

THE BLUE BANNER



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UNCA HOMECOMING EVENTS COVERED INSIDE!



Photo by Luke Howe - Contributor

Students prepare for the race at the starting line of the Nearly Naked Mile.

UNCA students race a mile, nearly naked

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Students and alumni at UNC Asheville dodged the frigid cold temperatures Thursday evening to race each other in the Student Alumni Association's fourth annual Nearly Naked Mile on the indoor Kimmel Arena Concourse as part of this year's Homecoming festivities.

Zak Carroll, sophomore, is a SAA member who volunteered to operate the check-in table prior to the race. Carroll said there are two main goals beyond promoting Homecoming that SAA hopes

to accomplish through the Nearly Naked Mile.

"I am part of the SAA, so we're here to sponsor the event. I've never been able to participate in the Nearly Naked Mile for the two years that I've been here at UNCA," Carroll said. "Donating clothes to the Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry and promoting health and wellness where people can come out, take their clothes off and have fun running a mile is what the Nearly Naked Mile achieves."

Luke Howe, senior, is president of the Sigma Nu fraternity on campus that volunteered to

help organize the event. According to Howe, the Nearly Naked Mile not only kicks off Homecoming weekend, but also serves as a donation event for the Asheville community through ABCCM.

"This is the first event that we have for Homecoming so it's all about pumping everyone up for Homecoming and getting everyone excited," Howe said. "It's also a clothing fundraiser for the ABCCM, which is a non-profit organization that caters to homeless people and those people who need clothing in general."

Participants who want-

ed to compete in the race donated clothes to the foundation upon checking into the event, Howe said. According to tallies taken by the Student Activities, Involvement and Leadership committee on campus following the race, more than 500 pieces of clothing were donated by runners.

"Each year, we have an increase in the number of participants at the event," Howe said. "For instance, last year we had 193 runners in the event. It's kind of like a curse where, each year we do this, there's been cold weather or it's been raining."

Due to cold weather, the

Nearly Naked Mile was moved indoors this year. According to the data from Howe following the event, only 150 runners participated Thursday evening, down 23 percent from last year. Howe said he and the SAA were happy with the number considering the change of location.

Louie Edelstein, sophomore member of the Sigma Nu fraternity, said that he and his group enjoy helping with community events both on campus and in the Asheville area.

"This is one of the most popular events here at UNCA during the spring semester, and Sigma Nu

loves volunteering here and have done so since it began three years ago," Edelstein said. "We also go out to the Children's Mission Hospital on the first Tuesday of every month as part of our required community service each year. We like being involved on campus and the campus events as it gives us a good campus presence."

Participants in the race had to run seven laps around the concourse, according to Howe. **Brandon Watson, junior**, was warming up in the Student Recreation Center gymnasium

SEE NAKED ON PAGE 6

Sex talks break awkward silence

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Attendees kept mostly quiet as **Michael Harney, prevention educator at the Western North Carolina AIDS Project**, opened the floor for group discussion at Queer Sex Ed.

The event, hosted by Alliance Feb. 10, was the first of two sex talks at UNC Asheville this month.

Harney noted the importance of conversations such as these in a culture that, he said, does not



Photo by Timbi Shepherd - Asst. A&F Editor

Michael Harney of WNCAP talks sex with UNCA students.

foster openness and awareness when it comes to the subject of sex. He said he understood people's reticence, but encouraged audience members to

speak up, share experiences and ask questions.

"It really is about the fact that we are human beings, we have bodily fluids, and we can transmit

things through these bodily fluids no matter what you do," Harney said. "I don't care how vanilla it is. I don't care how kinky it is. I don't care how rough it is. All those kinds of things - people are into different things. They don't always want to admit it. They don't always like to be open about things like that, and that's OK as long as you're making informed decisions."

People must accept the responsibility to seek out and share information so that they may fulfill another

SEE SEX ON PAGE 9

Suicide rates generate call to further research

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Appalachian State University received a \$192,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to implement a comprehensive approach to preventing suicide in light of recent deaths, according to a statement

released by the university.

"We welcome this opportunity to strengthen the support of students in this critical area and look forward to involving the campus community in this important initiative during the coming year and beyond," said **Dr. Denise Lovin, a psychologist in the university's Counseling and Psychological Services Center**.

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