

CAMPUS BRIEFS

Two laptops reported as stolen from UNC buildings

Laptops were stolen from two locations on campus, according to University police reports.

One, an IBM Thinkpad T40, was reported Tuesday as missing from the UNC Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. It is valued at \$1,900.

A Compaq laptop valued at \$1,200 along with an anatomy textbook valued at \$200 was stolen from the Undergraduate Library on Feb. 25, but was not reported missing until Wednesday.

DPS to host public auction to benefit local schools

The UNC Department of Public Safety will hold an auction Wednesday. Items up for auction include binoculars, cameras, CD cases, jewelry, a laptop and an ax.

The auction will be from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. at the DPS building. Bidders are asked to pay cash, and all proceeds will go to the Orange County Board of Education.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

Restrictions on travelers from Mexico to be reduced

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Bush administration backed off plans to require that millions of visa-carrying Mexicans who make short visits to America and stay close to the border be fingerprinted and photographed to get into the country.

Asa Hutchinson, the Homeland Security department's undersecretary for border and transportation security, was to announce publicly the policy change at a Capitol Hill hearing Thursday, a congressional official who was briefed on the plan told The Associated Press.

The move, a concession to Mexican President Vicente Fox, comes on the eve of his visit to President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas.

Mexicans who have so-called laser visas currently are allowed to stay in the country three days, provided they stay close to the border. Such visas are issued to people who have undergone background checks and consulate interviews where they are fingerprinted and photographed. The visas generally are held by workers and people who need to make frequent quick trips across the border.

As part of the new US-VISIT program, before the end of the year those people were to be fingerprinted and photographed before crossing the border. The plan being announced by Hutchinson rescinds that requirement.

WORLD BRIEFS

Israeli army, Palestinian militants clash in raid

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — Israeli soldiers battled with Palestinian militants in Gaza on Thursday, killing a 14-year-old boy and bulldozing houses during a daylong raid, Palestinian officials said.

The Israeli army said troops entered Rafah, a frequent battleground in the conflict, in search of tunnels used by Palestinian militants to smuggle weapons from Egypt. Soldiers were met with gunfire and grenades, the army said.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat condemned the raid and a Wednesday helicopter strike on a car that killed three Hamas militants. The intensified attacks came prior to a proposed Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

Late Thursday, the Israeli military imposed a closure on the West Bank and Gaza, barring all Palestinians from entering Israel until at least Tuesday, following the Jewish festival of Purim.

Such closures, routine during Jewish holidays, idle thousands of Palestinians who have permits to work in Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has said he would leave Gaza and parts of the West Bank and impose a boundary on the Palestinians if efforts to implement the U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan remain stalled.

Judge orders new trial for man convicted in attacks

KARLSRUHE, Germany — A German appeals court ordered a retrial Thursday for the only person convicted in the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, a Moroccan found guilty last year of aiding the Hamburg cell of suicide hijackers.

The Federal Criminal Court ruled that the case Mounir el Motassadeq, 29, must be sent back to a lower court in Hamburg "for a new trial and decision," Presiding Judge Klaus Tolksdorf said.

Tolksdorf did not immediately explain the verdict, but el Motassadeq's lawyers have argued that he was denied a fair trial because the United States refused access to a key witness.

From staff and wire reports.

DPS calls for caution during break

UNC sees 443 larceny cases in 2003

BY GREG PARKER
STAFF WRITER

Data regarding thefts on campus released by the UNC Department of Public Safety on Thursday emphasizes the need for students to secure their possessions before they leave for Spring Break.

DPS reported that there were 443 documented cases of larceny on campus during the 2003 calendar year.

"We encourage students to do a couple of things," said Rick

Bradley, director of communications for the Department of Housing and Residential Education. "Make sure their windows and doors are locked, close their blinds, turn off the lights and take valuables home."

During the break, residence halls are understaffed and are a potential target for criminals.

"The residence halls for all intents and purposes are unoccupied during breaks so we will be increasing our patrols around them," said Major Jeff McCracken,

deputy director of DPS.

The report was sent to the student body Thursday in a mass e-mail as part of a larceny reduction plan to combat the most prevalent form of crime on campus.

McCracken said the department's new plan is a response to the fact that larceny is one of the biggest safety concerns at UNC year in and year out.

"Larceny has historically been the biggest crime problem we have," he said. "A lot of it has to do with people not securing their property."

McCracken said criminals on campus are actively looking for

students who leave their belongings unattended.

"Typically the criminal takes advantage of an open door or property laying around," he said.

The larceny reduction plan aims to decrease thefts by increasing the visibility of officers and educating students.

Plainclothes officers also will be present in public places such as gyms and libraries to observe any potential criminal activity.

So far DPS officials said they have observed a slight decrease in larcenies that could be a result of the new program.

The 443 larcenies reported in

2003 marks a drop from the 464 reported in 2002.

McCracken said that while DPS has increased its efforts, the most effective ways to prevent larceny is by protecting one's belongings and keeping a watchful eye for suspicious behavior.

"Don't leave your property unattended and unsecured," he said. "Also, don't hesitate to call us if you see a person in a place you don't think they should be. Students know best who should and shouldn't be in their living areas."

Contact the University Editor at udeak@unc.edu.

FUN IN THE SUN



DTH/BRENT CLARK

UNC freshman "Turtle" Harrison plays his trumpet in the Forest Theatre on Thursday afternoon. Harrison, a business major and music minor, has been playing the trumpet for eight years. Before coming to college this year he used to perform, but now he plays outside in the theatre

on occasion to relieve stress. Thursday's sunshine and warm weather, with highs in the 70s, prompted many students to move their activities outside. Temperatures are expected to stay warm through the weekend before dropping to highs in the 50s at the beginning of next week.

Election debacle shortens timeline

BY LAURA BOST
STAFF WRITER

After an exhausting campaign season, Student Body President-elect Matt Calabria faces a new challenge — a short time period to prepare for the transition period before his April 6 inauguration.

"Everything's just really getting started now," Calabria said. "A lot of the preparations at this time are just dealing with me getting my bearings."

One of the main issues Calabria quickly must contend with is the appointment of his Cabinet. Top officers, such as the vice president, treasurer and secretary, must be approved by Student Congress before the inauguration.

Calabria said none of the positions are filled and that applications are available on the student government Web site. Applications are due March 19.

"We hope lots of people apply

and then we'll go through all the applications and do interviews," he said.

Calabria also has to fight time constraints to learn all he can about the job he is about to undertake.

"I don't think having less time to prepare will have an effect on my presidency as a whole," he said. "But we're going to have to work a whole lot harder for the next few weeks."

Calabria said that he met with Chancellor James Moeser; Dean Bresciani, interim vice chancellor of student affairs; and Dan Herman, president of the Graduate and Professional Student Federation on Wednesday and Student Body President Matt Tepper on Thursday to prepare for the transition.

Bresciani said the meeting with Calabria is a conversation he likes to have every year with the incoming student body president.

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Research key to economic growth

BY CLEVE R. WOOTSON JR.
STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

RALEIGH — N.C. legislators need to fund North Carolina research institutions aggressively in order to increase economic growth, a research group told a joint committee of the N.C. General Assembly on Thursday.

The Huron Consulting Group and the Washington Advisory Group briefed legislators on the results of a study that analyzed the strategic significance of research universities in the state.

One of the group's key recommendations was that the General Assembly allow research universities to keep 100 percent of overhead receipts.

Overhead receipts — money the federal government gives to experimenters to cover added costs of research — also are paid for by the state, which funds buildings, maintenance and utilities.

In the past, the state has had universities return that money to North Carolina's coffers.

According to the study, research by UNC-Chapel Hill and N.C.

"Among the universities' greatest responsibilities is to translate the faculty's research into new jobs."

JAMES MOESER, UNC-CH CHANCELLOR

State University generated more than \$930 million in state spending between 1997 and 2002 and supported more than 22,000 jobs.

The university system is an efficient pipeline of cash from outside sources directly into North Carolina's struggling economy, said Jim Roth, group managing director for Huron's higher education and health-care consulting divisions.

"When we talk about research money, we're talking about money that's coming from outside the state and that's being used inside the state," he said.

But he added that state legislators should continue to make research institutions as strong as possible in order to allow them to remain competitive for coveted research funding. "This is money that could go elsewhere and that is

being pursued elsewhere," he said. "Absent the ability of the researchers to get that money, it will simply go elsewhere."

UNC-CH Chancellor James Moeser and N.C. State Chancellor Marye Anne Fox also were present at the Assembly's Joint Select Committee on Economic Growth and Development meeting at the Red Hat building on N.C. State's Centennial Campus.

Their message was simple: The state's research institutions have an obligation to benefit it by adding jobs, providing beneficial health research and aiding the economy.

"Among the universities' greatest responsibilities is to translate the faculty's research into new jobs, improved health and well-being

SEE N.C. GROWTH, PAGE 5

Students spurn relaxation to help others

BY KATIE DIMMERY
STAFF WRITER

Senior Ben Gullett, leader of the Habitat for Humanity Honduras project, has something other than beer kegs and salty breezes in mind for Spring Break.

Gullett and 10 other UNC students will spend the coming week in Honduras, working eight hours each day on the construction of two houses.

The group also will make a donation, drawn from funds the students raised during the past year, to the local Honduran affiliate of Habitat for Humanity. These funds, gleaned from activities including yardwork, bake sales and benefit concerts, also finance the trip, which costs more than \$23,000.

Gullett said the trip is important not only for providing money and a service to needy families but also for facilitating relationships

between Americans and Hondurans. "The houses would get built anyway, but I think it's important for us to go and make that cultural exchange," Gullett said.

But the Honduras project students are not alone in the quest for a slightly more profound spring break experience.

In a course sponsored by UNC's APPLS program, students have been studying theories of community service and putting them into practice by designing and planning service projects slated to take place in Atlanta, Wilmington and Asheville during Spring Break.

The Atlanta group, led by sophomore Tom O'Keefe and senior Robert Howe, will work with the Atlanta Community Food Bank to address hunger and homelessness, Howe said.

Participants will wake up at 8 a.m. each day to help the food bank

collect, sort and pack donated groceries. Work will continue until lunch, after which students will take a break to visit local tourist attractions like Centennial Olympic Park.

Senior Joseph Hoyle and sophomore Shanna Jefferson head up the Wilmington group, which will focus on providing health and social services to Wilmington's large Hispanic community.

Participants will volunteer at a health clinic and assist Amigos International, a service group focused on helping Hispanics, with computer work and tutoring. But the students plan to squeeze in some traditional Spring Break entertainment as well.

"We'll definitely be spending some time on the beach," Hoyle said. "We're also hoping to go shag dancing and salsa dancing."

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COURTESY OF APPLS

UNC students Isabel Hovey, Brooks Stone, and Stu Pratt (from left) mix concrete for a house they were helping build in Honduras.