

State plans breakwater construction

By SANDY WALL
Staff Writer

Recent storms have forced state officials to proceed with plans to build a \$15 million to \$20 million breakwater to protect the Herbert C. Bonner Bridge to Hatteras Island from continuing erosion.

The land that supports the southern abutment of the bridge has been eroding steadily and is in danger of completely washing away because of recent storms. The breakwater will shield the land from the tide.

The bridge, which spans Oregon Inlet and carries N.C. Highway 12, is the only link between Hatteras Island and the mainland.

"It's been eroding for 10 years," said Don Follmer, director of public affairs for the N.C. Department of Natural Resources. A breakwater would be a way to save the bridge and stabilize the south-progressing inlet.

The proposed breakwater (or

groin) would be a rock structure extending 500 to 1,000 feet into the ocean and would stop the erosion along the southern end of the bridge, said George Wells, highway administrator of the N.C. Department of Transportation (DOT).

"At risk is N.C. Highway 12 where it ties onto the bridge," he said. "The groin will allow the natural buildup of sand and beach which will restore (the land)."

The groin proposal was one recommendation from a task force of engineers and marine experts appointed by the DOT in 1988 to study possible solutions for the erosion problem at the bridge, Wells said.

The task force reported in August 1988 that the groin would be the most viable solution to the problem and predicted the area could wait 10 years before construction would be needed, he said.

But recent storms and normal

erosion have made the project an immediate necessity, Wells said.

"The recent two storms did extensive erosion," he said. "An emergency exists right now."

N.C. Gov. Jim Martin met Monday with U.S. Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan to emphasize the importance and urgency of addressing the Bonner Bridge problem, Wells said.

The Department of the Interior must approve construction of the groin because the land the bridge rests on is part of the federally-owned Pea Island Wildlife Refuge, he said.

A decision from the secretary could come within the next two days, said Tom Wilson, a spokesman for the Department of the Interior in Washington.

If approved, the groin would be a joint project of the state and federal governments, Wells said, adding that the state will seek the assistance and advice of the U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers.

Money from the N.C. highway fund would enable the state to pay for the construction of the project as well as reimburse the Corps of Engineers for any assistance they may give, he said.

The groin can work and any funds for it would be money well spent, Follmer said.

"They (similar breakwater projects) can be effective," he said. "Of course when you're dealing with the tide and the weather, you never know. It's still cheaper than a new bridge."

Projects similar to the proposed Hatteras project have been successful in North Carolina before, said Tom Jarrett, a former member of the DOT task force and currently chief of coastal engineering for the Wilmington Branch of the Army Corps of Engineers.

"It would be very similar to a structure at Fort Macon State Park," he said.

On-campus center provided for off-campus N.D. students

Across the Campuses

GRAND FORKS, N.D. — University of North Dakota students who live off campus now have an exclusive on-campus Student Life Center which was opened to give them interaction with other off-campus residents.

"We've been concerned for a long time that commuter students really aren't experiencing what college life is all about," said Gail Baker, adviser to Students Living Off-Campus, a group which helped organize the center.

The center opened in a vacant room of the student union. It is currently furnished with tables and chairs, and plans for the addition of a peer counseling center, a quiet lounge and a small kitchenette are in the making.

Alcohol ban on campuses

HARTFORD, Conn. — A Connecticut legislator has introduced a bill to Connecticut's House which would ban alcoholic beverages from state colleges.

Rep. Edith Prague said her bill prohibiting the sale, distribution and consumption of alcohol on Connecticut's public campuses is warranted by a rise in alcohol abuse among students.

"Alcohol abuse by the youth today is a major problem that cannot be ignored," she told Collegiate Press Service.

Prague said there is too much emphasis on drinking in college today.

Computer talks to the blind

ATHENS, Ga. — A computer accessory that talks has made academic life easier for visually-impaired students at the University of Georgia.

The system, which translates software into speech through a voice synthesizer, is designed to help visually-impaired students with papers and other coursework. Besides speaking to its user, the computer is also capable of making a Braille print-out of material needed for further study.

The University of Georgia has six legally blind students and about 20 who are visually impaired, handicap services counselor Diane Shimmels told Georgia's campus newspaper.

The system was funded by money from the university's College of Arts and Sciences and Student Affairs.

Texas law targets pay-for-play

AUSTIN, Texas — The Texas state Senate has passed legislation which will prosecute recruiters and student athletes who participate in illegal pay-for-play transactions.

Anyone found making gratuitous offers to student athletes in exchange for their athletic participation could be charged with a third-degree felony. Any student athlete who accepts the gifts could face Class A misdemeanor charges.

A third-degree felony conviction carries a two- to 10-year jail term and/or a maximum fine of \$5,000. Class A misdemeanors carry a one-year maximum jail sentence and/or a fine not to exceed \$2,000.

— compiled by Karen Dunn

Chapel Hill may get Soviet sister city

By NICOLLE SKALSKI
Staff Writer

A committee appointed by Mayor Jonathan Howes has chosen Tartu, a small college town in the Soviet Union, as a possible sister city to Chapel Hill.

About five or six years ago, the committee was formed by local citizens who were interested in getting involved on the local level to improve East-West relations, said committee member Dirk Spruyt.

The committee consists of about 12 active members who meet once a month to work on the project, Spruyt said.

The program is being sponsored by Sister Cities International, which is based in Washington, D.C. The mayor's committee is working through this organization to find a sister city, he said.

"The program will allow people here to understand the cultural diversity in the Soviet Union," said Jaan Valsiner, a psychology professor at UNC-CH who taught at Tartu University until he left the Soviet Union in 1980. "It will be very beneficial to both sides."

Spruyt said it was difficult to find a city similar to Chapel Hill because

most European universities are located in large metropolitan areas.

Tartu is the closest match to Chapel Hill because it is a small university town, Spruyt said.

"Tartu is a cosmopolitan town with a broad-minded point of view," he said. "This was why we were more attracted to it."

The town also has a strong interest in basketball and a strong historic and cultural background much like Chapel Hill, Spruyt said.

Valsiner said Tartu is a town of about 100,000 people, of whom over one-half are linked to one of the two universities in Tartu, Tartu University and an agricultural college.

David Griffiths, a member of the

mayor's committee, said Chapel Hill and Tartu are model university towns.

"Tartu is one of the oldest and best universities in the Soviet Union," Griffiths said.

Although Tartu is only a possible candidate and the committee is still in its negotiating and decision making stages, the committee would like to see Chapel Hill linked with Tartu, Spruyt said.

The program is now working at two levels, he said. "On one level the committee is working to get better information on who we are and what we represent."

On another level, Sister Cities International is contacting their counterparts in Moscow to find out

if Tartu would be interested in Chapel Hill, he said.

Carrboro is also interested in joining Chapel Hill to match with Tartu, Spruyt said.

One of the criteria set by Sister Cities International is a certain city size, and the addition of Carrboro will help meet this criterion, he said.

The mayor, the town council and the committee will be involved in making a final decision, Spruyt said.

The committee would like as wide a group as possible to be involved in making a final choice, he said.

"We would like it so people from all walks of life in Chapel Hill can find counterparts there (in Tartu)," Spruyt said.

OWASA to install Estes water main Congress

By TOM PARKS
Staff Writer

Orange County Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA) will soon begin installing a new water main along Estes Drive, OWASA's chief engineer said.

Chief Engineer Wayne Munden said construction is scheduled to

begin this week as soon as weather permits and work on the 16-inch main should be completed by late July.

The construction will take place on Estes Drive between Airport Road and Franklin Street, Munden said.

Two-way traffic will continue during "peak traffic hours" while the main is being laid, he said. Peak hours are from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

During the day, the eastbound lane of traffic will be diverted through the Estes Hills subdivision, Munden said.

The current main is being replaced because of its age and problems with the main over the past few years, he said.

"We've had numerous line leaks on Estes Drive," Munden said.

OWASA will try to complete the project as soon as possible because the N.C. Department of Transportation has scheduled Estes Drive for

resurfacing in August, he said.

OWASA is also working on its preliminary budget for the next fiscal year.

On March 6, the Chapel Hill Town Council recommended that OWASA make presentations this spring to the council and other local government bodies to increase awareness of OWASA's budget.

The budget will be presented for discussion at an April 12 meeting of OWASA's Board of Directors. The board is scheduled to vote on the budget during a meeting on April 27.

According to a memo from Town Manager David Taylor, the recommendation was made in response to a request from Everett Billingsley, the executive director of OWASA. In a letter dated Feb. 13, Billingsley requested comments from the council about OWASA's budget process.

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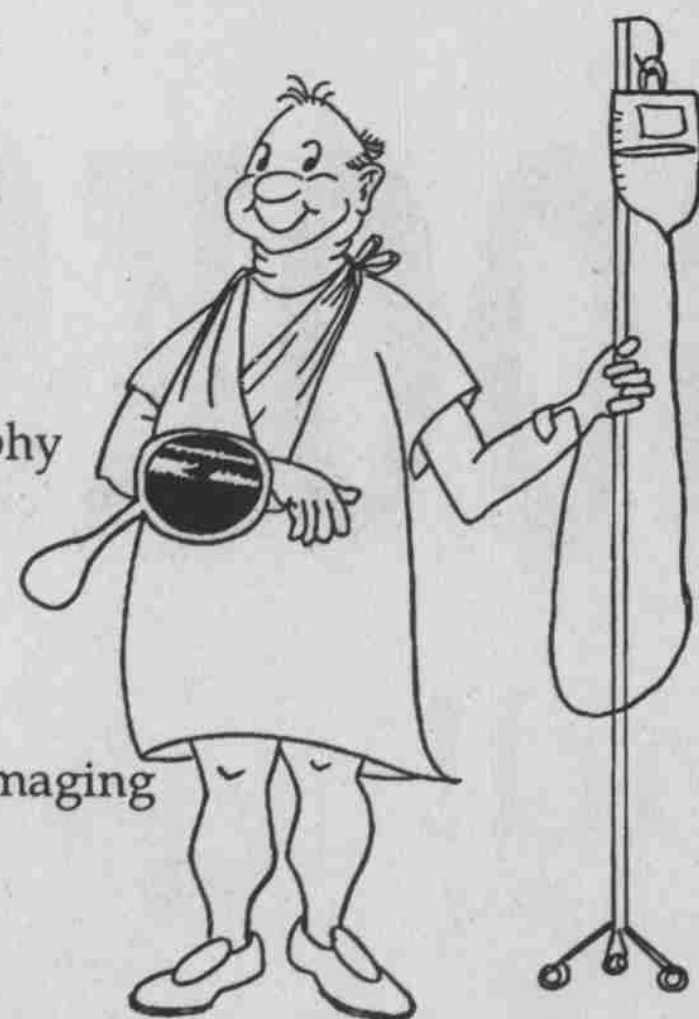
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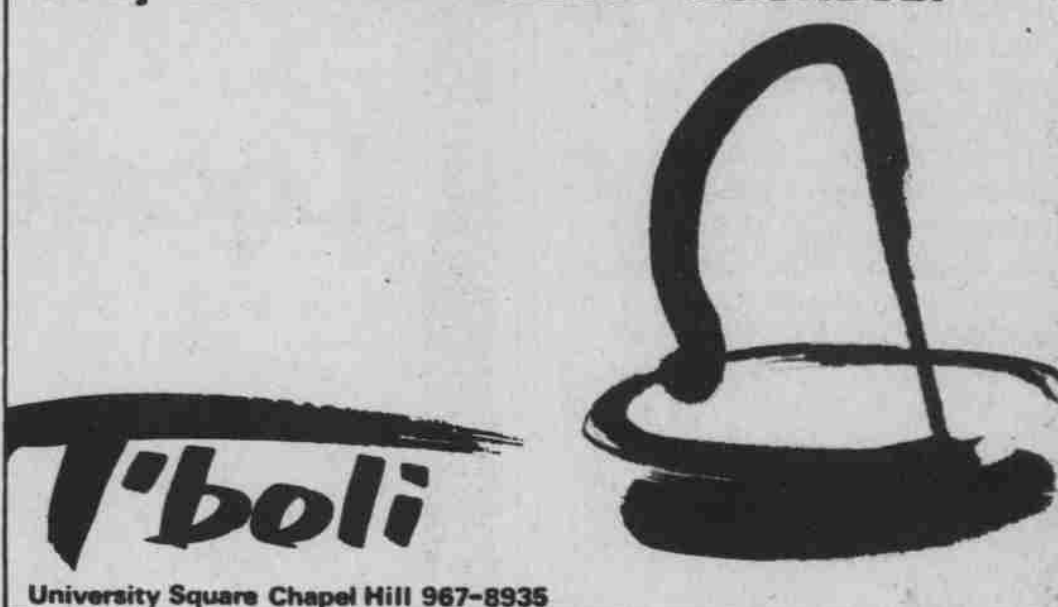
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