

CAMPUS AND CITY

Administrator suing UNC

By Jennifer Talhelm
Associate Editor

When Associate Dean of Information Systems Kirk Aune noticed something fishy going on with state resources and School of Medicine employees, he thought he would be safe reporting it. But Aune claims in a lawsuit filed in Orange County Superior Court that marriage and money got in the way. Soon after he told administrators about the incident, he lost his contract with the University. Aune claims in the suit against the University and his bosses that he is paying — with his job and reputation — due to conflict of interest among some top UNC administrators. Aune, who administers the Office of Information Systems for the School of Medicine, learned that some medical school employees could be misusing state resources. But when he reported it in 1991 to Stuart Bondurant, dean of the medical school, nothing happened.

He tried again in June 1992 — this time with University Legal Counsel Susan Ehringhaus. But again nothing happened. In April, his contract came up for review. Aune, who has received regular raises or promotions since he was appointed director of information systems in 1986, says the review panel looked only at negative information. After the review, his contract was not renewed. Aune stops working at UNC at the end of April 1994. Aune claims that he lost his job because of a conflict of interest inherent in the system. Ehringhaus and Bondurant are married. "The review considered primarily negative information or didn't look at positive information," Aune said. Neither Ehringhaus nor Bondurant could be reached for comment. Both were out of the office Wednesday morning. Bondurant reportedly was to be gone until Aug. 9.

Chancellor Paul Hardin did not return phone calls to his home and office Tuesday, and on Wednesday, his secretary said he had left for vacation. Aune claims in his lawsuit it was negligent of Bondurant to ignore his complaints and that Ehringhaus did not act on them because she was married to Bondurant. Bondurant violated the N.C. law that protects whistle-blowers by failing to renew his contract, Aune claims. "It is the belief of the plaintiff that the decision was made in retaliation for the aforesaid reports," the lawsuit reads. Aune would not comment on the alleged misconduct of medical school workers, and it is not explained in detail in his lawsuit. But he said that after he reported the incident, his relationship with his co-workers took a turn for the worse. Until the complaint, he had had a good relationship with Bondurant and others at work, he said. "I would like to

think so," he said. "I was employed as a result of a national search," Aune said. "And my contract was renewed after five years." In addition, Aune claims his reputation has been seriously damaged. Aune was hired as the director of information systems in the medical school and as a research associate professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Nutrition. He earned \$84,000 then. In 1987, he received a raise to \$89,040. In 1988, he received another to \$94,382. In 1989, he was appointed associate dean for information systems, and he received another raise in 1990. In 1991, he was reappointed director and associate dean for information systems and research and associate professor of biochemistry and biophysics. In 1992, he received a raise up to \$108,209. It will be difficult to get another job, Aune said. But he does not ask for his job back in the lawsuit.



DTH/Katrina Witkamp

Doin' the hokey pokey

Lori Walker, a UNC graduate who coaches at the University of Maryland, instructs Corey Riggs, 15, on a technique during UNC's Girls Soccer Camp earlier this month.

UNC housing could be tight due to large freshman class

By Jennifer Talhelm
Associate Editor

If you are a female student planning to live in University housing, you might find yourself living in extra close quarters this fall. University admissions officers expect this year's freshman class to be one of the largest in University history. And the extra students are creating a strain on the Department of University Housing, which expects more freshmen women than it can house under normal circumstances. If all the students who were accepted to the University decide to attend and live in the residence halls, some students might find themselves living three to a two-person room. Housing has sent letters to all women signed up to live in residence halls asking them to notify housing if they have

alternate plans so housing officials can determine how many students they have to place. "We're hoping cancellations will come in so we can start placing students," Housing Director Wayne Kuncl said. "We're hoping that if there were upper classmen who signed a residence hall contract and will not be living in the residence halls, they will let us know. I think we will be able to accommodate everyone, we just might have to assign more students to a room than we normally would." Kuncl said housing officials could assign three people to two-person rooms. Residence halls on North Campus most likely will have to take up the extra students, Kuncl said. North Campus rooms are older and larger than rooms on South and Mid-campus. The extra students reverses a trend housing has experienced in the past few

years. Last year, several residence halls had vacancies. The University has about 6,800 spaces available for students. On average, between 2,700 and 2,800 freshmen live on campus. In addition, Granville Towers can house about 1,300 students. Right now, the privately-owned residence hall located off-campus has a waiting list of about 60 students. The admissions office expects this year's freshman class to be the largest in University history with more than 200 more students than usual. Classes average about 3,200, said Anthony Strickland, associate director of Undergraduate Admissions. Last year's freshman class numbered 3,211. This year, 3,484 students have said they planned to attend UNC although admissions officials still expect some

Two more to vie for board seats

By Bill Blocker
Staff Writer

Two Chapel Hill residents entered the race for a seat on the Chapel Hill-Carboro School Board this week, increasing the competition among five candidates for three open seats. Bea Hughes-Werner and Mark Royster, both members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force, announced their candidacies this week. The Blue Ribbon Task Force is a group of about 70 people, designed to set goals and recommendations for the school system to aid in the academic success of black students. Hughes-Werner said she was concerned about several problems facing the school system, with deterring violence being her top priority. "In sending your child to school, you have to know the school is safe," she said. "Finding and keeping the best teachers should be a high priority, second only to safety. (Students) keep repeating violent or very aggressive behavior in different forms," she said. "I'm talking mainly about middle school kids." Currently, there is no policy to handle problems with students who are violent in school, she said. "I want them removed from our schools so that they don't present a safety problem to our kids. There should be another school where they would be required to go every day." Hughes-Werner, a 20-year resident of Chapel Hill, said she would like to consolidate the best academic programs from each of the schools in the system to use them for the entire district. "I want to look at all current programs, figure which are working the best and put them in all the schools." Hughes-Werner said the Head Start program was a high priority. Head Start provides preschool education for children of lower-economic families. "I feel very strongly that's the most important," she said. "I think early intervention is the best way." Because individuals can make a difference, Hughes-Werner said she was motivated to seek public office. "You can bring changes and make government what you see as more fair and equitable," she said. A parent of two children enrolled in the school system, she said her work experience included teaching and doing work in environmental genetics. She added that she was active in the Inter-Faith Council and the League of Women Voters.



Downtown businesses survive slow summer, anticipate fall boom

By Bill Blocker
Staff Writer

Although Chapel Hill retail shops are competing with the summer heat for business, the local economy is continuing to grow fueled in part by the Tar Heel's NCAA basketball championship. "We've had about a \$5-million increase in the past year," said Joel Harper, president of the Chapel Hill-Carboro Chamber of Commerce. "You could judge the ebb and flow (of the economy) to a small degree on football games and that sort of thing," he said. The chamber's main effort is to work with elected officials to ensure that local businesses keep with free-market principles and do what is best for the community, he said.

Year	Gross Annual Retail Sales	Percent Change
1981	\$195,014,600	1.2
1982	\$206,116,328	5.7
1983	\$221,116,328	7.6
1984	\$244,990,347	10.5
1985	\$288,124,108	17.6
1986	\$315,984,975	9.7
1987	\$319,892,920	1.2
1988	\$349,259,998	9.2
1989	\$368,562,732	5.5
1990	\$345,181,675	-6.3
1991	\$363,615,953	5.4
1992	\$400,862,436	10.2

Source: N.C. Dept. of Revenue

Shelton Henderson, owner of The Shrunken Head Boutique, 155 E. Franklin St., said the NCAA victory had attracted visitors to Chapel Hill from all over the country. "Our business is wonderful," he said. "It's always wonderful, of course, that the national (championships) make everything improve." Tim Ogburn, branch manager of Wachovia Bank, said commerce in Chapel Hill was busy. "There's certainly a lot going on. Construction, commercial properties are being built, and businesses are opening," he said. "We have an increased demand for banking services and credit services which generally means businesses are expanding." Chris Belcher, owner of C.O. Copies, 169 E. Franklin St., said this year seemed better than the last. "Everyone knows Chapel Hill is slow in the summer," he said. "The summer conferences and the camps help a lot." Belcher said local business people and residents thought construction on the new Rosemary Street parking deck added to the normally slow business climate during the summer. "Hopefully when we have parking again people will be encouraged to come downtown," he said. Charles House, owner of University

Florist and Gift Shop, 124 E. Franklin St., said that in the past few months, flower sales countrywide had improved. "We've seen an up tick in sales," he said. "I feel we will have a modest gain over the long haul." With the advent of malls and shopping areas only a car drive away, many retail stores have not been able to survive increasing rent downtown, said Steve Kronberger, owner of Whims Cards and Gifts, 122 E. Franklin St. "Traffic in general downtown hasn't improved in years," he said. "But there's a slight increase. I don't think it's going to get any worse." Ken Jackson, owner of Wentworth & Sloan Jewelers Inc., 167 E. Franklin St., said his summer revenue had increased because he did business outside Chapel Hill. "Our business has done well over the summer," he said. "Traditionally, summer is a slow time for us." John Woodard, Jr., owner of Sutton's Drug Store, 159 E. Franklin St., said that with so many students and residents traveling during the summer, sales naturally decreased. "We're real excited about the prospect of a real good fall," he said. "It's been a while since we've had a good fall businesswise."

General Assembly expects higher graduation rates

By Yi-Hsin Chang
Editor

The N.C. General Assembly sent a message to the UNC system through two paragraphs inserted in the recently approved state budget: improve 4-year graduation rates. The section mandates that the universities improve the average number of hours full-time undergraduates take to 15 credit hours by December 1997. In addition, students who take more than 140 hours for a degree in a four-year program or more than 110 percent of the hours necessary to complete a five-year program will have to pay 25 percent more in tuition. Provost Richard McCormick said that it would not be difficult for the University to meet the 15-hour average requirement. "We're already at 14.7 percent or something," he said, adding that it would not be necessary to require students to take 15 hours to be considered full-time students. The tuition surcharge also would not affect most students. If a student takes 12 hours per semester, he or she could spend 5 1/2 years here without having to pay the extra 25 percent. The 140-hour limit also excludes hours earned through Advanced Placement exams or University placement exams as well as hours earned in summer school. McCormick called the legislature's mandate a "warning shot," one that would have a marginal effect on students. UNC-system President C.D. Spangler also said that the change should not hurt students. "But we're trying to do everything we can to not penalize students." Student Body President Jim Copland said he and his staff did not fight the mandate when it was proposed because it did not seem to affect many students. Graduation rates at UNC-CH are high and have increased in the past few years to a four-year graduation rate of 64.8 percent. About 81 percent of the students graduate after five years. UNC-CH has by far the highest graduation rates in the UNC system, whose average for graduation after four years is 28.4 percent. After five years, the average is 50.1 percent. McCormick said it was unreasonable to expect all students to graduate in four years. "I'm unhappy seeing some kind of stigma on students who

UNC-Chapel Hill				
Year of entry	After 4 years	After 5 years	After 6 years	After 7 years
1980	58.2	72.9	75.7	76.9
1981	56.2	71.3	74.6	75.7
1982	54.9	71.2	74.2	75.3
1983	57.4	74.7	78.4	79.8
1984	53.0	72.2	76.1	77.6
1985	59.4	77.3	80.6	81.3
1986	60.4	79.2	81.7	
1987	61.3	80.9		
1988	64.8			

UNC system				
Year of entry	After 4 years	After 5 years	After 6 years	After 7 years
1980	28.7	45.7	49.7	51.6
1981	26.6	44.6	49.2	50.6
1982	26.8	44.9	49.4	51.0
1983	25.5	45.4	50.7	52.6
1984	25.6	45.9	51.3	53.2
1985	26.5	46.4	52.5	54.3
1986	25.6	47.5	53.0	
1987	27.8	50.1		
1988	28.4			

Source: UNC General Administration

take more than four years to graduate," he said. "It assumes a norm that is not reasonable." He cited inadequate high school preparation, work, double-majoring, changing majors and taking a leave of absence as some reasons why students may not take 15 hours each semester or graduate in four years. "There are lots of good reasons why students take more than four years to graduate," he said. "Not every student should be taking 15 hours." See GRADUATION, page 5

Commissioners to consider revamping election process

By Jada Overton
Staff Writer

In two weeks, Orange County residents will be able to air their concerns about the way they could be better represented on the Orange County Board of Commissioners. The Orange County Board of Commissioners and the Committee for Fair Representation will meet with area residents Tuesday to determine whether the election process for commissioners ig-

nores the needs of the county's rural and more conservative residents. "We need to discuss different forms of government," said Marc Marcoplos, a member of the Committee for Fair Representation. "We need to look at different ways to elect the officials." Marcoplos, who ran unsuccessfully for a county commissioners' seat in November, said he thought district representation, if crafted the right way, could work in Orange County as an alternative to at-large representation.

District representation allows voters from a designated area to elect officials to represent that area's interests. County Commissioner Verla Insko said she thought the issue should be referred to a neutral body, such as the League of Women Voters so a group with a reputation for fairness to study the issue. "I would like for them to provide a public forum to determine whether it is possible to create a system that's more fair," she said.

"We could see which precincts (in 1990 and 1992) were carried by candidates from rural areas. That would be one way for me to measure whether rural residents were unhappy." Marcoplos said he thought either cumulative voting or single-transferable voting could help to ensure fairness in the county elections. In a cumulative voting system, a voter would have one vote for each commissioner, so a voter possibly could give all of his votes to one candidate.

"It improves the situation for blacks to be represented and brings rural people to the table." The single-transferable vote would prevent residents from "wasting" votes, Marcoplos said. After a particular candidate receives the number of votes necessary to win, the excess votes are transferred to the voter's second choice. "These methods are being used all over the world. It's just that the United States is still in the 'winner take-all' mentality," he said. See SCHOOL, page 6

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