

## Mayor unharmed by abductors

By Kim Burns

Charlotte Mayor Ken Harris was abducted from his office and held in the Student Government Conference Room at UNCC this past Thursday.

A group of seven renegades fulfilled their threat to kidnap Harris and hold him for ransom of toys, clothes, canned items and money. The kidnapers specified all items received as ransom were to be collected and turned over to the Newell Lions Club for distribution to the needy.

Many students, organizations and dignitaries came to bargain for Harris' safe release. Delta Zeta brought two bags of canned goods. But kidnapers said they wanted more.

First on the list of negotiators was Santa Claus. When he heard of Harris' plight, "I flew right down to see what I could do."

Santa Claus said after his attempt to negotiate, "The mayor is under great duress. I can't understand why they are holding him. If it weren't for Charlotte, UNCC wouldn't be here. So I think the students



(photo by Bob Henderson)

Mayor Ken Harris visited the UNCC campus last Thursday after being abducted by some strange characters.

should dig down into the bottom of their pockets and souls and give. Right now the case looks hopeless."

Shortly after Santa Claus left the abductors sent a message for the students through a reporter on the scene, Jeff Wicker. The message read, "The mayor's life is truly on the line."

Eighth floor Sanford, "Krazy 8's" came to try and appease the kidnapers. "We're here to rescue the mayor. If we can't then we're going to

sing some Christmas carols. We've also brought some canned food and clothes for ransom," Karen Popp, an eighth floor representative, said.

The kidnapers agreed to let the girls sing to the mayor. They sang a total of six songs from "Jingle Bells" to "We're the Girls from Krazy 8." Harris seemed more at ease after the first song. Even the kidnapers gathered around to listen, and for a moment relaxed their firm guard on the mayor.

Students milled around outside the conference room, leaving donations on the tape sign that said, "Free the Mayor." Others left canned foods and clothes in boxes placed beneath the tape sign.

Two attempts were made by Student Body President Larry Springs to free Harris. The kidnapers sent another representative out to talk with reporter Wicker.

One of the kidnapers delivered the following statement. "I let Spr-



(photo by Bob Henderson)

Harris was released only after enough students had contributed canned goods and money.

ings go out of the goodness of my heart. I will not stand for this again... the mayor is an important man. This school is a big university. I do not understand the apathy. There is a lot of money. If the people do not give, we will have to take drastic measures."

Dean of Students Chuck Lynch tried and failed to get the mayor's release.

Zeta Tau Alpha came by to drop off a small box of canned goods and present Harris with a lady bug. Santa Claus returned at this point to try and renegotiate.

At approximately 1:30 p.m. Sigma Phi Epsilon brought canned goods for ransom. Kidnapers pleased by the large amount agreed to let several of them in to present the mayor with a Sig Ep jersey. The mayor slipped on the jersey to pose for a picture. With the jersey on and so many in the room

Harris was able to slip out among them unnoticed by the kidnapers.

The Sig Eps were able to get Harris as far as Cone Center Cafeteria before being recaptured by the kidnapers.

Seeing the situation was getting desperate Robert Gwaltney, president of the Newell Lions Club was brought in to negotiate with the kidnapers.

Lambda Chi Alpha brought in more canned items. This along with Gwaltney's finesse for negotiating convinced the kidnapers to release Harris in Gwaltney's custody.

The mayor's parting words after his ordeal were "Where's my car?"

(Editor's Note: All contributions were turned over to the Newell Lions Club for distribution to the needy for Christmas. Sigma Phi Epsilon won a pizza party from PFM for the most contributions.)

## UNCC included in "share-a ride"

By Kathy Espin

Negotiations between striking bus drivers and Transit Management of Charlotte broke down for the second time last Thursday as the two groups failed to agree on wage increases for drivers and mechanics.

Federal Mediator Leonard Duggins said he has no plans for calling another meeting.

Meanwhile, most of the students and faculty members who hold bus passes are driving to school or riding in carpools, but students without their own means of transportation are in a bind. Several students said they hitchhike to school.

"I stand in the parking lot and beg (for a ride in the afternoon)," Ann Owens said. She said she is sometimes let off two or three miles from her home in Foxcroft.

Owens, like most of the other students and faculty members interviewed, said she had not called the Public Safety office about arranging carpools. Many of the students said they did not even know about the service.

Two students said they had called the office but had no results.

Jerry Hudson, Public Safety director, said anyone with a serious transportation problem should contact him personally by calling 597-2282.

Fred and Vickie Amon said they called a Charlotte cab company 24 hours in advance to arrange a ride home from Fred's work-study job in the Cone Center recreation room. They were told they need only call four hours in advance to qualify for the "Share-a-ride" plan

which charges a flat rate of \$1.25. When they called they were told the "Share-a-ride" program did not apply to UNCC because the campus is outside the city limits, and they would have to pay full fare. Amon said he made about \$5 at work that night. The ride home cost \$10.

Neither Hudson nor Libby Webber of Charlotte Transit Authority knew the "Share-a-ride" plan did not apply to UNCC.

The CTA announced Friday that a new phase of the "Share-a-ride" plan would go into effect Monday that would include the UNCC campus. Rides can be arranged with no advance notice for \$1.25 for the first mile and 30 cents a mile after the first. Regular rates are \$1.35 for the first mile and 60 cents a mile after the

first. There is no extra charge for more than one passenger under the "Share-a-ride" plan.

Webber said the plan was changed because the cab companies were losing money and with the four hour notice, drivers often found the riders had already left when the cab arrived.

Joe King, president of the Charlotte Cab Company, said, "The public has let us down very bad with "share-a-ride." He said three out of five callers are not there when the cab arrives. "This has had a real bad effect on drivers' moral and has cost a lot in gas, mileage and wages," King said.

Hudson said he has not considered what arrangements will be made next semester because he feels certain the strike will be over by that time.

## Reminder

Dec. 16, 9 a.m. — all residence halls close for Christmas break; any students checking out after this time will be billed a late check-out charge of \$10.

Jan. 9, 1 p.m. — all

residence halls open for spring semester.

Jan. 16 — contracts due for all clubs, organizations and student groups wishing to participate in any homecoming contests.