

Sangam Nite to offer window into South Asian culture, art

BY CAROLYN INGRAM
STAFF WRITER

Twirling skirts and recitations are just a small portion of how Sangam Nite is intended to celebrate and share South Asian culture.

Saturday evening will mark the 11th annual Sangam Nite celebration at UNC. The program will kick off with a dinner featuring Indian cuisine at 5:30 p.m. in the Morehead Banquet Hall. The show will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Memorial Auditorium.

Members of Sangam, the South Asian awareness organization, have been planning the event for months.

"A lot of people haven't seen many other cultures," said Susan Kansagra, an event coordinator. "This is a way to

open their eyes to a totally different world."

The celebration will feature approximately 100 performers who dance, act in skits and read poetry.

This year, Sangam will announce the first recipient of the Mahatma Ghandi Fellowship, a \$3,000 scholarship for a student to study abroad in a field of interest related to South Asia.

Event coordinators Kansagra and Neha Shah said they worked with about 50 other people to put the show together.

"There were some weeks that we worked 40 hours," Kansagra said. "It's been hard, but everybody's been dedicated to the same vision, to put on a good Sangam Nite."

Tickets for the combined dinner and show are \$10. Tickets for the show alone are \$5.

Both are open to the public. Sangam members will sell tickets today in the Pit and at the door on Saturday. Coordinators said they expected the

event to sell out.

Although Saturday night's celebration is the 11th annual Sangam Nite at UNC, this is only the second time it has been held in Memorial Hall.

Nirav Shah, president of Sangam, said that the last time the show was held in Great Hall, its previous location, tickets sold out in 45 minutes.

"We changed the venue so that more people could go," Shah said.

"It's a very popular event. It's a dynamic program," said Nalin Parikh, Sangam adviser. "If you come, you'll enjoy it."

Richa Gupta, a Sangam Nite performer, said, "It's not just about dancing; it's more than that. It's about cultural awareness."

Last semester, Sangam sponsored programs called Rang-e-Sangam and Namaste.

They are also involved in the Cross Cultural Interaction, a program of the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center, and several other service projects.

Condom company targets fraternities

■ "Condom Cash" allowed fraternity members to earn points for condoms used.

BY LAURA STOEHR
STAFF WRITER

In the same spirit of Pepsi Points, Camel Cash and Marlboro Miles, a condom manufacturer targeted UNC fraternities with a Condom Cash campaign in February.

The London International Group, which owns DUREX condoms, sent information about safe sex, free condoms and a flier, which introduced the incentive program to 2,750 fraternities at 200 universities nationwide.

Under the program, members receive points for every condom used. Points can be redeemed for prizes such as pool tables or vacations.

But UNC officials were surprised and disgusted when they were told about the campaign.

"There's certainly no way in hell that we'd sponsor a contest," said Ron Binder, director of UNC's Office of Greek Affairs. "Sure we support safe

sex, but we do not support a contest."

UNC fraternity houses received promotional goods, including T-shirts, door hangers, 50 condom wallets which hung out of the mouth of a blue cardboard moose and safe sex pamphlets.

"It sounds like those high-schoolers who have a club where you get a point for every girl you have sex with," said Anne Parker, co-chairwoman of the Women's Issues Network. "It's like, have the most sex possible, and we'll reward you. It doesn't talk about responsible sex."

But Paul Byrne, an account executive for Manning, Seldage & Lee, the firm that designed the DUREX advertising campaign, said it would be a popular program among the college-aged group. "(It) is an encouragement for people to use DUREX condoms over other condoms."

Elisabeth Winkler, market analyst for DUREX Consumer Products, said the campaign was meant to inform students about safe sex.

But Binder questioned the campaign's motives. "If they're serious about health, what are they doing about the other 90 percent (of non-Greek students)?" Binder asked. "What in the hell

is behind this contest?"

Some fraternity members said it was unfair the campaign targeted them.

Worth Liipfert, president of Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity said, "If I'd gotten (condoms) from anyone else, I would have laughed, but because I'm in a fraternity I'm a little offended because that's portraying us in a negative light." Liipfert said the moose at SAE was torn up after two days.

Many UNC fraternities said they treated it like a joke. "We just laughed at it," said Steve Saville, Interfraternity Council president. "We thought it was strange that someone could gain enough points by using condoms to win a pool table."

Byrne said it excluded sororities but that they might later receive a similar promotional package.

But Parker said she was concerned that DUREX did not include sororities.

"It reinforces the image of a study male and women who are coerced into sex," she said. "Once again, we're targeting fraternities who aren't the full problem."

But despite reactions at UNC, Byrne said he has received a lot of telephone calls requesting more blue moose.

Officials: jobs aplenty but hard to fill

■ The low unemployment rate has caused a shortage of workers in Chapel Hill.

BY NICOLE WHITE
STAFF WRITER

While students are scrambling to find internships and summer work, local employers are scrambling to find enough employees.

The low unemployment rate in Orange County is making the hunt for reliable employees to fill part-time and blue-collar positions more difficult, said Pat Thomas, personnel director for Chapel Hill.

Bill Webster, Department of Parks and Recreation director, said the department was facing the same problem.

"There's just a tremendous amount of competition among employers to hire lower-paying positions," he said. "There just aren't enough bodies to go around."

Although the town's turnover rate has held steady at about 10 percent, Thomas said hiring people to fill positions had taken longer than usual in the last two

years. The town is also receiving fewer applications for the positions, she said.

"In past years we might have had 10 good candidates for one position," she said. "Now we have only two or three."

In particular, the town has had difficulty hiring groundskeepers, heavy equipment operators, bus drivers and lifeguards. Chapel Hill, however, is not the only employer having difficulty filling these kinds of positions, said Greg Payne, acting director of the Orange County Economic Development Commission.

"The problem is widespread throughout the county, throughout the state and throughout the nation," Payne said.

The unemployment rate in Orange County for 1997 was 1.4 percent, the lowest in North Carolina, Payne said. The statewide annual unemployment rate was 3.6 percent, which is lower than the national rate of 4.8 percent.

Payne said Orange County traditionally had the lowest unemployment rate in the state, mostly because of the steady base of employers. The University and UNC Hospitals are the largest employers in the county, with about a quarter of the work force, and tend to be resistant

to downturns in the economy.

In addition, some of the manufacturers in the county, such as General Electric, have been here for 30 to 40 years, he said.

The educated, college-oriented nature of the area might also be a factor in the town's difficulty in finding laborers, Payne said.

"We have heard many employers complain that there is a lack of emphasis on a blue-collar job as a career opportunity," he said.

Aside from increasing wages, Payne suggested offering more training, more benefits and advertising more aggressively to cope with the competition.

The town is offering courses to train current employees for unfilled positions. The Parks and Recreation Department also recently raised its hourly wages, paying between \$6 and \$7 per hour, Webster said. Although the town is attempting to offer more competitive wages, many positions remain empty.

"The cost of living in Chapel Hill is well above the rest of North Carolina," Payne said. "People with blue-collar jobs, if they don't make a lot of money, they can't afford to live in the area."

Corner of Franklin and Elliot to feature new business center

■ The center will house a travel agency, a dentist and an advertising agency.

BY BERNADETTE GILLIS
STAFF WRITER

The ever-changing face of Franklin Street will soon get a facelift with the opening of three new businesses.

The travel agency Kalos Tours, a dental office and an advertising agency broke ground this week in two separate buildings called the Elliot Road Professional Center. The center is located on the corner of Franklin Street and Elliot Road.

Construction of the project should be completed by October, said Roger Jennings, owner of Jennings & Co., an advertising agency that will be located at the center.

Jennings, who played a major role in

initiating and designing the center, said he and his wife decided to relocate their business two years ago. They felt the center area would be an ideal location.

The Jennings & Co. building will occupy 3,300 square feet, and the other office building will cover more than 4,700 square feet, Jennings said.

Barry Hill, a project architect with Michael Hining Architects, said the center's design is standard. Each of the buildings will be one story.

"The building design is consistent with the buildings surrounding it," he said.

Johnny Morris, owner of Morris Commercial Inc., said United Carolina Bank was the seller of the East Franklin Street property. Morris described the project as an office condo project and said it would cost almost \$1 million.

Jennings said that though the planning of the project took a few months, it was not an extremely difficult task.

"The town of Chapel Hill is very pro-

ductive of the development (of the area) because it's the first thing people see when you come off the interstate," he said.

Jennings said he had to attend hearings at the Chapel Hill Town Council to make sure the plans were in compliance with general planning.

Jennings said he hoped the center's pleasant design and convenient location would attract customers.

Jennings said the center, which will be located near a residential area, should fit in well with the existing architecture.

"We're going to do everything to make it compatible with the neighborhood," he said.

Jennings said his company had also tried to make the center convenient for the employees.

The building will have extra-high ceilings, and every office will have a window.

Jennings said, "I think it's going to be a pleasant place to work."

Pentagon adviser challenges Gulf War illness

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon's specialist on Persian Gulf War illnesses is denouncing a contention by a veterans group that as many as 400,000 troops may have been exposed to depleted uranium from shells fired during the war.

Bernard Rostker, Pentagon adviser on Gulf War illness questions, told reporters at a Pentagon briefing Thursday that too few Americans were on the battlefield during the war and shortly afterward to have had so many

exposed to the hazardous substance.

The Pentagon estimates that about 250,000 service members were involved in ground combat or served in Iraq or Kuwait in the months following the 1991 war. When hostilities broke out, 541,000 men and women had been shipped to the region, with at least 83,000 at sea and tens of thousands based in Turkey, Saudi Arabia or nearby nations.

"If you look at the number of people who were in combat situations, who

could have even come in contact (with depleted uranium), it is much less than 400,000. The number is not credible," Rostker said.

The National Gulf War Resource Center released a study this month that estimated 400,000 men and women had contact with depleted uranium either during combat, while recovering contaminated weapons or while visiting the battleground after the conflict.

Paul Sullivan, the center's executive director, said at the time that his group

believed the number "is a conservative estimate of those exposed."

But Rostker contended Thursday, "The basis for their estimate of hundreds of thousands is not at all credible. The surveys they have are not competent, are not scientific surveys."

Depleted uranium is a metal residue left when natural uranium is refined. It is used in artillery shells and bombs designed to penetrate the armor of tanks and forms protective shields for armored vehicles.

Campus calendar

Friday

7 p.m. — The Student Environmental Action Coalition and the Triangle Vegetarian Society will co-sponsor a lecture by Erik Marcus on vegan/vegetarianism in

209 Manning Hall.

Come find out more information on how and why to stop eating meat. Refreshments will be served.

8:30 p.m. — Hip Hop Nation will have its March Madness party, featuring D.J. Pez and

other in D.J. competition, the Hip Hop Nation All-Stars and others in the Great Hall. Admission is \$5.

Items of interest

Orange Community Recycling will present a mixed-paper collection at the University Mall recycling site from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday. For more information call 968-2788.

The Duke University music department will present a symposium honoring Peter Williams at 1 p.m. Monday in Bone Hall in

the Biddle Music Building on the Duke campus.

The public is welcome, and admission is free. Call 660-3333 for more information.

The Ballroom Dance Club will sponsor ballroom dances with taped music from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. March 29 and April 26 in the Great Hall of the Student Union. Students, nonstudents, couples and singles are welcome.

Admission is \$4 for students and \$6 for the public. Please call 914-4003 for more information.

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