

Journalists to Align With Broadcasters

The New York Times and ABC News say they will complement each other's technological resources.

Associated Press

NEW YORK — ABC News and The New York Times are the latest media heavyweights to announce a news alliance, saying Thursday they will collaborate on a daily political Webcast and share other resources.

Journalists from the New York Times will now appear on ABC News broadcasts and help the network produce stories.

The stories produced will primarily be on technology and health for "20/20" and "Good Morning America."

The agreement comes two months after a similar deal announced by NBC and The Washington Post.

ABC, CBS and Fox last month also said they would begin an effort to share video footage of some domestic news stories.

The centerpiece of Thursday's deal is a 15-minute Webcast, "Political Points."

The broadcast will appear at 1:30 p.m. EST Monday through Friday on both ABCNews.com and NYTimes.com.

It will debut Monday to coincide with the Iowa presidential caucuses.

Michael Oreskes, Washington bureau chief for The New York Times, and Mark Halperin, political director for ABC News, will be the moderators. "Political Points" will include audio, video and text material.

The Times and ABC both took pains to say theirs was a "limited editorial partnership" that would not infringe on their independence.

Both ABC and the Times will be able to veto anything they are not comfortable with.

"I don't think there is anyone who could doubt the independence and autonomy of The New York Times and their editorial decisions," said ABC News President David Westin, "and there shouldn't be any doubts about the autonomy of ABC News."

"I don't think the audience will have any problems with this."

Both organizations said neither could fully explore the possibilities of the Internet alone.

ABC couldn't match the New York Times' print capabilities and the newspaper didn't have ABC's video skills, they said.

"I saw this as an editorial matter first and a business matter second," Westin said.

The Webcast will work as a test case to determine how well the two organizations work together, so there can be more cooperation in the future, Westin said.

There was no immediate word on whether CBS was pursuing a similar alliance with a newspaper after the announcements were made by NBC and ABC.

Another media alliance, between CNN and Time magazine, ran into trouble two years ago.

Time printed material from a CNN story alleging that nerve gas was used against American defectors in the Vietnam War.

CNN and Time, which are both owned by Time Warner, later retracted their stories.

"We're determined to be very careful," Oreskes said.

"I wouldn't want to do anything on the show that couldn't be in The New York Times."

UNC Plans Meadowmont Addition

Developers of a new \$11.8 million wellness center say the facility will provide activities for all residents.

By SABINE HIRSCHAUER Staff Writer

Plans for a 52,000-square-foot Wellness Center in the Meadowmont Development have received criticism from some Town Council members.

The proposed \$11.8 million center will offer swimming pools and aerobic classes as well as educational health awareness classes.

The Town Council held a public hearing Wednesday night to give residents a chance to voice concerns over the proposed development.

Chapel Hill Town Council member Jim Ward said the proposed plans did not provide sufficient access to the center.

"One exit to and from the center is not sufficient, especially in emergency situations," he said.

Council member Pat Evans said she agreed a second road to the center needed to be included.

"The center needs to get at least two access roads, especially considering all the activities the Wellness Center plans to offer," she said.

Daniel Lehman, associate director of planning for UNC Hospitals, said the activities the new wellness center would provide would attract residents from throughout the community.

"The center will be available to everybody, not just to residents of Meadowmont," he said. "We chose

Meadowmont because of its central location in the community. Meadowmont was also one of the few developments that still had properties available."

Roger Perry, the developer of Meadowmont, said he was excited about the expansion of UNC Hospitals.

"The UNC Wellness Center will be a wonderful asset to Meadowmont and to the entire Chapel Hill community," he said.

The issue will be taken up at another public hearing regarding the center Feb.



Chapel Hill Town Council member Jim Ward voiced concerns over plans for a proposed wellness center.

Residents also voiced opinions at Wednesday's meeting concerning an application filed by The John R. McAdams Co. for a special-use permit that would authorize construction of Providence Glen Condominiums.

Pending approval, the multi-family development will be located on the south side of Sterling Road and will house 192 units.

Ward said a major concern over the proposed units was that they would be too expensive.

"People were concerned about the lack of affordable housing in Chapel Hill," Ward said. "The condominium units (would) cost between \$50,000 to \$200,000."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

Web Site Boosts Court Record Access

A new online site called 123nc.com allows anyone with an Internet connection to obtain N.C. court records.

By TAENA KIM Staff Writer

Web sites that now allow court records to be obtained over the Internet might help the public to avoid some of the red tape previously associated with acquiring the documents.

A new Web site, www.123nc.com, permits anyone with a valid credit card number to order N.C. court records.

Information about court proceedings, such as pleas, rulings, conviction and sentencing dates can be found in the records, which are sold for a \$6 fee.

According to officials at the Orange County Court House, court records were only available to the public at the city courthouse for a small copying charge, prior to the start of the Web site.

The only difference between records from the courthouse and those from the Web site is convenience.

Anyone from employers to journalists to housewives can obtain records over the Internet without the time required to go to the courthouse.

Although information is more accessible to a wider range of individuals because of the new sites, many pundits said privacy was not a concern.

"It is not illegal to sell it (over the Internet)," said UNC Law Professor Laura Gasaway.

Deborah Price, staff attorney for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, an Internet-policy group, said privacy was

a vital right. But Price said the site did not threaten privacy because the records are already available for the public.

"A lot of your personal information is available, so it does raise privacy concerns," she said. "But these are all court and public documents, and we want them available."

American Civil Liberties Union officials also were not concerned with the court records of individuals, especially criminals, being available over the Internet.

"We believed in public records," said Deborah Ross, the N.C. ACLU's executive legal director.

Reducing bureaucratic hassles is helping businesses such as www.123nc.com to make money.

Wally Bock, a business consultant specializing in the Internet, said companies used their ability to increase effi-

ciency as a primary selling point.

Bock said businesses like www.123nc.com could obtain records much easier than the average citizen because they were more familiar with the process and with the red tape awaiting them at the courthouses.

He said employers and landlords also used the Web site to conduct background checks for serious offenses without the hassle of putting in a lot of effort.

Dealing with the hassle for their clients will help businesses such as www.123nc.com become more profitable in a society that is demanding a faster-paced lifestyle, Bock said.

"I'm not aware of lots of places that do it," Bock said.

"But there will be."

The State & National Editor can be reached at stntdesk@unc.edu.

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BOND

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which he said was under attack because it succeeded, not because it failed.

Bond asked the audience, "Would you rather be qualified and not have a good job, or be unqualified and have a good job?"

A concern over the general attitude toward minorities also marked Bond's speech. "Jim Crow may be dead, but John Rucker is alive and well."

Bond spoke of encouraging condi-

tions for blacks as well. "Much of the recent economic news is good news," he said. "Black poverty is down. Black income is up. There are more blacks in college than ever."

Junior Katrina Jackson, a resident adviser in Parker Residence Hall, brought the students on her hall as part of a cultural diversity program. "We need to know why issues are important, especially from people that were there for the civil rights movement."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

UNION

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great job making sure everything is in working order," Heinke said.

"My concern is that since this is being paid for by student fees, and every day, in theory, we're getting less for our dollar than we voted on."

Completion of the new addition to the Union building will take a year. The Union will remain open, but parts of the building will close during the transition stage, Luse said.

The May 1 date is still an estimate, pending the completion of the approval process, but Runberg said the actual realization of the improved Union was not far away.

"I think we're finally over the significant hurdles," he said.

"In the scheme of things we're getting pretty close."

"We're down to the last few steps to get it on the street. We're all anxious to get the work going."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

STARHEEL

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ment," she said.

To what state will she head next? Green doesn't even know. The important thing from now until Jan. 24, Green said, was to focus on the approaching Iowa caucus. "The caucus is really

hard," Green said. "It's cold, and the people have to come out and verbally fight for their candidate. We want to just focus on Iowa right now."

And focusing is about all Green is able to do — whether she's assigning cars, organizing motorcades or setting up debate sites, Green is up by 6 a.m. and not in bed until 1 a.m. or 2 a.m. "I only thought I was busy before," Green

said. "Now I have no time to eat or call my parents. One time we all had to buy new clothes from Wal-Mart because we'd been on the road so long that we'd been wearing the same things for days."

Already, Green has seen the wilder side of politics. "At one debate rally, our people got there a lot earlier than Gore's," she said. "There's a line that you aren't supposed to cross, but some of the Gore people jumped over and started pushing and shoving. The police had to calm things down."

Despite all the hard work and unpredictability of the job, Green said she considered this to be an incredible experience. She approached the internship

expecting to pour coffee and ended up working daily with Bradley's equivalent of George Stephanopolous, President Bill Clinton's former ingenu press secretary and campaign director. "This is proof to me that politicians work so hard," she said. "It's exciting, and you don't just have to sit behind a desk."

So, has this sparked any political ambitions of Green's own?

"I came in with an interest in politics, and I knew this would help me decide whether or not it was for me," Green said. "And, yes. I love it."

The Arts & Entertainment Editor can be reached at artsdesk@unc.edu.

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