



ANNE FAWCETT

Sanders' Snub Bodes Poorly For System

I was shocked to read in Friday's Daily Tar Heel that John Sanders was not re-elected to the UNC Board of Governors.

Granted, my experience with the university system's governing body has been limited to the last two years, but Sanders has been the heart and conscience of the BOG during that time.

He has been one of the board's most knowledgeable members and students' most stalwart supporters during his two-year tenure.

Above all, Sanders believes in the University and its capacity to do good with its students and the state.

He has spent his career in service to North Carolina.

Sanders was a member of the faculty at the Institute of Government for 33 years, with 25 as the institute's head.

He is one of the fathers of the state's modern constitution. When the General Assembly convened in 1968 to redraft the Constitution, he served as staff adviser.

Sanders helped create the statewide community college system. He helped design a plan for desegregating the UNC system in the early 1970s.

How did the N.C. House not re-elect him to the BOG?

Sanders was the one person who should have been a shoo-in to keep his seat. He and others estimated that he was running second or third among the 12 candidates for the seats.

The decision makes no sense. Who knows what our illustrious representatives were thinking when they cast their votes?

Maybe everyone assumed that Sanders was guaranteed to keep his seat, so they voted for other candidates.

Or maybe Sanders was doing his job too well. Perhaps he made the General Assembly and the other members of the board think too hard about raising tuition capriciously.

Perhaps he was too great an advocate for students and too loud in his refrain of only raising tuition under exceptional circumstances.

He warned with great foresight that the decision last spring to raise tuition on five of the 16 UNC campuses was a dangerous precedent that would lead to a flood of future requests. Just as he predicted, N.C. Central and Appalachian State universities, among others, requested tuition increases this year.

Perhaps representatives from the west were intent on increasing the influence of Piedmont and Charlotte residents on the board. Others could have been trying to raise the board's minority presence. There are rumors of an alliance between the Black Caucus and the GOP.

Theories abound as those who know and respect Sanders try to explain the illogical decision.

It could have been politics; it could have been carelessness.

Politics seems the likely explanation, but it's also the worst reason. Support for public higher education shouldn't be an issue that splits Democrats and Republicans.

"It's unfortunate how politicized this process often gets," said Jeff Nieman, a former student BOG member.

(BOG) votes almost never come down along party lines, yet party affiliation plays an inordinately large role in the membership selection process."

Nieman is currently circulating a letter of support for Sanders among the state's leaders, many of whom have looked to Sanders as a mentor throughout their careers.

The only certainty is that the UNC system and the state as a whole will be worse off after Sanders' last BOG meeting June 8.

I hope Sanders will continue to stay involved with higher education in North Carolina. Even though he and I are only slightly acquainted, I know he has the integrity to not let one vote from the N.C. House keep him from pursuing his passion.

He will be a dangerous watchdog for the interests of students and universities in North Carolina.

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Town Studies Options for New Land

By LEAH COLE
Staff Writer

After a public hearing that attracted no comment from residents, the Chapel Hill Town Council passed a resolution to purchase a tract of land that could soon house the Chapel Hill Public Works Department.

The council needs to find a new location for both the Public Works and Transportation departments because of the likelihood that their current University-owned leases will not be renewed.

"As the council well knows, we face difficulty," Town Manager Cal Horton said.

The departments are currently located on the Horace Williams property on Airport Road.

The town rents this land from the University for \$1 a year, but this lease expires Dec. 31, 2006.

The University has not agreed to the town's requests to extend the lease for an additional 10 years because UNC plans to develop the land into a research and housing facility.

The failure to obtain an extension has led the town to search for new sites to house both of these municipal operations.

In an 8-1 vote Monday night, the council

approved an installment contract for the purchase of a 54-acre parcel of land that is bounded by Eubanks Road, Mill House Road and Interstate 40.

This 54-acre site was selected to house the Public Works Department because it is one of the few large vacant areas in Chapel Hill.

"We were looking at areas that would have enough acreage," council member Jim Ward said.

"They are pretty easy to find because there are not that many left."

Horton said the large area of land is needed to shield residents from the new facility.

"One of the reasons that we need so much land is because we plan on significant buffering," he said.

Ward said he has concerns about the ability of the town to relocate both operations within six years, when the lease expires.

"Under the best circumstances it would be a



Chapel Hill Town Council member Jim Ward said the search was made easier by the limited choices.

tight time frame in which to make that move," Ward said.

Council member Kevin Foy said he feels the town probably will not be able to relocate both operations within the six-year time frame, but because this would cause problems for both the town and the University, he feels something can be worked out.

"No transportation system is a problem for the University, as well," Foy said.

"I think that something will be able to be worked out."

Horton said no sites have yet been identified as a possible home for the Department of Transportation.

"We are still searching for a transit site," Horton said.

Council member Pat Evans said there are more options for the Department of Transportation site because of the far-reaching community impact of the transit system.

"We are partners in terms of transportation with Carrboro and the University, and there may be other options of locations for (the Department of Transportation)."

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Student BOG Rep One Step Closer To Voting Power

The bill needs the approval of the N.C. Senate and Gov. Mike Easley's signature before the ASG president can vote.

By KRISTY JONES
Staff Writer

RALEIGH — The N.C. House Education Committee approved a bill by voice vote Tuesday that would allow a student vote on the Board of Governors, despite some opposition from committee members of both parties.

About 10 students, including UNC Association of Student Governments President Andrew Payne, listened to the committee debate the bill, which will now go before the Rules and Calendar Committee and then on to the full House. The house committee must determine if the proposed bill is properly written and then schedule its introduction on the House floor.

Rep. Joe Hackney, D-Orange, vice chairman of the rules committee, said he believes that the bill will not die in the rules committee. The bill also must be approved in the N.C. Senate and signed by Gov. Mike Easley before it becomes law.

The bill's safe passage through the committee is a major victory for student leaders, who have been lobbying for a BOG vote for years. A similar bill died in a Senate committee in 1999.

About 40 legislators took part in the committee meeting, debating the merits of the bill and how it would impact the BOG.

Rep. Alma Adams, D-Guilford, who sponsored the bill, told committee members the bill would allow students fair representation on the board. "It would restore meaningful participation to the student member of the Board of Governors," Adams said.

She said student body presidents at each UNC-system school already receives voting privileges on their respective boards of trustees. Adams argued this privilege should be extended to the lone student member on the BOG.

But some committee members said the student sits on the board for only one year — not enough time to get a grasp on the issues the board considers.

And Rep. Gregory Thompson, R-Catawba, said allowing the student member to vote is unfair to the rest of the BOG. "This is a slap in the face to those who work hard to get elected," he said.

The BOG sets policy for the UNC system, as well as approving tuition and student fee increases.

Rep. Phillip Haire, D-Graham, said he opposes the student vote because the student population changes every year — meaning that student priorities might shift frequently.

But other committee members countered that an extra vote on the board would not change the direction of the BOG and said their fellow committee members' concerns are invalid.

There are currently 32 voting members on the board, all of whom were elected by either the state House or Senate.

Rep. Maggie Jeffus, D-Guilford, vice chairwoman of the education committee, said student leaders are highly capable. "These student leaders did not get where they are overnight," she said. After the meeting concluded, Rep. Donald Bonner, D-Hoke, co-chairman of the committee, said he supports the bill but would not speculate if it will pass the House.

Payne, who is running for another term as ASG president, said he is optimistic about Tuesday's meeting and that he believes the bill will pass. "With support from the committee, we should have the same success in the House."

If the bill is approved this summer, Payne or his successor will be able to vote on the BOG. "Today's results were awesome because we've been working 10 years for this."

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ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT



DTH/MIKE MESSIER

UNC men's crew club rowers Paul Scruggs (foreground) and Matt Clark row on the club's "erg" machines in the Pit on Monday night as a part of the club's annual Erg-A-Thon fund-raiser. The Erg-A-Thon lasts 26 hours straight, and club rowers take one- to two-hour shifts, advertising for businesses that contribute money to the club.

Outlook for Downtowns Is Moving Up

By MICHAEL DAVIS
Staff Writer

During the last few decades, downtowns of Piedmont cities have been marked not by burgeoning business but by desolate buildings and little pedestrian activity.

But prompted by intense downtown revitalization efforts in several N.C. cities, Main Street is back.

At least that's what community leaders across the state have in mind.

After seeing downtowns suffer as a result of suburban growth, city leaders are planning ways to reinvigorate commerce in these areas.

So far, results are promising. Buildings are filling, sidewalks are brimming with shoppers, and residents are more eager to venture down-

town after the sun sets.

Wilmington: Battling Suburbia

Like many cities across the state, Wilmington saw its share of suburban sprawl in the 1970s.

The trend was highlighted by the opening of Independence Mall in 1979, with most urban retailers fleeing either to the mall or to other shopping centers on the outskirts of town.

Bob Murphrey, executive director of Wilmington's Downtown Area Revitalization Effort Inc., remembers the fading days of downtown all too well. "The downtown region) bottomed out in the early 80s, and then it started picking up steam," he said. "It's been steady progress since then."

The re-emergence of the downtown can be credited partially to the work of Murphrey's nonprofit organization, which has been recruiting

business to the region since 1977.

With more than \$200 million invested in the downtown, Murphrey has witnessed the renovation of 250 buildings, the creation of 250 living units and the addition of between 3,000 and 4,000 jobs to the area since the late 1970s.

In the late 1990s, after realizing many of their goals were reached, Murphrey and his team created Vision 2020, an urban development plan to guide the downtown into the new century.

One of the major parts of the plan is the construction of a convention center on an old industrial site bordering the Cape Fear River.

Murphrey is in favor of a room occupancy tax and a prepared food tax increase to help fund the project, but he said that so far legislators have been hesitant to approve the tax increases.

Murphrey said such issues, as well as those

with suburban developers concerned their efforts will take a hit, are inevitable. "There are always those who are going to oppose the changes or think they have a better idea for it."

Raleigh: What Next?

Errol Frailey, president of the Downtown Raleigh Alliance, a nonprofit organization looking to improve business in the capital's downtown, said there have been noticeable differences recently. "We've been trying to raise visibility to all the changes in downtown Raleigh in the last five years."

Frailey said there has been a recent interest in visual and performing arts in Raleigh. Several galleries have opened in the last several years,

See REVITALIZATION, Page 9

New Club Brings 'Class' to Greensboro

By RUSS LANE
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

GREENSBORO — The Artistika Cafe Concert is the type of music club that makes you think twice before lighting a cigarette.

Located at 523 S. Elm St. — a part of downtown Greensboro's arts and antiques district — the Artistika's decor is a far cry from the concrete floors of Go! Rehearsal Studios or Cat's Cradle, making smokers a little self-conscious to light up in a building that exudes class.

The wooden ceilings and grainy pale brick walls are juxtaposed with colorful tapestries hanging from the walls. The 20-by-30 stage was built so that all the wiring is under the performance space and reaches the \$25,000 sound system tucked away in the far corner.

An iMac and a statue of Cupid sit on the L-shaped bar close to the door. It's a mix of the old and new — of technology and antiques — and it gives the venue an unpretentious but dignified atmosphere. And smoking is permitted at the Artistika.

The relatively empty streets are a sharp contrast to the Artistika's interior. The owner, former advertising executive Hugo Pascale, and house manager, film industry veteran Audra Angela, have converted an old hardware store into a 5,000-square-foot concert venue.

Pascale said the Artistika was built in a location without much competition on the street or in the city.

"We are aiming for the live music fans that are going to other cities instead of staying in Greensboro," he said.

Pascale and Angela — neither of whom had run a club before — began researching revitalization in the state and realized their plans

for the Artistika were in sync with their findings. "We found the most crucial element of any downtown (revitalization project) has to be that it reflects the arts and cultures of its residents," Angela said.

The foundation of the Artistika began in 1997, when Pascale bought the property and slowly began construction. Since its Christmas 2000 opening, Pascale and Angela have focused on bringing more live music to Greensboro.

Pascale creates a compilation CD each month highlighting several tracks from bands with forthcoming performances. In addition to providing live music Wednesday through Saturday, Pascale plans to include a latin music showcase and informal jam sessions to the weekly roster.

"It's obviously different than hearing a band in a bar — the band commands the room here," Angela said.

On March 23, Wilmington-based pop-rock outfit Velvet were playing as several police walked in and chatted with Angela. While the sight of police at a concert venue could evoke negative reflects for the club, both Pascale and Angela said they have experienced no problems with crime since the Artistika's opening.

"I'm surprised that downtown Greensboro (and most downtown areas in the state) has this reputation of being 'unsafe,'" Angela said. "I feel safer here than at the Four Seasons' parking lot."

The police seen visiting the Artistika, Angela said, are present



DTH/BRENT CLARK

Proprietors of Artistika, a new club in downtown Greensboro, watch as the Wilmington-based band Velvet performs a set.

because they are fans, not watchdogs, of the club. She said six to eight police officers stop by the venue regularly. "We're so thankful for the word-of-mouth," Angela added.

Joe Trappe, keyboardist for Suitcase, said the mix of the venue's theater-like atmosphere and attitude make a better musical experience for both musicians and audiences.

See ARTISTIKA, Page 9