



Gas shortage stalls Asheville



PHOTOS BY JONATHAN WALCZAK - NEWS EDITOR
Top, cars wait to fill up on gas at the Merrimon Avenue Shell station Monday morning.
Bottom left, long lines stretch down Merrimon Avenue at a BP station Monday afternoon.
Bottom right, Mimi Haynie, 18, waits as gas slowly flows into her pickup truck at the Shell station.

Campus police drive to Weaverville in search of gas as supplies run low in Asheville

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Tempers flared Monday at one area gas station as customers waited as many as two hours to fill their tanks with scarce \$4.19 per gallon unleaded gas.

"It will be about a week longer before things are back to normal for most of us," said Lisa McKinney, general manager for the Asheville office of the auto services company AAA.

None of the more than 30 gas stations surveyed by The Blue Banner Sunday night had gas. By Monday morning, lines grew at the few stations that received shipments overnight.

At the Merrimon Avenue

Shell station, manager Marsha Messer helped direct more than 35 cars with an employee and two police officers assisting.

"There were three wrecks this morning, three fights over the last two days and we had to call the cops three times to help direct traffic," Messer said. "This is chaos."

Retired legal secretary Natalie Nachman waited more than an hour with two friends for one gallon of gas.

"They brought me here so they could fill up and I could get a gallon of gas for my car so I can go looking for more gas," Nachman said. "It's either that or I'd have to call AAA to come rescue me."

According to McKinney, panic and the lingering ef-

fects of Hurricanes Gustav and Ike caused the local shortage.

"What stations that receive fuel, people immediately figure it out," McKinney said. "The stations may have gas this morning and not this afternoon."

Campus police are taking measures to reduce gas consumption following supply interruptions, according to Investigator B.J. Bayne.

"We've actually had to go to Weaverville to get gas," Bayne said. "We now have more foot patrols and are doubling up two guys per vehicle. The guys know not to leave their cars idling and running."

The average price of gas in Asheville on Monday was

\$4.15 per gallon, according to McKinney.

"We have not had any confirmed reports of price gouging, but if people feel like there is price gouging going on, they can report it to the state attorney general," she said.

One woman in a blue sedan began shouting towards a car blocking her way at the Shell station, yelling "Move bitch, don't get up in my face."

Art gallery owner Bernadette Bender, 51, expressed shock at the rude behavior.

"You think in Asheville, people would be a little more laid back," she said. "This isn't New York City."

Shoe store manager Dean Peterson, 52, traveled

back home to Asheville late Sunday from South Carolina, where he said he had no problem finding gas.

"I woke up this morning with an eighth of a tank, not knowing it was this bad," Peterson said. "I came back at lunch and I've been waiting 50 minutes now. I think it's real sad."

According to McKinney, the Colonial Pipeline, which supplies gas to much of North Carolina, is not running at full-capacity more than a week after Hurricane Ike hit Texas.

"Even when it is at full-capacity, it only runs four miles per hour, so it's very slow," McKinney said.

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Students drop meat to go green

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Switching from an omnivorous to vegetarian or vegan diet helps the environment more than switching from an SUV to a Toyota Prius, according to Amy Lanou, assistant health and wellness professor.

"In the past two years, dietary habits have gotten high on the lists of ways for people to fight global warming," Lanou said.

Last week, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change urged people to eat meat-free one day a week to help tackle global warming.

Some UNC Asheville students heeded the calls by the U.N. and other groups to cut back on meat intake to help the environment.

"I've been telling people this for a while," said freshman student Leigha Houghland. "It's one small

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Students, faculty speak with hands

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In 1984, a University of Iowa graduate student set out to convince a skeptical comparative literature faculty that American Sign Language and deaf culture were worth writing about.

Not only were her advisers skeptical about the dissertation topic, they had serious doubts about whether or not ASL was even a language.

"They doubted it had a culture or a literature," she said. "But in spite of their doubts they encouraged me to explore, because as faculty they are committed to truth and knowledge."

After more than three years of travel and video documentation, the student discovered deaf stories migrated around the state and passed down between generations of deaf Iowans. She collected deaf-centric jokes, poems and ABC and number stories where clever tellers combined hand-shapes for letters and numbers, in sequential order to tell a tale.

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