

Speed Cause Gets \$10,000 Boost

A local volunteer group has vowed to raise \$250,000 by March for the hurricane-ravaged town of Speed.

By SABINE HIRSCHAUER
Staff Writer

After receiving a generous donation of \$10,000, a local volunteer group is a step closer to completing its fund-raising campaign directed at helping families devastated by Hurricane Floyd.

"Neighbors for Speed, NC," the Chapel Hill-Carrboro community volunteer group founded in October to help residents of the small town of Speed, has set its goal to raise \$250,000 by mid-March.

Jean Earnhardt, co-founder of the organization, said its goal was to jumpstart fund-raising efforts with mail-outs and door-to-door, individual donation pledges.

"We want to raise enough money for the people of Speed to buy all the material they need to rebuild their homes," Earnhardt said.

Earnhardt said the fund-raising campaign was important to secure housing

for Speed's 90 residents who live in donated trailers. Residents were forced to flee their water-logged homes after Hurricane Floyd devastated the community in September.

"The people of Speed can live in these trailers only until the end of this year," Earnhardt said. "By the beginning of next year, these people are forced to look for something else. These people are in immediate need, this is why we started our fund raising now."

Along with individual monetary donations, the group is also recruiting local businesses, organizations, neighborhoods and groups

to act as sponsors for each family in Speed. The sponsor visits its family, determines their needs and organizes to get supplies and furniture to the family.

"We became a sponsor because we wanted to help these people," said Bob Epting, of 410 Airport Road. His law firm was one of the first sponsors to come forward and adopt a Speed family.

Marshall said all the funds raised would be used exclusively for construction and building purposes in the form of vouchers that could be redeemed at local building supply stores.

"Families can only get money awarded if they have applied and received their building permit," she said.

To determine each family's individual needs, Earnhardt said they underwent

an interview and completed a comprehensive survey.

"We interviewed 50 families, and we have still more than 40 families who are looking for sponsors," Earnhardt said.

Alice Joyce, assistant to the mayor of Chapel Hill, said the group had the town's support.

"We provided the van last fall for the first trip down to Speed and initiated the first contacts between the group and the people of Speed," Joyce said. "The volunteers have all our support."

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

"We want to raise enough money for the people of Speed to buy all the material they need to rebuild their homes."

JEAN EARNHARDT
Co-founder of "Neighbors for Speed, N.C."



DTH/JOHN IKEDA

Ruined belongings from Johnnie Harper's flooded house in Speed sit in the front yard after being removed by volunteers from Chapel Hill. Speed was largely destroyed by the flooding in eastern North Carolina.

Campus Calendar

Today

Noon - Dr. Robert Kirkpatrick will present a **Study Abroad Information Session** in 106 Greenlaw Hall on the London Honors Summer Program.

2 p.m. to 5 p.m. - A **makeup final exam** for Dr. Benavie's fall 1999 Economics 10 class will be held in 307 Gardner Hall.

Those taking the exam should bring an official dean's excuse.

4 p.m. - UNC professor Scott Warner will direct the **Fred and Gail Fearing Friday Afternoon Jazz Series** featuring the UNC Jazz Combos in 107 Hill Hall.

7:30 p.m. - **Amnesty International** will meet in Union 220.

Those interested can attend to learn about human rights actions around the world. New members are welcome to come to the meeting.

8:15 p.m. - The Lab! Theatre and the Department of Dramatic Art will present **"Why We Have a Body"** by Claire Chafee.

The play will be at the old Playmakers Theatre on Cameron Avenue.

IRA Peace Accord in Limbo

Associated Press

BELFAST, Northern Ireland - Politicians in Belfast, Dublin and London struggled today to salvage Northern Ireland's joint Protestant-Catholic administration, a crisis triggered by the Irish Republican Army's continued unwillingness to disarm.

The British government was weighing the prospect of suspending the administration's powers - vested with such optimism two months ago - in hopes that would prevent its outright collapse.

The office of Prime Minister Tony Blair said an announcement was likely Thursday.

A U.S.-mediated deal that spurred the Cabinet's formation anticipated the IRA would gradually scrap its stockpiled weapons in response.

But a disarmament commission's report, required as part of the deal and presented on Monday to the British and Irish governments, indicated no disarmament had taken place.

mament had taken place.

The major Protestant party, the Ulster Unionists, has accused its Cabinet colleagues in the IRA-linked Sinn Fein party of reneging on their part of the bargain, which was mediated by American diplomat George Mitchell in November.

Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble warned that the only way now to keep the Cabinet intact is for the British government to suspend its powers, resume "direct rule" from London, and hope fresh negotiations would produce either a start to disarmament or political sanctions against Sinn Fein.

Trimble, in London to meet Blair, until now has outmaneuvered Protestants opposed to the 1998 peace accord.

But he received only narrow support from his party grassroots to form the Cabinet - and only because he pledged to withdraw by February if the IRA didn't cooperate with the disarmament commission.

The Cabinet cannot work without Ulster Unionist participation.

Trimble insisted that November's negotiations produced "clear understandings" between Sinn Fein and the Ulster Unionists that the Cabinet could

only survive for a matter of weeks if the IRA balked on disarmament.

Sinn Fein angrily rejected that account, as separate delegations lobbied the British and Irish governments in Belfast and Dublin.

"The IRA are not signatories to the Good Friday agreement and are not involved in this process," said Sinn Fein's Conor Murphy, part of a delegation that met Peter Mandelson, Britain's minister for Northern Ireland, in Belfast.

The leader of that delegation, Gerry Kelly - a pioneer of IRA car bombs in the early 1970s who masterminded the biggest prison escape in British history in 1983 - said he expected Mandelson to side with Trimble.

A second Sinn Fein delegation led by party leader Gerry Adams traveled to Dublin to seek support from Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern.

In a statement issued Tuesday, the IRA emphasized the value of its 1997 cease-fire, which followed a 27-year effort to destabilize Northern Ireland that claimed 1,800 lives.

The IRA said its representatives had stressed in its talks with the disarmament commission "that the IRA's guns are silent and that there is no threat to the peace process from the IRA."

RDU Runway Clearing Prompts State Criticism

By DEEPIKA NARASIMHAN
Staff Writer

Raleigh-Durham International Airport's use of a compound called urea to clear ice and snow from its runways has sparked concern from state environmental regulators.

Urea, a combination of ammonia and carbon similar to that found in urine, could damage the environment due to its 46 percent nitrogen content.

In the days following last week's snowstorm that dumped nearly 2 feet of snow at RDU, cleanup crews spread approximately 60 tons of urea on runways to help improve icy conditions.

Once the ice melted, the urea ran off into the airport's designated drainage ponds and flowed into the Neuse River.

Increased nitrogen levels in rivers could cause low oxygen levels and algae blooms - two conditions that might be harmful to fish, said Ernie Seneca, a spokesman for the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Seneca said the main concern was the Neuse River, one of North Carolina's main waterways.

"The Neuse River is nutrient-sensitive (overfertilized) and an increase of nitrogen continues to damage the river's ecosystem," he said.

Seneca said he hoped RDU officials could be persuaded to decrease urea use. "The department realizes that the airport was dealing with extreme circumstances, but we hope that we can work with airport officials to lower usage of urea," he said.

He said the current urea usage spurred plans to inspect run-off, including a faster way to monitor water.

But Mike Blanton, RDU spokesman, said the airport did not violate environmental guidelines. "What we did is within the statutes of our storm water permit," he said.

Blanton said the airport used urea because it was the most effective and least expensive way to clear the runways. He also said the infrequent use of urea did not warrant changing methods.

"This (snow) has been an odd occurrence," he said. "We have used a total of 60 tons (of urea) in the last two weeks while in the last decade, we used a total of 57 tons on four days in 1996."

But not all local airports rely on urea.

Officials at Piedmont Triad International Airport occasionally use urea, but potassium acetate is primarily used to clear the runways.

Bill Shaw, spokesman for Piedmont Airport, said the airport used potassium acetate partly since it did not harm the environment. He said, "We wanted to implement a good-neighbor policy and be more environmentally friendly."

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



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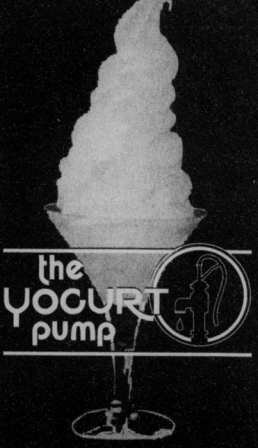


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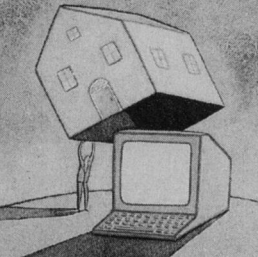


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