

Form tackles issue of attacks of females

By Lynn Jordan

The Oct. 17 attack of a female student in the New Dorm parking lot shocked and disturbed ECSU students, especially females.

The masked attacker, who held a knife to the female's neck, tore off her shirt and panty hose. He fled after a car pulled into the lot.

Since that time, Campus Security has beefed-up patrol in the New Dorm area. Dr. Leon White, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, has issued a list of precautionary measures, White urged students to walk in groups at night, not alone, to walk in lighted areas, and to report any strangers on campus, or ask for their identification.

Attacks on females are rare on this campus, but officials say that students do need to be cautious.

"Our campus is usually safe," said SGA President Michael Myrick. "I hope that this was just a post-Homecoming incident that won't happen again."

A recent study conducted by the Medical University of South Carolina in

Charleston reported that one out of every eight adult women in the U.S. will be the victim of rape. Rape is one the fastest growing violent crimes in North Carolina, yet it is the most under-reported, according to the study. Only 16 percent of rape victims report their assaults to police.

In the wake of the October attack, concerned ECSU students have formed a supportive organization, the Female Action Support Group. The FASG addressed females' safety concerns at an open forum on Thursday, Nov. 18 in the New Complex.

Forum coordinator, Trina Rawles, reviewed the safety rules released by White and presented a panel of students. Speakers included campus policewoman Tanya Long and Cleveland J. Storey, Independent distributor for Quorum Security Devices.

Officer Long, who often gives rides to students walking alone at night, reinforced safety rules, adding that seven out of 10 college females have been victims of rape.

"Most rapes are by someone the vic-

tim knows well, friends or classmates," she said. "Females should also realize the natural weapons. Pens, pencils, combs, and even keys can be a deadly defense."

"A shoe's high heel can go through someone's neck," Valerie Bouldin, student panelist pointed out.

Storey discussed defensive techniques as well as the importance of attitude in warding off potential attackers.

"You need to be aware of your surroundings," he said. "If you walk with your head down, with little self-esteem or confidence, then you will appear to be a prime target."

Noting a current tactic in the D.C. area in which a stalker lays under a car and waits to slash the ankles of its owner, Storey also suggested that students approach vehicles from an angle and park in well-lighted areas.

Storey asked if any students carried defense weapons. When some females said they did, he discussed the liabilities associated with weapons carried for defense. "Over 40 percentage of the police officers that were killed in the past year, were killed with their own weapons," he

said. "So what do you think your chances of survival with a knife or gun are?"

Mace is inefficient because conditions must be favorable—no rain, little or no wind, and around 73 degrees, said Storey. The woman may also become the victim of her own Mace, he added.

"A shocker (stun gun) is not a very useful measure because distance and timing must be precise, or both the attacker and victim might be shocked," Storey added.

At the close of the forum, Storey offered "warranted" security devices from his company at wholesale prices to students.

"More students should have been here because we learned so much," said Rawls, coordinator for the forum.

Following the Dec. 17 attack, New Dorm director Charlotte Gregory spoke to about 45 female students in the study room of the new dorm. Gregory discussed her concern about the broken lights in front of the dorm, and the need for more security patrols.

Since then, the lights have been repaired, students said.

Students to conduct research on fruit flies

By Tim Smith

ECSU's Biology Department has been awarded a \$350,000 grant from the National Institute of General Medical Science and the National Institute on Aging. The grant will fund a research project on the aging of fruit flies.

Three biology majors, Cynthia Rountree, Shiroshell Dingle, and Presley Settles, will assist Dr. Ronald Blackman in conducting the research.

"We're looking for the biological and chemical mechanisms involved in the aging process," said Blackman.

The gnat-like fruit flies grow from egg to adult in about ten days, he said. The normal life span is about 40 days.

"Our objective is to get a strain that will live from 70 to 80 days. We've got three years to study the differences in regular and long life flies. We're going to try to find what enzymes allow longer life, and try to manipulate the genetics involved."

The grant will pay for students to attend meetings and seminars "all over the country," said Blackman. "This type of research is good for the students and the school. Employers are looking for qualified applicants, and the future students are looking for a school that offers research projects such as this one."

The students will cross breed short and long life fruit flies "in order to isolate the

genetic codes that control aging," said Settles. "We want to be able to learn the genetic aspects of aging and short life spans."

The results of their research will be published in prestigious scientific journals, nationwide.

Students said they are excited about participating in the project.

"This is really interesting because it's unique," said Dingles. "I didn't know anything about these fruit flies, now I'm learning all about them."

Settles said working on the project will help the students become biologists. "This research will provide knowledge and hands on skills that are necessary after graduation for getting a job."

Blockmon and the student assistants encourage ECSU science students to get involved in other research programs.

"There are research projects available during the summer," said Dingle. "They're all over the country."

Rountree added, "There are a lot of opportunities available during the summer break, and you get paid too."

Student research projects are becoming increasingly common on campus as more and more instructors receive grants.

Blockmon said many industries are looking for individuals with "hands on experience" in addition to formal education. "These projects are a great way to get this type of experience."

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to

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from

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Have a safe and joyous holiday!