

G.I. Jane
Cadet rises in
ranks. See Page 3



Marshall Marches In
The Thundering Herd rolls into
Kenan Stadium on Saturday.
See Page 5



T.G.I.F.
Today: Rainy, 77
Saturday: Sunny, 86
Sunday: Stormy, 86

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Friday, September 22, 2000

Study Examines Solutions for U.S. 15-501 Congestion

By THEO HELM
Staff Writer

Local officials introduced residents to a plan for easing traffic congestion on U.S. 15-501 at an informal meeting Thursday night.

Chapel Hill Mayor Rosemary Waldorf, town transportation planners and study consultants presented the Major Investment Study. The MIS must be completed to receive federal funding for a new transit system.

Waldorf said the study team is dis-

cussing four options – a diesel rail system, a light rail system, a busway and a combination busway and mixed traffic area – to curb traffic between Chapel Hill and Durham.

"Everyone knows there's an extreme congestion problem on (U.S.) 15-501 between Chapel Hill and Durham," Waldorf said. "How can we best have transit service from Ninth Street (in Durham) to the UNC Hospitals?"

Triangle Transit Authority has already chosen the diesel rail system as the transportation system linking Raleigh and

Durham, but it will not be built until 2007, assuming the project receives funding.

Chapel Hill resident Robin Helburn suggested integrating a rail system with the one TTA is planning.

"To have to switch from tech-



Chapel Hill Mayor Rosemary Waldorf said changes are at least 10 years away.

nologies is a real barrier to ridership," Helburn said. "It's like reading a book with a different font for every chapter."

But any hopes for a quick solution to transit problems were dashed when Waldorf explained the time schedule for the project.

"We want to finish the study by Feb. 1," she said. "The best guesstimate I've heard about when this thing could begin being built is 10 years, minimum."

Waldorf said the best short-term action would be to persuade the N.C. Department of Transportation to install

high-occupancy vehicle lanes between Chapel Hill and Research Triangle Park, which conceivably could encourage carpooling. The HOV lanes also could serve as bus lanes, Waldorf said.

The goal of the project, both short and long term, is to prevent the worsening of congestion, Waldorf said.

"We're not talking about a drop in traffic flow unless there's sudden depopulation," she said. "Traffic congestion is here to stay."

Orange County resident Ted Seymour said he is worried about the

effect the project could have on residential areas. "I'm concerned about neighborhood areas being uprooted by mass transit," he said. "But we certainly do need some sort of mass transportation system to alleviate congestion."

Helburn said the community ultimately would rather have a rail system.

"People would be happier to see a set of tracks rather than a giant highway. We already have one (in U.S. 15-501)."

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu.

Faculty Must Keep Bond Talk Neutral

As state employees, faculty must inform the public about the bond referendum without openly backing it.

By MONICA CHEN
AND RACHEL COTTONE
Staff Writers

Many UNC-system faculty members support the \$3.1 billion higher education bond referendum but must exercise caution when voicing their opinions.

Sue Estroff, UNC-Chapel Hill faculty council chairwoman, said most of the University's professors favor the bond referendum but stop short of publicly endorsing it.

"Some people are giving talks," Estroff said. "We have to walk a fine line, though. We are state employees."

The \$3.1 billion bond referendum, the largest in the state's history, will be used to renovate and build capital facilities across the UNC system. And UNC will receive a significant portion of the bond package, totaling \$499 million. North Carolina residents will vote on the package Nov. 7.

As state employees, faculty members cannot legally use state or university resources to produce or distribute materials actively supporting the bond.

But faculty members are allowed to educate the public about the bond, provided they stick to factual information.

The guidelines suggest "that informational material include alternatives to the bond issue." According to the guidelines, the real distinction between educating and advocating depends on "style, tenor, timing and content of the publication or activity."

Estroff said faculty are allowed to lobby for the bond but must operate within limits.

"As private citizens, (the faculty) can do what any other citizen can," she said. "We can educate. We can inform."

But Evelyn Hawthorne, UNC-CH associate vice chancellor for government relations, said faculty must remember their public and private lives can be hard to separate.

"It is difficult (for the faculty) to distinguish between the faculty and university role and the personal role," Hawthorne said.

Some faculty at other UNC-system schools also favor the bond but cannot voice that opinion.

Brenda Killingsworth, former East Carolina University Faculty Senate chairwoman, said partisan support for the bond is strong and widespread but not voiced.

Killingsworth said ECU faculty supported the bond because of its possible impact on the school's future.

"We know how much it means to us," she said. "We need the money."

Killingsworth said ECU Faculty Senate meetings regarding the bond have been used to educate faculty so they do not petition for the bond.

Philip Carter, chairman-elect of the N.C. State University Faculty Senate, said he also favors the bond but understands any public advocacy must remain educational.

"One function (of faculty) is to inform the public."

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UNC Faculty Council Chairwoman Sue Estroff said professors do not stump for the bond package publicly.

Memorial Honors Late Principal

Students Recall Life Of Educator

By STEPHANIE GUNTER
Staff Writer

Students and faculty at Guy B. Phillips Middle School gathered Thursday to celebrate the life and accomplishments of late Principal Alton Cheek.

Cheek's goal for Phillips had been to achieve the status of an N.C. School of Excellence. The school was honored Thursday with that title, which it gained under Cheek's leadership for the 1999-00 school year.

"We are proud that we were able to reach this achievement before he left us," said Richard Pierce, interim principal at Phillips. "On behalf of Alton Cheek and his family here today, we are proud to accept this honor as a N.C. School of Excellence."

State Superintendent Mike Ward commemorated the event by presenting Phillips with a banner. In addition to praising the school for a job well done, Ward also shared thoughts on Cheek.

"I have known Alton Cheek since the days when I was a principal," he said. "As a principal, I tried to pattern myself after great leaders like Alton Cheek. Alton Cheek was a giant in our midst."

Cheek died of natural causes Aug. 22 and was found at home by Chapel Hill police. Students said they were shocked when they heard of his death.

"I was sad," said Charles Clarke, a seventh-grader at Phillips. "He was really nice. He was real laid-back and lots of principals are strict."

The faculty at Phillips had planned a daylong celebration in honor of Cheek, designed to be a joyful remembrance rather than a mournful time.

After the award ceremony, students enjoyed a day of sidewalk chalk drawings, face painting, music and food.

"The whole focus is to celebrate his life with the upbeat music and all of that," said guidance counselor Anne Brashear.



DTH/BRENT CLARK

Sixth-grader Kelan Danku of Phillips Middle School sends a message in chalk to her recently deceased principal, Alton Cheek. She was participating in a schoolwide celebration and memorial for Cheek, who passed away Aug. 22 from natural causes.

Cheek's daughters, Lynn and Jacquie, were also in attendance and presented the school with a small gift in memory of their father.

"My father treated you all like family," Lynn Cheek said. "You all were and still are his No. 1 priority."

"My father had a lot of sayings," she continued. "One was there were no problems, only challenges. Think outside the box. Don't close yourself in."

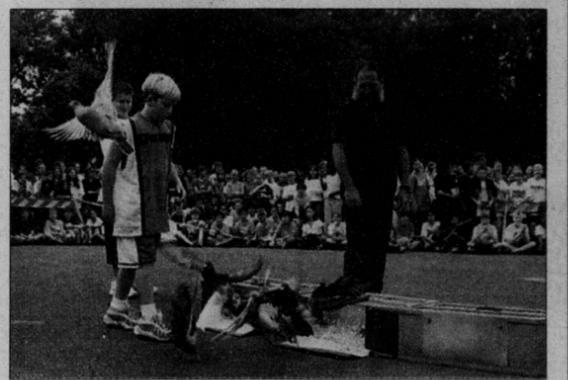
As a symbol of this sentiment, Cheek's daughters gave the school a small golden box with a figure perched, appropriately, outside it.

Seventh-grader Gabrielle Foushee shared her fond memories of Cheek.

"When I got in trouble, he always helped me out," she said. "He was always there for me."

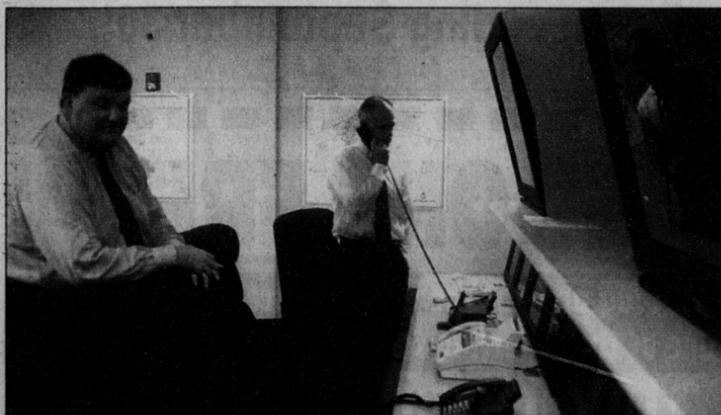
An array of stuffed animals had graced Cheek's office, reflecting his love for the toys. After Cheek's death,

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DTH/BRENT CLARK

Kenneth Oliver and his son Justin release their homing pigeons in front of students and teachers at Phillips Middle School on Thursday. The moment capped off a day dedicated to celebrating the school's academic achievements and the life of Phillips' late principal.



DTH/AUDREY BARRETT

Director of Public Safety Derek Poarch (left) and Deputy Director Jeff McCracken (right) show off the new Emergency Operations Center at DPS headquarters Thursday.

UNC Unveils High-Tech Crisis Center

By PAIGE AMMONS
AND TORI KISER
Staff Writers

The newest addition to UNC's campus lurks behind a maze of long hallways and security systems.

Only four supervisors hold a key to this locked room that might control the safety of all UNC students and faculty in an emergency.

The Emergency Operations Center, which opened in July, has placed \$50,000 worth of high-tech equipment designed to respond to emergency situations on campus in the hands of Director Derek Poarch and Deputy Director Jeff McCracken.

"It puts us in the situation where communication and services can continue to be provided," Poarch said.

ed," Poarch said.

The large room, located in the basement of the Department of Public Safety building on South Campus, houses all the essentials needed to keep the University functioning during all kinds of disasters, which include hurricanes, tornadoes, thunderstorms and even riots, Poarch said.

Poarch said one of the primary responsibilities of those manning the center would be to monitor the situation and classify the emergency's severity. "We would create an emergency plan based on whether it was a Category II or III emergency," Poarch said.

An example Category II situation would be an airplane crash; a Category III would be a hurricane, Poarch said.

In the event of an actual emergency, the only people allowed in the room would be those

from DPS, the Health and Safety Department, the Facilities Planning Department and media. Each of these representatives would have an individual assignment, but all would collectively work together to disseminate information to University officials, faculty and students.

"We now have a place to bring people together who do have to work together," Poarch said. "The sole purpose is to monitor and effectively protect the University's property."

The center is equipped with telephones, base-unit radios, fax machines, cable television and additional monitors, McCracken said.

A weather satellite dish on top of DPS headquarters keeps one of the large TV screens updated on forecasts around the globe. The

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A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.

Henry Adams