

THE CAMPUS ECHO

EXCELLENCE WITHOUT EXCUSE

ISSUE 12

NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

SEPTEMBER 17, 1992

Injuries Not Serious

Former Eagle Lineman, Five Students Shot

By JASON WILLIAMS
EDITOR

After a confrontation with outsiders, former Eagle lineman Rodney Edmonds was shot three times last Saturday night near Eagleson and Baynes dormitories.

Edmonds was one of six students shot during the incident. Three others, two of them students, were injured as they left the scene.

Interim Chancellor Doña J. Benson said as she announced the shootings: "First of all, we are very concerned about our students who were wounded by gunfire or otherwise injured on Saturday night. We are most thankful that their injuries were not worse. This is a very serious tragedy and another painful re-



Former NCCU Lineman
Rodney Edmonds

minder that universities are not immune from the wanton violence that is so pervasive in this society. NCCU remains committed to doing everything possible to secure the campus and to protect our young people."

This is the third shooting in six years on campus. Anthony W. Bul-

lock was killed in Chidley Hall in 1986, and in 1990 Kenneth Jet Clark was shot and killed near the Student Union.

The *Herald-Sun* quotes Campus Police Chief Anthony Purcell as saying that the incident began when a male "grabbed a female and kissed her."

Edmonds intervened, Purcell said, and in the dispute that followed, Edmonds was shot in the leg. Five other students were also injured in the legs and feet. All were released from the hospital by Sunday.

Eight of NCCU's 14 security officers were on duty Saturday night.

"Nothing is safe anymore, but we are going to do what we can to protect the students," Purcell told the *Herald-Sun*.

Campus Security will limit the

access of non-students to the campus. Similar security measures were instituted in the aftermath of the Clark killing. The dorms were locked after 11 p.m., and students were discouraged from the Union area after 10 p.m.

A vigorous attempt is being made to have only NCCU students at certain events," Purcell told the *Herald-Sun*.

So far, no planned campus activities have been cancelled.

As of Monday, detectives only had a brief description of the suspect, whose first name is thought to be Bernard.

Bernard, according to Durham Police Detective M.J. Thaxton, is six feet tall, with slim build and a medium complexion. He has burns and scars on his arms. He also has gold teeth and a diamond stud earring in his left ear.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call Thaxton at 560-4440 or CrimeStoppers at 683-1200.

**'I Never Thought It
Would Happen To Me'
Freshman Victim Unafraid,
Calls Shooting Freak Event**
*"Someone else had
to tell me I was shot"*

By RONDA ROBINSON
CORRESPONDENT

Saturday, Sept. 12, 1992 is a night that will be remembered on NCCU's campus. No one will recall that night more vividly than freshman Ballady Hargett from New York will. While gathered with fellow students about 10:45 p.m. near Eagleson and Baynes, Hargett would have never expected that an unwanted kiss would end in gunfire.

Hargett says, "I saw the two guys fighting, but I did not know what it was over. It is said that an unidentified man attempted to kiss a woman against her will. Another man, former NCCU lineman Rodney Edmonds, intervened. All of a sudden the unidentified man pulled out a pistol and sprayed the crowd of people gathered by the dorms.

Hargett was hit and did not even know it. "Someone else had to tell me I was shot," she said.

She says, that this incident was a freak occurrence and that she is not afraid to go out on campus at night.

As a New Yorker Hargett says she is used to shootings, but "I never thought it would happen to me."

Student Body President's Platform Includes Student Unity, Politics and Culture Awareness

By ERNIE SUGGS
Herald-Sun Special

The door to Phyllis Jeffers office is always open. Whether she's there or not is another story.

North Carolina Central



Jeffers

University's outspoken and controversial Student Government Association president is always thinking. Always talking.

"So far it's been stressful, but exciting. Tense but exhilarating," Ms. Jeffers said.

A 3:15 p.m. meeting with Ms. Jeffers had to be squeezed into a campus tour, as she tried to sell commemorative T-shirts for this weekend's football game and meet with administrators.

"The hours on the job vary. Sometimes one. Sometimes 12. Today, the whole day," said Ms. Jeffers, who is taking 12 semester hours. "I am going to graduate next year, but I want it to be clearly stated that I am doing that on purpose."

Walking around the campus, she greets nearly everyone, in between reflections on the past and hopes for the future.

She chooses her words carefully and begs not to be misquoted.

"You know, this has been a whole lot more exciting and de-

manding than I thought it would be," Ms. Jeffers said. "But it is worth it. It's nice to see things happen and people excited.

This past March, Ms. Jeffers won 57 percent of the student vote to be elected SGA president. Despite her victory, the Raleigh native's campaign slogan, "Shut 'Em Down," was not universally appreciated.

"I think there was some apprehension about what her tactics would be," said Assistant Dean of Students Milton Lewis.

"'Shut 'Em Down' caused some concerns, but if you listened to her speech, you knew otherwise."

Ms. Jeffers' platform actually stated that first, students ask questions, then they offer proposals and if they fail, then rally, protest and hold forums.

"I am not concerned about a perception that people may have. I'm not concerned about the negative evaluation of my platform. Any negative feelings are due to ignorance," Ms. Jeffers said. "'Shut 'Em Down' is three-prong: Wake up, stand up and get what's yours. I'm not talking about anything new."

Ms. Jeffers' ideas hark back to the 1960s when black empowerment was at the top of most black college students' agendas. No wonder her ideal is Al Hajj Shabazz (Malcolm X).

"My daddy may be lying, but he told me that if I would have been a boy, he would have named me Malcolm," said Jeffers, who incidentally has red hair and freckles like Malcolm X.

The walls of the student government office in the student union are plastered with posters of black musicians, actors and politicians. Malcolm X posters dominate.

"I say what I believe and the way we got our points across may be comparable, but I am not his shadow, but a reflection of him," Ms. Jeffers said. "Every black man or woman should be a reflection of his ancestors."

Ms. Jeffers said that when she graduated from high school, she chose to attend a black college to help her people.

"When I graduated, that was my

goal in life: To uplift the black race," Ms. Jeffers said. "When I got here I found myself always asking questions and always challenging things."

She said she ran for SGA president because her questions were not being answered and her challenges were not being met.

"I used to join groups that said they were going to change things. I felt I had to utilize SGA and the only way to utilize SGA is to join it," Ms. Jeffers said. "Most SGAs were not culturally or politically active for the most part."

Ms. Jeffers said that since school has started and even this past summer, she has had her ups and downs with administration.

"Sometimes it's good. Sometimes it's not," she said stoically. "As a woman, people sometimes try to take advantage of me, but I stand strong with my beliefs and leave it at that." She said that one of her major problems is use of facilities for student activities. She said that several student-run activities and programs have been cancelled or postponed at the last minute.

"Trying to get things going around here, culturally is very difficult," Ms. Jeffers said. "I think that some people have forgot what it's like to be young-probably black, too."

Ms. Jeffers has lofty goals. By the end of the year, she hopes to have student unity; student love for the university and fellow students; and "awareness" on the part of the administration, alumni and community.

NCCU and other state-supported black colleges are battling to retain their identities although the agenda is being set by the white power structure of the University of North Carolina, she said.

"The question is, how do we retain our Afro-centricity in a white dominated system? Not only in school, but in life?"

She said the answer can only be found within.

"You have to find out what you have within yourself and you have to keep it," Ms. Jeffers said. "I found mine and I'm keeping it. I'm not saying that I have all the answers, but I speak the truth."

Faculty, Students React To Spectre Of Violence

By ANITA DARCUS SPIVEY,
COREY KENT
and DONNA LEE
CORRESPONDENTS

The violence on campus cannot be stopped according to some members of the NCCU community, but it can be lessened. Dr. Robert Wortham, assistant professor of sociology, says that staff response time is an issue which could be addressed.

"Campus security is a wide-spread concern not only here at NCCU, but at other universities as well," Wortham says. He suggests that there will be a full-time staff available during weekends or redirected staff for peak times, such as football games and the like. He also addressed the concern of crossing the line between the protection or restriction of students' rights.

Wortham suggests a student watch, and "extension of the buddy system," be organized. Perhaps such watches can set up in the dormitories, to be there as a "presence and structure," he says.

Dr. Janet M. Young, a counselor and instructor, expresses a concern that the students are adapting, but perhaps too well; it is as though the students are learning to "exist in warfare." The violence experienced on campus, say Young, is only a microcosm of society and is a major concern of Durham.

Young feel that this rise in crime is a result of a "change in values and morals of right and wrong" and that perhaps we should start with the reevaluation of our values.

She suggests that Campus Security continue checking identification at the campus entrances, as the city police are currently doing.

What should be done about the possession of guns by students and non-students on NCCU's campus? Peter Mason, a professor of criminal justice says the campus should

be closed to non-students until problem is resolved. Mason said that off-campus students should come to campus, complete their work on campus and then leave.

Some students may feel as if these rules are extreme he said, but until the problem is solved, such measures may be necessary.

At least one student feels that security was already too restrictive before the shootings occurred. Security swarmed the campus last weekend during the NCCU/A&T game, said senior Elementary Education major Leah Ann Owens; "We had limited access to the cam-

pus; therefore, we had to park at least eight minutes away from the stadium. Students could not get on campus to park because of uncontrolable traffic."

Owens says she feels safe on campus during the day, but not at night.

Another woman student who asked to remain unnamed, said the shooting could have been prevented. "Although students are asked to carry University identification, we are never asked to produce it," she said.

When asked if she felt safe on campus, she said, "Yes!, I carry a registered gun in my purse everywhere I go, including class for personal protection."

Virginian Comrades Win Top Slots In Frosh Voting

By JASON WILLIAMS
EDITOR

Only 268 freshman voters decided last Thursday on class officers, for one of the largest classes in history. Criminal justice major Christian DuBoise from Norfolk, Va. won the presidential election with 106 votes. Sordao Mckenzie, Selena Wynn, and Tremayne Hawley finished behind with 68, 52, and 40 votes respectively.

"I feel excited about winning, because my ideas will be put together with my fellow classmates so that we can work together to accomplish the same goal. I thank the Lord," he said.

One of his goals, DuBoise said is to unite all of the classes and convey the message that "we are more than freshmen we are NCCU students as a whole."

DuBoise also plans to consult soon with his staff, especially his vice-president Michael Cox.

Cox, a psychology major from Virginia Beach, Va. won his election with 114 votes. Walter Ra-

leigh-Higgs, III, Kimberly Hood, and La Derrick Bullock finished behind with 58, 50, and 44 votes respectively.

"It's an honor to win, because people look at me as someone who can lead, someone who they can trust," Cox said.

Cox plans to work with DuBoise to get the "total class involved by letting them have a voice in SGA." Cox also said he hopes all the freshmen candidates involved in their class activities. "Every candidate should still be heard," he said.

DuBoise and Cox were close friends before the elections and see no problems working together for the class.

The rest of the freshman class officers include: Treasurer Cassandra Palmer, Secretary Stacy Reid, Miss Freshman Keitra Musgrave, and nine members of Congress Korie Burrow, Serieta Collins, Ericka Ferguson, Kenndra Johnson, Tonya Palmer, Antionette Raines, Demetrius Thompson, Ronald Robinson, and Teresa Walker.

"And still I rise" -- Maya Angelou