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Winter Break crime belies decrease in county figures

BY STEVE MRAZ
SENIOR WRITER

When some people returned to their homes after Winter Break, they knew someone else had been inside — and it wasn't Santa.

"There were a lot of break-ins at fraternities," said Jane Cousins, spokeswoman for the Chapel Hill Police Department.

"A few apartment complexes and single-family dwellings reported break-ins, but they were not hit that hard."

Several fraternity houses — including Phi Delta Theta, Pi Kappa Alpha, Beta Theta Pi, Zeta Psi and Sigma Alpha Epsilon — were broken into during the holiday season.

The string of break-ins contradicts an Orange County Sheriff's Department report released Monday, which showed that the number of major crimes decreased in 1997. 27 fewer break-ins occurred in 1997 compared to 1996.

According to the report, violent crimes — including murders, rapes, robberies, break-ins and larcenies — dropped slightly to 888 incidents from

891 in 1996.

Orange County Sheriff Lindy Pendergrass attributed community policing as one of the reasons the number of crimes had dropped.

In Chapel Hill, major crime in July, August and September of 1997 went down 4 percent compared to those same months in 1996, Cousins said.

"There have been decreases in robberies, aggravated assaults and burglaries," she said.

While the number of robberies has gone down in the county and Chapel Hill, three armed robberies have been reported on the UNC campus since Sept. 23.

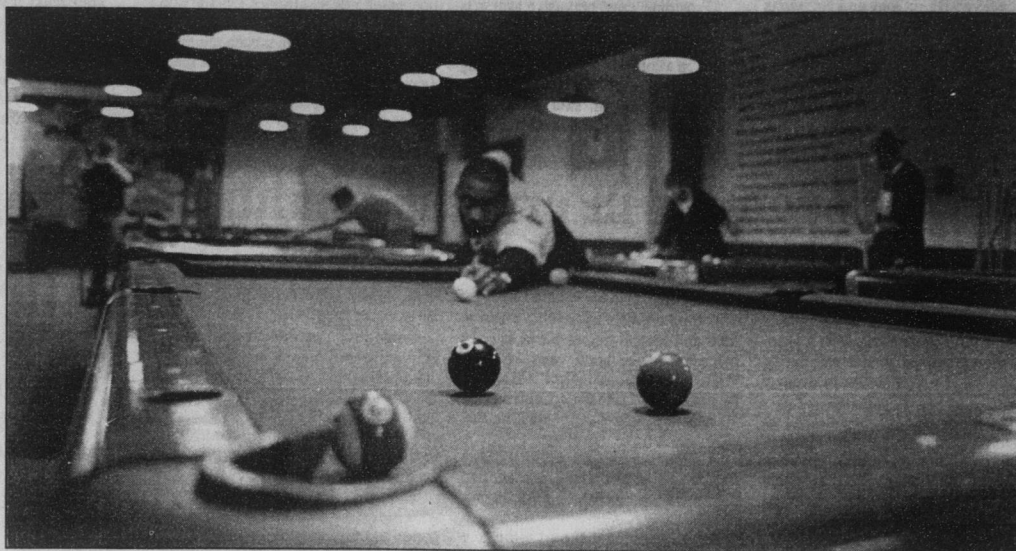
In an ironic twist, Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity member William D. Ashcraft reported he had been the victim of a break-in during the break.

Ashcraft was one of the 14 fraternity members who were allegedly involved in the theft of 150 Christmas decorations in Chapel Hill in December.

Ashcraft, 19, reported \$3,900 worth of his possessions, including 75 compact discs and a desktop computer, were stolen during the break.

SEE CRIME, PAGE 5

BEHIND THE EIGHT BALL



August Jenkins, a freshman from Winston-Salem, lines up a shot in the Student Union after the first day of classes on Wednesday. Jenkins is a business major.

Online classes canned due to low funds

Students would have to pay more than \$300 per course to have class online.

BY KAITLIN G'JRNEY
STAFF WRITER

In the University's pursuit of further technology, Caroline has gotten in the way.

As a result of funding problems, the Division of Continuing Education can no longer offer its nine online classes through Caroline. Instead of reporting the problem, the online Directory of Classes reports the classes as canceled.

The reason for this discrepancy is that each online course costs \$390, a fee Continuing Education does not receive when students sign up through Caroline, said June Blackwelder, assistant director for publications and promotion. Blackwelder said that when the courses were taken out of the Directory of Classes, the system had no choice but to list them as canceled.

The University has placed great emphasis on increasing long-distance learning recently. Last semester, the same nine classes were available for registration on Caroline. Out of the 92 students who registered for the classes last semester, 30 used Caroline to enroll.

"Our courses are largely receipt-driven, since we must pay faculty to teach these courses," Blackwelder said. "We don't receive these funds when students sign up on Caroline."

Josh Brannon, a student from Raleigh, said he found it misleading that the online classes are listed as canceled. He said he only found out he could enroll after calling Continuing Education.

Brannon said he liked the online courses despite the extra fee because they were conducive to working a job while taking classes. "The convenience makes it worth it to me, so I'm still interested," he said.

Art professor Dorothy Verkerk, who teaches an online art history class, also said she thought the courses listed as canceled were misleading. She linked it to the overall lack of University funding for Continuing Education initiatives.

"On one hand, we are told to implement a lot of technology, but on the other hand we are not given enough time to do so," Verkerk said. "They're (Continuing Education) the ones spearheading the online courses, but they are forced to operate on a shoestring budget."

Verkerk said she received \$150 for each of her three students in the class, a substantial drop from her regular classes but that she taught the class because she thought long distance learning was a worthwhile cause.

Verkerk said the number of on-campus students in online courses could diminish now that the classes are not offered on Caroline. "If the University is dedicated to more technology, they

Terminals in Union give quick access to e-mail, Web

BY SHARIF DURHAMS
UNIVERSITY EDITOR

The usual lines piled up in Union Station at lunch time, but lines at four computer terminals just outside in the Union at times rivaled them.

The students stood in line to surf the Internet and check their e-mail at the terminals, which the Union staff installed during Winter Break.

Union Systems Administrator Wendy King started work this summer, asking

Union employees to donate their spare equipment for the project.

She asked Union employees to donate their unused computers so that students could have one-stop access to their e-mail accounts and the World Wide Web.

"Everybody's always screaming because they need to check e-mail," King said.

Union Director Donald Luse said he hoped the Union would become a place to access advanced technology.

Soon one of the computers will feature a survey students can fill out on different topics. The first will let students pick which performers they want to come to UNC as part of the Union's Performing Arts series.

"We have a way of asking questions and getting quick response that we could not possibly ever do with paper and pencil," Luse said.

Plans to expand the Union include creating a 24-hour computer lab and labs for students to work on group pre-

sentations.

Meeting rooms and areas will include furniture that allows students to plug in their notebook computers and access their e-mail or the Web.

Academic Technology & Networks started adding one-stop e-mail and Web access earlier this year by dedicating computers in Davis Library to this purpose last semester.

ATN will also donate to the Union's technology this semester by adding two network computers — boxes that access

on-line applications and the Internet — to the ones already in the Union.

"We're hoping to be able to add to that by the fall," ATN Director of Client Services Lynwood Futrelle said.

ATN is also "shopping for locations" to add quick-stop computer terminals to reduce the wait at computer labs.

But even the quick-stop terminals are causing a backup. King said the lines are so long in the Union that she would have to put up a sign asking students to limit their time at the terminals.

Brown's affordable housing legacy left to local leaders

BY NICOLE WHITE
STAFF WRITER

Even though the Longhorns have grabbed Mack Brown, Chapel Hill still has the attention of his wife, Sally.

Before the Browns left for Texas, Sally was active in developing a housing project named The Cottages, designed to show developers that affordable housing is possible in Chapel Hill.

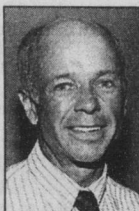
Before leaving, Brown chose real estate agent Larry Short and Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools attorney John McCormick to head the project in her absence.

"I don't look at it as she is out of the picture," said Short, managing partner

of the Cottages. "She is going to remain as active as she can."

Brown has agreed to return to Chapel Hill in the future to speak to Town Council about the project and serve in a consulting capacity, Short said. Brown herself declined to comment.

McCormick said Brown's association with the



Council member JOE CAPOWSKI said a proposal to bring moderately priced housing to Chapel Hill would be looked upon favorably.

project accounted for its notoriety.

"I recognize that we do not have her track record in development," he said. "That is why we have worked closely with Sally to continue with all of the elements of the project she has begun."

Both McCormick and Short said they had been involved with The Cottages since its earliest stages.

Although the leadership of the project has changed, its focus has not, Short said.

"Sally's goal and mine is to show developers that with the cooperation and coordination with town officials that entry level housing can be built affordable to moderate income people."

The Cottages will consist of two- and

"Now we need the permission of the council. Our goal is to have the permits in place in four months, which is a very optimistic goal."

LARRY SHORT

managing partner of The Cottages

three-bedroom freestanding houses from 900 to 1,200 square feet in size. The 29 homes will sit on small lots that cover 3.8 acres in all. Short said the high price of property in Chapel Hill accounted for the steep cost of homes, adding that the

small lot size for The Cottages is paramount to their affordability.

The average price of area homes today is \$200,000 to \$250,000, he said, adding that The Cottages would be priced in the \$100,000 range.

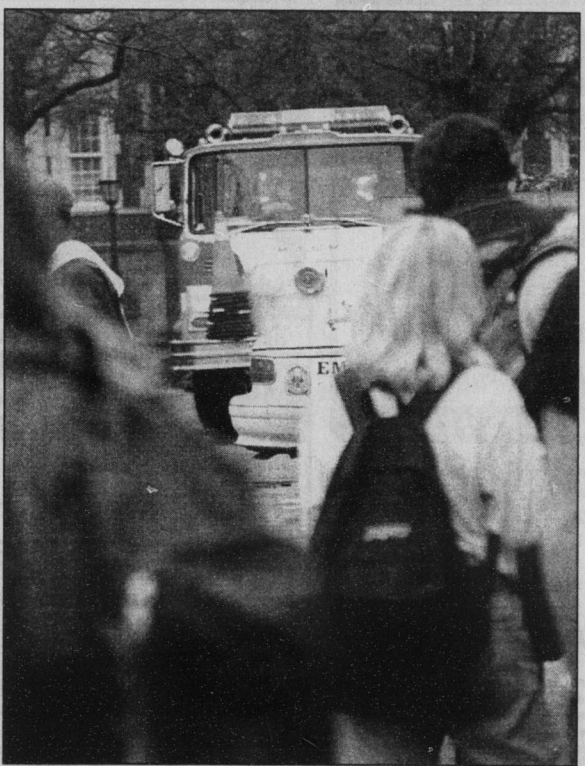
Completion of the development depends on the town's willingness to approve the project, Short said.

"We have the plans; we have the drawings," he said. "Now we need the permission of the council. Our goal is to have the permits in place in four months, which is a very optimistic goal."

The low cost of The Cottages depends on the council's changing infra-

SEE BROWN, PAGE 5

FALSE ALARM



Students gather outside Swain Hall on Wednesday morning after the fire alarm sounded. The alarm was set off by fumes from leaf blowers.

Officials examine methods to avoid future housing woes

BY ANGELA MERS
STAFF WRITER

University officials hope the lack of privacy and loss of sleep temporary housing residents suffer from will not affect next year's students.

With all of last semester's temporary housing students having found permanent homes, the Department of University Housing plans to make some changes to prevent a similar shortage of rooms next year.

Assistant Director of Conference Services Rebecca Casey said University housing had highlighted two areas to change: increasing the interaction between University housing and the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and postponing room assignments for freshmen.

"Admissions and housing will have closer contact with each other," she said. An unanticipated increase in the percentage of students who enrolled at the

University last semester caused the problems in housing this fall, said Barbara Polk, associate director of Undergraduate Admissions.

Polk said there would be a very careful and close monitoring of numbers to avoid problems in the future.

"We will monitor the numbers of incoming students who have paid their housing deposits and work closely with University housing and Granville Towers," Polk said.

Freshmen will not receive their room assignments until July, Casey said.

Because many students change their housing plans after making deposits, University housing will wait to mail out assignments, she said.

Director of University Housing Wayne Kuncel said although University housing is making these changes, the preparation for next fall's housing would be complex because of many factors.

"It is a difficult situation to be precise," Kuncel said.

"Some students want to live in halls with different visitation rules or halls with certain programs."

Kuncel said the completion of residence halls currently under construction would also be a factor.

"If we can plan on Aycocock and Graham (residence halls) being available, we can better guess what number of students will return in the fall," he said.

INSIDE Thursday

Raising a new roof

Construction will start next month to rebuild the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity house that burnt down in May 1996. Completion of the new house is expected next January. Page 2

Deadlocked in Denver

The jury in the Oklahoma City bombing trial of Terry Nichols deadlocked in the penalty phase. The jury found Nichols guilty of conspiracy to build the bomb last month. Page 4

Today's weather

Thunderstorms; high 60s
Friday: Partly cloudy; low 60s

Apply now

Are you ready to get involved on campus? One great way is to join the staff of The Daily Tar Heel. We will be accepting applications, available at the DTH front desk in Suite 104 of the Student Union, until Friday, Jan. 16. Call 962-0245 with questions.

The new job of art is to sit on the wall and get more expensive.

Robert Hughes