

A SHOCKING EXPERIENCE



DAVID HARDEN/Arizona Daily Wildcat
Lightning chaser and cactus painter Adam Graham sets up his equipment Thursday night in the Saguaro National Park east. Graham chases lightning throughout Southern Arizona.

Campus security report not accurate

By Andrea Kelly
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

An e-mail sent yesterday by the UAPD to all UA students and employees contained a link to an inaccurate 2003 Campus Safety and Security Report.

Although the e-mail was sent to announce that the report would be released today, UA students and employees were able to access the online report with inaccurate statistics yesterday.

Sgt. Eugene Mejia, spokesman for the UAPD, said yesterday afternoon that the numbers needed to be revised because a computer glitch combined UAPD and Tucson Police Department statistics.

Late last night, Sharon Kha, UA spokeswoman, said the numbers had been corrected by the police department.

But when the *Wildcat* went to press, only some of the numbers had been changed from the original report, and other numbers from the TPD were removed from the report.

In addition, numbers that Mejia had said stood out to UAPD representatives as being too high had not been changed last night.

Mejia pointed to a statistic in the original report, which showed that there were over 200 more bike thefts in 2002 than 2001.

The *Wildcat* was unable to contact Mejia last night to confirm the accuracy of those numbers that had not been changed.

In an interview yesterday afternoon, Mejia said initial inaccuracies in the report were caused by the computer-assisted dispatch system used by the TPD. The system was combining both departments' numbers, rather than distinguishing the cases by department.

"We have different case numbers that keep us separate," Mejia said. "We're going to try to utilize the system that only picks up our numbers."

Mejia said TPD representatives called yesterday after the e-mails had been sent out, concerned that the crime statistics seemed high. When the UAPD took a

Go Online

► Campus Safety and Security Report

www.uapd.arizona.edu

ALUM: 'EXPECT NOTHING' WHEN CHASING LIGHTNING

By Erin Schmidt
STAFF WRITER

While most people are home eating dinner and unwinding at 6 p.m., Adam Graham can be found watching the weather forecast with his camera ready, hoping for a lightning storm.

Just another day in the life of a lightning chaser.

Graham, 47, a former UA theatre major, has been chasing and photographing lightning for nine years.

"I chase lightning to feel

like a kid again," Graham said. "It's like the excitement you felt opening presents on Christmas morning, but better."

Graham, who is an ex-comedian and a self-proposed adrenaline junkie, said chasing lightning interrupts "the coach potato disease" and helps him fight a mid-life crisis.

Every night during the eight-week monsoon season, Graham constantly watches the weather reports and checks his favorite Web site, www.intellicast.com, for active thunderstorms.

Once activity is spotted, this amateur-turned-professional photographer grabs his tripod and his Minolta X700 slide film camera and hits the road.

"All year round I am looking for perfect pull-out stops throughout Southern Arizona," Graham said. "So when lightning happens, no matter what county, I know right where to go and set up."

Last Wednesday, on a dark and rainy night, Graham anxiously talked of past lightning tales and perfect spots to park and wait. Waiting for that

perfect bolt is something that he said could take hours.

"When you are on a chase, your head is constantly turning, looking at all areas of the sky," Graham said. "You are always going after the bolts, no matter where they are."

That night Graham was unlucky. Raindrops were falling heavily, but no lightning. It was well below 100 degrees, which, in a hot and dry climate, would have been the optimal conditions for a lightning strike.

A night like this is typical

See LIGHTNING/7

See SAFETY/6

Light planned for south campus

Sixth and Park to get traffic light

By Nathan Tafoya
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

After completion of a long-awaited turn signal at North Park Avenue and East Speedway Boulevard, the UA has decided to turn its attention to the southern end of Park.

By early next year, the UA plans to install a traffic signal at the intersection of North Park Avenue and East Sixth Street.

The traffic signal is intended to improve pedestrian safety and to discourage drivers from cutting across the parking lots of nearby businesses, said Melissa Dryden,

program coordinator for facilities design and construction.

The light will not allow east and westbound drivers to turn south onto North Park Avenue because neighbors asked that traffic not be funneled through the residential area, Dryden said.

Right now drivers heading southbound on North Park Avenue cannot turn left onto Sixth Street. But, once the light is installed, they will be able to make both left and right hand turns onto East Sixth Street, Dryden said.

In addition to the traffic light, the UA will change the crosswalk at North Fremont Avenue and East Sixth Street to ease traffic congestion.

Although it already has a light that stops traffic to let pedestrians cross the street, the crosswalk at

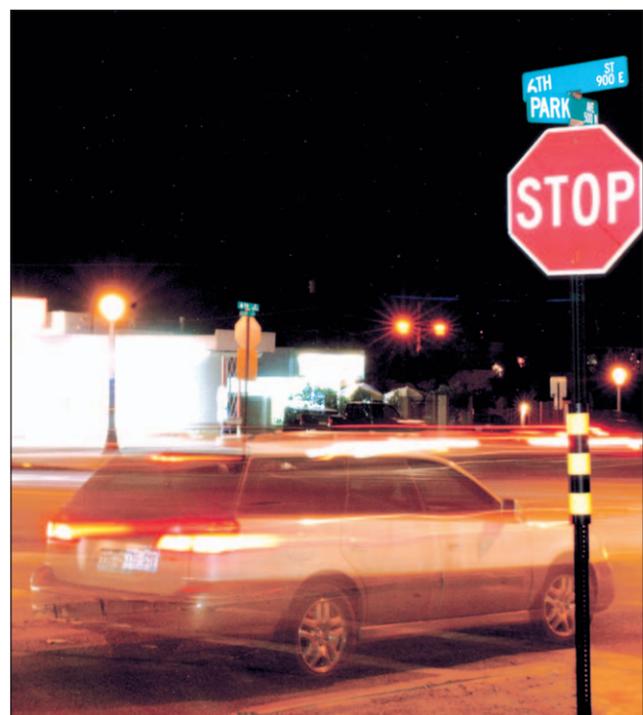
North Fremont Avenue and East Sixth Street will be converted into a pelican crossing, similar to the one at University Medical Center and North Campbell Avenue.

With a pelican crossing, triggering the crossing signal only stops the traffic nearest the pedestrian. The pedestrian then has to walk to the island in the middle of the road and trigger the crossing signal again to proceed to the opposite side of the street.

The alteration is necessary in order to facilitate a steady flow of east and westbound traffic, which will be broken up by the light at North Park Avenue and East Sixth Street, Dryden said.

Money collected from permits, citations and visitor parking that

See LIGHT/6



CHRISTAL McCONNELL/
Arizona Daily Wildcat

The intersection of North Park Avenue and East Sixth Street will be home to a new stoplight come January 2004. Currently, traffic is only allowed to make right-hand turns onto East Sixth Street as indicated by this long exposure.