

# The Daily Tar Heel

**INSIDE TUESDAY**  
OCTOBER 8, 1996



**Search for justice**

Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation teaches alternatives to the death penalty. Page 2



**Getting a Head Start on life**

A new Head Start center is set to open in Carrboro this week. Page 5



**Sow what?**

The University is replacing approximately 150 trees that were damaged by Hurricane Fran. Page 6

**Today's Weather**

Mostly cloudy, rain; mid 60s.  
Wednesday: Sunny, high 60s.

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## Students, officials differ on sprinkler options

BY KELLY GILBERT  
STAFF WRITER

The Chapel Hill Town Council heard the reactions of students and residents alike in a public hearing concerning mandatory sprinkler systems in fraternity and sorority houses as well as multifamily and nonresidential buildings.

The debate about requiring new buildings and existing Greek houses to have sprinkler systems began after five students were killed in the May 12 Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house fire.

Chapel Hill Fire Department Chief Dan Jones presented the possible ordinances requiring sprinkler installation.

Ordinance A requires installation of sprinkler systems in fraternity and sorority houses within five years.

Ordinance B allows seven years for this installation if preliminary fire precautions, such as fire alarms and fire escapes, are installed within the first two years.

The fire department recommends Option A, Jones said.

"Fraternity and sorority houses represent some of the largest fire hazards in Chapel Hill because (in the houses) we have multiple ignition sources, and young folks have a limited sense of their own risks," Jones said. "They have a sense of immortality."

Student Body President Aaron Nelson spoke in support of Option B. "B shows the town is flexible." Option B gives students more options and time to complete the safety requirements, he said.

Nelson expressed concern about the cost of the sprinkler installations. Proposed costs have gone as high as \$50,000.

"I ask the town to actively support fraternities and sororities in financing this," Nelson said.

Brett Perry, a senior from Chapel Hill, said he also supported Option B.

"It makes the fraternities and sororities have a fire system installed in the first two years and allows five years to install sprinklers," he said.

Dean of Students Fred Schroeder said he also supported Option B. "As I understand it, under Option A, a house could wait up to four and a half years to begin installation," he said. "I prefer Option B to speed up the fire prevention."

Randy Cox, chairman of the Greek Affairs Committee, said the committee's first recommendation was for the sprinklers to be installed in the houses.

"It's imperative that this is a mandatory system," Cox said.

The council also heard comments from residents regarding automatic sprinkler systems in new and extensively renovated structures within town limits.

The sprinkler systems would be in-

stalled in multifamily residential buildings with more than three attached housing units and nonresidential buildings.

The council heard four options for multifamily residential buildings and five for nonresidential buildings.

Jones said the fire department recommended the option in both cases that requires sprinklers in buildings which exceed two stories and 6,000 square feet.

Nick Tennyson of the Home Builders Association spoke for his colleagues.

"We will be worried about the cost," he said.

The council referred the issue to Town Manager Cal Horton. It will come before them again at a later date.

## Court rules on resolution to quiet SBP

■ The decision will be announced at Wednesday's Student Congress meeting.

BY LYNN WADFORD  
STAFF WRITER

Students will have to wait until Wednesday to find out if Student Congress' decision to limit Student Body President Aaron Nelson's ex officio rights was constitutional, said Wendy Sarratt, chief justice of Student Supreme Court.

On Friday, Nelson filed a formal complaint in Student Supreme Court concerning the constitutionality of the process that limited his ex officio powers.

The court made its decision Sunday night, but did not want to announce the results until Wednesday's Student Congress meeting.

"The problem is the Constitution is 50 years old, and it should not be changed in the middle of the night by a simple resolution," Nelson said. "To change the Constitution, a bill must be sent to committee and approved by two-thirds of Congress and then approved by student body vote. They changed the Constitution unconstitutionally."

Student Congress passed the resolution limiting Nelson's powers at its Sept. 25 meeting. The Student Constitution was changed by immediate consideration of the resolution and passed by a majority vote of Student Congress.

The resolution, introduced by Reps. Jason Jolley, Dist. 16; James Hoffman, Dist. 15; and Bryan Kennedy, Dist. 4, limits ex officio members to a single, two-minute period to speak on any bill or motion in Student Congress debates and prevents them from making motions or objections from the floor. However, ex officio members still retain full powers of debate and discussion in committees.

One problem that sparked the limitation was the length of Student Congress meetings, Speaker of Student Congress James Kilbourne said. The desired result was to shorten the length of the meetings by limiting the rights of ex officio Student Congress members. Another problem was the lack of a definite meaning to ex officio, he said. "The whole point is what does ex officio mean?"

Student Congress does agree on what the student body president's rights are, Kilbourne said. The president should be able to speak in Student Congress without having to be recognized by a congressman. He cannot vote, but he is able to write and introduce bills without a congressman's support. The president can also speak on any bill, Kilbourne said.

But that leaves a questionable area in Student Congress' code as to how long the student body president can speak on a bill and the extent to which he can make motions during Student Congress meetings, Kilbourne said.

"Although we may disagree on what powers the Constitution grants the president, I think we all realize that the code creates a gray area."

## Balanced budget good theory, tough practice

BY TONY MECIA  
STAFF WRITER

UNC students and the federal government both know about running up debt. While students carry big credit card balances, Uncle Sam has run large deficits since the early 1980s.

And now, 15 years later, as the budget grows larger and explosive entitlement spending looms closer, public attention around the country and at UNC is trained on ensuring that federal expenditures match revenues.

Though most Americans support a balanced budget, they also like the services government provides, leaving politicians in Washington with mixed messages about the nation's priorities.

"You have to decide what's more important," said Sophia Gates, a freshman from Shelby. "You want everything, but you can't have everything."

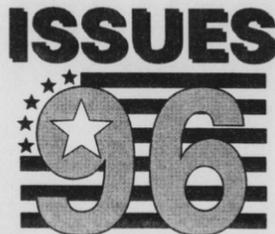
Gates' sentiments reflect those of many students who grew up when politicians spent taxpayer money faster than they received it.

The bill for those deficits is now coming due: the U.S. government spends \$240 billion per year on interest on the national debt, a full 15 percent of the budget.

And while past deficits are consuming current budgets, future fiscal problems loom on the horizon. Social Security and Medicare, entitlement programs that cover senior citizens, currently cost \$542 billion per year, or 35 percent of the budget. These programs are expected to become even more costly when the oldest baby boomers begin to retire around 2010. By 2029, analysts say, there will be fewer than three workers supporting each beneficiary.

Twenty-three-year-old John Tottie, a tax and budget specialist with Citizens for a Sound Economy in Washington, D.C., warns that without changes to Social Security and Medicare young people will have to pay heavily in 10 or 20 years.

"We'll be paying almost all of our



money in the future to the government in one way or another," Tottie said. "The president's own budget shows a lifetime tax rate of 80 percent if we uphold the commitments he's made."

Indeed, twenty-somethings seem to be pinched between the past and the future. They're stuck with payments on the debt accumulated while they were teenagers, and if the status quo is maintained, they will be forced to pay in the future for programs that benefit their parents' generation.

In recent years, attempts have been made to trim the federal deficit, which would slow the national debt's rate of growth. The debt is the combination of each year's deficit.

Deficits declined in the late 1980s, climbed sharply in the early '90s and decreased to \$140 billion in 1996. Deficit control packages typically include tax increases and spending cuts, two politically unpopular policies.

William Keech, UNC professor of political science, credits both parties with the limited success in reducing the deficit. He said President Clinton and the Republican-led Congress had made some tough choices that brought the United States closer to a balanced budget.

"When making policy, they have addressed this problem in a responsible way," Keech said. Congress and the president have agreed to produce a balanced budget by 2002.

But policies designed to force the budget into balance have not worked, Keech



"You have to decide what's more important. You want everything, but you can't have everything."

SOPHIA GATES  
Freshman



"The Republican Party is focused on cutting taxes and that's an election technique. We do need to raise taxes."

BRANDON ASHCROFT  
Sophomore

said. Politicians ignored or disobeyed the 1985 Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act, which mandated across-the-board cuts if certain deficit reduction levels were not met. It was formally discarded in 1990.

A balanced budget amendment, which was part of the Republican "Contract with America," remains a popular idea. The amendment passed the House of Representatives last year but fell one vote short in the Senate.

"I like the balanced budget amendment proposal because it puts it into law to keep the budget balanced," said Matt Ross, a sophomore from Durham. "It's the responsibility of the government to keep the deficit from climbing."

Some economists, though, think balancing the budget should take a back seat to funding essential government services. "I think it's insane," said Arthur Benavie, a UNC professor of economics who is writing a book about deficits and debt. "It's crazy to tell the federal government that it can't borrow to pay for public works."

Benavie said infrastructure projects like highways and toxic waste treatment

plants are too costly to be paid for with current taxes.

While producing a balanced budget remains politically popular, there is hardly any constituency lobbying hard for a balanced budget or spending cuts, said John Tottie of Citizens for a Sound Economy.

"There's no incentive for taxpayers to go after any individual programs," he said. "Everyone agrees in the abstract that sure, cutting spending is a good thing. But as soon as you get to specifics, you annoy special interests."

The United States Student Association, a lobbying group for increased educational spending, feared that a balanced budget would dry up taxpayer money for educational programs.

"The USSA opposed all balanced budget amendments that came out because all would have resulted in huge, disproportionate cuts in education," said Kazim Ali, president of the USSA and a student at the State University of New York at Albany.

Ali suggests that instead of targeting education, politicians should cut defense

### The Daily Tar Heel

#### Top 5 Campus Issues

The Daily Tar Heel conducted an intercept poll of 395 people on campus from Sept. 10 to Sept. 15 to determine which of 24 issues were most important to the University. Of 24 possible answers, respondents chose the following five as the most important. See page 4 for more of Issues '96.

- 1 Schools and education
- 2 Crime
- 3 Abortion
- 4 Balancing the budget
- 5 The environment

## Town Council taps former UNC vice chancellor to fill vacant seat

BY MARY-KATHRYN CRAFT  
STAFF WRITER

The Chapel Hill Town Council unanimously appointed Edith Wiggins to fill its vacant seat Monday.

Monday night's vote was the final step in a process that began in August to fill the seat vacated by six-year council member Barbara Booth-Powell's July death.

Wiggins, retired UNC vice chancellor of student affairs, and Louise Stone, director of publications at the N.C. Department of Labor, applied for the vacant council seat. Both candidates presented their platforms at a public hearing Sept. 24.

Wiggins was installed as the council's newest member immediately following her appointment. She said she looked forward to working on the council.

"I want to thank all the council mem-

bers," Wiggins said. "I pledge to work with all of you ... to make Chapel Hill a place we will all enjoy."

In a prepared statement, Stone said she felt privileged to have been a part of democracy at work.

However, Stone said she was bothered by the lack of interest in the vacant seat because there were only two candidates.

"The lack of interest and absence of more candidates from the minority community is a disconcerting commentary about Chapel Hill's political climate that does not appear to excite a greater inter-



EDITH WIGGINS was chosen to fill the seat left vacant by Barbara Booth-Powell's death.

est among all segments of the population," she said.

When asked in a previous interview if she agreed it was important to have a minority on the council, Wiggins said she thought "diversity wherever we can have it enhances any body of people."

Wiggins, who has lived in Chapel Hill for more than 32 years, said she wanted to give back to the community with the extra time her retirement would provide.

"My intent is to become involved in the life of the community and the council is a good way to do so," she said.

Council member Julie Andresen said although she wished more people had applied for the vacant seat, she thought both candidates were qualified for the position.

She said she hoped both candidates would remain involved with town government.

## Observers claim debate swayed no voters

■ But Clinton looked more comfortable in the debate format, a professor says.

BY ROBIN SMITH  
STAFF WRITER

Heated exchanges might have marked Sunday night's debate between President Bill Clinton and Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole, but observers noted that it lacked the power to sway votes.

"It wasn't a great debate in the sense of Lincoln-Douglas, but this was a very serious discussion and to the point — about as good as it can get," said David Lowery, political science professor at UNC.

The debate, complete with sharp words and humorous interludes, focused strongly on education and taxes.

Clinton was clearly the debate winner, Lowery said. "He defended his record, and that's what an incumbent candidate has to do in debates."

Erik Doxtader, professor of commu-

nication studies at UNC, agreed. "Clinton did a better job of answering the questions and came across a little better on his feet."

Doxtader said Clinton was more comfortable in the debating environment. "Dole has trouble speaking in an impromptu fashion. At times he sounded like George Bush — there were points at which he wound himself in a circle."

However, Jason Evans, UNC campus coordinator of the Dole-Kemp campaign and chairman of Students for Dole-Kemp, said Dole definitely won the debate.

"Both candidates articulated their positions clearly but Dole's vision is better for America's future," he said.

Evans also emphasized that the Dole candidacy was especially important for younger voters. He noted that Dole supports student loans, school choice and educational reform.

"If you're a low- or middle-income American, you can't afford to send your children to private schools as Clinton can," he said. "A very important part of the debate and Dole's vision of America is that Clinton doesn't support true school

choice and Dole does."

David Wade, national president of the College Democrats of America, disagreed. "Bob Dole doesn't understand young people."

"He said, 'I like young people,' but if the way he likes us is by voting against the first ever federal student loan program in 1965, which he did, voting against the Student Loan Reform Act of 1993, which he did, and voting in Gingrich's Congress to gut AmeriCorps National Service and eliminate federal spending, I'd be afraid to see what he'd be like if he didn't like young people."

But Courtney Davis, a junior communications major from Wake Forest, said, "Even with the years he has over Clinton, Dole is much more attuned to issues for young people."

Aside from education, taxes were a large focus of the debate as well.

Dole noted that in 1993 Clinton admitted he "had raised taxes too much." Clinton in turn recalled that 10 years ago, Kemp, Dole's running mate, said Dole

SEE DEBATE, PAGE 2

*Lead me not into temptation; I can find the way myself.*

Rita Mae Brown