

Fall Fest celebration considered a success

BY BETHANY BLACK
STAFF WRITER

Nothing makes freshmen trade South Campus for South Road like the lure of free food.

A mix of musical acts, raffles, games and, yes, free samples, drew waves of students to the annual Fall Fest celebration Sunday night.

For both incoming and returning students, the festivities provided an opportunity to explore the array of organizations and activities available to the University community.

More than 200 student organizations recruited members and distributed handouts from 9 p.m. until 2 a.m., said Jon Curtis, assistant director for student activities and organizations.

Freshmen and upperclassmen said they hoped the evening would help them become more involved.

"It's great because rather than inviting you to interest meetings that you may not have time for, you just get to scan through and get a taste of everything," said Jason Gonzalez, a freshman from Gastonia studying philosophy and biology.

"It's a great way to jump-start my freshman year," he added.

Michael Smith, who performed with the Marching Tar Heels, also said Fall Fest was beneficial.

"I'm a freshman, so the best part is just that everyone is here," he said. "I've never seen this many people in

one place before. It's a great way to find out about all the different clubs and organizations."

The evening was a chance for local businesses to showcase their offerings to new potential customers.

"I think it's a great opportunity for incoming freshmen to experience Panera," said Kristen DeMeglio, Panera Bread's catering coordinator. "It's a chance for us to get our name out there, especially since we're off campus."

She said Panera had students' needs in mind when deciding what to offer at Fall Fest. "We have lots of coupons — we know what it's like to be a poor college student."

Ira Simon, director of food and vending services, echoed the importance of reaching out to students.

"Carolina Dining Services, as well as other vendors, like Aramark and Pepsi and Alpine Bagel, are all here because it's a great opportunity to give back to students and also to market to students," he said.

Simon said dining services passed out 3,600 barbecue sandwiches and 5,000 water bottles.

Relay For Life was another organization enticing students with handouts. "We gave away all of our T-shirts, but we've still got hats, candies, all kinds of stuff," said Emily Bagley, Relay's event co-chairwoman.

"The response has been great



DTH/EDYTHE MCNAMEE

Junior Jesse Galef draws a crowd while performing at Fall Fest with the breakdancing group Mighty Arms of Atlas.

so far," Bagley said, noting that between 300 and 400 students joined the group's listserv by the close of Fall Fest.

Curtis said the event continues to be a success year after year. "I think it's just an amazing, rockin' event," he said.

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

New students welcomed at traditional ceremony

BY KELLY GIEDRAITIS
STAFF WRITER

The sidewalks overflowed Sunday night as hundreds of first-year students poured into the Smith Center for new-student convocation.

The ceremony gave new students the opportunity to be formally inducted into the University and to meet key faculty members and administrators.

Names and handshakes were exchanged as the students took their seats.

"I figured it would be a good way to meet people," said freshman nursing major Kristina Riemen, who lives in Ehringhaus South. "There are a lot of upperclassmen in my dorm, and I wanted to meet the other freshmen."

As new students settled in, Chancellor James Moeser welcomed them to the University.

The chancellor commended students for their hard work and diligence thus far but emphasized what will be expected of them dur-

ing their future at UNC.

"Our challenge to you is to do your part — to reach as far and as high as you can," he said.

Student Body President James Allred urged new students to take advantage of the opportunities that N.C. taxpayers have given them.

Students owe state taxpayers the duty of attending class and studying hard, he said.

"Carolina is not like Sea World," he said. "You will not get wet if you sit in the front row."

Every year new students attend the traditional event, which marks the official beginning of their education at UNC.

But for some the convocation experience is a just distant memory.

"Did I go to what?" asked senior Will Gerichten, an international studies major. "Oh, I remember."

Gerichten said he still recalls the long walk from Granville Towers to the Smith Center for the first-year rite of passage.

"Everybody else was going," he

said. "It was a good way to meet new people."

Four years ago Gerichten and many other members of the class of 2007 stood to recite the same honor pledge that the newest class of UNC students uttered Sunday.

As the ceremony came to a close, the new students stood, awkwardly linking arms, and sang — or rather, mumbled — the alma mater.

"It's new to me, but I'm going to have to get used to it," said freshman Emilie Moseley, a journalism major.

Although the clapping during the fight song was anything but in sync, a booming "Go to hell, Duke!" echoed through the Carolina blue bleachers at the song's conclusion.

With these words, the new students truly were inducted into UNC culture.

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

Schools searching for new lawyer

BY JESSICA SCHONBERG
CITY EDITOR

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools are looking for a new lawyer after firing long-time attorney John McCormick.

McCormick's contract was terminated last month after he disappeared. He is now wanted on one count of felony embezzlement.

McCormick has been the school board's legal counsel for more than 20 years. He did not have access to school funds.

"We had no indication that this would happen," school board chairwoman Lisa Stuckey said.

N.C. lawyer Phillip Dixon was appointed as interim counsel until the board hires a new attorney.

Stuckey said a committee has been formed to lead the search. The committee is composed of Stuckey, school vice chairwoman Jamezetta Bedford and board member Mike Kelley. Dixon will work with the committee to develop a plan for soliciting applications and hiring the new lawyer.

Stuckey said she could not comment on whether applicants will be scrutinized more closely because of the allegations against McCormick, who was last seen July 10.

On that day, a representative of home builder D.R. Horton visited

What's happened so far ...

► John McCormick was reported missing July 11. A car registered to his family was found outside an entrance to Duke Forest.

► Homebuilder D.R. Horton accused McCormick of withholding about \$800,000 from homes he closed on for the company.

► The N.C. State Bureau of Investigation has issued a warrant for McCormick's arrest on one count of felony embezzlement.

► The Chapel Hill-Carrboro Board

of Education fired McCormick as its attorney and hired Phillip Dixon in the interim but does not believe McCormick had access to school funds.

► The North Carolina State Bar won a court order to freeze the funds in McCormick's trust accounts. The bureau is continuing to investigate McCormick's mismanagement of funds but does not plan to consider filing charges unless he is found.

his Chapel Hill office to talk to him about \$800,000 he owed the company. The funds were from five homes McCormick helped close in June.

After waiting for several hours, the representative learned that McCormick was no longer there.

A car registered to McCormick's family was found parked outside an entrance to Duke Forest on Whitfield Road at about 1 a.m. July 11.

After his disappearance, the N.C. State Bar won an injunction in Wake County Superior Court to prevent McCormick from receiving or dispersing client funds.

A. Root Edmonson, deputy coun-

cil for the bar, said he does not think the bar will consider pressing charges unless McCormick reappears.

The N.C. State Bureau of Investigation, however, has issued a warrant for McCormick's arrest.

Orange-Chatham District Attorney Jim Woodall, who will prosecute the case if it comes to trial, said he has referred complaints about McCormick to the state bar.

Anyone with information about McCormick's whereabouts should contact the Chapel Hill Police Department at (919) 968-2760.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

BY WHITNEY KISLING
ASSISTANT UNIVERSITY EDITOR

Sitting in a circle Monday afternoon about 20 first-year students were given their first introduction to University academics.

The students met Chancellor James Moeser and Student Body President James Allred in Saunders Hall to discuss this year's summer reading selection.

Moeser began the afternoon's session by calling roll and then asked students to share their personal connections to the novel, "The Namesake," by Jhumpa Lahiri.

The book, which delves into issues of immigration, identity and culture, is a story about an Indian family adapting to life in America.

Students in Moeser's discussion group said they felt connections to the book on many levels. Some said they related to Gogol Ganguli, the main character, when he advanced from high school to college.

"A lot of college is finding out

who we are," said freshman Abby Farson, from Davidson.

"The discussion went really well, and the book touched me very deeply," said freshman Akshay Ahuja, who is from India. "It was really the best choice for me."

The novel sparked debate about cultural awareness in the country. "Tolerance isn't what we need — what we need is acceptance," said Durham freshman Madeline Struttman.

Jocelyn Glazier, a professor at the UNC School of Education, said she read the book before she decided to lead a discussion.

She said the summer reading program gave new students an opportunity to meet each other on a more intimate level. Other Week of Welcome events geared toward freshmen were less personal.

"I think it's a really good way to introduce students to Carolina," she said.

"The Namesake" will be adapt-

ed into a movie, directed by Mira Nair and starring Kal Penn as Gogol. The movie is scheduled to be released March 9.

This is the program's eighth year and is the first time a work of fiction has been chosen. Selections in the past have been controversial.

In 2002, five people, including three UNC students, filed a lawsuit in response to the selection of "Approaching the Qur'an: The Early Revelations," translated and introduced by Michael Sells. Plaintiffs claimed the book violated the separation of church and state.

Moeser said that of his seven years leading discussions he was most impressed with this year's group.

"This discussion has really been rewarding," he said to the students. "You're all going to make great contributions to this institution as students."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

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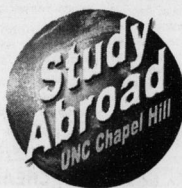
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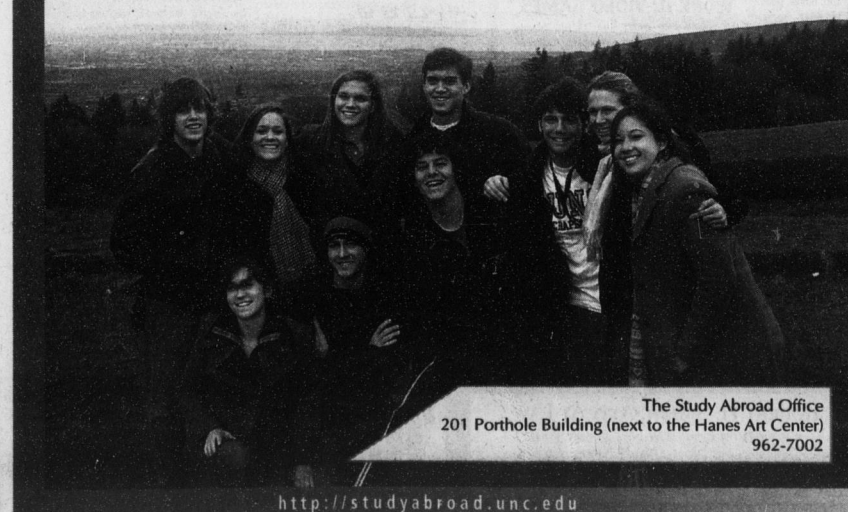
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