

# Neon impressionists light up local businesses

By KYLE HUDSON  
Staff Writer

Some of the people parading down Franklin Street Halloween night caught a glimpse of a witch on a different sort. This witch on a broom placed in front of Top of the Hill was a 4-by-8-foot neon sign created by a local group of entrepreneurs.

The sign-makers at Neon Impressions, which opened last January, are the witch's creators. Neon Impressions is located in the Mariakakis Plaza off 15-501 bypass.

Three of the store's co-owners are UNC graduates. Brothers Nate and Curt Sheaffer both graduated in 1986. Their older brother, Garth, studied art at a technical school in Pennsylvania.

The three brothers handle the creative end of the business, and UNC graduate Eric McManaman takes care of management.

Nate was the first of the brothers to encounter sign-making. He said that he learned some at school in the art lab, where he studied with Art Professor Jerry Noe. He also worked with John Wilhelm, a neon sign-maker, in Raleigh.

Nate was able to convince his brothers and McManaman to go into business with him. The four were able to finance the shop with their collective savings and a small loan, Garth said.

"We were also able to buy some good used equipment from a shop in Wilson that closed down," he said.

Garth explained the neon sign-making process: "First, I sit down with the client and help him to visualize exactly what it is that he wants. When that's done, I can draw up a pattern. Then either Nate or Curt takes over to do the bending."

To bend the glass into the desired form, the sign-maker must hold a glass rod over a gas flame until the glass is evenly heated and bendable, Garth said. Then the bender lays the glass flat on top of the pattern and simply bends it into the desired shape. Bending usually is a two-hour process.



DTH/Matt Plyler

Neon Impressions co-owner Curt Sheaffer works on a new design to display in the store

After the glass cools, it must be pumped full of neon gas. He said that takes anywhere from half an hour to over three hours, depending on the amount of glass to be filled, as well as the number of curves and twists in the design.

Garth said he then must "age" the sign. "To age, you place the sign on a flat surface and hook it to a transformer," he said. "Then you allow the sign to burn until a solid color is achieved and all the impurities have burned out. This can take a whole night. When this is done, you

disconnect the sign, and it's done."

Nate said that most of the work Neon Impressions does is for businesses. Papagayo, Squid's, and Kinoko's are some of his largest customers.

The University is also a major customer. Neon Impressions made the signs for the Cutting Board in Lenoir Hall. Nate said he anticipates doing more work for the University in the near future, but mentioned no specific plans.

But individual students wanting their own neon signs should not be discouraged.

Garth said that Neon Impressions keeps about 20 ready-made beer signs which cost about \$75 in stock at all times. The signs, which plug into a wall outlet, should fit into any window. For a little more money, he said, he can add personal touches to a sign.

Nate said he and his partners are pleased with the success of their business so far, but they encourage even more students and businesses to buy neon signs. Neon Impressions' emphasis on service creates lots of return business, he said.

## Dedication ceremonies held for new chemistry laboratory

From staff reports

Dedication ceremonies were held Friday and Saturday for the \$7.6 million John Motley Morehead Undergraduate Chemistry Laboratory building.

The five-story, 52,000-square-foot building is located next to Kenan Laboratories on South Road.

The ceremonies began at 2 p.m. Friday with the dedication, followed by tours of the building.

The air-conditioned laboratories in the building replace those in Venable Hall and provide room for about 22 students each. Students have been using the labs since the spring of 1986.

Frank Press, president of the National Academy of Sciences and science adviser to former President Jimmy Carter, delivered the dedicatory address at 4 p.m. Friday.

Activities continued Saturday with a symposium conducted by UNC alumni.

### Psychology professor dies

Paul Obrist, professor of psychology in the UNC School of Medicine's psychiatry department and a pioneer in psychophysiological research, died Tuesday after a lengthy illness. He was 56.

Obrist did his most influential research on how stress creates different cardiovascular and blood pressure responses.

He was author of more than 100 scientific articles and associate editor of three scientific journals.

The family asks that instead of flowers, contributions be made to the South Orange Rescue Squad, P.O. Box A, Carrboro, N.C. 27510.

### Comet watch to be held

Morehead Planetarium will hold an observing session of William Bradfield's 1987 comet at

### University Briefs

6 p.m. Nov. 13 at the Fearington Point Boat Docks.

Some telescopes will be available to view the comet, but participants are encouraged to bring their own. It may be possible to view the comet with binoculars.

The session will not be held in the event of poor weather or cloudy skies.

### Business scholarship founded

A \$1 million scholarship in the Graduate School of Business Administration was announced Tuesday in the name of Dalton McMichael.

McMichael, chairman of the board of Macfield Inc., a nylon manufacturing company, is a UNC graduate.

The scholarship is the largest gift to endow a professorship in the business school's history, according to the school's dean, Paul Rizzo.

William Armfield, McMichael's business partner and Macfield Inc. president, organized the idea and the donors for the scholarship.

### Openings in Carolina Fitness

Carolina Fitness, UNC's medically supervised outpatient weight control and fitness program, has space available for sessions beginning Nov. 9.

The program is especially helpful for people who have had trouble losing weight or have medical problems that could be improved by weight loss, but is designed for anyone who wants to lose weight.

For more information, contact Carolina Fitness, CB #8700, 125 Fetzer Gymnasium, UNC-CH, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27599-8700.

## Halloween

from page 1

He said between 750 and 800 people went through the haunted house each night.

But the peak of the Halloween celebration is unquestionably the exhibition on Franklin Street.

For several hours on Saturday night, the strip was packed with awestruck spectators and people wearing every imaginable costume.

Most of the revelers evidently did not suffer from claustrophobia or mind being touched by several

hundred intoxicated strangers in foreign attire.

Some only wore masks, some were decked in elaborate rental or homemade costumes and some didn't dress up at all.

Nuns, monks, hippies, witches, noses (yes, noses), pirates and crayons are only a few of the describable costumes represented.

Juniors Dennis Keller and Rick Toseland were clad in slacks, coats and ties and had neatly combed hair. They also wore nooses around their necks.

They were stockbrokers, of course. Keller and Toseland accredited the inspiration for their costumes to drugs.

Keller said his favorite part of Halloween this year was "all the different people out there trying to entertain you."

Toseland said that he most enjoyed "the weird energy in the air."

Concerning their plans for the remainder of the evening, the "stock-

brokers" said, "We're going to try to recoup some of our losses."

Trotting alongside the crowd on Franklin Street were freshmen Brad Woodall, Mike Morehouse and Lance Davis — the Ostrich Jockeys.

Their costumes, composed of towels, socks, beaks, assorted articles of clothing and stuffed pants legs, were designed to make them look like they were mounted on ostriches. The fake legs flopped over the "bird bodies" on their torsos.

The three suitmates from Hinton James were also the winners of the Student Union costume contest, receiving a \$20 gift certificate from Spanky's.

"This is our first Halloween in Chapel Hill and we wanted to do it up right," Davis said.

"But the pantyhose are only for the costume, of course," added Morehouse.

The jockeys all agreed on their favorite part of Halloween: "Candy, always candy."

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## Investment Banking Opportunities at First Boston

First Boston, a special bracket investment banking firm, headquartered in New York, will be recruiting for its financial analyst program. Positions are available in the Investment Banking, Corporate Finance, Mergers and Acquisitions, Real Estate, Mortgage Finance and Public Finance Departments. All Seniors are cordially invited to attend a presentation and informal reception.

Presentation:

Friday, November 6, 1987  
The Carolina Inn  
"Carolina Room"  
2:00 P.M.

A reception will immediately follow the presentation.

Interviewing schedule:

Monday, February 1, 1988

For further information and inquiries, please feel free to contact:

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