

Community Kitchen serves food, fellowship

By **NANCY McCARTNEY**
Contributing Writer

As I walked up the stairs to the front porch of the Community Kitchen in Carrboro, I did so with more than a little trepidation. I had never been to a soup kitchen. How would these people react to me? Would they resent or ignore me?

My fears were quickly dispelled as soon as I met Walter. The elderly black man sits on the front porch of the Community Kitchen every day. He goes inside the building only to eat or watch one of the movies that are shown on the VCR on Friday afternoons.

"Hi," I said to Walter, who was sitting with his right leg stretched out in front of him. He leaned forward on his cane, studying me with blue eyes faded by time. "Hi," he said, and smiled, revealing more gum than teeth. "Sure is hot, ain't it?"

Walter is only one of the many people who come to the Community Kitchen on Merritt Mill Road every day to eat, socialize and just get in out of the weather — whatever it may be.

Grace Higgs is the "guardian angel" of these people. Small, slim and

birdlike in her motions, Higgs has an upscale aristocratic look about her that, at first glance, makes her appear incongruous with the drab appearance of the kitchen and the poorly-dressed people around her. This is not the case.

The disadvantaged people with whom Higgs works cluster around her with obvious affection. Higgs sees her work at the center (which is a full time job for her) as "a gift to me."

The Community Kitchen was begun five years ago when a group of concerned citizens realized the need for a place for the poor to obtain free food. The Inter-Faith Council, which also runs the shelter for the homeless on the corner of Rosemary and Columbia streets, is responsible for the kitchen. The facility serves the elderly, the working poor and "lonely people."

Higgs said anyone can eat at the kitchen, regardless of their financial situation.

Most of the almost 100 daily meals are served at lunch, when the "clients" converge in the small building to eat, socialize or just think. Higgs said the

food for the kitchen comes from local restaurants and grocery stores. Some of the food is collected in community food drives and donations from local

Transportation

section of Airport Road and Estes Drive, according to Gardner and Howes.

A possible route is the train tracks, which are now rarely used, Gardner said, except to deliver coal to the University's power plant. The tracks, owned by the state university railroad corporation, could be used for transport between the main campus and the airport.

"The town has got to get interested, too, and commit to the kind of land-use plan that we have to have to put that in place, to make it happen," Gardner said.

Howes said the use of the rail to the airport is probably not worth the cost.

"From Chapel Hill's point of view, a light rail is not very well located. It runs north to Hillsborough before it goes to Durham. It doesn't provide a link to Research Triangle Park, which is something we would need costwise," he said. "We don't have the base to support that."

Also, Howes said, the track is a single track, and there is no room for a dual one, meaning the town could

only operate one train out and back. Higgs termed the food gifts "manna from heaven."

The staff of the kitchen is made up entirely of volunteers from area

churches and the University, as well as from various local organizations such as the Salvation Army and the United Way.

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"My guess is it would be far more economical to put a higher density of buses on Airport Road," Howes said. "The town would be willing to help with transportation out there."

"It would be a dedicated transitway with just buses, bikes and pedestrians," Rimer said.

"Obviously (the campus) is a proposal that's going to gain momentum," Bonk said. "Serving it is not a problem and will not be a problem in the future. As long as we can anticipate that, we're fine."

Officials look to future

"We're kind of at a crossroads here in the region," Howes said. From 1995 and on, the region must concentrate on pulling the points of the Triangle together, he said.

"We really need to be thinking about that kind of future, with the technology that is a year 2000 kind of technology," he said. "I don't see the town and the University ever being willing to make radical changes in the downtown; Pittsboro Street and Ridge Road are the only sug-

gestions. Putting those aside, I just don't see any major additions to thoroughfares in downtown.

"Given that, we need more reliance on the transit system and more reliance on park-and-ride in the near term — that's the kind of future we're looking at. For a lot of people, that'll be okay, although it may be difficult for some."

Regional systems such as a light rail system or a complete interstate system with separate bus lanes must be considered to link Research Triangle Park, Raleigh-Durham Airport, Chapel Hill, Raleigh and Durham, Howes said.

"It's certainly not too early to think about how we can link those points — not today, but by the year 2000. We can't get people to get around in the cars, so we have to look seriously at (those options)."

"The decisions we make in the next six months to a year will dictate the situation we will find ourselves in in the year 2000. I'm hopeful we can find a better situation by the year 2000," Bonk said.

Health service cares for students

By **L.D. CURLE**
Staff Writer

Student Health Service, located on South Campus across from North Carolina Memorial Hospital, provides a wide range of health care services to enrolled students through its nine permanent physicians.

Students must make an appointment to be seen, but same-day appointments can be arranged.

"We're open 24 hours a day, with the only exception during Christmas break," said Dr. Judith Cowan, director of SHS. "We provide what you call urgent services, an example being if a student woke up with a

102 degree temperature. If a student is acutely injured, he can be given attention just as in an emergency room. In very extreme cases, the student would be transferred to North Carolina Memorial Hospital.

"We try hard to work on an appointment basis so we can conserve students' time. This also helps the examining doctor by giving him adequate time to deal with the student."

The SHS clinical medicine staff, which consists of nine certified physicians and three nurse practitioners, takes care of most students' health needs. "We suggest that

students choose from the staff doctors and stay with that doctor," Cowan said.

SHS has divisions of sports medicine, women's health and mental health in addition to its clinical medicine staff.

Full-time students pay \$101 for SHS in their student fees. That fee covers any services provided by the clinical medicine staff. Services provided by any specialty clinics, such as the dermatology clinic, are not covered, but are equitably priced, Cowan said. There is also a charge

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