

The Daily Tar Heel

INSIDE WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 25, 1996



School violence

Police are still investigating a Chapel Hill High School assault that happened Sept. 13. *Page 5*



Laugh it up

One of New York's top comics will perform at B-GLAD's comedy night this Thursday. *Page 7*



Debatable decision

Ross Perot is filing a lawsuit to be allowed in the presidential candidates' debates. *Page 8*

Today's Weather

Mostly sunny; high 70s.
Thursday: Sunny; high 70s.

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News/Features/Arts/Sports: 962-0245
Business/Advertising: 962-1163
Volume 104, Issue 76
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
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Couch burners plead to misdemeanor charge

■ The fraternity members must apologize in letters to the editor to local papers.

BY SHARIF DURHAMS
ASSISTANT UNIVERSITY EDITOR

A Chapel Hill District Court Judge asked two Kappa Alpha fraternity members Tuesday to apologize to the community for setting an Aug. 17 couch fire near the scene of the tragic Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house fire.

When Colin Campbell Clode and

Charles Davis Allen pled guilty to a misdemeanor state building code violation of having an open fire without a permit, Judge A. B. Coleman said the two should send a letter to the editor to local papers before he decided their sentence.

"I think it would be good for the entire public to hear from them," Coleman said. "I want to see what their views are about what (Clode and Davis) did."

The defendants' lawyers requested a prayer for judgement Tuesday, and Coleman told them he would consider it after local papers published the letter.

Clode and Davis were arrested and charged with setting the couch ablaze on



Kappa Alpha members COLIN CLODE and CHARLES ALLEN asked for a prayer for judgement.

West Cameron Avenue, near the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house where

five students died in a fire on May 12. "My client in no way wanted to disrespect the memories of those who died," said Davis' attorney Mark Bibbs.

The state dropped felony charges of willful or malicious burning of property against Clode and Davis and a charge of misdemeanor larceny against Clode during the morning court session.

The larceny charge was dropped when Bibbs presented evidence that Davis owned the couch.

"You can't be convicted of stealing your own property," Bibbs said.

Clode's attorney, James Stanford, said the charges were an attempt to find a

scapegoat for the deadly fire.

"We're talking about charging these men with a violation of a state building code for burning a couch," he said.

"Our clients know what they did was foolish," he said. "It was just a foolish fraternity prank done on a dare."

District Attorney Carl Fox said the burning was no laughing matter.

"I don't think this is anything to laugh at or to take in any way lightly," he said.

Clode and Davis are scheduled to return to court Nov. 14 for Coleman to make his ruling. If he grants the prayer

SEE COUCH, PAGE 8

Families comforted at house



Part four of a five-part series

BY JULIA WOOD
STAFF WRITER

When a person becomes seriously ill, the family is left with some difficult choices and worries. The Ronald McDonald House of Chapel Hill makes it possible for families to be close to their loved ones in a homelike setting.

The first Ronald McDonald House opened in Philadelphia in 1974. Its mission was and continues to be to provide housing for families of ill children who are being treated at hospitals away from their homes.

The Chapel Hill Ronald McDonald House, located at 101 Old Mason Farm Road, opened in April 1988.

"We are a temporary home for families of seriously ill children who are being treated at UNC Hospitals," said Sheri West, Development and Public Relations Director.

West said the house, which has 20 bedrooms, was basically run by volunteers.

"We only have three full-time employees," she said. "Volunteers are really crucial."

The house currently has more than 100 volunteers, 10 to 12 of which West estimated were college students. She said volunteers mainly did jobs like setting up rooms, leading orientation sessions and answering phones.

West said individuals could get involved with the Ronald McDonald House by calling Programs Coordinator Clare Adkins, who works with volunteers.

She also said various campus organizations had gotten involved by working at fund-raising events, cooking meals for families and doing work around the house and yard.

Mike Vernon, a recent UNC graduate, volunteers at the house every Tuesday night from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. He said he became interested in the house through

SEE HOUSE, PAGE 2

Candidates present platforms to council

BY MARY-KATHRYN CRAFT
STAFF WRITER

Applicants for the Chapel Hill Town Council's vacant seat addressed development, mass transit, waste management and other issues at Tuesday night's public hearing.

In the ongoing process designed to fill the seat vacated by Barbara Booth-Powell's death in July, the council heard presentations and asked questions of Louise Stone and Edith Wiggins. The council will consider comments and make an appointment at the Oct. 7 special meeting.

Stone, director of publications at the N.C. Department of Labor, said she wanted to be part of the process that would promote Chapel Hill as a fine place to live. She said the town was growing, and development issues presented a dilemma to town officials.

"It's a dilemma because you have the rights of citizens vs. the common good," Stone said. "You have to address each event, each development, each problem as they arrive. I don't know that you can say yes or no to development. Growth is inevitable."

In response to a question asked by council member Joe Capowski, Stone said she would have voted for both Meadowmont and Southern Village developments.

Wiggins, who is UNC interim vice chancellor for student affairs until her Oct. 1 retirement, said she trusted the

council had made the correct decision about Meadowmont.

"I can't answer that question because I didn't have access to that information (about Meadowmont)," Wiggins said. "I trust that you made the best decision."

Wiggins said the impact of growth and development on the town's infrastructure was important to her. She said she would want to preserve neighborhoods from traffic cut-throughs unless such thoroughfares were necessary for public safety.

Council members also asked applicants questions about transportation issues. Wiggins said a transit system was essential to the community.

Stone said approximately 30,000 people came in to the town each day, and there was a need for a better transportation system. "I think also if we plan to serve a community of different income levels... then you have to study possibilities of mass transit," Stone said.

Applicants also explained which town issues they felt should be regarded as regional matters.

Stone said she thought the landfill should be a county matter. "I'm not sure why there should be a garbage dump in Chapel Hill," Stone said.

Wiggins said she felt waste management and other issues should be worked out within the region.

"I believe issues like transportation, possibly solid waste management, are the kinds of issues that lend themselves to regional solutions," Wiggins said.

STUMPING



Republican gubernatorial candidate Robin Hayes visits Chapel Hill for the first time since this summer. Hayes spoke about his platform planks, including education and prison reform. *See story, page 3.*

DTH/CARA BRICKMAN

Volunteer base drives executive branch

This is the first of a three-part series.
BY JESSICA GALAZKA
STAFF WRITER

Tasha Venters was bored with life on South Campus. Looking for a way to air her views on what goes on at UNC, the freshman from Eatontown, N.J., walked into Suite C of the Student Union, headquarters of the executive branch of stu-

dent government.

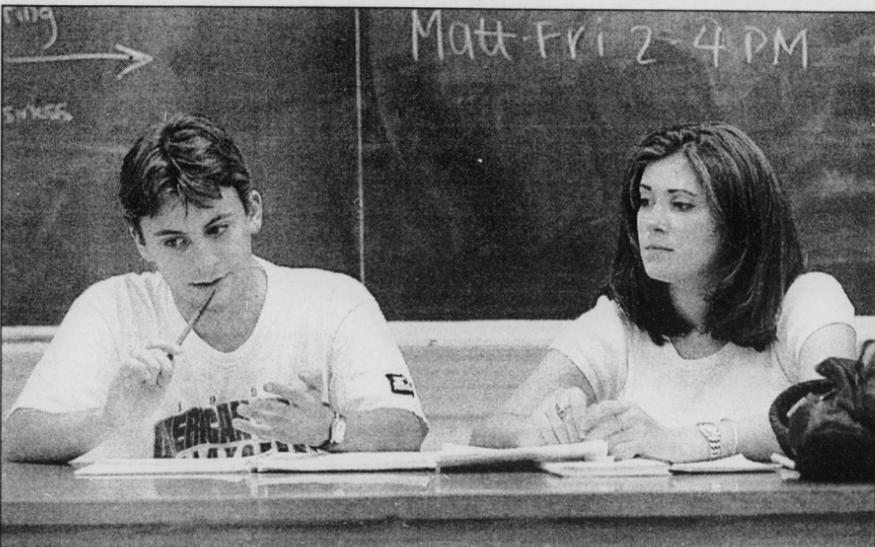
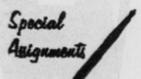
"So many older friends complain, and I realized that if I get involved, I could do something," Venters said.

This fall, more than 200 UNC students are dedicating their time and ef-

orts to work behind the scenes of the executive branch. While the student body president and vice president talk to the media, negotiate with the administration and preside over meetings, this army of volunteers does the day-to-day work to make student government run smoothly.

Rebecca Jamison, a junior from Haver-

SEE STUDENT GOVERNMENT, PAGE 5



Much of the work of the executive branch is done in committees. Thursday night Co-chairmen Matt Mesmer and Ray Fuerst led a meeting of the External Affairs Committee, which represents students in state and local government.

DTH/M.C. STEED

Gantt, Helms scramble for middle ground in 'kinder, gentler' U.S. Senate rematch

BY ROBIN SMITH
STAFF WRITER

In 1990, Harvey Gantt and Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., stood at opposite ends of the political spectrum and hurled negative ads at each other.

Six years later, they meet again, but this time in the middle of the road.

Gantt, a Democrat, has stressed the importance of family and "old-fashioned values," emphasizing respect for parents, the law and each other.

Gantt has also adopted conservative-sounding issues such as opposing gay marriages, advocating welfare reform and calling for the elimination of parole for drug dealers and violent criminals.

In an address to the Democratic Na-



Sen. JESSE HELMS, R-N.C., defeated HARVEY GANTT in a close 1990 campaign.

tional Convention, Gantt said, "We value strong families that struggle to stay together. We do not value deadbeat parents who abandon their children.

"We value hard work. Welfare depen-

dency if you can get a job is not something to flaunt before those who work two or three jobs just to get by."

Dalit Toledano, spokeswoman for the Gantt campaign, said, "This is not a 'new' Gantt, but the real Gantt. This year, he is simply telling people who he is."

However, David Lowery, professor of political science at UNC, said the whole Democratic Party is moving toward the middle. "Gantt is just reflecting the change in tone of the party," he said.

Political observers have noted that even Helms, famous nationwide for his "ultra-conservative" views, has mel- lowed. For example, Helms said over the

SEE HELMS-GANTT, PAGE 4

Judge: housekeeper mediation not yet needed

STAFF REPORT

Following a conference call Tuesday morning, attorneys for the UNC Housekeepers Association and the University will attempt to negotiate for at least a few more days without a mediator.

Judge Brenda Becton said that she was withholding her decision until the parties continued negotiations on their own, housekeepers' attorney Al McSurely said.

"The University wanted two more days to settle by Thursday," he said.

The attorneys will talk with Becton at 5 p.m. Thursday, when she will decide on the need for mediation.

Becton also laid down some other deadlines Tuesday.

By Oct. 15 she will send a letter to all black employees in Steps 50 to 52, the three lowest-paid positions, who have worked at the University any time from Sept. 22, 1993, to the present. The letter, a notice of participation to the class, will inform the more than 500 current and former employees about the housekeep-

ers' lawsuit and allow them to opt out of the class action.

The housekeepers filed the racial discrimination lawsuit against the University in 1992.

Becton also said the earliest she could clear a week from her court calendar would be the week of Feb. 3, 1997, McSurely said.

The housekeepers were supposed to go to court Monday, but a last-minute call for negotiations from the Black Faculty-Staff Caucus delayed the trial.

Doing what you like is freedom; liking what you do is happiness.

Unknown