

JOCULAR JUGGLER



Brendan "The Pretty Good" juggles for a crowd at the Fete de la Music in Carrboro. The festival featured more than 100 bands and lasted all day long.

Alumna Proposes Using Gerrard as UNC Chapel

Chancellor Moeser says he will consider a religious use for Gerrard Hall as UNC makes plans to renovate it.

By EMILY DRUM
Staff Writer

JUNE 14 - University officials say they will consider a proposal to develop Gerrard Hall for use as a non-denominational spiritual facility when renovations begin later this year.

Bronwyn Leech, a 1998 graduate of the UNC School of Journalism and Mass Communication, submitted the proposal to Chancellor James Moeser in May.

"It's something that I felt a need for when I was a student there," Leech said. "The facility would be used by different denominations and by different groups so it's a less intimidating environment to explore different ways of doing things."

The University could choose to incorporate Leech's proposal into the current restoration plans for Gerrard.

Provost Robert Shelton, chair of the University's facilities planning committee, said that while Moeser will make the ultimate decision, options for using the building will be reviewed by the Department of Facilities Planning and various other committees before any recommendations are made.

"If it's a well-thought-out use, it needs to be used in competition with other viable options," Shelton said.

Bruce Runberg, associate vice chancellor for facilities services, also said that any suggestions for the use of Gerrard Hall will be considered.

He said UNC is seeking to hire a historical preservationist for the campus. The committee will not begin consider-

ing options for Gerrard until they find a designer.

Leech said she hopes the restoration of Gerrard can honor the original intentions of the University's founders.

The building was finished in 1837 as the second campus chapel. It originally served as the primary religious center on campus and as a general meeting space.

Sophomore Brandy Dykhuizen of Surf City said she thought the original purpose of the building should be honored, but she would not use such a space herself. "It's probably going to end up being predominantly Christian, and everyone else will feel uncomfortable to go there," she said.

NC Hillel Executive Director Or Mars said he thinks the idea is good, in theory. "I think it could pose some challenges to pluralism as well as church-state issues, but if we could overcome that, it would be a positive step forward."

Jan Rivero, campus minister of the Wesley Foundation, said she thought it would be a valuable resource. Both NC Hillel and the Wesley Foundation already have their own spaces for students to worship.

Scott Vermillion, area director for UNC's InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, a campus Christian group that does not have a designated meeting space, said that his group would use such a space.

Some students, including Muslim junior Yusuf Ahmad, said they would not use the proposal but would probably not use such a facility themselves. "If this is going to work, the primary focus has to be on sharing knowledge of the different religions, (rather) than practicing religion."

Emily Drum can be reached at edrum@email.unc.edu.

Fare-Free Busing Factors Into Budget

By EMILY CANADAY
Staff Writer

JUNE 28 - The Chapel Hill Town Council cleared the way for fare-free busing Monday as part of the town's \$57.3 million budget.

The budget also combines the Transportation Fund tax rate with the General Fund tax rate to form a total tax rate of 50.4 cents for the 2001-2002 fiscal year, which is 7.4 cents lower than the current rate of 57.8 cents.

But these numbers can be deceiving. This year the county assessor determined that Chapel Hill homes increased an average of 25 to 30 percent in value. So, even though the tax rates are lower than in previous years, residents will pay

2.2 percent more per \$100 valuation in property taxes because their homes are worth more.

This additional revenue will raise the salaries of town employees, allow for the addition of 22 new town personnel including police officers, firefighters and public works crews and help provide for free Chapel Hill Transit service.

Seventy percent of student-voters supported a student fees increase in a February referendum to subsidize the implementation of fare-free busing. Instead of paying over \$200 for a bus pass, students now will only have to fork over a mere \$17.

"The students really wanted this," Council member Kevin Foy said. "The University said it really wanted it and

was willing to put up the money. It'll help them deal with the loss of parking spaces on campus in the next two years as growth goes on."

Carolyn Elfland, associate vice chancellor for auxiliary services, said the University will experience parking deficits as the bond-financed construction and renovation program unfolds over the next few years.

"We will sacrifice 500 spaces in the fall and in four years lose up to 2,700 spaces during the height of construction," Elfland said. "We're not looking at temporary solutions, we're looking at permanent demand."

The 75-cent-per-ride fare will cease beginning Jan. 1, 2002, and the hours of four routes, the C express, the S, the F,

and the North-South Express will be extended until 8 p.m. starting this fall.

A new route including Meadowmont and Southern Village will be added to prepare for Chapel Hill's annexation of the large neighborhoods. Two other added routes will include a new park and ride lot off Jones Ferry Road and an express shuttle to the Friday Center and the Hendrick building, two UNC facilities off N.C. 54.

"The University's willingness to put money on the table swayed our opinion," said Mayor Rosemary Waldorf. "Its payments will help local governments maximize a good investment."

Emily Canaday can be reached at sundancr1@msn.com.

Chapel Hill Dance Club Could Open in August

Paperwork and contractor problems have delayed the opening of the club located in a former movie theater.

By EMILY CANADAY
Staff Writer

JULY 12 - Construction on the nightclub NV, which was scheduled to open in late February, has been slowed because of a violation of the North Carolina Building Code and the owner's submission of false information on the building permit application, Town of Chapel Hill Building Inspector Bobby Pettiford said Tuesday.

According to state law, a licensed contractor must be used when the cost of remodeling a leased building exceeds \$30,000. Brent Lee, the owner of NV, exceeded this amount by \$25,000 and falsely stated on his permit application that he was the owner of the building, Pettiford said.

The club, in the former Ram Triple Theatre location, has long been anticipated as a new addition to Chapel Hill nightlife. The three-story club will exceed 10,000 square feet and will provide live music as well as well-known DJs.

But on May 16, Pettiford issued a stop-work order, halting all construction

of the building until a licensed contractor was hired and filed with the town.

Lee has recently hired Providence Development Group of Greensboro to oversee the project, but because he has not filled out the building permit, the town does not recognize this development as legal.

"That should be up to the contractor," Lee said. But under town regulations, Lee is required to sign the building permit.

Lee began working this week on completing installation of a light and sound system. But the town prohibits construction until the work order permit issue has been resolved.

"Until the order is lifted, all work done on the building is illegal," Pettiford said.

Lee originally planned to open NV in February, but his plans were delayed after problems with his former contractor.

"I wanted to do things one way, and the contractor wanted to do things his way, and since it is my club I thought it was time for him to go," Lee said. "I thought since I was running the show that I could avoid these types of delays, but obviously I couldn't."

Lee would not reveal who his contractor was.

NV would be a private, members-only club with some restricted areas according to the level of membership. The VIP areas will be reserved for celebrities that visit and as a reward for talent or special customers.

"A lot of clubs in the area do not follow the ... law that if a certain percentage of your revenue does not come from food, you have to charge a membership fee," Lee said. "But I am going to strictly follow this because I don't want to lose my liquor license. I have worked too hard."

The club will be for members 21 and older, but on certain nights the doors will open for those 18 and up.

"The club is going to appeal and provide for a market that has not been satisfied yet. It is completely different from anything else in Chapel Hill," Lee said.

"We are geared toward people who make going out an event, not those who just throw on jeans and a T-shirt," Lee said.

"We are promoting entertainment, not just a place to go get drunk."

"Until Lee comes in and fills out the necessary paperwork," Pettiford said, "it (the stop-work order) will not be lifted and the work cannot continue."

Emily Canaday can be reached at sundancr1@msn.com.

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THE CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO YMCA is now hiring counselors for the Outreach Program. Must be at least 18 years old and have experience working with children ages 5-12. The program serves economically challenged families in a public housing neighborhood. Hours are 2:15-6:00, Monday-Friday. Apply at the YMCA at 980 Airport Road. Call Whitney Buntan at 942-5156 for more information.

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