Union bomber strikes

By Davie Moore
Staff Writer

Students awoke to the sound of a loud explosion early Tuesday morning on March 20. “It sounded like a shotgun went off,” said junior Rusty Wilkerson.

The noise was heard around 12:45 a.m. and was loud enough that it was heard through much of the McAfee complex.

When they arrived at the scene, security discovered what appeared to be the remains of a chemical bomb made from a soft drink bottle filled with corrosive liquid.

This homemade bomb was apparently set on the upstairs porch of J Building in McAfee and placed in front of an apartment door.

According to freshman Joe Graves he and sophomores Ronald Henson, also a resident of the apartment that was bombed, were next door to the apartment playing cards with some friends when the blast went off.

“We were just sitting there playing cards when we heard this really loud noise right outside our door. It sounded like a gunshot. We were a little scared and wondered what had happened,” said Graves.

Both Dan Herr, resident director of McAfee, and Larry Ross, assistant dean of students, and director of safety and security, said that this is a serious infraction of the University Behavioral Values.

“I don’t think there was any malicious intent here, but the method that they used is extremely dangerous,” said Ross.

According to Ross, about three years ago security guard Bernice Bradford was making her rounds when a bomb very similar to the one set off Tuesday morning exploded inside of a dumpster that she was walking past. Bradford lost her hearing and had to visit a doctor. It was several days before she regained her hearing.

“The real danger from these bombs is not so much the blast itself but the abrasive chemicals that it contains. If someone were nearby when it went off they could have these chemicals sprayed on their skin, or even in their eyes,” said Ross.

Ross commented that although it may be intended as a prank, creating and setting off these types of bombs can have serious consequences both for the victims and for the perpetrators.

According to Herr, anyone found guilty of this type of activity could face fines, probation, counseling, community service hours or even resident life suspension.

“We want a community that feels like it can have fun and let off a little steam, but there is a fine balance between what is simply a harmless joke and what is a dangerous threat,” said Ross.

Ross said that he understands the need for a community that can have fun and pranks are often a part of that. However sometimes the students do not realize how their actions might potentially affect others.

Security is investigating the bombing, but because of privacy issues, no official statement has been released on the progress of the investigation.

The Jackson Police Department is not currently part of the investigation.