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Solarium finally opens after 34 months of construction

JUSTIN BOULMAY
Senior Staff Writer

It's finally finished. The Summit Trail Solarium, the construction project at Appalachian State University notorious for its setbacks, opened yesterday at 10 a.m.

The facility has been under construction since this year's seniors were freshmen.

Devin M. Grobert, a junior English major from Chatham, N.J., camped out during the night before the building opened.

"I was just really excited about the Solarium," Grobert said. "There's been a lot of construction going on campus and it's clogging things up, but this is awesome, man. This is something to be excited about. I just felt like people weren't hyped up enough."

The Solarium includes a fountain, plants, two artistic sheet rocks with engravings on both, a performing stage, plenty of new student seating and an upstairs balcony with overflow seating for

McAlister's Deli.

Two faculty members from Hayes School of Music, Todd T. Wright and Andy Page, played the saxophone and guitar as students looked at the new surroundings.

Lindsay C. Mitchell, a junior public and organizational communication major from Rocky Mount, N.C., said the setting of the new facility was perfect for studying.

"I really do think it's a very tranquil atmosphere," she said. "It's warm. It's a nice break from the winter cold."

"I think this is fabulous," Director for Student Programs Dave L. Robertson said. "I think this is incredible. There aren't many student unions on college campuses that have a space like this."

"Basically, it will have a lot of flavor a lot like this," Robertson said, referring to music playing in the background as students studied or conversed with one another. "There's music where you can still talk and study and do whatever."

Grand opening festivities

are scheduled for Nov. 29-Dec. 3.

The festival will consist primarily of musical entertainment. As of yesterday, not all the bands had been booked for the nighttime events.

The office of Student Programs has requested the Chancellor's Office to approve a Dec. 3 dedication ceremony, but the date has not yet been confirmed, Robertson said.

The Solarium passed a state inspection over a week ago under the condition that repairs would be made to problems that were unearthed at the time.

Project Manager W. Kelley Ingram said there was a problem last week where one of the walls wasn't properly sealed off against an existing wall, and the contractor had to come in and fix it.

Once the problems were fixed, student union staff held a special meeting to determine whether they could get everything ready for the opening on Monday.

"We're happy, we're re-



(left-right) Dan J. Hettinger, Devin M. Grobert, Matthew H. Blackburn and Caitlin E. Leadem camped out all night in front of the solarium, braving temperatures in the low 20s, for its opening on Monday morning, hoping to be the first students to walk through the new building.

Jonathan Williams | The Appalachian

lieved that we finally got it open," Administrative Officer for Student Programs Scott Cato said. "This is a big day

for us." Cato said the student union staff is not used to having people in the Solarium. "I

was just telling [someone] I feel like I'm supposed to run everybody out. It's just our instinct."

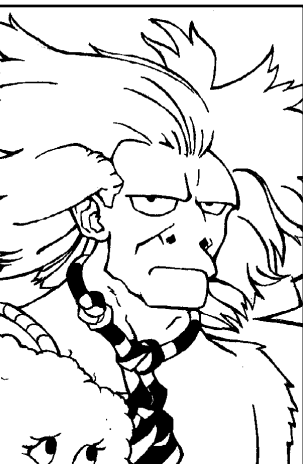
SOLARIUM



Long awaited opening is finally here for solarium project

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OPINION



Western students show lack of class, dignity

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Safety walk nets lighting, pedestrian concerns

ANNA OAKES
Staff Writer

The Student Government Association's (SGA) Student Affairs Committee conducted a "Safety Walk" across the Appalachian State University campus Nov. 1.

The purpose of the walk, which occurs semi-annually, is "to identify all safety hazards that exist across campus," SGA Director of Student Affairs Matthew D. Whisenant said.

Director of Parking and Traffic, Barry D. Sauls, and University Police Crime Prevention Specialist Sgt. Jeremy B. Jones accompanied the Student Affairs Committee on the Safety Walk.

just not very safe," Emily E. Smith, a senator from Dougherty Residence Hall, said.

Other problems include large cracks in walkways, unsafe construction detour

routes, a downed cable by the Broyhill Music Center and the crosswalk in

front of the River Street parking deck, Whisenant said.

Whisenant said the Student Affairs Committee also tested two BlueLight stations

The walk began at B.B. Dougherty Administration Building and continued across campus, terminating at Bodenheimer Drive, Whisenant said.

Several sites were noted as areas of concern.

"Probably lighting was the No. 1 issue of this Safety Walk," Whisenant said. "[It] was presented to us as a committee by other senators, their constituents and university administration as being a problem."

Participants noted several lights that were out, particularly near the tunnel by Edwin Duncan Hall, he said.

"The tunnel lights were covered in paint, [which is]

to measure response times from University Police.

BlueLight stations are set up across campus; a touch of a button alerts University Police of danger and officers are dispatched to the station's location.

Safety Walk participants tested a BlueLight station near Coffey Hall - response time was four minutes and three seconds. Response time to the Greenwood Lot was four minutes and 55 seconds.

"I do [think these times are good], as long as it's under five [minutes]," Jones said.

Jones said Appalachian's campus is fairly safe compared to other schools its size.

"I really trust our University Police," Smith said. "If they say that under five minutes is O.K. and that they're working on the times, I trust that's going to happen."

The Student Affairs Committee will present their findings to university leaders, including Director of Design and Construction Dr. Clyde D. Robbins and Physical Plant Director Larry D. Bordeaux, Whisenant said.

The River Street crosswalk in front of the parking deck is "one of our top priorities," Whisenant said.

Because there is no median between lanes nor a stoplight at the crosswalk, students are at the mercy of drivers to yield the right-of-way.



Whisenant

Rwandan refugee tells story to Catholic ministry

CLAIR BAXTER
Staff Writer

On Wednesday Nov. 10 Appalachian State University's Catholic Campus Ministry (CCM) had a guest speaker at their meeting. Their speaker was Grace Uwimfura, a Rwandan Refugee who has been living in Atlanta, Ga.

Uwimfura was invited to speak to CCM through an Appalachian State senior who has known Uwimfura since she was a little girl; she also was a refugee from Rwanda.

Seventy-five to 80 percent of the 50 million refugees

seeking safety in another country are women and children. According to the United States Committee for Refugees, last year over 46,000 of this 50 million were Rwandan.

"We are here to care about these people (the Rwandan Refugees), to advocate and to pray for them" Uwimfura said, who is the founder of The Giving Back Foundation.

The Giving Back Foundation is a non-profit organization providing African relief aid and education programs.

Uwimfura cooked a tra-

ditional African meal while visiting with CCM and then turned on a video showing the condition of Rwanda and its people. As the group watched the movie, Uwimfura talked about her experiences escaping a terrible life in her own country.

Throughout the evening Uwimfura unfolded a story of losing her husband, her sister and brother and their spouses along with many of their children.

On a few different occasions, Uwimfura began to tear up and the pain of her past became clear to each and

every listener in the room.

"I think that Grace is one of the most influential speakers I have ever had the honor of meeting. To hear her speak about how she was able to escape Rwanda while losing her husband and child, and to see the images of what life is like for those people really helped all of us to see that we should be thankful for everything that we are so lucky to have. She treated us as part of her family," said CCM President senior Jennifer M. Garifo.

Uwimfura, who has been in Atlanta for eight years now, spent two years in a refugee

camp in Kenya. She is returning to Africa for the first time Nov. 17 and will arrive in Kenya with the Giving Back Foundation.

In Kenya she will be reunited with family and friends that she hasn't been able to see for over 10 years. She was particularly excited to finally be able visit with her orphaned nephews, ages 14 and 15, and her 9-year-old nieces who "live with no mother, no father and no country".

Uwimfura will also be distributing 50 "giving back

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Almost doesn't catch it



Peter Larkins | Chief Photographer

DaVon Fowlkes (22) reaches for a catch in the 4th quarter. Fowlkes could not hold onto the ball. There were a lot of passes that were just overthrown or bobbled that could have swayed the game to ASU's side throughout the game.

Recreation students lend a helping hand

DAVID BREWER
Intern Writer

During the season when giving thanks and spending time with family and friends is tradition, four students from the Recreation Management department will be making some new friends.

Seniors Brenn M. Waggoner and Billy H. Teague along with juniors Ryan C. Hice and Andrew Gray will be hosting the Appalachian Thanksgiving Festival for the residents of the Appalachian Brian Estates, a local retirement community located on Shadowline Drive.

The Festival will take place Friday.

The students will be hosting the Appalachian Thanksgiving Festival as their major project for their Program Planning class, taught by Stephanie T. West, an assis-

stant professor in the department of health, leisure and exercise science.

Program Planning is an upper-level course and required for all recreation management majors.

"It's been a good experience working to put the project together," Hice said. "We get together about once a week to meet our goals for the class."

Among the festivities will be music provided by Jay Brown of regional band The Lazybirds, arts and crafts, a chance for residents to have their picture taken with a Thanksgiving backdrop and, of course, a Thanksgiving meal with food provided by Bandana's and Golden Corral.

In addition to considerable independent planning,

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Health Services heats up

Patients increase in winter months

JASON SECREST
Staff Writer

Not feeling so hot with the cold weather rolling in? Feel like the weather has you feeling under the weather? Class today simply becoming less of an option?

Visit Appalachian State University Health Services.

Susan Tumbleston, Health Services coordinator for quality improvement, said Health Services' purpose is to meet the health needs of Appalachian State students.

Health Services sees a lot of students during the entire school year, but Tumbleston said February is extremely busy. She said they are usually bombarded with flu cases in February, although the flu hit earlier during the 2003-04 winter.

Tumbleston said Health Services also sees patients who have been injured from falling on ice.

She said they also see some Appalachian State students who have been in ski accidents, although most go to the emergency room.

"Winter is just tough," Tumbleston said.

Health Services has three full time doctors and three full time nurses.

Tumbleston said she wants Appalachian State students to view Health Services as their family doctor.

"I've worked here a long time and continue to be impressed," Tumbleston said.

"Students get sick while they're here and need accessible healthcare," Health Services Director Dr. Patricia Geiger said.

Junior Cam L. Bumgarner said although he has not visited Health Services, a friend of his has and was pleased with the service.

"He just had a sprained ankle and they wrapped it up and told him what to do," Bumgarner said. "It's good it's included in our tuition."

Geiger said students may

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WEATHER

Mostly Clear

High 55° F
Low 38° F

Your detailed forecast, Page 2

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