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Noise, Firecracker Throwing Won't Be Tolerated 'Dorm War' Prompts Warnings

By Brad Rich

Chuck Lynch, UNCC director of Residence Life blames the Wednesday, October 26, "war between the dorms" on the fact that it was "the end of midterms and right before Halloween," and, in fact, said the spontaneous outletting of tensions "might have been healthy."

But Lynch, and Residence Life staffer Chuck Colby, both agreed that the outbreak was dangerous and annoying to many students, and said action has been taken against some individuals involved in the firecracker throwing, bottle tossing and noise producing activities.

In an interview last Thursday, Lynch said it is impossible to say exactly what brought on the October 26 incident, but UNCC has had "a problem with people being inconsiderate about playing stereos too loud, shouting back and forth and throwing fireworks. One thing led to another, Lynch said, "and, well, you know the rest."

Colby said there have been more problems this year with fireworks than ever before, and that it has become more dangerous. "More of the fireworks are inside this year," he said, "...people are shooting bottle rockets in the lobbies, down halls and in toilets."

One problem in stopping the activities is, as Colby said, "It's difficult to identify where it's coming from...but the dorm guards and campus security concentrate on things they can deal with



Residence Life Director Chuck Lynch and Assistant Chuck Colby
(Photo courtesy of Rogues 'n Rascals)

— firecrackers and too loud stereos — and they have become almost experts at identifying the rooms problems are coming from."

In response to the October 26 outbreak of hell raising, Colby said the dorm guards "tried to identify the six or seven rooms where more than just a few firecrackers were coming from. We've called these students in, and most have admitted that firecrackers were thrown from their windows, but they won't admit they or their roommates did it."

"Yea," added Lynch, "It's like 'some

bad person got in my room and...'"

Colby and Lynch said they had talked to the students who had owned up to the activities, and had placed several of them on what amounts to contractual probation. That is, they have been warned that any further offense(s) could result in a severance of their residence hall contracts — in essence, they would be expelled.

Lynch said he feels that the present lack of a working student judicial system favors this type of activity. "Some of these offenses have been going on a long time," he said, "and there have been no court cases. Since offenses have occurred and nothing has happened, people tend to relax and think they can do these things."

Not so, apparently, for Lynch went on to say that though he thinks the court or "peer" system of justice is better, he would sever a student's contract if necessary. "Cases of firecrackers throwing in the Student Superior Court in the past has resulted in suspension of the dorm contracts," he said.

Lynch said Student Body Attorney General Jeff Hall is reinstating the Student Superior Court under the old judicial act until the end of this semester, (while the new act is being prepared) and he had handed over four or five cases to him that "definitely need to be dealt with on a court basis."

"Hopefully," he said, "Jeff will jump right on these."



Athletic Director Lee Rose gives blood during last week's Red Cross drive
(photo by Frank Alexander)

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Betty Chafin: Associate Dean, City Council Member Finds Busy Life Easier As She Starts Second Term

By Brad Rich

In an interview last Thursday, UNCC Associate Dean of Students and reelected Charlotte City Council member Betty Chafin listed four areas she feels she has been most effective in during her first council term.

"I feel my council experience has been most meaningful in...one; neighborhood preservation, in which I think I've been a real leader, two; in the area of transportation, three; in increasing citizen participation in government, and four, in my support for district representation. Supporting district representation now seems like something everyone should have done, but I was one of only two (on City Council) who did (the other was Harvey Gantt). It was pretty gutsy at the time...but I campaigned for it just like I have been

(photo by Lisa Laney)



Associate Dean of Students Betty Chafin won re-election to City Council today.

campaigning for my own reelection," Chafin said.

Chafin, who has been instrumental in the success of UNCC's Mean Green Shuttle Machine bus system has been very concerned with transportation during her first term. She said, "I think we have to do two things. We have to improve the buses we have now, and we have to provide more crosstown routes like the UNCC system, as well as utilize the express lines which will be going into effect soon." These express lines will whisk commuters into the downtown area with a minimum of stops. Also, plans are in the works for providing separate bus lanes.

Chafin also expressed interest in Democratic mayoral candidate Jim Whittington's proposed commuter train system. "It's amazing how many people downtown commute from outlying counties...These are mostly secretaries and clerical workers...people who don't really leave their offices except to go to lunch...I think the trains could drastically reduce our traffic problem downtown."

Chafin went on to say that the train system would probably have to be privately funded with some government subsidy. She also said that UNCC could benefit greatly from the rail service, since tracks already run through the Newell area along Old Concord Road.

Chafin disagrees with Jim Whittington, however, on his proposal to put a bus terminal on West Trade Street. She said she felt it is not "an immediate need," and if it was, West Trade would not be the best place to put it. Chafin envisions West Trade as a "boulevard" type street, "with neat shops." She said that the Belk administration, as well as the council, deserves a lot of credit for revitalizing the area of the square east of

Trade Street, and now attention needs to be given to the western area.

Her greatest disappointment in her first term council term, Chafin said, is that the council itself would not adopt a district representation plan. "That's where Mr. Whittington and I really went our separate ways," she said. "It's sad that the people had to vote it in instead of the council taking the initiative."

Chafin said she lost several other critical votes. One she mentioned was when she tried to get UNCC political science professor Dr. Bill McCoy appointed to the Mecklenburg County Planning Commission. In a 4-3 vote, the Council rejected McCoy, and instead placed a southeast Charlotte developer back on the board.

Handling her job as assistant dean of students at UNCC while serving on city council has not been easy, but Chafin said she has adjusted to it. "I don't have a lot of free time," she said, "But, you know, I've found that the longer I've done it, the easier it has gotten." She said she has found the two jobs compatible, since her interest in the welfare of UNCC students has overlapped with her council duties. One example of this was the creation of the Mean Green Shuttle Machine, where she had the opportunity to do something constructive for both the University community and the city as a whole.

But Chafin's schedule has kept her out of her university office a lot, and she knows that there have probably been some complaints about her not being accessible at times. "I'm sure at times...some students have felt shortchanged," she said, "Particularly when Dennis (Dean of Students Dennis Rash) with his heavy schedule of community involvement, has been out of the office, too." She feels, however, that

she has been able to handle the two jobs effectively, and that she has been very accessible as a council member.

In her second term, Chafin sees three things as most important. She plans to continue to work on transportation so as to decrease our dependence on the automobile, reduce cut through traffic through residential neighborhoods, and to try to continue developing the city according to the 1995 comprehensive plan. This plan, which advocates controlled (but not slower) growth for the city, has a lot of support from the local government. Chafin feels it is extremely important to open up the northern half of the county, from UNCC northeast and northwest to Lake Norman, to the same development which has boomed in the southern half. She said the first step is to extend water and sewer services to the area. She also said she thinks the University can play a major catalyst role in the area.

Chafin gives outgoing Charlotte Mayor John Belk a lot of credit, especially for keeping Charlotte's credit rating high and for revitalizing the downtown area. She feels the much maligned Civic Center in downtown Charlotte will play an important role in the city as soon as liquor by the drink becomes a reality. "I think it (liquor by the drink) is coming," she said, and added that she thinks a city referendum will be held at least within the next two years.

With a new mayor coming into office, it is a good time to look back on the Belk years and see the problems his administration had. Chafin said, "I think what the Belk administration didn't do was understand the alienation neighborhoods and citizens in some areas of the city felt — and that's why district representation came about."