

# Students, Grandparents Meet at Crossroads

**Campus Crossroads has set up an Adopt-a-Grandparent program that pairs students with rest home residents.**

**BY MOIRA VANDERHOOF**  
Staff Writer

Justin Wright started the Campus Crossroads program this year hoping to provide a church alternative for students wanting to learn more about God through Christian fellowship.

Wright, a former UNC student who graduated from the East Coast Bible College in Charlotte, said the group provided a relaxed atmosphere for students who wished to build and strengthen their faith.

"We do things like have picnics on the quad, and we go bowling," Wright said.

But after voluntarily washing windows on Franklin Street and taking Christmas gift baskets to the elderly residents at the local Britthaven Nursing Home in December, Wright also found that the group enjoyed and found encouragement in serving the community.

"We realized that so many of these people (in rest homes) don't get visited," Wright said. "That's when it hit me that we should try to pair students

with them."

The idea caught on with the Campus Crossroads participants and grew into the Adopt-a-Grandparent program.

Wright said a challenge for the students was that many of the "grandparents" had trouble communicating with them.

"Some of these people in rest homes cannot speak," Wright said. "Some will talk your ears off,

but if you just spend five minutes with them it means so much. It's just a huge need I've found."

And the program has gained support from both the elderly and student participants.

"We definitely saw a need for it," said Jennifer Leonhardt, a sophomore from Denver and participant in Campus Crossroads and Adopt-a-Grandparent.

Jana Wilson, another participant, said she felt the program filled a void by keeping the adopted grandparents company.

"There are a lot of elderly people out there who do not have family that comes to visit them," said the sophomore from Morganton. "They are peo-

ple too. They get a lot of enjoyment out of having young people come visit them."

But it is not always easy for the volunteers to communicate with their adopted grandparents.

"It's uncomfortable at first," Leonhardt said. "It's hard for them to respond to you."

Three to four students are usually paired with one "grandparent," and Leonhardt said they tried to go to the rest home to visit as often as possible. Some students go once a week.

The volunteers target those residents who do not have family that visit them and those who do not get a lot of cards and attention, Wright said.

"I encourage the students to find out their birthdays and send them birthday and holiday cards," he said.

Leonhardt said the students tried to ward off the elderly people's loneliness.

"When we go we just try to sit down on their beds and talk to them. Some of them seem really lonely," Leonhardt said. "It's sad because some of them just sit and talk to themselves."

"But the more you go, the more

*"It's encouraging to know that just by being there you have brought them a little hope and made them feel a little better."*

**JENNIFER LEONHARDT**  
Adopt-a-Grandparent Participant



DTH/EMILY SCHNUR

UNC students Jana Wilson (left) and Jennifer Leonhardt visit with residents of the Britthaven of Chapel Hill nursing home as part of the Adopt-a-Grandparent volunteer program.

comfortable you get and the more they start to recognize your face."

Besides sitting and chatting with their adopted grandparents, the students have done things like send them Easter baskets.

"Just by sitting and talking to them you can find out their backgrounds and the things they like," Wilson said. "They might like to go out on the porch and talk, or they might have a favorite candy ... or they might like to go outside and look at the flowers. We try to tap into those things."

The main focus of the Adopt-a-Grandparent program is to give the

elderly people a chance to communicate and connect with others.

Even though the program is run through a Christian organization, Wright said students did not have to be either part of Campus Crossroads or Christian to participate.

"I take my wife and my son," Wright said. "And when you leave (the rest home) they've actually helped you. They have a lot of wisdom to share."

Leonhardt gets a sense of pride from spending time with the grandparents.

"It's encouraging to know that just by being there you have brought them a little hope and made them feel a little

better," he said. "It makes you feel good and uplifted."

About 10 students participate in the Adopt-a-Grandparent program. Wright said he hoped the program would continue to grow and allow them to volunteer in other rest homes.

"Our job is to make them feel special, to have an emotional relationship with them and give them something to look forward to each week," Wilson said. "They need to feel special and loved and cared for."

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# Local Blazes Fuel Town Sprinkler Debate

**Several area officials say sprinkler systems should be considered for off-campus housing, despite high costs.**

**BY KEVIN KRASNOW**  
Staff Writer

A rash of area fires has pushed local officials to consider whether sprinkler systems should be installed in all off-campus rental facilities.

Fires at Timberlyne and Foxcroft apartments in Chapel Hill last week, coupled with recent fires at Seton Hall University in New Jersey and at Bloomsburg University in Pennsylvania, have fueled the debate. None of the buildings in the incidents had sprinkler systems.

Robert Bosworth, deputy fire chief for Chapel Hill, said area fires had brought the issue to the forefront for good reason.

"The fires bring this issue to light," he said. "I've been to way too many fires where sprinklers would have controlled fires — they are a whole lot better than other devices."

Taking the lead in fire safety, the City Council in College Park, Md., has proposed that all sorority and fraternity houses, apartments and rental homes be equipped with sprinkler systems.

The proposal is geared toward ensuring the safety of students at the University of Maryland at College Park.

Some steps have already been taken by officials in Chapel Hill and Carrboro to install fire preventing sprinkler systems in new housing developments.

Bosworth said a 1996 Chapel Hill ordinance required that all future residential complexes and University housing must be equipped with sprinklers, stemming from a 1995 fraternity fire at Phi Gamma Delta, killing five UNC students.

"It requires any structure greater than 6,000 square feet or any building with a major renovation to have sprinklers installed," he said.

"All fraternities and sororities must also have sprinklers installed within five

years."

Bosworth said that while he wished sprinkler systems could be installed in every building, he felt the town had moved in the right direction to ensure fire safety.

Chapel Hill Town Council member Pat Evans said the town had not considered a proposal similar to College Park's plan because it would be too expensive to fund.

"To require every resident to have a sprinkler system would be excessive," she said. "Budgets are tight, and there's no free ride — someone's got to pay."

But some local officials said they felt that installing sprinklers was of utmost concern and a fire safety measure not to be ignored.

Carrboro Alderman Jacquelyn Gist said sprinkler systems should be installed in all buildings because they were the most effective way to prevent fires. Gist disagreed that cost should pre-

*"Our fire chief always says there has never been a death in a sprinkled building. ... So how could it be too costly?"*

**JACQUELYN GIST**  
Carrboro Board of Aldermen Member

# University Mourns 3 Former Faculty Members

**Former Professor Irene Rains designed costumes for more than 200 plays during her tenure at UNC.**

**BY HARMONY JOHNSON**  
Staff Writer

The University mourns the loss of three former faculty members who contributed to the University community through their research and enthusiasm.

A memorial service this month will honor the loss of a former University professor who is remembered for her love of students and dedication to her profession.

Irene Rains, a costume design professor from 1942 until 1969, died in her Chapel Hill home April 20. She was 95.

A memorial service will be held at 1 p.m. May 13 at the Chapel of the Cross in Chapel Hill.

UNC also mourns the loss of Professor Emeritus Harriett Rheingold, who died Saturday, and Distinguished Professor of Music Emeritus William S. Newman, who died Thursday.

During Rains' 27 years as a faculty member, Rains designed costumes for more than 200 plays, said Scott Parker, director of the UNC Institute of Outdoor Drama.

"She was clearly one of the most influential professors in the history of the drama department," Parker said. "She taught countless numbers of students the value of good costume design."

During her tenure at the University, Rains taught several notable theater personalities, including Andy Griffith and William Ingey Long, a two-time Tony Award-winning costume designer.

Long has designed costumes for six plays currently running on Broadway. Rains is also remembered for her

personal guidance to students and faculty.

"She was a house mother in many ways," Parker said. "She took a great personal interest in her students."

In 1984, Rains received the North Carolina Theatre Conference's Distinguished Career Award, an award that recognizes a lifetime of service in theater. Parker, who made the presentation speech for the award, said Rains was either the fourth or fifth recipient of the award.

In 1977, she also received the

*"(Rains) was clearly one of the most influential professors in the history of the drama department."*

**SCOTT PARKER**  
UNC Institute of Outdoor Drama Director

Distinguished Service Award from the Roanoke Island Historical Society for her many years of dedication to "The Lost Colony."

Rheingold, 92, was one of the nation's most renowned developmental psychologists.

She was nationally recognized for her research on the social and exploratory capacities of infants and young children.

She died in Carol Woods Retirement Center after a long illness.

Newman, 88, served on UNC's faculty from 1945 until his retirement in

1977. He taught piano, music appreciation, history and graduate musicology.

He was also an accomplished concert pianist and author of the three-volume series "The History of the Sonata."

Aside from Newman's professional work, motorcycles were his hidden passion. In 1953, he arrived at a University concert tour from Chapel Hill to Seattle by motorcycle.

He was also an avid sports car fan who did his own repair work.

He died from complications of a stroke and no service is planned at this time.

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# City Strives for Fire Safety

**Sprinkler system mandates for College Park, Md. aim to protect town residents and students living off-campus.**

**BY ALEX KAPLUN**  
Staff Writer

The City Council in College Park, Md., has drafted a proposal aiming to protect town residents from apartment fires, but particularly University of Maryland students living off-campus.

City Council members in College Park, where the University of Maryland is located, are examining a proposal to place sprinklers in all rental housing in the city, including Greek houses.

The proposal comes on the heels of a residence hall fire at New Jersey's Seton Hall University that killed three students and injured 50 others this year.

Five UNC students were killed when the Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity House burned down in 1995.

College Park city regulations already require sprinkler systems in all new housing, but there are no such regulations for existing residences.

Council member Lisa Blevins said most members of the council supported the proposal, but the group would host a public hearing next week before setting a date to vote on the issue.

Blevins said the proposal aimed to protect college students renting residences in the city. "The idea is, when you are a homeowner, you're a little more cautious than renters," she said.

She said it was likely that one opposition to the proposals might come from landlords who would have to pay for the sprinkler systems. "There will be some out-of-pocket cost increase for landowners," Blevins said.

She also added that some residents might not see the need for sprinklers. "One of the arguments for not having sprinklers is that we've not had a major fire in College Park in 10 years."

But Jim Robinson, U.Md.-College Park coordinator of life safety systems, said sprinklers were necessary to keep students safe. "Because of the lifestyle of students, it's difficult to protect them, but this is a step in the right direction."

He said fire detection and prevention technology should be efficient enough for sober students to evacuate a burning building before the fire reaches dangerous proportions.

Robinson said technology for effective sprinkler systems had only existed for about 10 years. He said landlords should update the fire prevention technology of residences that were more than a decade old.

He added that while the fire at Seton Hall had received national attention, no campus was devoid of fire-related incidents. "I'm not sure that there is any campus that hasn't experienced a fire in one form or another," Robinson said.

Wei-Lin Yang, a U.Md.-College Park freshman from North Potomac, Md. and a member of Zeta Psi fraternity, said the university community was already well-protected against fires. "Our house already has (sprinklers), but I think it's good that the university is trying to protect its students."

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