



The University and Towns
IN BRIEF

Carrboro Police Arrest Two Men in Drug Bust

Carrboro police made two arrests Thursday morning at a local residence in connection with an ongoing drug investigation.

Narcotics Investigator J.A. Lau said Christopher Elector Howell, 40, and Jermaine Christopher Yeager, 19, both of 116-B Fidelity St., were arrested about 9 a.m. Thursday when police seized \$800 worth of marijuana and crack cocaine.

Howell faces a felony charge of maintaining a dwelling, and Yeager faces the same charge as well as an additional felony charge of possession with intent to sell and distribute.

"It was a good bust," Lau said. "We expected to find drugs and money and we did."

Both men were arrested and taken to the Orange County Jail in Hillsborough.

Later the two men were released on a written promise to appear in court.

Yeager and Howell are scheduled to appear in Orange County District Court in Hillsborough today.

Morning Blaze Engulfs Carrboro Residence

An early morning fire in Carrboro resulted in the complete destruction of a condemned house.

Carrboro Fire Chief Rodney Murray said a man and a woman were inside the house, which was located at 605 Davie Road, when the blaze began. Both managed to escape through a window.

"When we arrived on the scene, all areas of the house were fully engulfed," he said.

Murray said the house had no power or water, and had been condemned for several years.

Even though the house was condemned, Murray said the people who owned the property had lived there for many years.

Carrboro Fire Marshall Stan Foushee said the fire appeared to be unintentional, but an investigation would determine the exact cause of the blaze.

"We believe the fire started somewhere in the living room area," he said. No one was injured in the blaze.

J.G. Booker, captain of the Carrboro Police Department, said that years ago the residence was a drug house, but drug activity ended when the house was condemned.

Wayne Lacock, department chief of the Carrboro Fire Department, said firefighters responded to the blaze in under two minutes because of the close proximity of the house to the fire department.

University

Wednesday, Feb. 9

- A UNC student reported that a Visa debit card was stolen or lost. The card was used six times for purchases totaling \$276.43.
- Police have no suspects.
- Emergency Medical Service workers and University police responded to a student who fell and broke her arm on the third floor of Carroll Hall.
- Police described her as conscious and alert.
- She was transported to the UNC Hospitals emergency room.
- A cardiology department patient experienced irregular heartbeats and was transported to the UNC Hospitals emergency room to receive treatment, police reported.
- She was listed as being conscious and alert at the time.
- A Carolina Inn employee fainted and was transferred to UNC Hospitals emergency room, police reports state.
- Two separate motorists reported their cars were broken into and their parking permits stolen, police reports stated.
- Both victims had left their cars doors unlocked and no other valuables were reported stolen.
- One car had received two parking tickets, reports state.
- Police received a call from an unknown caller that a vehicle in the Bell Tower parking lot was leaking gas.
- They reported that a 1-by-1 foot puddle of gasoline was underneath the vehicle.
- Police covered the puddle with kitty litter and fire officials asked the driver to move his vehicle.

Tuesday, Feb. 8

- A UNC student reported her wallet stolen from a classroom.
- Her bank service later reported that someone tried to withdraw \$300, in addition to the \$50 in the wallet.
- Also stolen was a UNC ONE Card and other personal items.

Matthews, Harris Snag Presidential Endorsements

Sangam members also endorsed Sherilynn Black and Jason Cowley for senior class officers at the forum.

BY ELIZABETH BREYER AND JOHN MABERRY
Staff Writers

Promises of a diverse campus marked the latest attempt by candidates to obtain endorsements and to further publicize their goals.

The Residence Hall Association and Masala hosted a forum Thursday night that gave candidates from the races of student body president, senior class officers, Carolina Athletic Association president, and RHA president a chance to speak.

Diversity was the main issue addressed by student body president candidates throughout the debate that resulted in Brad Matthews being endorsed by Sangam and Michael Harris by the Carolina Hispanic Association.

Sangam endorsed Tee Pruitt for CAA president, Jason Cowley and Sherilynn Black for senior class officers, and Robin Yamakawa for RHA president.

CHisPA endorsed Michael Songer and Adam Walters for CAA, Cowley and Black for senior class officers, and Yamakawa for RHA.

"We must increase communication and coordination to stop reinventing the wheel and truly address our diversity problems," Matthews said.

A number of questions from groups sponsoring the forum pushed the candidates to explain the specifics of their plans to make UNC a more diverse campus.

CHisPA President Erika Hamilton said Hispanics would be the largest minority in the United States by the year 2050.

She invited candidates to provide ideas for dealing with the growing numbers.

"We need to use student government press to publicize events that celebrate Hispanic culture and hopefully welcome them into the mainstream," said candidate Matt Martin.

Most candidates focused on the importance of increasing the numbers of Hispanics by creating a more sensitive admissions process.

"We could hire someone who can deal with special concerns of minorities, especially Hispanics - the country is growing and it is truly a melting pot," said Harris.

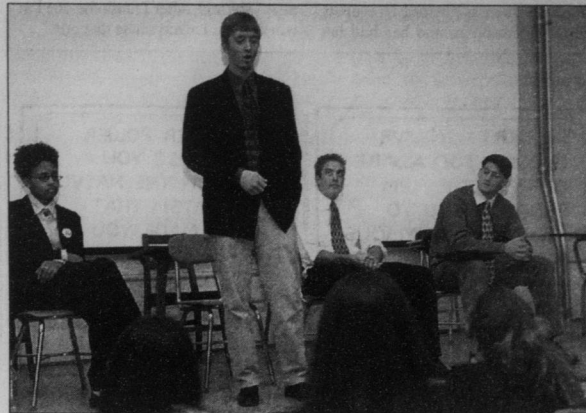
Another important diversity issue revolved around the means by which candidates would get in touch with minority groups and represent their concerns.

"We want to make this a more diverse campus, and I plan on standing there with you (recruiting) as student body president to say I represent students and we want you," said SBP candidate Preston Smith.

Candidate Erica Smiley also said the role of student body president exerted power which could help nurture diversity on campus.

"Student government has the potential to legitimize many minority issues," she said.

"If we create an accessible student government, the diversity will come



Student Body President candidate Brad Matthews outlines his platform during the Masala/Residence Hall Association forum Thursday night.

about by itself."

Other issues which came up included the prospect of a center for Asian-American studies and the need for a

diverse faculty.

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From the Mountains to the Hill



Sharyn McCrumb, a UNC alumna and bestselling novelist, will read from her works in Wilson Library on Sunday.

BY ALLISON ROST
Staff Writer

Fans of Sharyn McCrumb's Appalachian storytelling-style can hear the author read her works in person Sunday when she visits the UNC campus.

McCrumb, a UNC alumna who has written 16 novels and topped The New York Times' Bestsellers List several times, finds inspiration in her family's roots in Appalachia.

Growing up in Mitchell County gave McCrumb a lot of culture to work with. Her family settled in the Appalachian Mountains in the 1790s, and her great-grandfathers were circuit preachers who traveled by horse to different mountain towns each week.

"I grew up listening to the music and tales of the history and folklore of the North Carolina mountains," McCrumb said. "I find in this heritage a rich vein of material for writing."

Her books, such as "The Ballad of Frankie Silver," the true story of an Appalachian woman hanged for murder in 1833, incorporate that material.



McCrumb knew at the age of seven that she was going to be a writer.

"When I was a child, I read a book a day, and that preparation helped to change my perceptions of style and structure," she said.

McCrumb found her literary voice when she was very young and has maintained it ever since, resisting trends in literature.

She said she was always drawn to truly original writers who tried to connect with people rather than show off a contrived writing style.

Although McCrumb was sure of her path before college, her time at UNC was memorable enough to record in a short story titled "Southern Comfort," featured in "Foggy Mountain Breakdown," a collection of her short stories.

For those students wanting to follow her path, McCrumb has some advice.

She said to remember that more than one kind of writing existed and that being a successful writer required just as much intelligence and dedication as a career in medicine or law.

And McCrumb is exemplary of her own advice. In addition to having two books on The New York Times' Bestsellers List ("She Walks These Hills" and "The Rosewood Casket"), she has

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Snow Makeup Days Set for Area Schools

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City School students will attend classes on three Monday holidays and a Saturday.

BY SABINE HIRSCHAUER
Staff Writer

January's winter snowstorm, which canceled classes at Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools for eight days, will force local students to spend Easter Monday in classrooms instead of at home.

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro Board of Education voted Thursday night for a snow makeup day schedule which would include Easter Monday.

"It is a very tough decision to make for us, but we are in a decision mood," said board member Teresa Williams.

Steve Scroggs, interim assistant superintendent of support services for the school system, said another alternative

proposal was a shortened spring break. But, Scroggs added that this option encountered strong opposition from parents.

"By talking with the parents, we got the strong message not to mess with spring break," Scroggs said. "The proposal to use Easter Monday was almost exclusively based on parental input. We know that these days conflict with the holidays and might raise religious issues."

But, board member Elizabeth Carter said the board should consider a shortened spring break despite the strong opposition.

"We need to stop seeing spring break as something sacred," Carter said. "If this is what we have to do, then we have to do it."

Other options discussed included Saturday makeup days and extending the school year overall.

Both parents and board members expressed opposition to the option to extend the school year.

"We want the students to have as productive makeup days as possible," Williams said.

"I am very concerned about the upcoming (Advanced Placement) exams, and students who will struggle because of the time they lost."

Superintendent Neil Pedersen said it was impossible to choose a plan that would please both students and staff members.

"Whatever we are deciding on here tonight, there will be no ideal plan," Pedersen said. "It is choosing the lesser of two evils."

The resolution also included makeup days on Feb. 21, April 24 (Easter Monday), Feb. 26 and June 12.

In a motion presented by board member Roger Waldon, the board authorized the superintendent to schedule Saturday makeup days immediately following school cancellations.

At Thursday's meeting, the board also discussed a proposal to lengthen the school day next year for the city schools.

The proposal would provide students with the required 1,000 hours of class time, which is not fulfilled by the current schedule.

"The state requires 333.33 minutes per day for 180 school days and our elementary school falls over 18 minutes short," Williams said.

She also said to comply with state regulations, various options were discussed, including earlier starting times and later closings.

"All of these options will effect transportation and parents are concerned if their children are being picked up earlier or later in the day," Williams said.

But, board member Nicholas Didow said he questioned the validity of the 1,000-hour state requirement.

"Hundreds of our high school students take academic courses which do not count in the overall," he said. "That puts us well beyond the 1,000 hours."

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Board Rubber Stamps End to Class Rank

BY KELLIE DIXON
Staff Writer

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Board of Education voted 5-2 Thursday night to send a request to the UNC General Administration which would scratch class rank from college applications.

Initiated by the School Governance Committee of East Chapel Hill High School, the request asked that the state allow it the right to abolish class rank.

Several parents and students claimed that students not in the top 10 percent of their class would be given an equal chance in admissions with the passage of this request.

"High-achieving students are at risk of lowering their grade point average and hence class rank by participating in

cultural arts programs which give credit for that participation (but not on the weighted scale)," Madeline Mitchell, a mother of five, said. "Taking any extra class that is not weighted can negatively affect a student's average."

The ECHHS waiver stated that students in the 15th to 30th percentile were at a disadvantage. Because the average GPA at ECHHS is so high, even those that score well are at a disadvantage in college admissions. The



School Board member Elizabeth Carter voted against a plan to abolish class rank in local high schools.

request stated that students were overlooked in the admissions process because they were not in the top percent of their class, even though they still performed well.

But some board members remained hesitant. "Currently, I do not agree class rank causes stress," said board member Elizabeth Carter. "We live in a competitive society and education is valued here. The likelihood of the UNC system saying yes is unlikely."

Student class rank is an influential factor in college admissions and is based on a profile established by the school itself. The profile represents the school and the difficulty of the courses.

The software used by the school system does not allow for class rank to be removed from the individual school profiles. But Ann Hart, assistant superin-

tendent for curriculum, said that changes could be made.

Board member Gloria Faley requested that school profiles be updated to accommodate the change and that dialogue remain open.

"Along with the waiver, attach an updated profile, updated and changed transcript to say this will show how well our students do," Faley said.

If approved, ECHHS would join the ranks of private schools across the state.

ECHHS Principal David Thaden said, "(We) look forward to working with the associate provost and director of admissions for UNC) in the years to come as we try to make sure our kids are looked at as the individuals they are."

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BOG Seeks Stricter Standards

A desire to raise freshman grades prompted the BOG to examine heightened admissions requirements.

BY DEEPIKA NARASIMHAN
Staff Writer

A Board of Governors planning committee laid the preliminary groundwork for raising the admissions bar to UNC-system schools Thursday.

The committee discussed a proposal to increase minimum course requirements for UNC-system admissions, which would require high school students to complete at least two years of foreign language and four years of math, including one course beyond second-level algebra.

The foreign language requirement would be implemented in fall 2004, and the math requirement would take effect two years later, said Gary Barnes, UNC vice president of program assessment and public service.

Barnes said raising the course requirements would lead to improvements within the system such as increases in retention rates, graduation rates, incoming Scholastic Aptitude Test scores and first-semester grade point averages.

"Math beyond Algebra II more than doubles chances that a student will complete a bachelor's degree," Barnes said.

Present system admission requirements are four years of English, three years of math, three years of science and two years of social sciences.

But Barnes said most UNC-system students were already meeting the proposed requirements. "95.3 percent of freshmen are meeting the two years of foreign language. And 78.7 percent of freshmen are meeting both the math and foreign language recommendations."

Barnes said he was confident the new standards would boost freshman grade-point averages throughout the system.

Students who enter college with only three years of math and less than two years of foreign language have an average first semester GPA of 1.76, he said.

But if the plan was implemented, freshmen in 2006 who met the new minimum requirement would have an average first-semester GPA of 2.34, he said.

Barnes said there was no reason high school students could not meet the additional course requirements. "There is plenty of room in their schedules for students to take these courses," he said.

But some members of the planning committee voiced concern that implementing this plan would create an increased need for high-school teachers.

Barnes admitted that more teachers would be needed, but he said the BOG communicated more now with N.C. high schools than it ever had in the past.

He said the schools would be well-informed of the requirements and would be able to prepare for the additional courses. Barnes said the planning committee would make a recommendation later in the year after gauging the BOG's reaction Thursday.

UNC-system President Molly Broad said she approved of the plan and had already begun discussing it with the state Board of Education. "It will increase the college-going rate," she said. "The evidence is quite persuasive."

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