

'Bubble' provides false sense of security

Safety Awareness Week Events

Sept. 25

Date Rape Drugs

7 to 8 p.m. at Lambda Chi Alpha House Loy Center

Presented by Lt. Vickie B. Moehlman

A PowerPoint presentation on the different types of drugs used by sexual predators. Each drug will be discussed about its symptoms, side effects and the dangers. Students will leave this session with information on how to prevent being a victim, how to recognize symptoms of victims, awareness of the emergency actions to implement and the necessary resources for the victim.

Sept. 27

Men's Assault Program

7 to 9 p.m. at Whitley Auditorium

Previously "NO MORE," this is a non-profit organization dedicated to prevent rape. The bus tour consists of a "Men's Program" which is a one hour workshop. The workshop is called, "How to help a sexual assault survivor: what men can do." Visit <http://www.nomorerape.org/index.php> for more information.

Sept. 27

One In Four (men only)

9 to 11 p.m. at Whitley Auditorium

This is the same presentation as the Men's Assault Program, but for the Athletic Department.

Sept. 28

Take Back The Night

8 p.m. at Whitley Auditorium (outside)

This event begins with a rally where banners are displayed and several agencies, including Crossroads, will be represented. A candle light march across campus is a moving experience. The march ends in front of Moseley where Alamance County's Executive Director for Crossroads, Deana Joy, will speak.

Students feeling too safe on campus; increasing crime demands more attention from the university

Brittany Smith

Managing Editor

Freshman Samantha Miller returned to her dorm on Sept. 2 after dinner to discover that someone had rifled through her purse and her camera was missing.

Lucky for Miller, she called Campus Security and they arrested the suspect, who was still lingering on campus looking for other unlocked doors around Story Center.

"You don't think about it," she said. "You don't think it's going to happen to you, just random other people."

Miller is not alone. Since classes started at the end of August, three breaking and entering cases were reported to Campus Security, one assault in a parking lot was reported to the Town Police, one assault on the tram path, one assault in Harper Center parking lot and an attempted robbery were reported to campus administration.

Elon's bubble atmosphere is misleading. Students think they can leave their doors unlocked and walk alone at night without anything happening to them. The sense of community tends to outweigh common sense.

Unfortunately, it takes an incident like Miller's to make students understand that Elon is not always as safe as it appears.

"I'm definitely more careful now," Miller said. "My suitemates and I don't prop our door anymore and we make sure our doors are locked when we leave."

Not only should students look out for the safety of their property, but also their own personal safety as well. With three assaults already reported, Lt. Vickie Moehlman of Campus Safety and Police recommends that students not walk alone.

"There's no reason for anyone to walk alone at night," Moehlman said. "Even if you are stumbling home, don't be afraid to call for an escort because you think you'll get written up. I wouldn't do it and I've never seen it done because we'd rather see you get home safely than something happen to you."

If students need a ride home or an escort back to their dorm they can call Campus Security at x5555, Safe Rides at x7250 or they can check the E-Rides and shuttle schedules before they go out.

Campus Safety and Police are also working on installing lights and cameras on the tram path for added safety. Students should be wary of more than just the tram path at night. They should always be on the look out wherever they are.

"There's safety in numbers," Lt. Moehlman said. "Get a friend and always keep your wits about you."

Moehlman also suggests that if students see suspicious activity or are in an actual emergency, they should immediately call 911 instead of x5555.

"If you need something right now, like an ambulance, police or fire department, dial 911. Campus Security is really only for escorts, maintenance or a lock out," she said.

Reporting a suspicious incident to the Town Police Department not only gives the police more opportunities to protect the public by tracking down the suspect but it also fulfills the good citizen obligation.

"Imagine that your daughter is assaulted by a guy that assaulted another girl the night before and she didn't report it," Lt. Moehlman said. "It's our obligation to other people, as good citizens, to report things so it won't happen again."

The sense of community that Elon creates through its "bubble" often gives students a misleading sense of security.

"I definitely feel pretty safe," freshman Ghenet Pinderhuges said. "I'm from a big city and I feel like Elon is always telling us to be aware and to behave appropriately."

Small town life may seem safer than living in a larger metropolitan area, but living in the Elon bubble is only as safe as residents make it. There is no plan to gate in or put up walls around campus to keep the university a closed community. With the campus open to the public, students should realize that they have to exercise a bit of personal responsibility to protect themselves.

While crime may not disappear, it is possible to decrease the incidents on campus. Exercising caution is the easiest way to keep the campus safe. A little common sense goes a long way.

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