

Racial slur on billboard surfaces in town

By Marlo Fulmore
Around the Campus Editor

Graffiti spray painted on a billboard, along U.S. Highway 711-West with the words, "Nigger central," has been seen in close proximity to UNCP by some students and some faculty members prompting some members of the community and university to address the issue.

"When I first saw the slur, I couldn't believe it. I slowed down, and then because I was still shocked, I turned around and drove back by it. It made me angry. I think this incident reflects poorly on the university,

because it shows that we need to do more when it comes to living up to our honor of being a really diverse campus and that we need to do more, a lot more, in our relationship with the town of Pembroke to cultivate a respect for all people. When I saw the sign, I could only imagine what parents and prospective students might think as they came into town to visit campus. I also couldn't help but think about the students who live in Pointe and walk by that sign every day," said Dr. Scott Hicks, professor at UNCP.

While some students and community members

may look at this incident as just another random act of vandalism, some feel that the public should be made aware that crimes such like this are occurring in the community.

"Officers have been made aware of the graffiti going on in the community and have been notified to be on the alert for such crimes," said Channing Jones, Pembroke assistant town manager.

"I think the public needs to be informed about this incident and I think our campus can take the lead in making it public. I would like for administration, faculty and student government of this school to make a



A billboard sign entering the town of Pembroke was vandalized with a racial slur. The sign has been taken down. Photo by Marlo Fulmore

clear statement that we reject racism and that we work hard to foster respect and civility, that we're going to think and act creatively and deci-

sively when it comes to responding to this incident and making sure it doesn't happen again. In terms of making it public, I think, too, that we need

to know whether this act of vandalism was investigated by the police. If so, I want to know the status of the investigation, and if not, I want to know why the crime isn't being taken seriously," said Dr. Hicks.

According to Jones, the owner of the billboard has been notified, and the issue has been addressed. Jones said that the sign has been painted over.

"Although, I find it distasteful and disrespectful, I find it even more deplorable that we still live in a racist society," said Robert L. Canida, Pembroke resident and director of the UNCP Office of Multicultural and Minority Affairs.

Campus holds a 'party fit for a King'

By Janna Blue
Staff Writer

Students, faculty, staff, administrators and community members came together to pay tribute to the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the 6th annual celebration program Jan 13.

The tribute began with participants gathering at the water amphitheatre for a candlelight vigil and march to the UC annex.

The program opened with a welcome from Director of Multicultural and Minority Affairs,

Robert Canida and a multimedia presentation of the Negro National Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" that past leaders of the civil rights movement and others who are still working toward King's dream today hold to.

"The time is always right to do what is right," UNCP Chancellor, Charles Jenkins recited a famous quote from King's "Letters from a Birmingham Jail" before bringing his greetings.

Chancellor Jenkins said that he was fascinated

by King's oratorical skills and reflected upon beginning his graduate classes with about three of his favorite quotes as a Professor of Educational Leadership.

"Our biggest crisis is not the financial crisis, but a crisis of ethics," Chancellor Jenkins told the crowd. He closed by challenging those who gathered for the program, "a lot of progress has been made, but we must recommit ourselves to work to continue."

Multicultural organization presidents also

brought greetings. These presidents represented diverse student organizations on the campus: The Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), African Student Organization (ASO), and the Sexuality and Gender Alliance (S.A.G.A.).

Avon Banks, president of the UNCP NAACP, introduced the keynote speaker, Rodney Jenkins. Jenkins is the Assistant County Manager for Robeson County.

Jenkins spoke from the topic, "A Party Fit for

a King." Jenkins compared Dr. Martin L. King Jr. to well known kings from the middle ages: King Leopold II and Henry VIII. Jenkins described royal parties like those seen in medieval movies.

"Hear ye, hear ye," this is the invitation the wealthy and society's elite would hear," began Jenkins. Then he said, "to this king everyone is invited."

Dr. King was the king who Jenkins was referring to. He described King as a man with no land or ser-

vants who had come from meager beginnings, but ascended to a throne of greatness.

"Dr. King was a king of tolerance, peace, equality and non-violence," Jenkins said.

After reflecting on the character of King, Jenkins closed by saying, "All parties must come to an end. Thanks for your attendance."

The event was sponsored by the Office of Multicultural and Minority Affairs and the Department of Housing and Residence Life.

Upcoming library events announced

By Wade Allen
Editor

The Friends of the Mary Livermore Library have many events approaching for members of the UNCP community to take advantage of.

New books

The Spring Faculty Showcase will be held on Jan. 27 at 10 a.m. in the library and will feature UNCP faculty Dr. Craig Shoulders and Dr. Mordechai Inbari.

Dr. Shoulders is chair of the Accounting and Information Technology Department at UNCP and has recently authored the book *Governmental and Nonprofit Accounting: Theory and Practice*.

Dr. Inbari is an assistant professor of religion at UNCP and has recently authored the book *Jewish Fundamentalism and Temple Mount: Who Will Build the Third Temple?*

Special guest

On Feb. 4 at 7 p.m., the Friends of the Library will host Dr. Katherine Mellen Charron, author of the book *Freedom's Teacher: The Life of Septima Clark*.

Dr. Charron will conduct a presentation in the main reading room of the Mary Livermore Library, which will be followed by a reception.

Dr. Charron is an assistant professor of history at N.C. State University. She received her Ph.D. in U.S. History from Yale University in 2005.

UNCP staff, faculty,

administration, students and community members are encouraged to attend this free event.

Writing contest

Kiwanis of Robeson-Lumberton and the Friends of the Library are co-sponsoring their annual poetry and short prose contest.

There are three categories for competition, making the contest open to UNCP students, area high school students and the general public.

Cash prizes will be awarded in each category and each winning writer will be invited to read the piece at a program during National Library Week.

The deadline for submissions is March 1. For more information, contact Jean Sexton in the Mary Livermore Library at (910) 521-6659.

Second showcase

The Friends of the Library will host a second Spring Faculty Showcase on March 31 at 10:15 a.m. in the main reading room of the library.

Once again, two UNCP faculty members will present their newly published work.

Dr. Catherine Parisian, an assistant professor in the Department of English and Theatre, will discuss her book *The First White House Library: A History and Annotated Catalogue*.

Dr. Antonio Valle da Anton, assistant professor in the Department of Foreign Languages, will present his new book, *Two Romance Tenses and the*

Atlantic in Between: A Study of 'Present Perfect' and 'Preterit' Usage in Present-Day Spanish.

The event is free and open to the public.

Annual benefit

The Friends of the Library will host their annual benefit fundraiser on April 17.

Monies raised will fund Friends of the Library projects and events as well as raise scholarship funds for UNCP students.

John Shelton Reed, co-author of *Holy Smoke: The Big Book of North Carolina Barbecue*, will be the featured speaker.

The evening's events will include dinner, a silent auction, the guest speaker and a live auction.

Auction items

Among items available for bids at the auctions include pottery, an autographed portrait from the movie "E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial," an original "Clifford The Big Red Dog" drawing from author Norman Bridwell, hardcover books autographed by renowned authors Catherine Coulter and Dean Koontz, handmade quilt, a hand-signed picture of Academy Award winner Dustin Hoffman and a 1976 original script from the hit television show "M.A.S.H." autographed by Alan Alda.

Tickets to the benefit are \$50 each and are available by calling Sherry Locklear at (910) 775-4170 or Karen Fritts at (910) 775-4242.

Swoopes cancels speaking engagement, playing for Greek team

By Grant Merritt
Web Video Editor

After signing a deal with Greece's Ravenna Esperides basketball team, three time Olympic gold medalist and WNBA legend Sheryl Swoopes broke her contract with UNCP's Distinguished Speaker Series appearance for Jan. 21.

Swoopes, 38, signed on to fill an empty spot on the Greek women's basketball team, the Ravenna Esperides, after the departure of Lindsay Wisdom-Hylton.

Due to Swoopes' professional obligation to play basketball in Greece, she was able to break her Distinguished Speaker

contract with UNCP and the Office of Student Life.

Because of such short notice, Director of Student Life Mike Severy said that there would not be a replacement for Sheryl Swoopes.

"No, there is no replacement," Severy said. "It [the Distinguished Speaker Series] will end with Jodie Sweetin in March."

According to a Greek online press release, Swoopes wanted to breathe new life into her basketball career, and Greece thought she would be a big asset to the team.

An Esperides spokesperson released a statement saying, "Irrespective of her actual

contribution [on the court], since she needs time [to get in shape], Esperides' goal is to upgrade women's basketball."

After getting cut from the Seattle Storm team last season, Swoopes said that she still wanted to play basketball. She said that playing for Greece will let her achieve that.

Greece's women's basketball season resumed on Jan. 17, and Swoopes will not play for the first few games.

According to Esperides' team website, "Swoopes will not be playing at first but will become more active in later games."

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