

Legislators Sum Up General Assembly Session

BY JASON RICHARDSON
STATE AND NATIONAL EDITOR

Three members of Orange County's legislative delegation focused on the high points of the 1993 N.C. General Assembly session in a forum sponsored by the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce Thursday morning.

The meeting, held at the Siena Hotel in Chapel Hill, featured short speeches by N.C. Reps. Anne Barnes, D-Orange, and Joe Hackney, D-Orange, as well as N.C. Sen. Howard Lee, D-Orange. Following the speeches, the legislators held a brief question-and-answer session for the crowd of about 50 local residents.

Barnes began the forum discussing the N.C. General Assembly's actions on education this past year. "It was a good year, Paul, for the University," Barnes said, addressing UNC Chancellor Paul Hardin, who attended the meeting.

Barnes said she was pleased that the General Assembly had managed to keep tuition increases to a minimum, and that legislators had allotted more funds for libraries as well as for raising faculty salaries. "We appropriated additional dollars for bringing faculty salaries into a more competitive situation," she said.

Hackney addressed the future needs of the UNC system. "Let me put in a plug for the bond issue," Hackney said. "We have

many pending capital needs, and interest rates are very low right now."

Hardin also asked the citizens to lend their support to the proposed University bond issue. "I can tell you from a standpoint of the buildings at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill that there is a desperate need for those buildings."

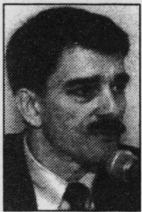
Lee said it had been a hectic legislative season. "It was one of the most difficult sessions we've been through in my short tenure there."

Lee discussed local issues, beginning with the General Assembly's authorization for Chapel Hill police to use the "Denver boot," a device used to immobilize illegally parked cars. He also said the legislature had granted the towns of Chapel Hill and Carrboro authority to "engage in the process of recall of elected officials."

Hillsborough enacted a meal tax, while the Chapel Hill Town Council withdrew its application to have such a tax, Lee said. "Hillsborough's food tax passed," he said. "Chapel Hill's did not."



N.C. Rep. ANNE BARNES outlined the General Assembly's actions on education.



N.C. Rep. JOE HACKNEY stressed the needs of the university system.

Lee called for local citizens to work with the Chapel Hill town government instead of turning to the General Assembly for help in resolving differences.

"It puts this delegation in a terrible position to try to be a referee," Lee said.

Barnes said she was happy about what the legislature had accomplished to help state employees. "I did get my bill passed to raise the wage floor for the lowest-paid employees."

Barnes then asked the chamber to stay involved in education issues. "I want to urge you to continue your involvement in education issues," she said. "It has made such a difference."

She added that the legislature had made an attempt to counter increasing tension in public schools. "We passed a number of bills to curb school violence," she said. "It will allow schools to develop their own programs to stop school violence."

"We were also able to fund the low-wealth counties," Hackney said he was pleased with the tone of the past session.

"There was not nearly so much political posturing on both sides. From a tax-systems perspective, it was pretty much an uneventful year," said Hackney, who is co-chairman of the House Finance Committee. "The state budget was balanced. It always is. This time, there were no substantive changes in the tax system."

"We had a 7-percent growth in state revenues," he said. "That was higher than was predicted." Hackney added that the growth prediction for 1993-94 was 6.2 percent, and that after one month the state already was \$14 million ahead of that figure. "Our state is on good and safe and steady economic ground," he said.

Hackney also discussed his successful measure to lower the drunken-driving standard from .10 to .08. "It passed the House 104-0 and passed later in the Senate. But we need to make more progress."

Hardin also complimented the legislators for their work over the years. "This is the best delegation in the General Assembly."

Failed to consider, after losing quorum, an act to clarify voting eligibility in the case of a tie in the election of a Student Congress officer.

Michael Workman and Steve Robblee contributed to this article.

GUNS

FROM PAGE 1

so that you can just hop in your car (to buy a gun)."

Brolin also said her organization's membership had grown to 70,000 since 1975.

"I think we've made a difference," she said.

Stanford said that Steven Higgins, director of ATF, had testified to Congress about the need for strengthening laws pertaining to the acquisition of firearms.

"How they should be strengthened is up to our elected officials," Stanford said, adding that the ATF did not lobby "in any way."

But National Rifle Association spokesman Bill McIntyre said the Brady Bill would not be sufficient to solve the growing violent-crime rate because it did not make background checks mandatory.

"We know those kinds of checks can be made," he said.

A waiting period would not be effective, he said.

"It's impossible to prove ... All I can say is waiting periods have not reduced crime like people said it would," he said.

McIntyre cited an FBI report saying that violent crime rose between 1987 and 1991 in 20 out of 22 states that had enacted some type of waiting period.

In North Carolina, which uses a 14-day waiting period, violent crime rose 36 percent and homicides rose 41 percent in that time period, he said.

McIntyre compared background checks for handgun buyers to the credit checks run on credit-card users.

"Every time you pull out a credit card, a credit check is made," he said. "If American Express can make 70 million checks per month, we can at least make a fraction of those checks per year."

The federal government also should focus more effort on investigating the black market, McIntyre said.

"We sell firearms in this country on an honor system ... If you're willing to sign a paper and lie on it, you can buy as many firearms as you want."

LES STANFORD
ATF public information officer

"Ninety-three percent of criminals get guns somewhere other than a retail store," he said. "There is a black market that's being virtually ignored."

The NRA's three million members have been asked to write letters and make phone calls to members of Congress advocating mandatory background checks, McIntyre said.

"It's an enviable political base," he said of the NRA, "and it counts."

McIntyre said that some gun-control proponents saw the NRA as hard-nosed and difficult to work with, but added that the group advocated controls of gun ownership.

"Oftentimes, the NRA is viewed as obstructionist and unwilling to compromise," he said. "Nobody wants to see criminals getting guns ... Nobody wants to see kids getting guns."

Despite the controversy, most agree the current laws concerning firearms are ineffective.

"We sell firearms in this country on an honor system ... If you're willing to sign a paper and lie on it, you can buy as many firearms as you want," Stanford said.

The slow rate of change on the issue prompted Stanford to question America's willingness to modify existing laws.

"It's ludicrous. There isn't any control. But do we as a nation want to change this? I don't know."

CONGRESS

FROM PAGE 1

was returned to the floor without the amendment and voted down, Sarratt said.

Although the mechanism for reconsidering the bill is unclear, congress may vote

to give the Phoenix funds later in the year, Sarratt said. "My feeling is that congress would be willing to fund the Phoenix if a board of directors is created," he said.

In other business Wednesday night, Rep. Philip Charles-Pierre, Dist. 19, was elected Student Affairs Committee chairman.

Late Wednesday night, congress also:

■ Appropriated \$2,758.60 to the Vietnamese Students' Association;

■ Passed by an 18-4 vote, with two abstentions, a bill to appropriate \$1,490 to the Coalition for Animals and Animal Research; and

Michael Workman and Steve Robblee contributed to this article.

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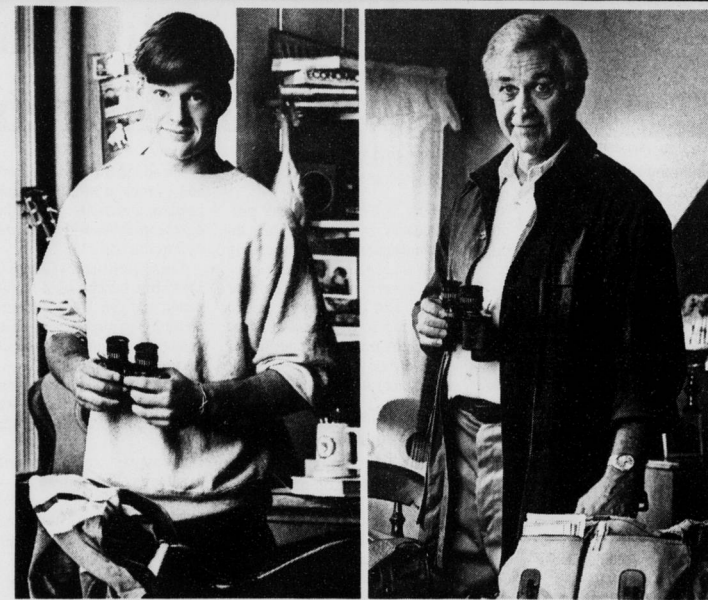
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Campus Calendar

FRIDAY
10 a.m. Amnesty International will hold a vigil for human rights in the Pit that will last until noon Saturday.
6:15 p.m. N.C. Hillel will hold reform and egalitarian services followed by a meal. The cost is \$5. Please RSVP for dinner. Morning services are at 9:30 a.m. Saturday.
7 p.m. New Generation Campus Ministries will hold its first Friday Night Fellowship in 205-206 Student Union.

ITEMS OF INTEREST
The Honors Office will accept applications from sophomores for the Honors Program until Wednesday. Application forms can be picked up outside 300 Steele Building.
The Orange/Durham Coalition for Battered Women needs volunteers to provide crisis and support services to families experiencing domestic violence. Training begins Tuesday.
University Career Services announces a fall semester part-time development internship with the Nature Conservancy, N.C. chapter. Information is available in 211 Hanes Hall.
University Career Services announces a fall-semester internship with Weaver Street Market. Information is available in 211 Hanes Hall.
Great Decisions 1994 will accept applications (available in the Student Union) for the coordinating committee until Wednesday.
The Elections Board needs undergraduate and graduate students to serve on the 1993-94 board. Sign up for an interview time with Melinda Manning (914-3045).
Selected Hillarity will perform in the Union Cabaret Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$3 and tickets are on sale at the Union information desk.
N.C. Hillel invites students to Havdalah service at Hillel at 8 p.m. Saturday, followed by a song session.
Carolina Fever will meet at 12:30 p.m. in front of Wilson Library on Saturday. Please wear your blue shirts and bring your athletic pass and school identification.
N.C. Hillel invites students to come out for a field day with UNC and Duke Hillels Sunday at noon at the Interlural Fields.
The Black Student Movement will hold the Mr. BSM Contest Sunday at 6 p.m. in the Cabaret.
Campus Y Footballs Committee will meet Monday at 7 p.m. in the Campus Y.
The UNC American Chemical Society Student Affiliates invites all chemistry majors or interested students to the first fall meeting at 6 p.m. Monday in 224 Venable Hall.
Leadership Development will hold an emerging leaders orientation meeting from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in 101 Greenlaw Hall. All students chosen to be emerging leaders must attend Monday, Tuesday or Thursday.
Amnesty International will have its official introductory meeting Monday at 7:30 p.m. in Union 206.
The Carolina Union Activities Board Public Relations Committee needs creative and dedicated students to help with public relations for Union programming. The first meeting is Monday at 5:30 p.m. in Union 206.
Circle K International Service Organization will hold a general interest meeting Monday at 7 p.m. in the Union Frank Porter Graham Lounge.
N.C. Hillel will offer "To Lead and to Follow: A Guided Tour to Shabbat Services" with Rabbi Andy Koren Tuesday from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Hillel.
The American Advertising Federation will hold a general interest meeting at 8:15 p.m. on Tuesday in Union 226.
Student Government will hold a mandatory meeting for all organizational treasurers Tuesday at 8 p.m. in Union 205.
The Carolina Cycling Club will hold an interest meeting Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in Union 206.
The Leadership Development Office will hold a Women's orientation meeting for faculty and staff members at 4 p.m. and a student meeting at 6 p.m. Wednesday in Union 211. At 6 p.m.

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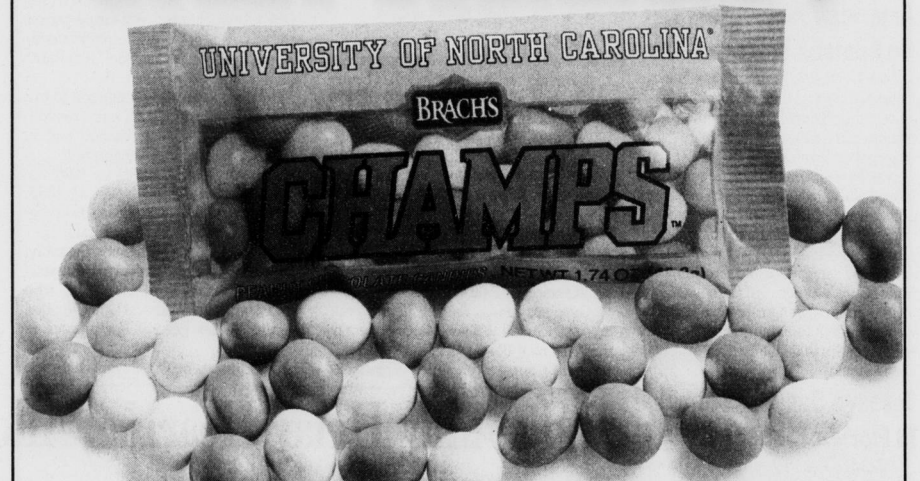
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