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Emergency call box
... may be replaced

Town cuts emergency box funding

By Susan Mauney

Emergency call box service funded by the Town of Chapel Hill was discontinued July 1.

The 24 call boxes, located throughout town, were tied into the Chapel Hill Police department for emergency calls. A light board in the police department signaled the exact location of the caller in the emergency and guided officers to the scene as quickly as possible.

Ben Callahan, Chapel Hill police department administrative assistant, said that maintenance problems have offset the emergency system's usefulness.

"We just decided that the use and problems they gave us were just not worth it," Callahan said. The call boxes are the property of Southern Bell Telephone Co. and are serviced by them.

The boxes are financed through the town police department and the monthly rates have risen over 70 percent in the past year, Callahan said.

"We never got a call from them that was documented," Callahan said. "In the past four years, we have had to run periodic checks on

them to make sure that they were working." Callahan said that the town continuously had to request maintenance for them, and had to pay monthly rates regardless of whether the boxes were working.

Callahan also said that a police department survey found that two-thirds of the town's call boxes were located within sight distance of phone booths.

In an emergency, a caller would be able to run into a booth and dial 911 for a direct line to the police emergency dispatcher.

The Chapel Hill public works department has been putting bags over the boxes that are not working until Southern Bell is able to remove them.

Callahan said that there is a possibility that the call boxes will be replaced by phone booths in areas where a booth is not already available.

"Phone booths tend to be in better shape," Callahan said.

The call boxes were installed by the University when the local telephone system was still University-owned. When the University sold its utilities, Southern Bell took over box maintenance.

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Inflation:

By Howard Troxler

Special to The Tar Heel

For the first time in his four years as a student at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Tony Furr has taken a job to help make ends meet. He's now a hamburger cook in a fast food restaurant.

To raise extra cash, every other week he sells a pint of blood for \$20 to N.C. Memorial Hospital.

He takes his new-found working-class status in stride. "I'm just not buying as many luxury items these days. Like food," he jokes. "And there's nothing like selling your precious bodily fluids to get by."

Most of the 20,000 students at UNC aren't quite so dramatic about their finances. But as the costs of living and attending school continue to rise, many students are changing the way they spend money.

"The good old days are gone," moaned Beverly Shepard, a junior from Jacksonville. "All those things I loved to do, I can't afford any more."

"Like joy-riding, which now costs a dollar a gallon for gas. And eating seafood—mmm, I love to eat seafood. But the last time I went, I spent \$7.33. Who can afford to do that?"

Just how much students could afford was on the minds of the members of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of

Spiraling prices force students to budget carefully, spend wisely

Commerce this spring when they took a survey of area merchants to find the effects of inflation and recession on sales.

The results of the survey were surprising: Retail sales in Chapel Hill were ahead of 1979. Of the 15 categories of business included in the survey, only two—banks and automobile dealers—reported a decline in income.

According to the study of the 30 Chapel Hill-Carrboro merchants and two dozen students surveyed, most said they did not think students were spending less money. But they said the money being spent was being spent differently. In buying necessities, both said students were more apt to look for bargains. Students said they had become increasingly aware of the need to save money.

Town and gown

Of Chapel Hill's 35,000 population, roughly 20,000 are students and 11,900 are University employees. Although Chapel Hill's economy is influenced by the financial affairs of students, it is not totally dependent on them, said Bill McDonald, vice president of the chamber and marketing director for the *Chapel Hill Newspaper*.

"Believe it or not, students do not account for much of the retail sales in this town," McDonald said. "They account for most of the sales of things like food and everyday items everyone needs."

"But there are things like real estate and other businesses that are a large part of the business community, which have nothing or little to do with students," McDonald said.

"What I'm trying to say is this: We look at students as part of the general public. You can't say, 'The students aren't spending money, so we're going down the drain.'"

"They're like everybody else who's fighting inflation. Everybody is tightening the belt. And eventually, things will get better—and everyone, including students, will be better off."

College-town blues

But students aren't better off yet. According to the UNC Student Aid Office, the average cost of attending the 1980-1981 academic year will be \$3,450, an increase of \$490 from last year. "It's a pretty big jump this year," said a financial aid administrator. "We usually raise the estimate about \$100 a year, but so many things went up, we had to go higher."

One of the reasons for the higher estimate is rent. In dormitories, students will pay an average of \$60 more this year. In apartment complexes, most rents are going up about \$30 a month.

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Carrboro gets funds for new bus route

By Jeff Bowers

Carrboro town officials said this week that the C bus route will be split in August into two routes and that a new bike path connecting Carrboro to the University would be built.

The C bus route, which has been plagued with severe overcrowding, will be split to form a new C route and a J route that will cover Jones Ferry Road and 54 bypass, acting town manager Sonna Loewenthal said Tuesday.

Loewenthal said she hoped the split could be made by the fall semester.

"Carrboro will be extending bus service in two ways. One, by splitting the C route and two, by extending shared ride service on evenings," Loewenthal said.

The new routes will be funded by federal revenue sharing funds until at least November when a referendum to use tax money to pay for bus service will come before the voters, Loewenthal said.

Some of the details of the new route have not been decided on, "but that's a relatively easy process," she said.

Carrboro also received a federal grant of more than \$100,000 to build a bike path connecting the town with UNC.

"The grant we got was to build a separate bike path along the railroad tracks between Cameron Avenue and downtown Carrboro," said Larry Belkin, acting planning director.

The new two-lane bike path will be 14 feet wide, paved with asphalt, lighted and patrolled.

"It'll be shorter for a lot of people riding from Carrboro to UNC," Belkin said. "Not only will it be shorter, but it will be safer since there will be no automobiles."

The town is also widening Greensboro Street to include two bike lanes. This project is now under construction, Belkin said.

Plans are to install bike lanes along Jones Ferry Road as well. Construction on

that project is scheduled for sometime early next year, he said.

"The only section (between Old Well Apartments on Jones Ferry and UNC) which will not have bike lanes will be about one block in the downtown area," Belkin said.

The federal money that will allow Carrboro to build the new bike path was part of a \$400,000 grant distributed among eight southern states. The town of Carrboro received over one-fourth of that total grant.

Chapel Hill also has several bike paths and bike lanes.

West Cameron Avenue and Country Club Road each have bike lanes, while Airport Road, Raleigh Road and Franklin Street have bike paths.

A pamphlet containing a map of Chapel Hill's bike lanes and paths along with bike regulations is available from the planning department in the Municipal Building on North Columbia Street.

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