

## News Briefs

compiled by Trevor Metcalfe

### Obama outlines future in SOTU address

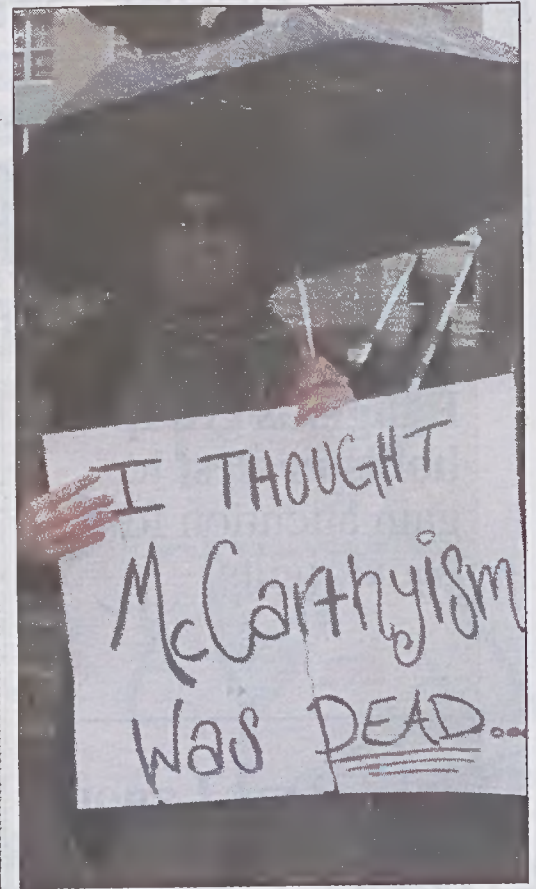
President Obama delivered his second State of the Union address on Jan. 25, urging Americans to unite and forge a successful future. He outlined a plan for increased spending in areas such as education and clean energy, while proposing large spending cuts to lessen the federal budget deficit. In the official Republican response, Rep. Paul D. Ryan of Wisconsin criticized Obama for doing too little to curb the deficit.

### Protests rage in Egypt

Egypt's military recently vowed to not use force against thousands of protesters rallying against the government of President Hosni Mubarak. This statement followed a week of demonstrations against the regime, and Mubarak's recent reorganization of his cabinet. Authorities issued a curfew to combat the protestors and almost all of the country is offline. The Egyptian economy is in a state of collapse as foreign commerce, tourism and finance has all but ceased.

### Charlotte to host 2012 Democratic National Convention

Michelle Obama revealed Charlotte as the host of the 2012 Democratic National Convention in an e-mail to supporters. President Obama and Joe Biden will formally accept their renomination at the convention, which is scheduled for the week of Sept. 3, 2012.



Jeremiah Reed - Staff Writer

Kim Carlyle, left center, former President of the Asheville chapter of Veterans for Peace and Jeff DeCristofaro, right, a UNCA MLA student and member of Students for a Democratic Society participated in the downtown rally last Tuesday.

## Asheville community protests FBI raids

Jeremiah Reed

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Despite steady rain, hand-numbing temperatures and the presence of Homeland Security, more than 30 people gathered outside the Asheville Federal Building last Tuesday to protest federal grand jury subpoenas issued to 23 anti-war activists stemming from a series of FBI raids last fall.

"I was really pleased with the turnout," Josh Skyes, who helped organize the demonstration, said. "Everybody was energetic and I think we helped send a clear message that we want these raids and grand jury investigations of anti-war activists stopped."

Tuesday, nine of the 23 activists subpoenaed were to appear in Chicago before a federal grand jury. According to the Committee to Stop FBI Repression website, six of the nine were Arabian-Americans and three were Palestinian solidarity activists.

**"The FBI has been rounding up anti-war activists and raiding their homes when all they are doing is speaking out in solidarity of people in other countries who are being ravaged by U.S. intervention."**

**Josh Skyes**  
*UNC Asheville alumnus*

Sykes, a UNC Asheville alumnus, expressed his support for those he said were wrongly persecuted by the federal government for speaking against U.S. foreign policy.

"The FBI has been rounding up anti-war activists and raiding their homes when all they are doing is speaking out in solidarity of people in other countries who are being ravaged by U.S. intervention," Sykes said.

Demonstrators voiced their message by standing in unity

with other anti-war activists. Sykes said he knew almost all of the accused personally.

Jeff DeCristofaro, a UNCA Master of Liberal Arts student and member of Students for a Democratic Society, was among the protesters.

"The fact that we have so many people out here against all circumstances is proof that we're willing to unite for a cause," he said.

Along with holding signs and banners, protestors engaged

in a series of chants as drivers on Patton Avenue drove by the protest. Among them were shouts of, "Anti-war activists are under attack. What do we do? Stand up and fight back."

DeCristofaro said the government seemed to use federal grand juries to persecute those who expressed dissent, but not necessarily disloyalty.

"I really feel angry that certain freedoms which are always given to us as citizens are being taken away from those who are using them. Quite frankly, we are living in a country that is being run by a government that seems to misinterpret the meaning of the Constitution," he said.

The group's message of solidarity was enhanced when they joined with members of the Asheville chapter of Veterans for Peace.

Lyle Petersen, a member of Veterans for Peace who served in the Army from

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