

The Daily Tar Heel

107 years of editorial freedom
Serving the students and the University
community since 1893

Thursday, April 6, 2000
Volume 108, Issue 27

News/Features/Arts/Sports 962-0245
Business/Advertising 962-1163
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
© 2000 DTH Publishing Corp.
All rights reserved.

Legislators Approve Bill To Protect Tobacco Firms

The state legislature placed a \$25 million cap on what N.C. companies must pay before they can appeal out-of-state court decisions.

By **MATTHEW B. DEES**
State & National Editor

RALEIGH — The N.C. General Assembly ended its one-day special session Wednesday by overwhelmingly passing a bill to shield state industries from hefty out-of-state lawsuits.

Signed into law immediately by Gov. Jim Hunt, the legislation places a \$25 million cap on the bond that N.C. companies must post to appeal another

state's court decision. Without the provision, an expensive judgment could bankrupt a company and strip it of its ability to appeal.

Although it is applicable to all state businesses, the bill comes as a response to a lawsuit filed by Florida smokers against five tobacco companies, four of which have footholds in North Carolina.

A Florida jury began deliberations today to determine whether to award \$13.2 million in compensatory damages to the smokers. If this is approved, it will set the stage for a class-action lawsuit to seek punitive damages for the estimated 500,000 sick smokers in Florida.

N.C. lawmakers fear this ruling could force the firms to pay whopping punitive damages upwards

See **SESSION**, Page 9A



Speaker Pro Tem Joe Hackney, D-Orange, and Rep. George Miller, D-Durham, discuss a bill in the N.C. House chamber designed to protect state industries. It passed overwhelmingly.

Congress Taps Fresh Leadership

New Speaker Alexandra Bell says accessibility is her main goal as leader of the 82nd Student Congress.

By **GEOFF WESSEL**
Staff Writer

With Wednesday's elections of new officers, the first meeting of Congress' 82nd session completed the transition from this year's student government to the next.

Former Speaker Mark Kleinschmidt opened the meeting Wednesday and then turned over the chair to Rep. Alexandra Bell, Dist. 20, who was unanimously elected as speaker.

"I have big shoes to fill, but I feel I can make the 82nd session as effective (as the 81st)," Bell said. "I want to bring Congress closer to the students."

"Accessibility is my main goal." As the new Congress elected its officers, members raised the issue of accessibility several times. "Students need to have a voice in Congress," said Rep. Gregory Wahl, Dist. 1, a first-year law student who was elected Student Affairs Committee chairman.

"Just because we're on STV doesn't mean everybody knows what's going on."

Wahl, who won a majority of votes, despite running against five other representatives in the most contested race of the evening, said he saw Student Affairs as the most important Congress committee.

"If you ask any student what the purpose of Student Congress is, they would say it's to be the voice of students, which is what this committee does," he said.

Student Affairs is also responsible for examining resolutions, which raised another debate. Several resolutions have entered the campus consciousness recently, coming under criticism for being outside the scope of Student Congress's authority.

"(The resolution to call for a moratorium on sanctions against) Iraq was the big one last year," Bell said.

"I think that if a dedicated group of students brings something before us, if enough students come should be no problem hearing them out."

Other such resolutions included a call for a moratorium on the death penalty and one asking students to boycott South Carolina for the state's refusal to remove Confederate flag from its Capitol Building.

Wahl said that while he personally felt Congress should not pass such resolutions, he supported allowing the members to vote.

He said it was important to know the views of the students they were repre-

See **CONGRESS**, Page 9A

REINVENTING THE FAMILY

Once Only a Catchphrase, Family Values are Evolving In Nontraditional Ways

By **LAUREN BEAL**
Assistant University Editor

Eight years ago, the vice president of the United States stood before the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco stressing the need for a renewed dedication to family values.

Nearing the end of his speech, he made a short reference to a popular television show.

Dan Quayle questioned the message Murphy Brown's creators were sending with an unmarried fictional character proudly deciding to have and raise a baby alone.

"It doesn't help matters when prime-time TV has Murphy Brown — a character who supposedly epitomizes today's intelligent, highly paid professional woman — mocking the importance of fathers by bearing a child alone and calling it just another 'life-style choice,'" Quayle said.

The country erupted.

The politician's remarks became instant soundbytes and launched a nationwide debate on family values.

One can only wonder what Quayle would say now when faced with the nontraditional makeup of today's families.

Gone are the "Leave It to Beaver," "Ozzie and Harriet" families of the 1950s. America's families have moved beyond the traditional mom, dad, 2.5 children and family dog of years gone by.

Divorce is a commonplace word, stepfamilies a widely accepted concept. Children are raised with one parent, two parents, parents of the same sex or sometimes no parents at all. Today's criticism and debate is often likely to center around whether it's OK for young Sally to grow up with two moms.

And those studying the family say that as the number of nontraditional family combinations grow, so will our levels of

acceptance.

"We all know families of varied types; it's reflected on what we see on TV," said Steve Reznick, a UNC professor of psychology. "We've become much more open-minded about people finding combinations that work."

A 1999 University of Chicago study shows that while almost half of all households in the 1970s were comprised of a married couple with children, only about a quarter of today's households have a similar makeup.

Though still a valued institution, marriage itself has a less central role in our society. Surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Center show the proportion of adults who have never been married rose from 15 percent to 22 percent between 1972 and 1996. Members of Generation Y are more likely to delay marriage, more likely to live with someone without wearing a ring and more likely to get divorced than those of previous generations.

Of those women born between 1933 and 1942, only 7 percent first lived with someone before marriage, according to the research center study.

But for women born between 1963 and 1974, the percentage of relationships beginning with a couple living together rather than marrying jumped to 64 percent.

Along with the increase in cohabitation has come an increase in the divorce rate.

"Half of all marriages end in divorce" — the phrase is widely accepted, common knowledge for those of Generation Y. And while the figure of one out of two is a projection of how many people will eventually divorce, the actual percentage of divorces is not too far off.

The research center study shows the proportion of adults who have been

See **FAMILY**, Page 9A



Proposal to Boost Pell Grant

A UNC administrator says increased Pell Grant funding would add to aid packages for thousands of students.

By **GAVIN OFF**
Staff Writer

Within the next two days, Sen. Russ Feingold, D-Wis., and Sen. Ted Kennedy, D-Mass., plan to introduce a proposal that could further enable students to fund their higher education.

The two senators will offer the Senate an amendment that would raise the amount of each federally awarded Pell Grant by \$400. With the increase, stu-

dents could receive a maximum grant of \$3,700. The increase would be implemented in the 2000-01 school year.

The Pell Grant is a federal need-based college financial aid program begun in 1972. The nation's largest source of grant money to needy students, \$7.7 billion in Pell Grants were awarded during this school year — \$4 million of which went to UNC students.

Feingold and Kennedy are expected to introduce their proposal to the Senate either today or Friday.

Shirley Ort, UNC director of scholarships and student aid, said 2,057 UNC students received the Pell Grant last year, with awards ranging from \$400 to \$3,125, depending on their need. Ort said the Pell Grant was University's

largest source of federal aid.

"The Pell Grant is a cornerstone for our financial aid package for needy students," Ort said. "We use that to anchor a package and add other sources. It's very important to students with need."

Feingold stated in a press release that the importance of the Pell Grant could not be overestimated.

He stated that the award often determined whether students were able to attend college.

"Without Pell Grants, many individuals simply can't consider college — post-secondary training, some employers won't consider hiring these individuals," Feingold stated.

See **PELL**, Page 9A

\$307 Million Aid Bill Faces Delay in Senate

Staff & Wire Reports

WASHINGTON — A bill providing \$307 million in Hurricane Floyd relief for North Carolina has stalled in the Senate because of a budget battle between President Clinton and Congress.

The president criticized Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott Tuesday after Lott decided to prevent the Senate from taking up an emergency spending bill the president submitted in February.

The \$13.1 billion bill, passed last week by the U.S. House, contains \$2.2

billion in aid for hurricane victims and other disaster relief, with \$307 million targeted for North Carolina's recovery from September's historic flooding.

Lott said the House added too much money to the measure, which has more than doubled in cost since Clinton sent it to Congress.

In addition to the disaster relief, the emergency spending measure includes \$2.1 billion for U.S. peacekeeping forces in Kosovo and \$1.7 billion to fight drug trafficking in Colombia.

See **FUNDING**, Page 9A

INSIDE Thursday



Looking Back

The UNC men's basketball team carried fans on a wild ride this year. The Daily Tar Heel revisits a season in which the final result was typical, but the way it happened was anything but. See **Inside**.

Political Mudslinging

Political attack ads might become things of the past if other companies like Capitol Broadcasting Company allow politicians free airtime for their platforms. See **Page 11**.

Today's Weather

Sunny;
Low 70s.
Friday: Sunny;
Low 80s.

Wisdom begins with wonder.

Socrates