

# Tobacco issues light up on, off the Web

Advocates for and against regulation spark discussion and activism.

If there's one topic that has people fuming on and off the Internet, it's tobacco. With President Bill Clinton's new Food and Drug Administration regulations on nicotine and with 13 states suing to recover smoking-related health care costs, it's easy to see that this issue is smoking.

A plethora of sites debate the regulation issue from both ends of the spectrum. And the friends and foes of tobacco do not hesitate to offer their stance on North Carolina's biggest cash crop.

Most web pages hope to incite action by encouraging browsers to contact their representatives.

The source of the problem can be found at <http://www.netaxis.com/~cb/smoke/>, the "smokers source of news and reviews."

Created for the tobacco smoker, browsers can look up the latest news on Congress' fight to ban and tax cigarettes, located under "the enemy" and "the news" categories. Click on the no smoking sign to see what the enemy, a k a the FDA, is doing.

As an added benefit for smokers — those who might want to switch brands perhaps — it reviews various cigarettes from Camels to Marlboros. The authors cover such factors as the package design (they seem to like the green and blue colored ones), cigarette construction (flimsy vs. sturdy) and cigarette taste.

The creators of the smokers' source would probably like to join forces with the Kinston-based "Friends of Tobacco" at <http://www.fujipub.com/fot/>.

While somewhat out of date, the group made a strong effort to organize tobacco advocates into one group in a rational, nonradical way.

Through a series of statistics from the Tobacco Institute, the organization lays out tobacco's financial contribution to the U.S. economy to illustrate the crop's impact and to fight the anti-tobacco movement. The text is a bit dry and could have used some graphic advice in designing the web site. Despite this, if one wants to argue on the "pro-tobacco" side of the issue, this information will best back up the argument.

If you're not on the tobacco industry's side, then you might want to set your browser to Smokescreen, the Tobacco Control Network, at <http://www.smokescreen.org>.

Tobacco control activists will be impressed. To proceed from the opening page of a cigarette smoking dollar bill, the browser needs to enter his or her zip code in order to personalize the web site's information.

Upon doing so, the browser will reach a menu that lists your local representatives, their record on tobacco (check out Jesse Helms' long list of PAC contributions), and how to reach them via e-mail or fax.

To find other ways of political action, the site lists a directory of tobacco control groups in the browser's local area.

And although a good idea, the creators need to develop further their list of smoke-free eating establishments. To date, there were only listings for three states.

The most pseudo-objective site seems to be at <http://www.tobacco.org>. It doesn't scream out with cool graphics but is thorough in the links it leads browsers to.

The authors describe their "Tobacco BBS" as a free resource center focusing on tobacco and smoking issues.

Recent tobacco news, alerts for tobacco control advocates and an arena for debate are just a few of the highlights of the web site.

The site is broken down into categories of news, health, resources, documents, culture and activism.

In the health section, there is an interesting debate about the nicotine patch versus nicotine gum, as well as a section on how to quit smoking.

Among the resources I found useful is a map on state smoking laws in the workplace at [http://www.toolkit.cch.com/guidebook/text/P05\\_5200.htm](http://www.toolkit.cch.com/guidebook/text/P05_5200.htm). (I'm into localizing, or finding location-specific information for the less literate browsers, in case you haven't figured it out.) Click on your respective state to get information about your state's general rule and various policy requirements.

Finally, in the culture category is a site on tobacco history, complete with time line, and subsections on art and books.

Tobacco sites are growing as rapidly as the crop itself. No matter what side you're on, you'll find something to huff and puff at.

E-mail descriptions of interesting and unique web sites to [jlbanov@email.unc.edu](mailto:jlbanov@email.unc.edu).



# Company gives schools free access to Internet

BY TIFFANY CASHWELL  
STAFF WRITER

Starting on next month's Net Day '96, about 460 North Carolina schools will receive free Internet access for a year from BellSouth.

State and local educators are excited about the prospect of better school technology. "Businesses are good partners with the schools," said Elsie Brumback, director of instructional technology at the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. "They realize these children are the future users of their services."

BellSouth announced Monday that they will set up 4,000 schools in nine states with wiring and Internet accounts. The contribution also provides each school with BellSouth volunteers to install the wiring, accounts and telephones for five classrooms, training video tapes

and Internet courseware books for grades K-12. The offered services are worth \$25 million.

BellSouth's contribution is in conjunction with Net Day '96, a national grassroots initiative developed to wire a large number of schools to the Internet on Oct. 26. Local educators and BellSouth will choose which schools will receive services. Guidelines must be published before schools are picked. BellSouth will release implementation details next week, Brumback said.

Brumback said she hoped the contribution will create a ripple effect. "Hopefully BellSouth's contribution will prompt other companies to make similar announcements," she said.

The contribution reflects the reliance by public schools on outside funding for supplies. Brumback said corporate financial help in education is needed. North

Carolina's share of the program is \$4.2 million. The N.C. General Assembly will also take notice, Brumback said. Public schools asked for \$71 million this year for technology purposes, but only received \$20 million, she said. "Next year, we're asking for \$107 million."

The board has a five-year technology plan that will have all state schools completely wired for Internet access. "Even after Net Day, we will still need other equipment," Brumback said.

News of the BellSouth program was also welcome locally.

Chapel Hill and Carrboro elementary schools could benefit tremendously from BellSouth's efforts, said Doug Noell, systems analyst for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools. "We are focusing on our elementary schools because most other schools are already wired for Internet access," he said. The area's elementary

schools have Internet access in their media centers and administrative offices, and Net Day could bring the Internet to classrooms and teachers' homes.

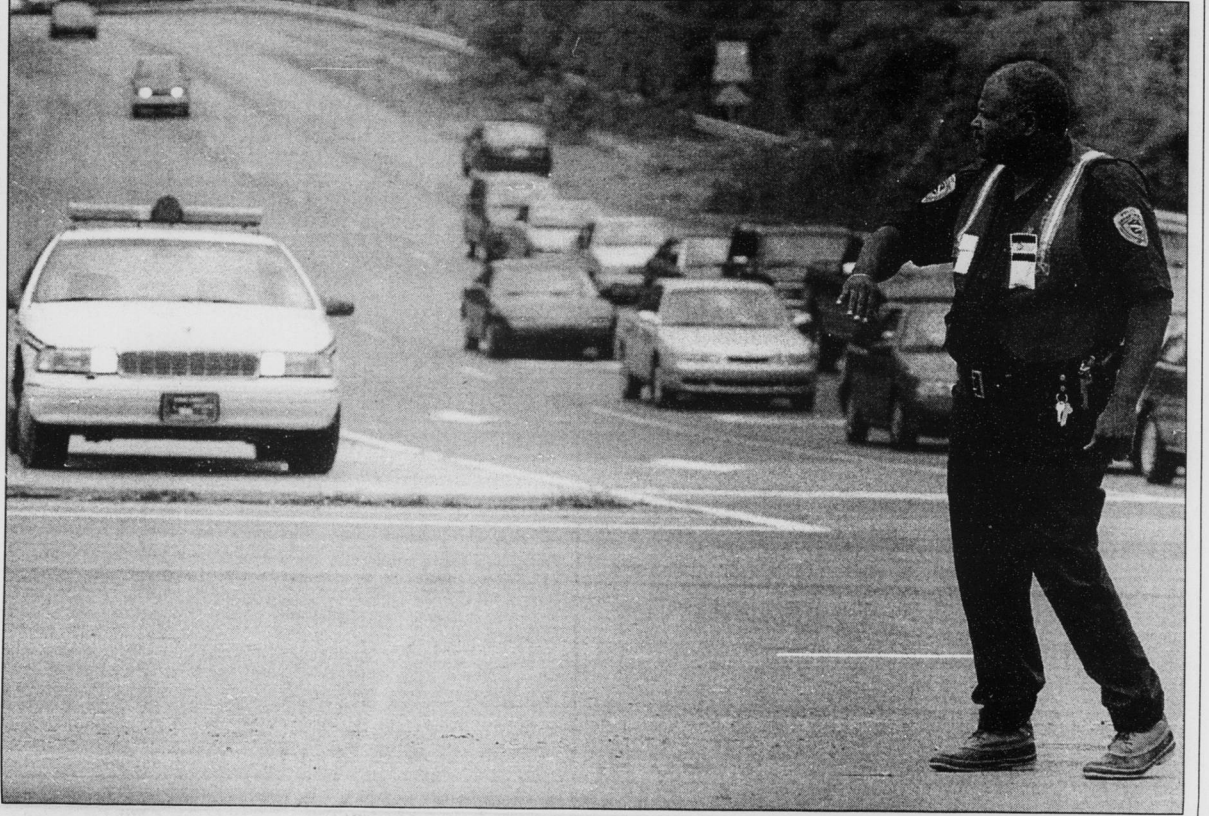
Internet access enables students to tap up-to-the-minute information from sources around the world. Internet skills are also essential to succeed in future job markets, said Deb Spicer, a BellSouth spokeswoman.

"BellSouth has a long-term relationship in the educational community. Thirty percent of the schools in our nine-state region will benefit from Net Day," she said.

After a full school year of free services, schools can continue to carry the services at a reduced rate. BellSouth will still offer support.

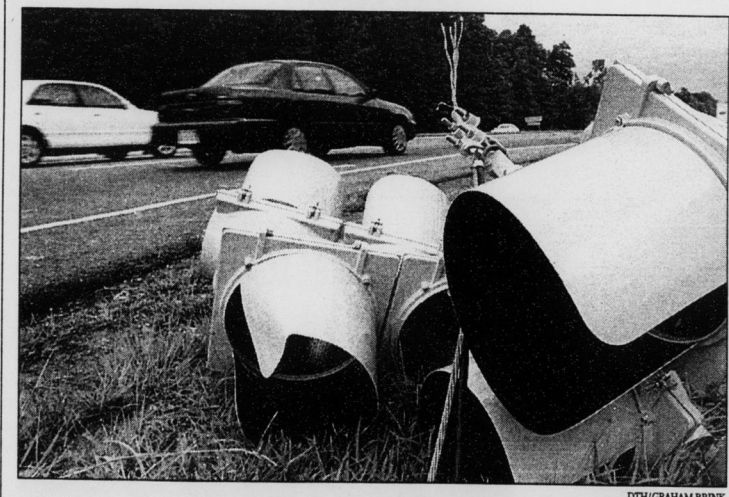
In addition, BellSouth Foundation will offer \$600,000 in grants to help teachers organize curriculum.

## DIRECTIONS ANYONE?



Traffic officers were out in force after Hurricane Fran downed power lines and traffic lights. Even though officials asked residents to remain at home except to engage in life-sustaining activities, Chapel Hill streets were littered with cars.

## LIGHTS OUT



Traffic signals around Chapel Hill remain battered from Hurricane Fran's whipping winds. Power remains out in parts of Chapel Hill but should be restored by midweek.

# Saddam supporters capture city in northern Iraq

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
DOKAN, Iraq — Kurdish allies of Saddam Hussein captured the last stronghold of their rebel rivals Monday, giving the Iraqi leader control over much of northern Iraq for the first time since the Persian Gulf War.

With Iraqi troops trailing close behind, the Kurdistan Democratic Party claimed control of the city of Sulaymaniyah after the crumbling forces of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan abandoned their posts, U.N. workers in the city said. "The PUK had withdrawn and the KDP walked in," said Stafford Clarry, the head of a U.N. guard unit in Sulaymaniyah, Iraqi Kurdistan's second-largest city.

About 50,000 of Sulaymaniyah's 400,000 people fled in advance of the offensive, leaving the city quiet after its fall, Clarry said.

The United States, which launched missile strikes against southern Iraq last week, made clear it has no plans to take sides in the fighting between the Kurdish factions, who have frequently shifted alliances in the course of their conflict.

The missile strikes appeared to discourage

Saddam's forces from taking a direct role in the fighting, but it has not slowed the Saddam-allied KDP.

KDP fighters claimed they entered Sulaymaniyah on Monday evening after residents rebelled to force out a rival, Iranian-backed Kurdish faction and its leader, Jalal Talabani.

The city was the last stronghold left in the hands of the PUK forces after they lost Irbil, the area's de facto capital, on Aug. 31 in a KDP offensive backed by the Iraqi army.

The capture of Sulaymaniyah means Saddam effectively wields control over much of northern Iraq for the first time since the U.S.-led forces established a Kurdish "safe haven" after the 1991 Gulf War.

The town of Dokan fell to the KDP earlier in the day, giving the Kurdish group control of a dam that supplies water and power to the region.

Along a convoy of KDP fighters entered Dokan with strips of yellow ribbon — the faction's color — tied to their guns.

Some Dokan residents offered water to KDP fighters and waved yellow flags, yelling "Piroz be!" — "Congratulations" in Kurdish.

As his fighters claimed the town, KDP leader Massoud Barzani stood on a hill just outside, saluting his men as they entered.

"This is the end of the collaborator," he said, referring to PUK leader Talabani's alliance with Iraq.

Traveling in trucks, taxis and even old Mercedes-Benz sedans, the KDP troops encountered a few sniper ambushes, but quickly responded with heavy artillery fire into hills covered with dry golden grass.

The PUK had put up stiff resistance until Monday, but appeared unable to hold back the onslaught. Iraqi forces were advancing across the region behind the front-line KDP fighters but were not playing a major role in the fighting, according to most accounts.

In Washington, President Bill Clinton said the conflict won't be resolved until the Kurds stop fighting among themselves.

"I would still like to do more to help the Kurds," Clinton said. "But frankly, if you want the fighting to be ended, the leaders of the various factions are going to have to be willing to go back to the peace table and talk it through."

## IN THE NEWS

Top stories from the state, nation and world

### Clinton orders tightening of airport security

WASHINGTON — Promising safer skies, President Bill Clinton issued orders Monday to tighten airport security and challenged Congress to support a \$1.1 billion anti-terrorism crackdown. "Terrorists don't wait," the president said. "And neither should we."

Clinton unveiled the proposals in an Oval Office ceremony designed to reassure jittery Americans after last year's Oklahoma City bombing and the explosion of TWA Flight 800 less than two months ago.

"As a result of these steps, not only will the American people feel safer, they will be safer," the president declared of the proposal that comes just two months before the election.

The White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security, which un-

veiled its recommendations last week, formally presented them to the president Monday. In embracing the report, Clinton:

— Ordered immediate criminal background checks of airline workers with access to secure areas.

— Ordered the Federal Aviation Administration to set up a system in selected airports to match each piece of luggage with a passenger.

— Promised to sign an executive order making the National Transportation Safety Board the point agency to help families of plane crash victims.

— Announced that the U.S. military will provide several dozen specially trained dogs for security at key airports. The airport safety recommendations would cost \$429.4 million.

### Netanyahu wants peace talks with Syria reopened

WASHINGTON — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu looked to the Clinton administration Monday to reopen peace talks with Syria, but ruled out pullout of the Golan Heights as a precondition for peace with the Arab nation.

"Like us, the United States wants the talks resumed," Netanyahu said. "I don't know if Syria wants it. We are looking for a solution in words."

A senior Israeli official said the main

obstacle was Syria's insistence that Israel first commit itself to a withdrawal from the Golan Heights as a part of a peace accord.

The official, insisting on anonymity, said Israel would not agree to a land-for-peace arrangement, meaning that it would not give up the strategic high ground it won in the 1967 Six Day War.

Former Prime Minister Shimon Peres' Labor-led government, which Netanyahu ousted in national elections May 29, implicitly agreed to Syria's demand, the official said, but it was not binding on the new government in Jerusalem.

Netanyahu is also telling the administration the Mideast peace process could fall apart if Israeli troops were withdrawn from the volatile West Bank town of Hebron without solid security guarantees.

Deflecting a U.S. call for a prompt redeployment, restricting the troops to guarding some 400 Jewish settlers, Netanyahu said he had told Secretary of State Warren Christopher that "improving the security in Hebron is not only an Israeli interest but it is a Palestinian interest."

### Former adviser called before House committee

WASHINGTON — Former campaign adviser Dick Morris has been asked by a House committee chairman to an-

swer questions about his reported statement that Hillary Rodham Clinton was behind the collection of hundreds of confidential FBI files on former Republican officials.

Rep. William Clinger, R-Pa., chairman of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee, said in a statement that he "was astonished to learn from news reports" that Morris "has information linking the first lady to the improper review of at least 900 confidential FBI files."

In a letter dated Saturday and made public Sunday, Clinger asked Morris to "affirm by sworn statement" the truthfulness of his reported contents and to supply all "correspondence, e-mail, memos, talking points, briefing papers, polling data, telephone records and other records" on the subject. Clinger said Morris had agreed to respond by 5 p.m. today. Clinger said his committee, which has led the investigation into how the FBI files ended up in a White House security office, "may need to take additional efforts to secure sworn testimony from you." He has suggested that Morris may be subpoenaed to appear before the committee.

The Star supermarket tabloid released excerpts Friday from the diaries of a prostitute in which she wrote that Morris had blamed Mrs. Clinton for the White House's acquisition of the files. Morris resigned after the tabloid revealed what it

said was his longtime relationship with the call girl.

White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta, appearing Sunday on CNN's "Late Edition," said it was his understanding that Morris "did call the campaign to indicate that there was no truth to this story."

"I think you also have to look at the source of this story," Panetta said. "I mean, we're still operating off of a tabloid story."

### Perot promises to abolish existing tax system

DALLAS — In his second TV infomercial of the campaign, Ross Perot promised to abolish the existing tax system if elected president and use computer-generated models to come up with a simpler, fairer alternative.

Perot said he would use the Internal Revenue Service's computer databases to test several tax ideas — including a flat tax, a consumption tax, a national sales tax, a savings tax, a value-added tax and a financial transaction tax — and find the best plan. "The computer will have the same role in this effort that a wind tunnel would have in creating a new airplane," the Reform Party candidate said Sunday night in a half-hour campaign infomercial broadcast on NBC.

Perot said he would also rely on the help of IRS employees and "the leading

authorities on taxes," including several members of Congress, to come up with creative alternatives.

The idea, he said, is to scrap the current complicated income tax code for a simpler one that is paperless and not shaped by special interests that lobby Congress.

"As your president, I will return our tax system to one that will pay our bills and tap the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of America to create millions of new jobs here in the U.S.A.," he pledged.

"We must carry this same spirit of reform to the other programs in government that have runaway costs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and welfare — and we will," he added.

Part biography, part testimony and part oratory, Perot's ad included not only a plan to revamp the IRS, but also a plea to send in money for his presidential campaign.

In 1992, when the Texas billionaire won 19 percent of the vote, he paid for his own independent White House bid, spending \$60 million. This time, under his new Reform Party banner, Perot agreed not to dip into his own pocket in exchange for receiving more than \$29 million in federal funds to campaign. In contrast, President Clinton and Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole each got twice that amount for the general election contest.

FROM WIRE REPORTS