

# Greenfest returns to campus,

By David Milton

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UNC Asheville hosted the first Greenfest nearly 20 years ago, and this year Evan Edwards is expanding the sustainability festival into a three-day event including panels, seed planting and free outdoor markets.

Edwards, a 21-year-old philosophy student, is the executive director of sustainability for UNCA's student government and a quintessential example of the environmentally-conscience population.

He is a vegan. He buys local food. He champions community solidarity, and he does not hesitate to point out the list of ecological problems associated with mountaintop removal.

On April 9, Edwards and a dedicated group of students and faculty will launch Greenfest 2010.

"I'm here to promote sustainability through SGA," Edwards said. "This is the big push of my job. I wanted to have a large part in Greenfest because it gives information to students for things they should know about that are already happening."

Edwards, the primary organizer of Greenfest, does not work alone.

"We are collaborating with SGA and the Student Environmental Center on funding and promotion for Greenfest," said Beth Porter, leader of Active Students for a Healthy Environment. "It's definitely something we've supported for years. It goes with everything in our mission statement."

The green weekend starts with a day of panels on sustainable transportation, wind energy and eco-feminism. The eco-feminism panel features UNCA lecturers Tracey Rizzo, Melissa Burchard and Grace Campbell as discussion leaders.

Campbell lectures on environmental ethics for UNCA's Humanities 414 course. Rizzo and Burchard academically specialize in feminism and women's studies.

"Eco-feminism is a philosophy based on the idea that we owe the earth a certain amount of respect," Edwards said.

Environmentalist Kirkpatrick Sale, the keynote speaker of the festival, will lecture on the quad at 7:30 that evening. Sale is the author of *After Eden: The Evolution of Human Domination* and the director of the Middlebury Institute, a political think-tank focusing on secession and separatism.

Sale's talk, "Bioregionalism: Your



This year, Greenfest participants will plant. Porter works on a garden. Upper right.

Home as Your Country," focuses on community living, and emphasizes the importance of political and economic localization.

"Bioregionalism is basically encouraging people to live within the boundaries of their natural environment," Edwards said. "Purchasing locally-grown food is an example."

In complement of Sale's lecture, this year's Greenfest includes garden work led by J.C. Brew, an ASHE member in charge of campus gardening, according to Porter.

"We've been doing raised beds, and for Greenfest, we'll be doing maintenance on the garden behind the cafeteria," Porter said. "We're also starting a pollinator garden on campus."

Porter, who buys local food, suggests students utilize the North Asheville Tail-

gate Market to promote localization and network with Asheville residents who grow food. The on-campus market is not a part of Greenfest, but it opens April 17 and remains in operation on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to noon into the fall.

"Re-localizing is really progressive. We can produce things in our region, and we don't have to rely on massive energy-consuming systems," Edwards said. "It's all about community solidarity."

Edwards and Porter both expect an increased turnout from last year's Greenfest, because the festival timetable spans weekend rather than an entire week.

"Last year was an interesting layout. It was throughout a week, so the turnout was ebbed and flowed with classes," Porter said. "This year it's on a concentrated weekend."

UNCA also garnered regional atten-

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tion last week after Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine named the campus one of the top green colleges in the Southeast. The magazine surveyed nearly 50 campuses, and UNCA tied with Warren Wilson College for first place as the greenest small college in five states.

The Asheville community is known for being eco-friendly, which contributes to Greenfest's long-term success, Porter said.

"It is easier to popularize and promote green initiatives in Asheville," Porter said. "People are already onboard."

Yet despite a heightened awareness of environmental issues, the southern Ap-