

# Town Seeks Low-Cost Housing for UNC Hires

By JAMILA VERNON  
Staff Writer

Chapel Hill officials will soon present clear-cut options to the University and UNC Hospitals as to how they can participate in a project for employee-employer low-cost housing.

Michael Curzan, a consultant for the project, will introduce the various options to a task force comprised of town and University representatives by the second week in September.

The project will offer University and hospital employees of low to moderate

income the chance to live close to work.

Mayor Rosemary Waldorf has been advocating the plan since November 1997. She said there is demand based on surveys conducted this year and that UNC's participation is important.

"What we need from UNC is to think about whether they want to participate," she said. "All parties need to think about land donation or financial donation."

Tentatively the plans are for 140 two-bedroom, two-bathroom condominium units to be built for employees making \$30,000 to \$45,000 annual incomes.

"They would sell with favorable interest rates ... for (\$130,000) to \$135,000," Waldorf said. "That's a very good price for Chapel Hill."

Waldorf said the units would be available only to hospital and UNC employees and ownership will be based on salary. Three lots are being considered for the project, but some are more favorable than others.

"It needs to be properly located in the center of town," said Town Council member Kevin Foy. "The prime land still available is on Rosemary Street ... but the University became less sure of using its property."

The two other spaces are the lot west of Breadman's on Rosemary Street, which also belongs to the University, or Lot 5, located near Franklin and Church streets, which belong to the town.

Waldorf said the development will meet demands created by enrollment growth and will allow for development.

Waldorf said the project would allow for retail space, a grocery store and, if the project is lucrative enough, extra parking spaces.

Michael Stegman, public policy analysis professor and member of the task force, said the University's stance on the matter is still unclear.

"Ultimately it's the chancellor's prerogative," he said. "The mayor has had one chance to sit down with him. She's hoping to sit down with him again."

Stegman said the University has been in transition so the project has not been at the top of the agenda. "The phenomena we're dealing with here is that this is new and different," Waldorf said. "If everyone were to sign on the dotted line today, it would probably take a year (for construction to start)."

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ERIN MENDELL

## Pets Need You To Love 'Em And Leash 'Em

Carrboro resident Carrie Monette loves your dog, but she wants you to keep it on a leash.

The animal advocate has filed three complaints with the Carrboro Police Department's Animal Control since the beginning of fall classes at the University.

Chapel Hill and Carrboro both have ordinances that require dog owners to keep their dogs on leashes except in certain zones designated as "leash-free."

Monette said she usually sees an increase in leash law violations when classes begin because students might not be aware of the ordinances. But she makes it clear that she's not against students having pets. "I became an animal rights advocate because of the cat I had as a student," she said. "I know that many students are respectful."

Unfortunately there are students who are not respectful, and they're not helping town/gown relations any.

Monette said when she sees someone violating a leash law, she will inform the person about the ordinance and request that he or she follow it. She only calls animal control when her request is met with disrespect.

Just because we only live here for about eight months out of the year, it doesn't mean we can ignore the ordinances Chapel Hill and Carrboro pass or be disrespectful towards residents who try to inform us about them.

"I'm a wimp and I definitely don't want your dog - no matter how cute it is - running at me."

Monette might not hold the negative experiences she's had with some students against all of us, but we shouldn't be surprised if some people do.

"Often times, people take it as very confrontational," Animal Control Officer Amanda Stipe said of when residents approach people about leash laws. "Animal issues are kind of difficult."

You might think your dog is sweet and harmless, and maybe it is, but other animals and people might not know that and be scared anyway.

The ordinances are in effect for good reason. "A lot of people say, 'Oh, my dog won't hurt your cat,' but the cats don't know that," Monette said. Cats can get hurt just by being scared, because they run up trees to get away from dogs.

Monette said an off-leash dog killed one of her neighbor's cats, and one of her own cats was injured on its way up a tree while trying to get away from a dog.

And other dogs are at risk when people don't keep their dogs on leashes. Off-leash dogs often harass dogs that are on leashes. Not obeying leash laws can be dangerous to people too. Older adults and young children could easily be harmed by an off-leash dog even when it's just being "friendly."

The leash ordinances are also in place to protect dogs whose owners might allow the dog to run off-leash without them.

"We have had a problem with rabies," Stipe said. The problem is not nearly as severe this year - with only one recorded rabies case so far - as it has been in the past, an off-leash dog is much more likely to meet with a rabid raccoon than a dog on a leash is.

Stipe said she sees other pet-related problems besides leash law violations. She also deals with abandoned animals, many of which she suspects have been abandoned by students.

It might seem like a great idea to get a pet when you move off campus, but pets are also a lot of work. And unlike when you were 7-years-old and begged for a dog, promised to walk and feed it "every day, daddy," your parents aren't here to pick up the slack.

As a matter of respect to the Chapel Hill and Carrboro residents and the animal itself, students should treat getting a pet like the serious commitment it is. If you find that you can't take care of a pet you already have, don't just leave it outside your building. Try to find someone who can take care of it or bring the pet to an animal shelter.

When Monette was a student at UNC, she loved having her cat. That proves it can work out for students to have pets. "It's just a matter of people knowing what the ordinance is and being respectful."

Columnist Erin Mendell can be reached at mendell@email.unc.edu.

## AAA to Push Cell Phone Ban

By WORTH CIVILS  
Senior Writer

AAA Carolinas recently announced its intention to push a legislative ban on the use of cellular phones while driving, citing concerns that the phones could lead to deadly accidents.

The group, which lobbies for motorist safety issues, is the largest organization of its kind in the Carolinas.

AAA hopes to persuade state legislators in North and South Carolina to regulate drivers' use of cell phones.

"It's safer to drive with two hands on the wheel than one," said Tom Crosby, AAA Carolinas vice president for communications. "It's very difficult with a phone on your ear, and to put it down and grab the wheel (in an emergency situation)."

This is the first time a restriction on cell phone usage has been proposed before the North or South Carolina legislature. Attempts to restrict cell phone usage have already failed in 21 other states.

Crosby said AAA would encourage state legislators, through lobbyists, to draft a bill enacting the ban.

Rep. John Hurley, D-Cumberland, said the N.C. General Assembly would address a proposed bill when it reconvenes in January. But he said passing the bill likely would be difficult and time-consuming.

"Some people will see this as infringing on privacy," he said. "It probably will take a long time to pass, and we'll kick it around for several years. We just don't know until we all have a shot at it and get feedback."

Under the proposal, drivers still would be allowed to use hands-free phones, such as headset devices and speaker phones. Crosby also said the proposal does not ban hand-held phones completely.

"We're not against, in an emergency situation, to have (a hand-held phone) in the car," he said. "It would be a different thing."

But AAA officials said they hope safety concerns will outweigh any privacy or infringement issues drivers might raise and will ultimately lead to the proposed ban becoming law.

According to AAA, a 1997 study in the New England Journal of Medicine showed that talking on a hand-held cell phone while driving was as dangerous

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DTH/MARGARET SOUTHERN

Brad Armstrong chats on his cell phone while driving around campus. A safety advocacy group is trying to ban cell phone use while driving.

## Holiday Weekend Brings Gas-Price Relief Labor Day Celebrates Workers

By KASEY BENSINGER  
Staff Writer

Labor Day weekend should mark the end of rising gas prices in a year when Americans have paid up to 25 cents more per gallon for fuel.

"Labor Day weekend usually marks the end of the summer travel season," said David Neill of the Durham Chamber of Commerce's research department.

"This is the time of the year that gas prices typically fall."

Neill said residents can expect prices to decrease in the coming weeks because people will not be traveling as much after the Labor Day holiday weekend.

Stacey Orcutt, spokeswoman for the Chapel Hill Chamber of Commerce, said she thought Chapel Hill had the highest prices in the area, compared to their neighbors in the Triangle.

But the town's average - at \$1.49 per gallon - is still lower than the national average.

Even Durham has lower prices than Chapel Hill.

Durham's average is about 10 cents lower, wavering between \$1.38 to \$1.39 per gallon.

A nationwide survey conducted in California on Aug. 25 showed the average of 10,000 gas stations to be \$1.55 per gallon.

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Gas prices vary across the country. The price of gas in San Francisco is a national high at \$1.86 per gallon. But residents of El Paso, Texas, enjoy a national low average of \$1.34 per gallon.

Greg Johnson, a UNC junior, said he spent the summer in California and had to pay attention to how much gas he used.

"I was driving a fuel-inefficient car, and I had to cut down (on using gas)," he said.

"But now I have a small car here, so it is not a problem."

Because of the high prices, numerous Web sites have been created to direct people where they can purchase cheaper gasoline.

Gasprices.com is one such site that offers people a way to search the Internet for the cheapest gas in their city.

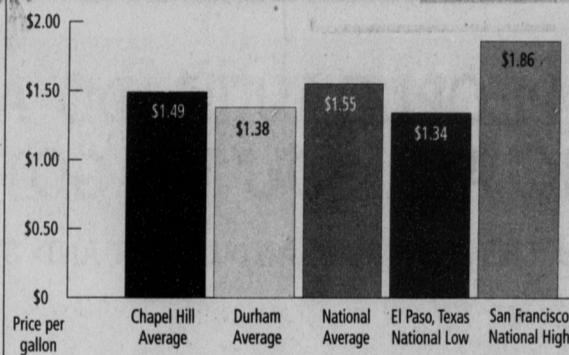
But students are not letting the high pump prices get in the way of their weekend plans, planning road trips to various locations.

UNC junior Leigh Fox is planning a trip to Myrtle Beach for the three-day holiday.

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### Got a problem with gas? No worries. Help is on the way, officials say.

Chapel Hill offers gas at a cost much lower than that of the national average. Despite this, town pumps still have a higher price than other gas stations around the Triangle. This Labor Day weekend, gas, which has increased 24 cents in cost as compared to last year's pump prices, is expected to peak. Experts predict the gas prices will begin to decline as summer road trips start to wind down.



SOURCE: THE UTILITY CONSUMERS ACTION NETWORK

The holiday, to many, means beaches and the end of summer, but it actually began for the working class.

By LUCAS FENKES  
Assistant State & National Editor

Different people have different Labor Day traditions.

Some people stuff their faces with hot dogs at backyard barbecues. Others go to the beach and work on their tans in the sun, while other people mow the lawn during the day and set off fireworks at night.

Labor Day, the first Monday in September, has traditionally marked the end of summer.

But the only thing most people know about Labor Day is that it means a day off from school or work.

"I wish I knew what (Labor Day) is," said UNC junior Naru Williams of Durham. "Is it something religious?"

Graduate student Autumn Winters, of Jonesville, said Labor Day meant the end of summer - and some fashion options.

"It means you can't wear your white shoes anymore."

Junior Liz Hern of Raleigh said Labor Day celebrations were related to working.

"Labor Day celebrates the fact that everyone works, so everyone needs a day off," Hern said.

But UNC history Professor David Anderson, who teaches a class on the history of the American worker, said labor unions first started celebrating Labor Day to showcase the strength and spirit of the working class.

"It's really the only holiday dedicated to a specific class," Anderson said. "Workers wanted to show politicians not to pander to corporations."

He said President Grover Cleveland signed a bill making Labor Day a national holiday in 1894.

Anderson said countries worldwide celebrate their work forces, but most choose to do it during May Day.

"(America) chose to celebrate Labor Day over May Day because May Day was adopted by radical socialist elements throughout the world," he said.

Anderson said Labor Day's early celebrations involved parades and speeches professing workers' ideals of what America should be.

But the holiday's original symbolism was somewhat lost after World War II, when it became increasingly commercialized, Anderson said.

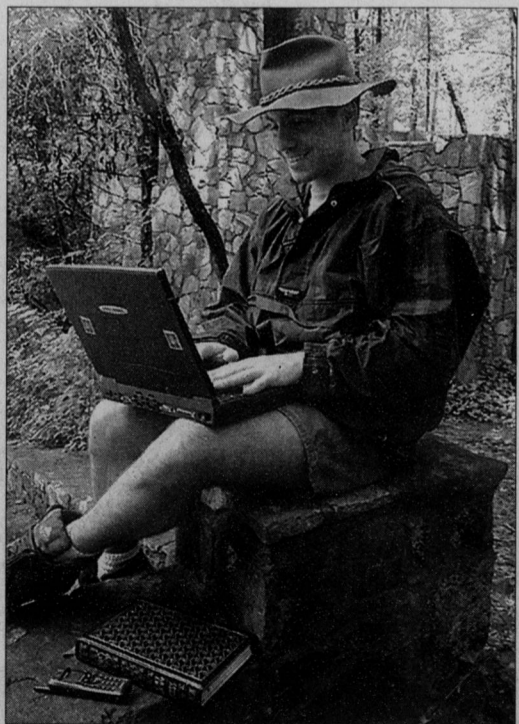
"Holidays have really lost their official functions," he said.

"(Labor Day) is now mainly seen as a vacation rather than an opportunity for dialogue."

"It doesn't bother people that Labor Day has been reduced to a day people

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## Tar Heel Gets 'Jolly' Over Classics



DTH/KATE MELLNIK

preferring to work outside his office, UNC graduate Elliot McGucken runs a popular literature Web site.

## Alum's Web Site Targets 'Literary Renaissance'

By RUSS LANE  
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

UNC alumnus Elliot McGucken's 30-year-old face is camouflaged nicely on the streets of Chapel Hill. Few would know that his literary Web site is a force to be reckoned with in the Internet community.

Despite his talent to blend into the area, however, McGucken already has begun and ended a teaching career and now focuses on his Web site, <http://www.jollyroger.com>.

McGucken runs jollyroger.com and is its sole employee. Established in 1995, the Web site features message boards where people discuss classic literature and philosophy at length, often with a depth beyond that of an average English 20 class.

As the domain name suggests, McGucken said the Web site is a sort of literary pirate on the information superhighway. He said the site offers its visitors the opportunity to engage classic literature often overlooked by young people today.

"The major point of the site is to help inspire a literary renaissance in the up-and-coming generation," he said. In the younger generation, "reading and enjoy-

ing the classics seems to make you somewhat of a rebel."

The child of two college professors, McGucken was no stranger to academia, eventually becoming interested in science, Shakespeare and Salinger in high school. Juggling physics classes with the occasional literature course, McGucken received his doctorate at the University in 1998. A year prior to his graduation, he helped develop technology that allows the blind to see with a microchip imbedded in the eye.

McGucken's conversations can transition from "Hamlet" to Einstein in the same breath. He said science and literature hold their own respective importance - people get in trouble when they try to mix the two.

"I think a lot of confusion arises when people use physics to address the humanities and vice versa," McGucken said. "So many postmodernists use the fact that we can't scientifically prove (emotions) to deconstruct a lot of the classics, when really science is the wrong tool for unlocking the secrets of the soul."

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