



POLICE ROUNDUP

University

Saturday, Feb. 5

■ A break-in was reported at a local construction site.

According to police reports, Shelco Construction Co. employees said upon opening the site in the early morning, they found two trailers with broken windows. The trailers were last known to be secure Friday evening.

Damages include the theft of a digital camera and the vandalism of construction equipment belonging to J. A. Ferrell Construction Co., reports state. Police have no known suspects.

Friday, Feb. 4

■ A resident assistant reported a break-in at Ehringhaus Residence Hall at approximately 5:40 a.m.

According to police reports, an intoxicated student entered the unlocked room of a fellow resident, talked for a few moments and passed out on the floor. The complainant's roommate knew the identity of the perpetrator as a floor-mate and called the resident assistant, reports state.

By the time University Police arrived, the resident assistant had revived the student, reports state. When University Police questioned the suspect about the situation, he said that he was not tired and had wanted to talk.

The student was then escorted by University Police to his own room.

■ An on-campus domestic dispute led to the arrest of a Chapel Hill man.

University Police arrested Michael Allen Cook, 31, of 542 Piney Mountain Road charging him with one count of assault on a female at about 8 p.m.

According to police reports, Cook and the victim were dating and engaged in an argument between Phillips Hall and Peabody Hall. The victim was apparently pushed over the short rock wall by Phillips Hall.

By the time University Police had arrived at the scene, both parties had left for UNC Hospitals.

At the hospital, the victim was being treated for back, shoulder and leg injuries. Hospital examiners found blood on the victim's shirt, but could not determine where it came from, reports state.

Cook was arrested and transported to the magistrate's office, where he was issued a trespass warning by the University. Cook was then transported to Orange County Jail.

Neither Cook nor the victim are associated with the University.

City

Saturday, Feb. 5

■ Chapel Hill police are searching for the person who broke into Ram Theatres about 1:40 p.m.

Police reports state that the suspect climbed on the roof and entered the main office.

The suspect continued to break into a display case and steal \$120 worth of candy. Damage to the display case was estimated at \$50.

Friday, Feb. 4

■ Carrboro police made two arrests in connection with a domestic assault and an assault on a child around 1 p.m.

Dean Jannavush Garret, 26, of 8116 Reynard Road in Chapel Hill was charged with trespassing, assault on a child and assault on a female, all misdemeanors.

Latoya Covington of 605 Oak Ave. was charged with one misdemeanor count of assault.

According to police reports, Covington hit Garret with a baby stroller as he tried to remove property from her apartment.

Garret retaliated by pushing her to the ground and choking her. Covington accused Garret of jerking her two-year-old child by the arm.

Garret was arrested on the scene and Covington was arrested later in the day after police put out a warrant on her.

Thursday, Feb. 3

■ An assault led to the arrest of a UNC student around 5 p.m.

Police reports stated that Matthew Barnette, 20, was arrested at his home at 112 Fraternity Court and charged with assault and battery.

Wednesday, Feb. 2

■ Chapel Hill police arrested a man for illegal dumping around 2:30 p.m.

Ricardo Collazo Delvna, of 5640 Hilltop Road in Fuguay-Varina, was charged with one count of illegal dumping of hazardous waste. Delvna was caught dumping diesel gasoline on a parking lot near Booker Creek.

The gasoline ran off of the parking surface and into the creek.

Candidates Spell Out Views in DiPhi Forum

Each of the six SBP candidates say the new advising system still has room for improvement.

By ELIZABETH BREYER
Staff Writer

A week of political forums and debates kicked off Monday as student body presidential candidates took public stands on a variety of issues such as student fees and advising.

The Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies held their annual candidate forum with a packed audience, allowing each candidate to express their opinions in speeches and a question and answer period.

A number of diverse issues arose which were not directly covered in the

candidates' platforms.

One of the most contentious proved to be advising at UNC.

"No one knows about the advising system, what is available or how to best utilize it," said candidate Michael Harris, echoing the views of several candidates who expressed unfamiliarity with the current state of academic advising.

Harris and candidate Joshua Ray both said advisors should begin to publicize their services as early as C-TOPS.

"You need to be ready and aware of all angles at Carolina and know your options before you get here," Ray said.

Candidate Preston Smith also raised the issue of dissatisfaction by the advisors themselves and said he would work to alleviate their complaints.

"I have talked to several advisors who are perturbed by the system," he said.

"It will take communication between the advisors and what they see as problems and what students see as problems."

Another issue introduced in the forum was the candidates' ideas regarding student fee increases.

Candidate Erica Smiley said she wanted all students to have input in how their money was allocated, a view shared by many other candidates.

"More important than my opinion is the fact that I am in favor of all students voting about fee increases through a referendum," she said.

Harris said students' ability to choose where their money went would create a beneficial environment for UNC as a whole.

"It is (the students') money to do with

as they wish, and we should let students decide how to increase the intellectual climate," he said.

But, candidate Matt Martin said he thought fees were high already and that raising them should be considered carefully by each student.

"I have noticed that fees are almost as much as my tuition, which I find rather unsettling. I don't think I would like a large general increase very much," he said.

Although newer topics were considered, candidates had a chance to debate more familiar issues such as tuition.

Candidate Brad Matthews said despite funding problems and need for disaster relief funds in the eastern part of the state, UNC had the ability to keep tuition down by implementing creative alternatives.

"We have talented fund-raisers and could even divert capital improvement

money to counteract tuition costs," he said. "We can make do with a lot of alternatives besides state support."

Smiley also stressed the time issues involved in any future funding debates. "It's very important to take students to the General Assembly in order to get a long term commitment to re-fund the system," she said.

Although many candidates expressed similar goals, each had a chance to convey a personal slant by defining their views on the issues and explaining what made them personally qualified.

Smith explained that the individuality of each candidate and their views was the best way to make a final vote. He said, "This is about you and me, about combining your vision and my vision to make the University a greater place."

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

Keeping Tradition Alive Through Service

By AMY DOBSON
Staff Writer

Before the advent of Alka-Seltzer, Twinkies and sliced bread, Merritt's Store & Grill opened its doors in 1929.

Located at 1009 S. Columbia St., Merritt's Store & Grill stocks its wooden shelves with the products of any convenient store. The history behind the store, however, is far from typical.

The late E.G. Merritt was 28 years old when he opened the store 71 years ago.

"People needed a place to get bread and milk," his wife, Ruby Merritt, said. "Merritt's began because he loved those people."

She said law students at the University came and sat on the bench in front of the store to discuss their cases. "We named the bench the 'Liar's Bench,'" she laughed.

Merritt said her husband retired in 1981 after owning the store for more than 49 years, but he still remained close to the customers. "He knew everyone in Chatham and Orange counties," she said. "They all came by our house to visit him."

Ruby Merritt said her husband spent many winter mornings clearing any ice or snow that might have endangered customers.

This dedicated service characteristic of Merritt's store did not end when he retired.

Bob Britt, who assumed ownership nine years ago, trudged two miles through the snow to open during January's storm. "He knew that local residents could not travel to other grocery stores," said employee Robin Dubois.

Until 1983, Merritt's offered auto service and fueling pumps to its customers, Britt said.

"The area of the store that now serves as a kitchen was once a car garage," he said.

Britt now spends the majority of his time in the kitchen, cooking everything from bacon and eggs to barbecue sandwiches, which Dubois said keeps the customers coming back.

"Construction workers are often waiting at the door at 6 a.m. to get one of our breakfast sandwiches," Dubois said. "The (bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich) is a specialty and comes in small and large sizes. The small is large, and the large is very large."

Camp Jenkins, a University alumnus who lives in Chapel Hill, said he comes into the store about once a week for a B.L.T. sandwich.

"I didn't come in college," he said. "I didn't know about it."

Merritt's Store & Grill is about a five-minute walk from UNC Hospitals, which makes it hard for on-campus residents to access it.

"Most of our college-aged customers live off-campus," Britt said.

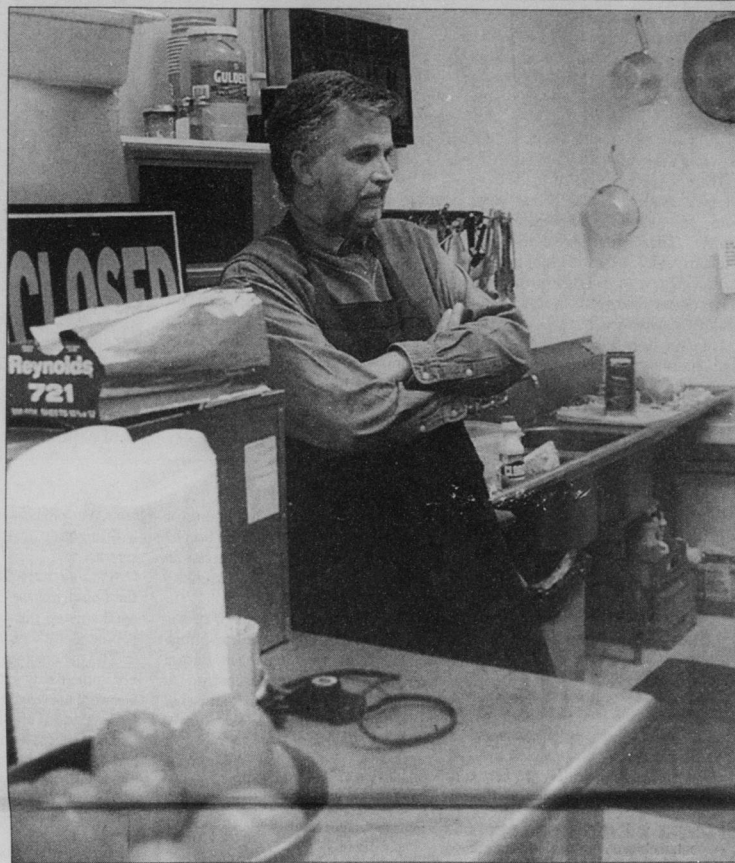
Britt also added that it was not uncommon to see local celebrities stopping by Merritt's Store for a sandwich.

"James Taylor hung out here when he was a kid," he said. "Dean Smith and Eric Montross usually stop by when they're in town."

Britt said it was special when celebrities stopped by, but that he enjoyed interacting with a wide variety of customers.

"Merritt's is a democratic store," he said. "We serve a little bit of everything to everybody."

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DTH/KAARIN MOORE

Bob Britt, who has leased Merritt's Store & Grill for the past nine years, spends most of his time in the kitchen cooking up bacon and eggs for his regular customers.

County Candidates File in Last-Minute Flurry

Orange County school board candidates say they will try to reduce numbers of students in classrooms.

By ENYONAM KPEGLO
Staff Writer

Two major local political races have new competitors who filed just before the noon deadline Monday.

Republican Judy Anderson of 2006 Thoroughbred Drive in Hillsborough filed for one of the two seats up for grabs in the Orange County Board of Commissioners race. Dana Thompson, of 3821 Stoneycreek Road in Chapel

Hill, will run for the Orange County Board of Education.

Thompson said her primary focus was on teachers.

"We need to attract, retain, reward and support (teachers) in order to be the best."

Thompson said she also wanted to reduce class size and support the families of prospective Pathways Elementary School students to facilitate a smooth transition. Pathways Elementary is under construction and should be ready for students this fall. "I see a real community effort to direct our schools, and



I want to be a part of that," Thompson said. "I see a lot of positive things as well, and I want to build on them."

Anderson was unavailable for comment.

Other school board candidates who have filed since Jan. 25 include Gary Horne of 601 Elin Court in Hillsborough, Marcia Blum Compton of 1002 Hurdle Mills Road in Cedar Grove, Lee Fowler of 3900 N.C. 86 South in Hillsborough, David Hunt of 2304 Judah Benjamin Court in Hillsborough and incumbent Keith Cook of 419 Calvary Court in Hillsborough.

Compton said she wanted to ensure that new schools had student interests at heart by easing the redistricting process

stemming from Pathway Elementary's construction. She also said she wanted to make sure that all schools in the district had equal resources. "I think it is important for children to receive the education that they deserve," she said. "I realize that all students will not continue their schooling at a four-year institution."

Fowler, a self-employed plumbing contractor, said the board needed to focus on attracting more qualified teachers to the school system. "Bringing teacher pay to the national standard or even above it is key," he said.

Granville County native Hunt, who filed Feb. 4, supports improving the quality of education in the Orange

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Aldermen Silent on IFC Plans

The Carrboro Board of Aldermen are slated to discuss new sites for the Inter-Faith Council shelter.

By NISHANT GARG
Staff Writer

Carrboro Alderman Jacquelyn Gist is staying tight-lipped about a report concerning the Inter-Faith Council shelter which she plans to present to the board tonight.

Gist, a member of the Task Force on Alternative Location for IFC Facilities, said the group was reviewing several possible sites for the proposed IFC shelter expansion previous to tonight's presentation at the Carrboro Board of Aldermen meeting. Carrboro Alderman Jacquelyn Gist said the Chapel Hill Police Department was a possible site for a new IFC shelter.



Carrboro Alderman Jacquelyn Gist said the Chapel Hill Police Department was a possible site for a new IFC shelter.

She said the Chapel Hill Police Department, located at 828 Airport Road, could serve as an alternative once a new site for the police headquarters was approved. The shelter is currently located at 100 W. Rosemary St.

But Gist also said the work involved in the entire process of moving the shelter to a new location or expanding the existing shelter could take five to 10 years.

"There is a committee that is looking at the IFC needs and I will make a report tomorrow," she said. "Everything is in a search mode."

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GOP Gubernatorial Candidate Touts Tax Cuts, Family Values

Republican hopeful Chuck Neely spoke to College Republicans at the UNC law school on Monday night.

By RACHEL LEONARD
Staff Writer

N.C. Republican gubernatorial candidate Chuck Neely outlined his conservative campaign platform at the UNC School of Law on Monday night.

About 25 students attended the speech and the question-and-answer session that followed.

Neely touted his main platform, which consists of what he deemed the "Covenant With the Family."

The "Covenant" targets three main issues: education, less taxation and family values.

In the area of education, Neely said he supported school vouchers for failing students and neighborhood schools, instead of forced busing programs.

"We need to give our parents more choice as to where their children go to school," he said.

Neely said teachers should be paid based on merit, not seniority. He said he advocated more freedom within the school system. "Give principals the authority to run their schools, and give teachers the authority to run their classes," he said.

On taxation issues, Neely proposed repealing

taxes on children's clothing and baby supplies and reducing taxes on educational supplies. He also said he would fight to repeal the car tax, which is the personal property tax on family automobiles.

Neely made it clear that he was a strong supporter of family values.

"The problems (in the state) relate ultimately with the weakening of the family structure in this state," he said. "Families are not being able to rear and guide their children."

Neely proposed limiting Internet pornography as well as strengthening laws to curb domestic violence.

"We ought to have filters on (school and public) computers and educate parents about these (filters) for home use," he said.

Neely also said video poker games in North Carolina should be banned.

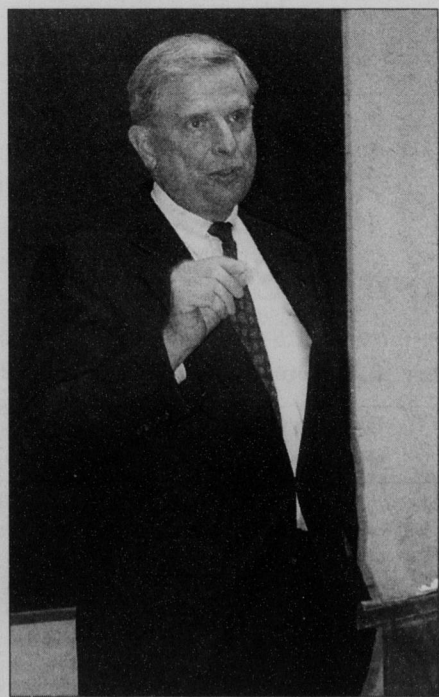
"Twenty percent of domestic violence is attributed to gambling," he said.

Neely spoke out against current corrosive values. "The popular culture is one of sex, drugs and violence," he said.

Neely also took a strong stance on crime and punishment, saying he advocated a mandatory death sentence for cop-killers and longer sentencing for violent criminals.

Neely is both a UNC and Duke University grad.

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DTH/RACHEL LEONARD

N.C. gubernatorial candidate Chuck Neely (R) outlines his campaign platform Monday night.