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Equal standards goal of education program

By LANA LEWIN

In an attempt to make educational standards consistent statewide, N.C. Department of Education has implemented the Basic Education Program in elementary and secondary schools this year.

The main goal of the program is "to ensure that each child, regardless of where the child lives, receives a good basic education," said Myra Joines, public information coordinator for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

Peter Leousis, research associate for policy development with the N.C. Department of Education, said the program would allow poorer districts to offer classes in foreign language and arts.

Under the plan all students would have the opportunity to fulfill the same "floor requirements," said Dr. Michael Redd, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction in the Chapel HillCarrboro City Schools.

Over \$700 million has been allocated to the Basic Education Program. Most of this money will be given to districts with low local funds, allowing students to obtain an education equal to that of richer districts.

The money would be used to hire 10,000 new teachers in specialized areas and to reduce class size. Despite the current shortage of quality teachers, districts such as Chapel Hill-Carrboro foresee no problems in finding new teachers. Redd said some of the rural districts might encounter problems in reducing their class sizes to meet new requirements.

Under the program, students who scored in the bottom 25th percentile in annual testing would attend free summer school, and competency tests would be administered to all students for promotion from the third, sixth and eighth grades, he said.

Although North Carolina ranks below the national

average in SAT scores, the state's achievement scores have climbed. Redd said he expected to see significant improvement in all areas.

He said he believed improvements in schools, especially in the respected Chapel Hill area, would increase the attraction of the Research Triangle to new family residents.

The Basic Education Program's new requirements are:

 Graduation requirements of four English, two math, two social studies, two science, one physical education and nine other units of study in grades 9-12. •Student-teacher ratios of 23-1 for kindergarten through third grades and 26-1 for fourth through 12th. •More dollars per student for language, arts, math, social studies, vocational education and other subjects. Screening of preschool students for learning disabilities before reaching school age.

From wire reports

WASHINGTON - President Reagan, seeking to thwart protectionist legislation in Congress, announced Saturday that he planned to move against Japan, South Korea, Brazil and the European Economic Community for "unfair trading practices."

In his weekly radio speech, Reagan firmly reiterated his free-trade position and rejected calls from Congress for overall restrictive trade legislation.

"While we will use our powers as a lever to open closed doors abroad, we will continue to resist protectionist measures that would raise prices, lock out trade and destroy the jobs

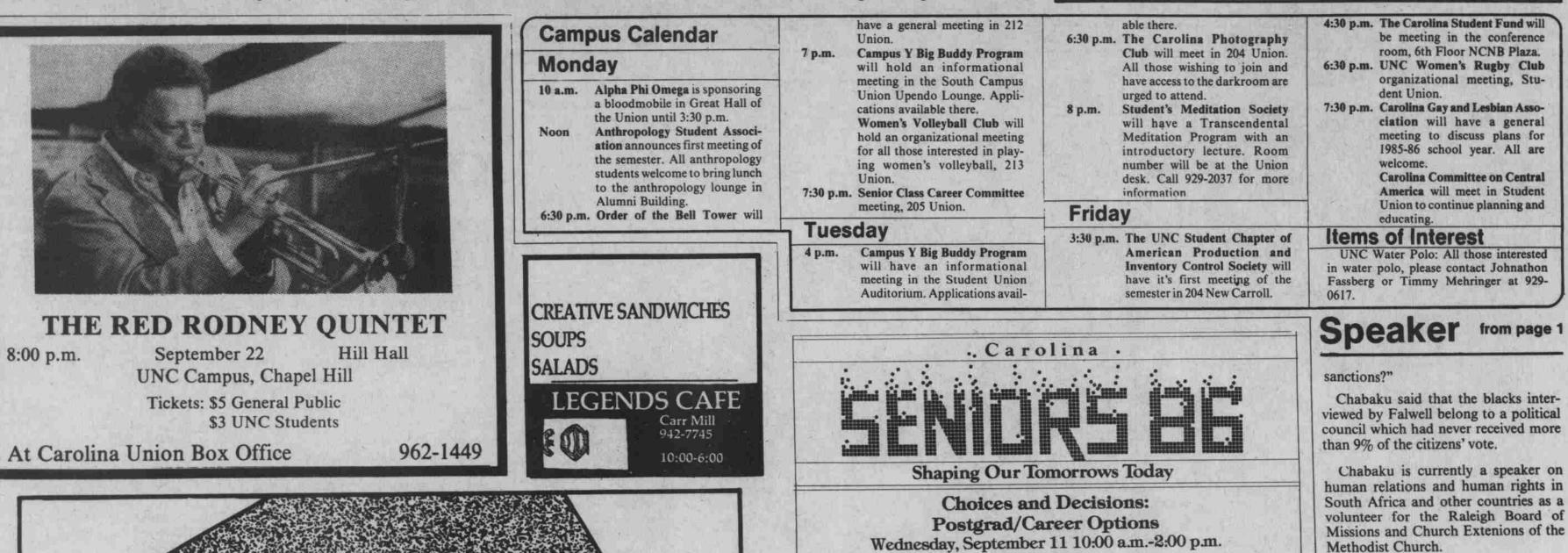
news in brief

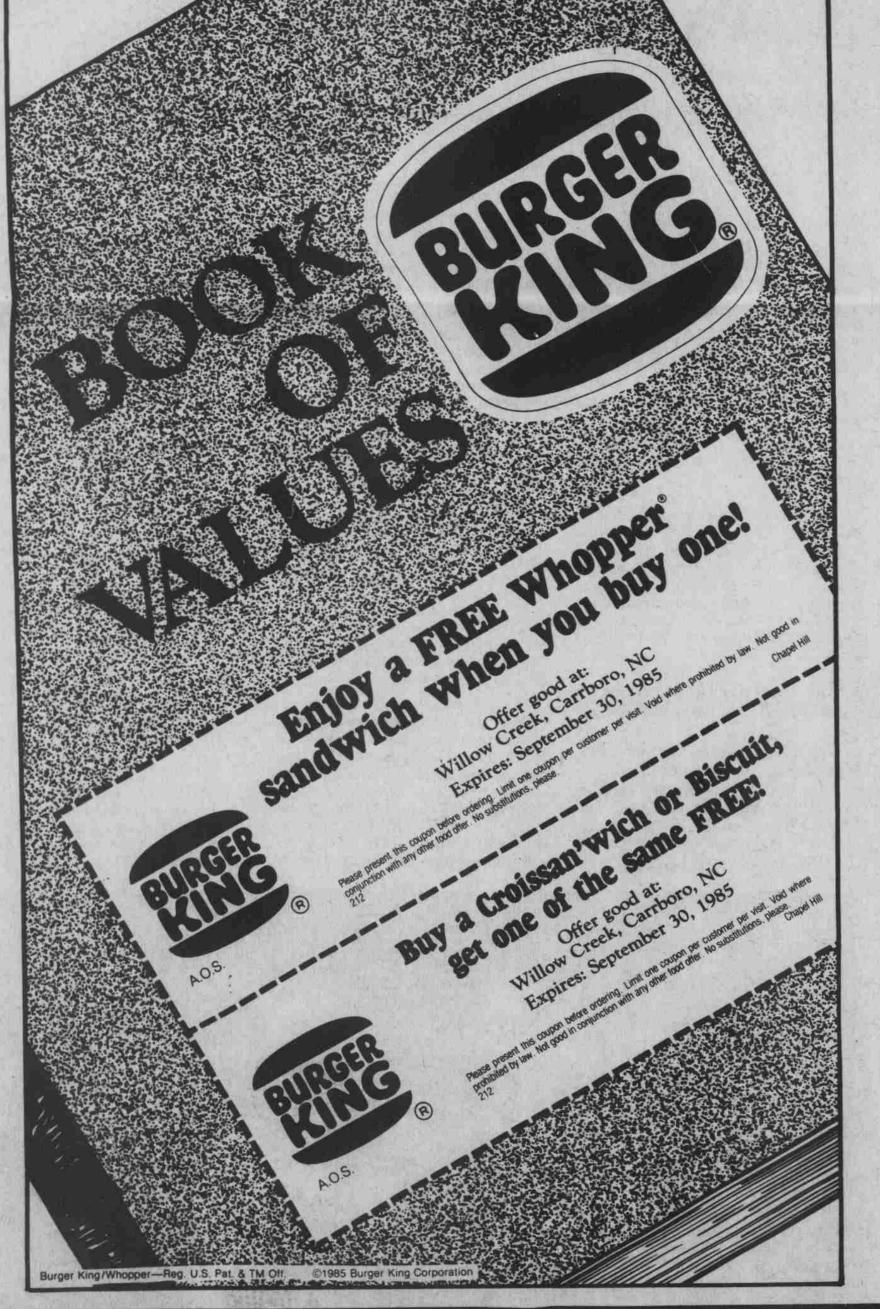
Reagan rebukes trade policies

and prosperity trade bring to all." Reagan said.

Crashed engine parts found MILWAUKEE - Investigators probing the crash of a Midwest Airlines jetliner that killed the 31 persons aboard, including a North Carolina man, discovered pieces of an engine on the runway used by the jet, a federal official said Saturday night.

The parts from a Pratt & Whitney JT8D engine, the type of engine on the DC-9, were found under the flight path of the jet that crashed.







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