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IN THE NEWS

Top stories from the state, nation and world

Burning Case Defendants Convicted on All Charges

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — Two white laborers were convicted of all charges Tuesday in the burning of a black tourist who said they taunted him with racial slurs, doused him with gasoline and set him on fire.

Mark Kohut and Charles Rourke showed no reaction when the jury of five whites and one black found them guilty of attempted murder, kidnapping and robbery. The jury returned its decision after a 10-day trial and 12 hours of deliberations.

Burning victim Christopher Wilson sat looking straight ahead next to his mother, Enid Plummer, who looked upward as the first guilty verdict was read and nodded her head yes.

Kohut and Rourke, both day laborers from Lakeland, face up to life in prison. Sentencing was set for Oct. 22.

Wilson made no comment as he left the courthouse, but his mother said, "We are very happy to know justice was served."

"As a black mother, I would like to say that never would I wish for anyone, whether black or white, to have to undergo the pain and agony and frustration we have been through and are still going through."

Bosnian Leader Appeals For Better Terms From UN

UNITED NATIONS — Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic appealed Tuesday to the Security Council to support better terms for Muslims in a peace settlement and not to reward ethnic cleansing.

He plans to take the same message to the White House on Wednesday, when he is scheduled to meet President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

The beleaguered leader of Bosnia's Muslim-led government wants a peace plan that he rejected in Geneva last week modified, so Muslims can have secure access to a port on the Adriatic Sea, now controlled by Croats.

Izetbegovic is also seeking another step to get a better deal: moving the talks to New York so the Security Council can provide more direct guidance to international mediators Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen.

Arafat Tries to Win Over Former Enemies in Oman

MUSCAT, Oman — Yasser Arafat brought his peace campaign to the Persian Gulf on Tuesday, hoping to win back support from wealthy Arab oil states that have shunned him for three years.

The Palestine Liberation Organization leader came to Oman from Cairo, where Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak predicted the PLO and Israel would recognize each other by nightfall Thursday.

Arafat wants mutual recognition before Israel and the PLO sign the accord on Palestinian self-rule in the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho.

The plan has won the backing of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council. But relations between most of the gulf's Arab countries and the PLO have been icy since Arafat backed Iraq after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

The gulf states also are expected to come under U.S. pressure to swallow their differences with the PLO and contribute money needed to make Palestinian self-rule work.

Senate Votes to Confirm Elders Following Debate

WASHINGTON — Dr. Joycelyn Elders, President Clinton's choice for surgeon general, was confirmed by the Senate Tuesday night, surmounting opposition from conservatives. The vote was 65 to 34.

Senators debated her nomination for more than six hours on the first day of their return from a summer recess. Elders was not present for the final vote.

Republicans had acknowledged in advance of the vote that the former Arkansas health chief would be elevated to the position of surgeon general, the nation's number-one doctor.

Sen. Wendell Ford of Kentucky, the second-ranking Democrat in the leadership ranks, voted against Elders. Three other Democrats, Sens. Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia, John Breaux of Louisiana and James Exon of Nebraska, joined 30 Republicans in opposing her confirmation. Thirteen Republicans voted for Elders.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Weather

TODAY: Cloudy, 60-percent chance of showers; high 75-80.

THURSDAY: Variably cloudy, 30-percent chance of rain; high lower 80s.

Citizens Demand Right to Bear Arms

BY DANIEL FELDMAN
STAFF WRITER

The Chapel Hill Town Council chamber seats 160.

But it was standing-room-only Tuesday night both in the chamber and lobby as hundreds of disgruntled citizens appeared at the public hearing on gun control to sound protests to the pro-gun-control town council.

Wearing orange stickers that read, "It's the criminal, stupid," National Rifle Association members, gun collectors, hunters and supporters of personal liberties appeared to convince council members that a ban on handguns would not be the answer to the town's rising violent-crime rate.

About 60 local citizens spoke Tuesday night, while 35 out-of-town speakers will appear at town hall Wednesday night at 7:30 for a second hearing.

Daniel Keller, a disabled resident and one of about 40 protesters, began the attack on the council with an emotional plea for the defense of the disabled who are vulnerable targets to criminals.

"I can't defend myself, except with this club, if handguns are illegal," Keller said, waving his walking cane in the air. "The Constitution says the National Guard has the right to bear arms. The National Guard is not the militia, we are the militia."

David Barry, a local resident, said he was disappointed in the council's approach to handling the gun issue. "Do you believe you should be passive and submissive in a situation or do your duty to yourself and society to fight back and defend yourself against a well-armed criminal?"

David McFarling, president of the Durham Rifle and Pistol Club, said the council was trying to legislate in a region where it did not have authority.

"The ban (on handguns) is unconstitutional and was confirmed by the town attorney," he said. "The idea is to control crime, not to make criminals out of law-abiding citizens who pay taxes."

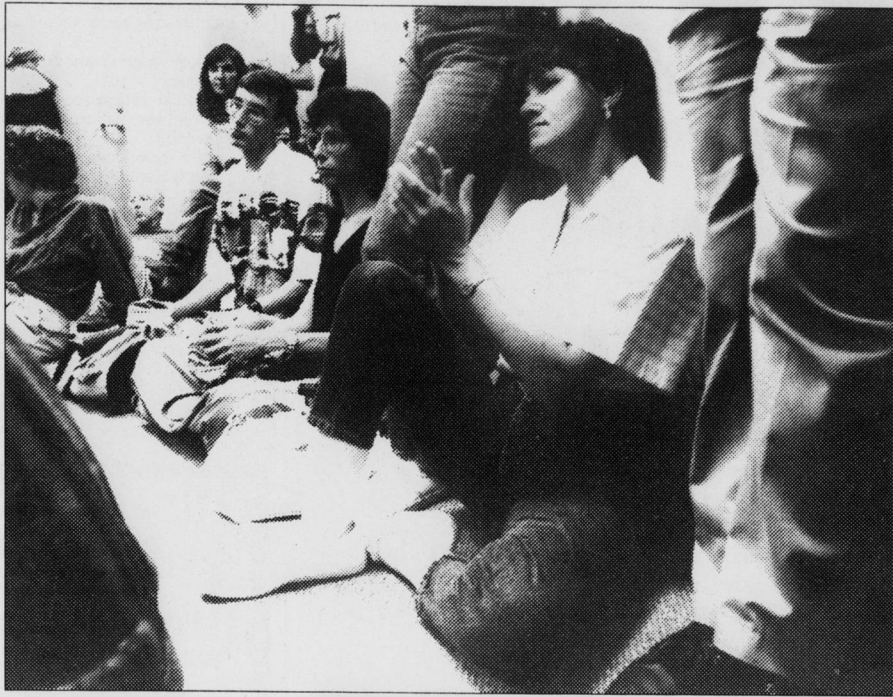
John Reinhard, a local resident, said the stricter gun-control laws would send out Chapel Hill's defenseless signal to all criminals. "Gun control has been tried before in Washington, D.C., and it doesn't work," Reinhard said. "Criminals don't obtain them through normal legitimate channels."

Reinhard added, as did many other opponents, that the real issue was reducing criminal activity and upholding the law.

"The problem is restricting the availability of criminals to the 'revolving doors' of prisons," he said. "We need to build more prisons, for it's these types that killed Michael Jordan's dad."

Though the town council has not endorsed any new proposals on gun control, a series of viable options was suggested by Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos and Town Manager Cal Horton.

"The town is limited by the N.C. Constitution and Chapel Hill statutes," Karpinos said. "Our options are a prohibition on the possession of firearms at specific places of public assembly, streets and sidewalks and by those persons who are consuming or under the influence of drugs



DTH PHOTOS: JUSTIN WILLIAMS

Betty Sorrell (above), a Hillsborough resident, applauds an anti-gun-ban speaker as she watches Tuesday night's council meeting on a television in a room adjacent to the council chamber. Sorrell was one of many who could not be seated in the crowded meeting. Daniel Keller (right), a disabled NRA member and a Chapel Hill resident, speaks out against the proposed gun ban. Keller thought a ban would leave him "with only a cane" to defend against would-be attackers.

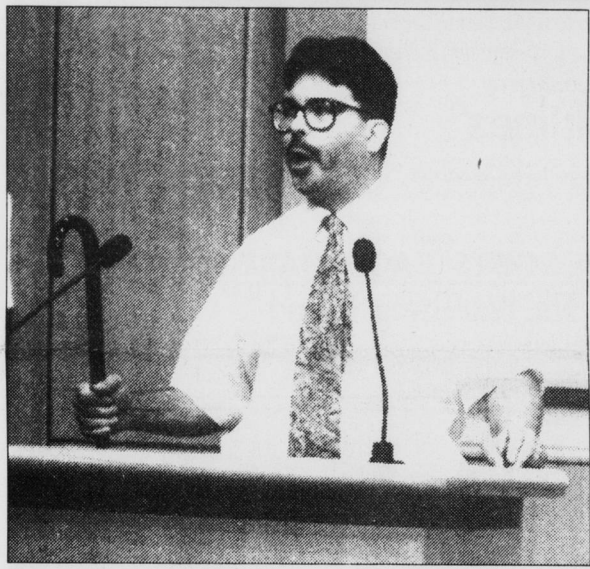
or alcohol."

Horton said handguns were involved in a significant portion of crimes committed last year in Chapel Hill. "We believe that over a period of years, restriction of handguns and other weapons could prove desirable in helping to reduce the potential for gun-related accidents and the theft of guns which could be used in crimes."

About 20 speakers appeared to support strengthening current gun-control laws.

Dr. Christopher Baker, trauma division chairman at UNC Medical School, said that between 80 and 90 percent of handgun accidents happened at home -- 60 percent of which involved acquaintances.

Rosemary Waldorf, chairwoman of the violent crime task force, said the committee recommended stricter punishments for criminals. "We should urge local magistrates not to release subjects on unsecured bonds, have swift, certain and significant punishments and not return the weapons



to offenders of violent crimes."

Waldorf added that she was in favor of new gun-control ordinances. "We should proceed with restrictions, especially downtown, to get the guns off the streets."

Ken Rudo, a local engineer, said he thought he was in the minority Tuesday night, being in support of the town council.

"The manager's comments and restrictions are the correct thing to do," Rudo

said. "The reason behind the public outcry is fear, for the public services and safety can't handle (Chapel Hill's) growth."

Mayor Ken Broun said it was difficult to tell whether the opinions expressed were indicative of the town at-large. "Some of the additional restrictions are necessary, and I agree with the town manager and the attorney's reports. Nothing which was said tonight has changed my mind."

UNC Housing Department Recruits Record Number of Minority Resident Assistants

BY THANASSIS CAMBANIS
UNIVERSITY EDITOR

One campus group can't complain about a lack of diversity — the housing department's resident assistant program.

This year, 46 percent of RAs are minorities, an all-time high at the University.

Rick Bradley, assistant director of housing in charge of the RA selection process, said the high total represented a move to diversity instead of a quota pursuit.

"We have an ongoing effort to increase our pool of minority applicants," Bradley said. "There is no target percentage."

During the final selection process, the housing department looks only at the merit of each individual candidate, Bradley said. But while recruiting RA applicants, the housing department targets certain groups to ensure that a wide variety of people apply, he said.

On a campus that is about 85 percent white, the RA composition represents a surprising plurality. Seventy-five of the 162 RAs are black, Hispanic, Native American or Asian.

The University housing population is 75 percent white. Blacks, Asians, Hispanics and Native Americans make up the other 25 percent, according to 1992 housing department statistics. The distribution is probably about the same this year, Bradley said. "We don't have a target that we stop accepting minority applicants at 25 percent," he said.

The ethnic makeup of RAs as a group

does not necessarily have to reflect the housing population, Bradley said. "I think what we try to do is mirror society, not the campus you're on," he said.

Bo Aylin, Morrison area director, said about half of his staff was African-American. "I think it really reflects the diversity of Morrison Hall," he said. "It also enriches students because they see people in leadership positions they might not see otherwise, back home or in high school."

Bradley said he had not heard specific complaints from students who felt the number of minority RAs indicated reverse discrimination. "I think this becomes very misleading," he said. "Some students might feel it's discrimination to white students, but we just want to get the best pool."

This year's high percentage of minorities on the housing staff comes at the tail end of a five-year effort to diversify the RA pool, Bradley said. At one point a few years ago, only five black men had applied to be resident assistants, he said.

"For the past five years we've gone about trying to increase our pool of minority applicants by doing things like going around to groups with high minority membership," Bradley said. "However, last year we tried to target white males because their numbers in the pool had dropped."

Bradley said the only applicant group whose quantity and quality had declined was white men. "Forty-six percent of a 162-person staff doesn't have to mean that white applicants are bad," he said. "It just means minority applicants were better."

Local Cable Customers Could Lose Access to CBS, Pay More for Service

BY KATY WURTH
STAFF WRITER

Attempts by the U.S. Congress to regulate the cable television industry recently have forced unfavorable changes in local cable services — including possibly losing CBS programming.

According to William D'Epagnier, a vice president for Cablevision, which serves 9,000 subscribers in Chapel Hill, a local consumer can expect a different channel lineup with some unfamiliar stations and changes in rates as bills become itemized.

"We're not changing or dropping any services," D'Epagnier said Tuesday. But if Cablevision does not receive retransmission consent from WRAL-TV of Raleigh by Oct. 6, cable viewers will lose easy access to CBS programming.

"As a result of the Cable Act of 1992, local broadcast stations, like WRAL-TV (Raleigh's CBS affiliate) have to give us written permission to carry their signal," D'Epagnier said. "They have the option to negotiate for payment."

D'Epagnier said Cablevision had received retransmission consent from all the local broadcast stations except WRAL-TV.

"We're not reimbursing any of the other stations," D'Epagnier said. "We negotiated with all of them, and we entered into an agreement with some to share advertising or give them an extra channel."

D'Epagnier said WRAL was less willing to give retransmission consent. "What they are looking for is a lot of cash, and if we have to pay them, the rates will go up," he said.

But Jim Griffin, WRAL program manager, told a different side of the story.

"Congress created this legislation to allow local broadcast stations to charge the cable companies if they are going to charge the consumer for free TV," Griffin said. "There's no reason for them to make money from our free signal."

Griffin said the new law forbid the cable companies from raising rates because of retransmission agreements. He said WRAL just wanted a share of the profit Cablevision already was making off its signal.

Griffin added that the Cable Act should not compel the cable companies to raise rates.

"Do you think a bill that was designed by Congress to lower our cable rates would compel the cable companies to raise their rates?" Griffin asked.

Yet Cablevision claims that the rate freeze imposed by the Federal Communications Commission forces them to raise rates for some customers to a certain level.

"Some rates are going up, and some are going down," D'Epagnier said. "The FCC has come out with tables detailing the rates cable companies can charge customers, and every single charge has to be itemized on the bill."

According to a proposed rate schedule released by Cablevision, the cost of installing cable will rise from \$42.95 to \$64.58.

In addition, premium channels, such as HBO, Cinemax and The Disney Channel will cost more.

However, the monthly rate for basic cable service, which includes channels 2 through 16, will decrease from \$9.95 to \$7.51, and installation of additional cable

Congress May Sell Computers

BY HOLLY STEPP
ASSISTANT UNIVERSITY EDITOR

Scapegoat, the computer system that is the lifeline of several student publications, may be sold if a resolution authorizing a bid process is passed by Student Congress tonight.

The resolution, which is sponsored by Rep. Andrew Cohen, Dist. 6, would authorize Student Body Treasurer Kevin Hunter to solicit bids for Scapegoat. Cohen said the main goal of the resolution was to find better management options for the system.

However the resolution doesn't require Hunter to actually sell the system. "Even if (Hunter) were to solicit bids that doesn't mean he has to accept them," Cohen said.

Cohen said it was not his intention for student publications to go without a computer system. "If it is sold, they could attach conditions onto the sale that provides for student publication use of the system," Cohen said.

Scapegoat was purchased by student government in 1989 and was intended for use by the entire student body and several student publications.

The computer system currently is not operating because Student Congress did not allot any money to maintain it for the 1993-94 fiscal year, Hunter said. "It would take \$3,000-plus to maintain, service and insure the system, and there is no money to pay for anything," Hunter said.

Organizers and editors of the Phoenix and the Black Ink said they were unaware of the system's problems. "I just went in the office and tried to turn on the system and got nothing," said Jacqueline Charles, editor of the Black Ink, a publication of the Black Student Movement.

David Madison, a 1993 UNC graduate and a former Phoenix staff writer, said he felt the problems with Scapegoat were a result of student government negligence. The Phoenix, a student newsmagazine and former manager of Scapegoat, stopped publishing last spring because of financial problems.

"It is (student government's) responsibility to maintain the system, and it wasn't even insured," Madison said.

During the summer of 1992, student government seized a portion of the Phoenix's funding to make a lease payment on the system. Student government had assumed responsibility for the payments since May 1992.

Aaron Bell, student body treasurer for the summer of 1992, took \$2,500 from the Phoenix to prevent Scapegoat's repossession by Central Carolina Bank.

During Student Congress' fall 1992 session, a bill was passed to reimburse the

Please See SCAPEGOAT, Page 4

Editor's Note

We have chosen our new staff members from an overwhelming number of applications and posted their names outside The Daily Tar Heel office.

We received almost 250 applications and accepted about 125 new staff members. Although we were excited by the enthusiastic response, we regretted that we could not hire everyone who was interested.

Thanks to all who applied. We will keep your application on file and contact you if we need more people. Because turnover is high at the DTH, we encourage you to apply again next semester or next year.

A reminder to all staff members: We will hold a mandatory full-staff meeting at 7 p.m. today in Urion Auditorium.

Again, thanks for your interest in the DTH.

Solitude would be ideal if you could pick the people to avoid.

Karl Kraus