

## The BLUE BANNER



**Cross Country**  
Team hosts Big South home meet in Hendersonville, see page 4.

**Travelogue**  
Student travels to the land down under, learns lessons of survival, see page 10



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## THE NEWS IN BRIEF

## Merrimon makeover angers business owners

Merrimon Ave. Business owners disagree with the city of Asheville's plans to make the street more pedestrian-friendly. The proposed rules require new construction and renovation projects to be two-story and offer safer sidewalks.

Business owners argue the construction causes a financial burden, while residents call for a safer Merrimon Ave.

## O.J. Simpson in familiar territory, faces life in prison

O.J. Simpson and three other men face charges including kidnapping, robbery and assault with a deadly weapon regarding a robbery of sports memorabilia in a casino hotel room.

If convicted, Simpson, 60, faces life in prison.

## Student Tasered after trying to question, heckle John Kerry

Police Tasered a University of Florida student Monday who refused to surrender the microphone at a lecture given by Sen. John Kerry.

Andrew Meyer, 21, questioned Kerry about involvement in Skull and Bones and impeaching President Bush before officers attempted to remove Meyer.

Videos of Meyer resisting officers are available online. Kerry can be heard telling the audience he will answer the question.

University officials called the event regretful, but attribute the incident to efforts to keep a safe environment for faculty and students.

- compiled by Aaron Dahlstrom

## Protesters flock to Washington, D.C.

By Caroline Fry  
STAFF WRITER

A historic protest calling for an end to U.S. involvement in Iraq took place in Washington, D.C. on Saturday.

The protest began with a rally near the White House followed by a march along Pennsylvania Ave., and concluded with a "die-in" in front of the U.S. Capitol, where people laid down in an act of civil disobedience to protest the war.

"Today is a historic day," said Emelia McDonald, an activist who helped organize the protest. "People came from across the country to lay down in an act of civil disobedience, which resulted in hundreds of people being arrested, including war veterans. It shifts the movement from protest to resistance, which is the only thing that's going to stop this war."

Of the reported 100,000 Protesters in attendance, nearly 1,000 Protesters participated in the "die-in," according to the Associated Press. Participants were subject to arrest by the police officers that barricaded the front of the U.S. Capitol. The act symbolized the U.S. soldiers and Iraqi civilians who have died during the Iraq war.

Police arrested almost 200 people, and officers pepper sprayed some who protested near them, according to AP.

The Coalition to Act Now to Stop War and Eradicate Racism, a national coalition, organized the protest. Many different organizations, including the Muslim American Society, Freedom Foundation, Veterans for Peace, Code Pink, the Party for Socialism and Liberation and Pastors for Peace, comprise ANSWER.

"ANSWER is an anti-imperialistic organization that asks members of Congress to step up to the Bush administration and have a backbone," McDonald said. "We organize these protests to get our message out there to the rest of the country."

The only way to end the Iraq war is for citizens to keep resisting the government and protest as much as possible, according to McDonald.

"If you look back in history, it has never been the politicians on the Hill who have stopped the war," she said. "In Vietnam, it was the Vietnamese resistance, the military resistance and the American resistance. This is the only way to make the politicians pay attention."

Many groups joined the protest,



Protesters gather outside the U.S. Capital for a "die-in" on Saturday. About 100,000 people gathered, including war veterans, students and other civilians, calling for an end to the war in Iraq.



Dozens of police officers in full riot gear barricade the front of the Capital Building while protesters continue to gather. Right: Counter-protesters shout from the streets, waving flags in support of the troops.

including students from all over the world. A group of students from the Helmholtz-Gymnasium in Bonn, Germany, came to the United States specifically to take place in the protest.

"It is very important that un-

necessary wars stop," said a German student. "There is no need for the Iraq war. I've looked at so many memorials in Washington today, and there is no need for another one."

A few students from UNC

Asheville attended the rally, including Zach Shitama, senior student. He said the two protests he participated in earlier in the Iraq war were much larger.

"It disappoints me that there aren't as many people protesting

today as when the war began," Shitama said. "I also think that the organization of the protest could have been much better. The arrests were definitely the best part."

According to a Sept. 10 AP poll, 65 percent of Americans disapprove of the way President Bush is handling the situation in Iraq. CBS and the New York Times conducted a poll showing 30 percent of Americans supported removing all U.S. troops from Iraq, and 35 percent supported reducing troop presence there.

"This has turned into a very unpopular war," said Michael O'Donald, an activist for the 9/11 Truth Movement. "This administration has told us countless lies to get us involved in Iraq, including lies about weapons of mass destruction, Osama bin Laden and the hijackers who apparently attacked us. People are now starting to realize what has happened and are taking to the streets."

Although O'Donald said he did not know if protesting the war would ultimately help end U.S. involvement in Iraq, he said it is the only way he can think of to spread the truth about the war to the general public.

"All I can do is try my best to push forward and spread our message as much as I can," O'Donald said. "We can march on Washington as much as possible, but we're still not hitting the people we need to. Everyone needs to know the truth, especially the people who are still supporting the war."

The message the Iraq veterans who were protesting were sending was the best way to get public attention, according to Brian Smith, a Gulf War veteran and member of Americans Against Escalation in Iraq.

"Seeing our troops hauled away in handcuffs because they're expressing their First Amendment right to protest is a great image," Smith said. "For the soldiers to show the dignity and reserve they have shown today by making their voices heard is a wonderful thing. I definitely support what they are doing."

Smith also said protesting the Iraq war helped him deal with his own experiences fighting in the Gulf War.

"Protesting has personally helped me as a veteran to deal with my issues about war in general, and I find it very empower-

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## Freshmen volunteers call ACT Day a waste

By Courtney Metz  
STAFF WRITER

Although some viewed this year's Active Citizenship Together in Asheville, held Sept. 11, as a success, some freshman student said the event was too unorganized.

"They had, like, teams of 14 screwing in a light bulb," said Christina Bradley, freshman student. "We're college students. How many college students does it take to screw in a light bulb? Not that many, I hope."

Participants spent much of the day sitting around, according to Michelle Peck, freshman student.

"I feel like we could have done more because there was a lot of down time," Peck said. "We could have accomplished a lot more if it would have been a little more organized. There was just too much free time for us."

Students installed light bulbs for the Housing Authority of the City

of Asheville, the university's partner for the event. However, they did much more than replace light bulbs, according to event coordinator Merritt Moseley, Key Club advisor and literature professor.

"They also washed windows. They passed out safety brochures and handouts to elderly people," Moseley said. "The team that I went with didn't do anything with light bulbs. Some of us painted and primed some boards on which children paint pictures. And the rest of us cleaned up."

Students installed more than 5,000 energy-efficient, compact fluorescent light bulbs. Appalachian Offsets, a program of the Western North Carolina Green Building Council, donated the bulbs.

"The ACT project on Sept. 11 was the largest one-day light bulb change out I know of," said Matt

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## New environmental center blossoms

By Clary Tedford  
STAFF WRITER

UNC Asheville's new Student Environmental Center, which opened Sept. 10 in the Highsmith University Union, plans to create a model of environmental sustainability for universities.

"I thought the opening was a huge success. We had a large number of students in attendance, as well as a few staff, faculty, administrators, public officials and a few media outlets," said John Bucher, advisor of SEC and director of campus recreation.

Chancellor Anne Ponder and Asheville City Council members Robin Cape and Brownie Newman attended the opening ceremonies. Senior environmental science students Jonathan Barnes and Anna Lange, co-directors, will take charge of the center during its first year.

"It was readily apparent that the Southeast region is lagging behind in the areas of environmental stewardship and sustainability," Barnes said.

An environmental conference at the University of Colorado in Boulder inspired the four participating UNC Asheville students to create the SEC, which they established under the Student Affairs division. The conference

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JONATHAN BARNES  
Co-Director  
Student Environmental Center

resulted in the UNC Asheville Green Campus Initiative, according to Barnes.

"I was one of the four students who went to Colorado to CU Boulder, where we found a much more progressive climate for environmental action and awareness at the Boulder campus," Barnes said. "What we saw in Colorado was ultimately what inspired us to pursue the creation of the Student Environmental Center at UNCA."

Seeing another campus make environmental sustainability a priority is extremely valuable,

according to Joan Walker, SEC intern and senior environmental science student.

"Looking at successes from other campus communities really has given us an edge to better achieve our goals at UNC Asheville," Walker said. "We found that we are lucky to have a strong environmental ethic at UNCA. Our students, faculty and staff are concerned about environmental issues, and that's the first step."

In fall 2006, a group of students proposed objectives to reduce the campus' environmental impact.

"Our main objective was to lobby the student fee committee to obtain a portion of student fees that would be used to purchase renewable energy credits to offset UNCA's carbon footprint," Walker said.

Lange said she encourages students to get involved in the student fee decision process to understand how their money is being spent.

"Being a part of these conversations is very important," Lange said.

This could be an important foundation for the future of sustainability at UNC Asheville, according to Bucher, who said his only apprehension is that the university will not be able

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