

# WEEKLY SUMMER ISSUE

## The Daily Tar Heel

**INSIDE THURSDAY**  
MAY 29, 1997

### Curtain closes on comedy troupe

Selected Hilarity will stage its final show tonight at the Union Cabaret. Page 4

### Trudging ahead for a good cause

Local officials took part in a run to raise funds for the Special Olympics. Page 2

### Roberts reels in national honors

Shortstop Brian Roberts was named the country's top freshman. Page 7

### Today's Weather

Partly cloudy, high mid-70s.

Friday, Cloudy, high near 80.

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## Williamson files \$1 million damage suit

The suit seeks damages for alleged negligence on the part of UNC officials.

BY KATHERINE BROWN  
CITY EDITOR

A lawyer for former UNC law student Wendell Williamson, who killed two people in a January 1995 shooting rampage, filed a civil suit May 21 claiming damages because of negligence on the part of University officials.

The suit, filed with the North Carolina Industrial Commission, names Dr. Myron Liptzin, a former psychiatrist at Student Health Services; Winston Crisp, associate dean for student affairs in the School of Law; and Frederic

Schroeder, who was dean of students at UNC at the time.

The suit alleges the three were negligent in that they knew of Williamson's mental illness and did not take steps to ensure that he received proper treatment.

Since all three were working as employees of UNC at the time of the alleged negligence, the suit is actually being brought against the University.

"It's an important suit to everybody that's involved in it," Williamson's attorney, Nick Gordon, said on Tuesday.

Crisp, the suit states, had gained specific knowledge of Williamson's condition after a March 1994 incident in which Williamson disrupted a law school class.

"(Williamson) spoke at length with Dean Crisp relating his belief that he

had telepathic powers that people were physically injuring him with their thoughts, and that they were envious of his special powers," the suit states.

According to the suit, Crisp discussed Williamson's problems with Schroeder.

"Realizing the serious nature of Wendell's problems," the suit states, "Dean Crisp in effect required Wendell to seek counseling at Student



A suit filed by former UNC law student WENDELL WILLIAMSON claims the University had a responsibility to see that he got treatment.

Health."

The suit claims Liptzin, as Williamson's psychiatrist, should have arranged for the proper transfer of Williamson's treatment to another physician upon his retirement in June 1994.

"After Dr. Liptzin's retirement, no efforts were made by him, Dean Crisp, Dean Schroeder or any other persons at Student Health, The School of Law, or the UNC administration to monitor Wendell's psychiatric condition," the suit states.

Because of the nature of Williamson's illness, the suit states, he was unaware of the severity of his condition and did not seek further treatment on his own.

On Jan. 26, 1995, Williamson opened fire with a semi-automatic military rifle

on Franklin Street pedestrians. Ralph Walker Jr. and Kevin Reichardt, a UNC lacrosse player, were killed in the incident.

The action claims that because of the negligence by UNC officials, Williamson suffered physical, mental, emotional and economic damages.

The suit lists \$150,000 as the amount sought, but states the damage is actually much higher. It states Williamson would like to seek \$1 million if such an amount would be rewarded.

In a similar Industrial Commission claim of negligence on the part of the University, Karl and Carol Reichardt, the parents of Kevin Reichardt, are seeking \$150,000 to \$1 million for the death of their son.

Schroeder said Tuesday he had been advised not to comment.

## County rabies epidemic hits town borders

Authorities confirmed that the disease had spread to Chapel Hill on May 22.

BY KATHERINE BROWN  
CITY EDITOR

The first confirmed case of rabies within Chapel Hill town limits was discovered May 22, according to Orange County Animal Control reports. It was the second case of the disease in southern Orange County within the past week.

The latest case was discovered in Umstead Park by a local woman walking her two dogs along Bolin Creek.

One of the dogs attacked and killed a raccoon, which was later found to carry the disease. Although both dogs had been vaccinated two months ago, they were revaccinated as an extra precaution.

John Sauls, director of Orange County Animal Control, reiterated Tuesday the importance of keeping pets indoors at night.

"With the onset of the past two cases, as expected, the rabies epidemic is moving towards the Southern portion of the county," Sauls said.

"It is imperative that pet owners take precautions to ensure the safety of their children and pets from suspicious wildlife or other unfamiliar pets."

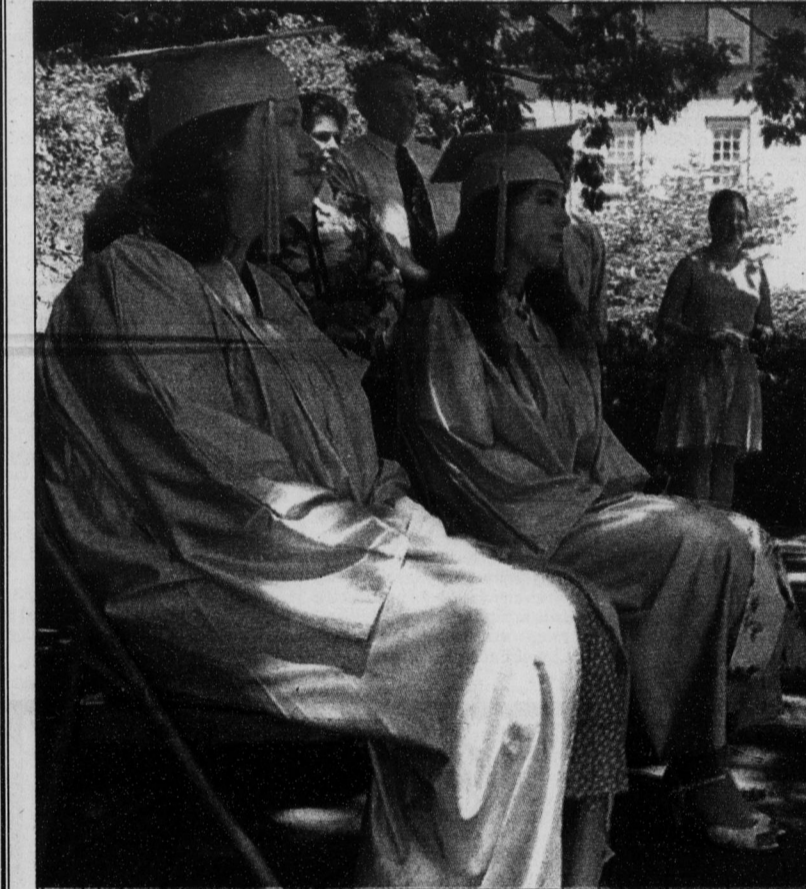
Animal Control has now confirmed 37 cases of rabies in Orange County since the epidemic began last July.

Sauls said the last time North Carolina had a rabies outbreak, it was a canine-based epidemic that spanned the late 1940's and early 1950's.

He said this year's rabies problems are primarily wildlife-based, with most of the confirmed cases occurring in raccoons.

Animal Control states that in order to avoid exposure to rabies, people should do the following:

- Avoid contact with all wild animals, including stray dogs, puppies, cats and kittens.
  - Secure all trash so it does not attract animals.
  - Never feed pets outdoors.
  - Call a veterinarian or animal control department if your pet is attacked by a wild animal.
  - Confine animals to your property.
- According to animal control, wounds that might be exposed to rabies should be washed with soap and water for 10 minutes. This might effectively wash away the virus and thus prevent infection. After washing the wound, seek treatment from a health care provider immediately.



Tammy Bouchelle and Christina Blackwood finally received their diplomas in a special ceremony last week. Due to a computer error, they did not receive their diplomas with the rest of their class.

## Pomp and circumstance

BY MOLLY GRANTHAM  
UNIVERSITY EDITOR

Two undergraduates made University history by graduating in UNC's smallest and most informal commencement ceremony Friday at the Old Well.

Christine Blackwood of Chapel Hill and Tammy Bouchelle of Hays both thought they were graduating May 11 with the rest of the Class of 1997. Upon entering Kenan Stadium for the Commencement ceremonies, though, they discovered their names were not on the program and diplomas were not available.

"I was devastated," said Bouchelle, a history major and a University Distinguished Scholar. "It was a big deal to me. I'd worked four years for a diploma and it meant a lot to have one."

Chancellor Michael Hooker opened the informal ceremony, and UNC-system President C.D. Spangler followed with a personal apology to the two graduates.

"I apologize for the errors of the University," he said. "It is (our) responsibility to make sure things go well, and this time they didn't go exactly as planned."

Corbin Williams of Salisbury was also omitted from the program, but she was unable to come to the small ceremony. Her diploma was mailed.

The error occurred when the women registered to graduate in early spring. That day

the computers crashed, and no proof of their eligibility was recorded.

"Of course if it was to happen to anyone, it would happen to me," Bouchelle said.

After learning there was no diploma for her at Steele Building, Bouchelle immediately contacted administration members.

"I went to work on Monday and stomped out a letter for Spangler and Chancellor Hooker," she said. "The next day I was at work, and (separately) they both called."

Each apologized for the error, and plans for the informal ceremony were made.

At the ceremony itself, Blackwood and Bouchelle sat on folding chairs, with Hooker and Spangler standing before them and a handful of family members standing behind.

After Spangler's apology, Hooker personalized the conferring of degrees by telling the women he was quite familiar with their files and knew they would both be successful.

"Both of you are very bright women," he said. "You will both clearly have leadership positions in the state."

Both women said they appreciated the ceremony.

Hooker made light of the situation with his closing remarks.

"Well, the band would normally play," he said with a laugh. "But the band has all gone home for the summer."

## Law School defends negative numbers

BY JEFF YOUNG  
STAFF WRITER

In her meeting last week with the Board of Trustees Committee on Academic Affairs and Personell, Dean of the School of Law Judith Wegner took time to address concerns about several recent problems at the school.

Although negative publicity has stemmed from Barry Nakell's dismissal, a student's in-class smoke break and the school's dipping U.S. News World and Report ranking, Wegner told the committee these instances have not altered the effectiveness of the law school itself.

"The general tone (of the meeting) was positive and enjoyable," Wegner said.

Wegner countered the declining number of applicants for the law school's 1997 entering class with figures relating to the continued strength of the program, which now ranks 18th in the nation by reputation, according to U.S. News and World Report. The school is ranked 35th overall.

Heather Alston, president of the Student Bar Association, said she believed the fewer applications paralleled a national trend, not a falling of UNC's School into disfavor.

"The profession may not be viewed as exciting as it once was," she said.

"(But) UNC is still a great name to have on your résumé."

Applications to the law school dropped from 2,281 in 1996 to 1,720 this year, a figure which elicited concern from the committee.

Wegner, however, insisted the law school's applicant pool quality remains consistent, and graduates rate with those from higher-ranked law schools.

A 97 percent placement of 1996 graduates within nine months of graduation indicates the marketability of the students, Wegner said.

Committee member David Whichard said the reduced applicant pool prompted him to question Wegner about possibly reducing class size in the future.

"It's a trend we need to look at, but you certainly don't want to take action because of one year's numbers," Whichard said.

Wegner cited a "peak" wave of applicants, that included a large number of minority and



Dean of the UNC School of Law JUDITH WEGNER explained why there has been a drop in applicants.

"The profession may not be viewed as exciting as it once was, (but) UNC is still a great name to have on your résumé."

HEATHER ALSTON  
Student Bar Association President

over 30-year-old students, as contributing to the decline.

"There are generational and economic factors that affect the size of the applicant pool," Wegner said.

Increased non-resident tuition, a smaller undergraduate pool and a declining interest in law as a profession were other reasons Wegner pointed to as possible factors in the decreasing application numbers.

The law school's new faculty members — including a full-time health specialist — and an inherent strength in public service areas would aid the law school in future recruitment, Wegner added.

The law school supplies 40 percent of all North Carolina lawyers and 41 percent of North Carolina judges.

## Floyd: Position won't affect SBP

BY JOHN SWEENEY  
EDITOR

Like most May graduates, Aaron Nelson will head to work next week to begin his new job. Unlike his classmates, though, Nelson will not be going far; it's just a few hundred yards from his old stomping grounds in Suite C to South Building.

That's because Nelson will be filling a new position in the University administration, serving as a special assistant to Chancellor Michael Hooker and Executive Vice Chancellor Elson Floyd.

The job is a one-year appointment, with an option for renewal next year, Floyd said.

While the job description lists significant experience and knowledge of student government and student issues as a primary qualification, Floyd said it would not be reserved for the student body president every year.

"I think in some ways it will depend on the student body president," Floyd said.

Having elected student officials seeking jobs with the University could raise the specter of conflict of interest.

But Floyd said that should not be a problem.

"A lot of people, I suspect, will run for student offices with the intention of going into university administration," Floyd said. "I'm not sure if this will mean that all student body presidents will be

interested in coming to work here.

"It depends on their interests and goals after graduation."

The special assistant's primary responsibilities will be "directing special programs and projects at the direction of the Chancellor and the Executive Vice Chancellor."

Among these projects are next summer's Special Olympics and the recently-announced America Reads Program.

Hooker said last month that he modeled the job after similar positions at other universities. Hiring students is a common practice at other schools, he said.

Floyd also said the position would not serve as a buffer between students and the chancellor's office, despite the hiring of someone with longtime student contacts.

"We have a vice chancellor for Student Affairs whose position is specifically for dealing with student issues," Floyd said.

In any case, he added, the prestige that comes with being student body president at UNC would likely not be undermined by the presence of any former student government official.

"We have a very strong tradition for student body president here," Floyd said. "I don't think Aaron will in any way affect Mo Nathan's term as SBP."

If God is a Catholic, how come he only had one son?

Unknown