

PUSH IT REAL GOOD



DTH/MARGARET SOUTHERN

William Stallworth steers while friends help push Josh Trammell's Blazer off of Cameron Avenue on Thursday afternoon. The guys were returning from playing Frisbee golf when the car ran out of gas and had to be pushed into Har's parking lot to prevent blocking traffic.

# RHA Focuses on Welcoming Freshmen to UNC Campus

By CHRIS STEGALL  
Staff Writer

As the excitement of move-in day fizzles and the flurry of activity starts settling down, freshmen are left in the midst of a huge university to find their place.

To help these students and other campus residents adjust to their new surroundings, the Residence Hall Association tries to make a cookie-cutter room feel like home.

Orientation counselors and resident assistants have been organizing social events, conducting campus tours and holding informational and instructional sessions.

"The most important thing is just to get everyone to come out of the room and meet people," said Jeremy Buenviaje, RHA governor for the Olde Campus Lower Quad.

And leaders say that despite its small size and

its focus on delegating authority, RHA has many plans for the year, though few have been finalized.

RHA President Robin Yamakawa said most RHA programs would be conducted at the area level, while resident assistants and members of residence hall government will be allowed to organize programs of their choice.

The result, Buenviaje and Yamakawa say, will be a smaller, more streamlined residence hall government. "I think smaller is just more efficient," Yamakawa said.

Yamakawa said RHA is working with the Carolina Athletic Association to have a tailgate party during the football game against N.C. State University.

And Buenviaje said there likely will be an "end-of-year bash" featuring the local hip-hop band Sankofa.

Within his own area, Buenviaje said plans

are being made for a "my tie" social, in which male residents leave neckties at the area office and female residents pick ties and meet the guys who left them. "It's not a date, just a way to meet people," he said.

RHA will also work many educational programs into its activities.

Yamakawa said she is working with student government to increase the amount of tutoring available in residence halls, especially on South Campus.

Yamakawa said RHA will update its Web site, distribute surveys to better understand residents and will work on relaying their concerns to the Department of University Housing.

She said, "I want to have more dialogue with residents and between housing and residents."

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## No Shift in Grading Policy Yet Shark Attacks Increase Off N.C. Coast

By JOHN MABERRY  
Staff Writer

Students concerned that changes in grading policy would lower the average grade point average this fall can relax — at least for now.

Officials say no recommendation to implement campuswide changes in grading policies will be proposed until the Committee on Grading Standards has completed the information-gathering process.

The committee, formed in April by Faculty Council Chairwoman Sue Estroff, was authorized by the council to collect and disseminate information on grade inflation at UNC.

The issue was raised in a report last spring suggesting that UNC's average GPA has been steadily rising for years, possibly indicating more lenient grading standards at the University.

The report was drafted in February by economics Professor Boone Turchi and the Education Policy Committee that he chairs.

No date has been set yet for the Committee on Grading Standards to offer a recommendation to the Faculty

Council on how to address the report.

"My personal timetable (for receiving the recommendation) is as quickly as possible, hopefully some time this fall," Estroff said.

When the Faculty Council met April 28, they made two resolutions.

The first authorized the creation of the Committee on Grading Standards, and the second allowed the new committee to collect and distribute information on the current status of grades at UNC.

"The Faculty Council's authorization allows the publication of such valuable information as the grade average for specific courses," Turchi said.

He said the discussion of this topic has continued during the summer.

"I've gotten some interesting feedback from faculty this summer who are in large part pro-reform," Turchi said.



Faculty Council Chairwoman Sue Estroff said she hopes to get the recommendation some time in the fall.

History Professor Michael Hunt is one supporter of Turchi's attempt to curb grade inflation.

"I think students' expectations have changed. My own feeling is that they're not getting a rigorous enough education," Hunt said. "In the long term, the skills and not the grades are what is truly important."

Some students who are opposed to any action to lower the campus GPA believe that grades are already declining as a result of Turchi's report.

"I think grades are being lowered already even without the policies in place," said senior Justin Bynum from Hickory. "I know Morehead Scholars that are now having to fight to maintain a 3.0."

Students have voiced concerns that changes to grade policy might reduce their competitiveness when applying for jobs or graduate school.

But Estroff is more optimistic about the results of action taken to halt grade inflation. "I anticipate a good outcome for everybody."

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Three assaults have been confirmed this year, while a fourth strike could be attributed to a bluefish.

By WORTH CIVILS  
Senior Writer

As some students plan end-of-the-summer weekend trips to the beach, shark attacks might be the last thing on their minds.

But an unusually high number of the rare attacks have occurred along North Carolina beaches this summer, with the most recent suspected incident occurring Monday in Emerald Isle, a popular destination this time of year.

The latest victim, who remains unidentified, was swimming away from a group of porpoises when the attack occurred. He was taken to Carteret General Hospital in Morehead City and then transferred to Duke Hospitals in Durham. He has since been released and is recovering well, said Carol Lohr, executive director of the tourism bureau for Carteret County, where Emerald Isle is located.

"It was a full recovery," Lohr said.

The victim's hand was injured in the attack, but Frank Schwartz, a professor at the UNC Institute of Marine Sciences in Morehead City, said the injury probably would have been more severe if the attack were by a shark.

"He would not have a hand if it were a shark," Schwartz said.

Rather, he thinks bluefish were the likely culprits. "The slashings were more reminiscent of bluefish," Schwartz said. "They go into feeding frenzies."

Three confirmed shark attacks occurred earlier in the summer, all within a two-week period.

On July 7, a shark attacked 12-year-old Ashley Walker of Chillicothe, Ohio, while she was vacationing with her family on the northern Outer Banks. The attack left her with a 9-inch gash in her leg that required more than 300 stitches.

Less than two weeks later, on July 16, a shark attacked a Florida surfer at Holden Beach. The attack left Tim Poynter, 14, with gashes in his foot, a puncture wound in his heel and cut toes.

Just one day later, Patrick Bruff, 16, of Wilmington, was bitten on the right foot while surfing in Wrightsville Beach. Experts are not sure why the high

number of shark attacks have hit N.C. beaches this summer, but one explanation points to a mix of warm ocean waters and the large number of tourists.

"It's a combination of the high temperatures and too many people," Schwartz said. "We're entering their domain rather than the sharks entering our domain."

He said the sharks implicated in the attacks so far have all been black tip sharks that frequent shallow water. But the sharks are looking for their next fish dinner, not seeking out humans.

In the cases where surfers were attacked, Schwartz said the sharks mistook them for sea turtles.

Potential swimmers and surfers should be cautious, not frightened, he said. "All (the attacks) are accidental as far as I'm concerned," Schwartz said.

Tourists do not seem to be worried, since business this summer was strong.

Lohr said revenues from tourism actually are up from previous years.

"We're not hearing anything," Lohr said of the potential backlash from the attacks. "It's been a great summer."

The State & National Editor can be reached at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu)

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