

On the Quad

With homecoming this weekend, what do you think about school spirit?



Maggie Craig
French student

"I would say it's important because to fully be a student and be active in your campus, I guess you have to have some form of school spirit."



Isabelle Noel
Undecided

"Personally, I'm not one of those people that feel the need to go to a bunch of games. I don't think it's necessary. I think a lot of people have different views of what school spirit is."



Hilary Arthur
Math student

"I think school spirit is largely just accepting your school and wanting to be here and enjoying it, and then obviously attending events and supporting groups that you support."

New drugs cause deaths to skyrocket *Legal synthetic drugs impacting US users*

Ashley Felts

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The new synthetic drug known as bath salts is making a scene in the first two months of 2011.

"I have been in law enforcement for 36 years and I have seen so many lives ruined by illegal drug use," **William Hogan, chief of police for the Asheville Police Department**, said. "I have seen people die, commit suicide, commit violent crimes and property crimes to support their addiction."

According to a press release by the American Association of Poison Control Centers, the 469 reported calls for the drug in 2011 has already surpassed the 292 reported in 2010.

"We know that a number of synthetic drugs are being marketed in Asheville and the surrounding area," Hogan said. "We deal with drugs and associated crimes on a daily basis."

Bath salts has been around for several years, mainly in the United Kingdom, but recently become a problem in the U.S.

The synthetic drug is still legal, although many states are working hard to ban it, according to a U.S. Department of Justice press release. The department released a drug alert watch for bath salts in December 2010.

"The state legislature is looking at creating laws to prohibit certain drugs that are currently unregulated at this time," Hogan said.

Bath salts, which goes by other names such as pure ivory and purple wave, has similar effects to cocaine, methamphetamine and ecstasy, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

No students on UNC Asheville's campus have reported using bath salts, according to **Jay Cutspec, director of student health and counseling at UNCA**.

"I have talked to a fair amount of students, but I have not really talked to any student that has mentioned it here on campus or in Asheville," Cutspec said.

Hogan said the increased media coverage of the drug could actually promote the use of the product.

"Media coverage of these le-

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Jay Cutspec

Director of student health and counseling

gal drugs often becomes the impetus for people trying these drugs," Hogan said. "The media increase the public's awareness of these drugs which inadvertently has some folks seeking out the new legal drugs."

There are many different reasons why students could become



Jay Cutspec

involved with drugs, according to Cutspec. "Some students do it for social reasons. They want to hang out with a specific social group," he said. "I think some students do it because it feels good and we all like pleasure as human beings. Other students do it to maybe mask painful feelings that they have, so it feels pretty comfortable."

The effects of bath salts do not last long and have led to suicide by certain users who develop extreme paranoia, hallucinations and suicidal thoughts, according to the American Association of Poison Control Centers.

Hogan said all age groups abuse harmful substances, but teenagers can particularly succumb to drug abuse.

"The unfortunate problem for teens is they start using drugs before their brains have fully developed, and they lack the maturity to completely understand the potential consequences their illegal activity will have on their health and future," Hogan said.

Cutspec warned college students should not use illegal

drugs or drugs not prescribed to them because it can affect cognitive skills.

"When you start altering anyone's brain chemistry, much less a student's, it's going to affect their executive functions: their memory, their ability to process information, their ability to analyze," Cutspec said. "Given the skills a student needs to be successful, it's one of the worst things they can do for their cognitive functions."



Rebekah Braswell

Rebekah Braswell, a sophomore at UNCA, said drugs affect students, but said they may depend on the user.

"I do think drugs affect a student's performance and overall outlook on school, but I guess it depends on the student and what kind of drugs they're taking. Everyone handles things differently," Braswell said.

Braswell said she does not use drugs, but knows it would not be hard to get them.

"Almost everyone knows someone who either does them or sells them," Braswell said.

Cutspec said he agreed drugs are easily available.

"Certainly drugs are available if you want them and if you go and seek them," Cutspec said. "But, I think, obviously, marijuana is our number one drug of choice on campus."

Hogan said drugs in the community are an ongoing problem

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