

Interaction Vital for Tolerance

Well, the first week of classes is behind us, and the semester is in full swing.

By now, many students are even officially enrolled in all their classes. To those of you who aren't, keep working on it. If a little schedule-juggling doesn't get you in, most professors will admit you after a little flattery.



Geoff Wessel
UNIVERSITY COLUMNIST

Meanwhile, another sign that the school year is truly under way is today's kickoff of the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center Awareness Week.

The BCC is holding several events to publicize its role on campus and recruit new students. See the article on this page for details on the week's events.

In addition to presenting facts about the programs, groups and facilities of the existing BCC, the Awareness Week also will include information about the freestanding building now under construction on South Road. The building is the result of a long-term fund-raising campaign, culminating in the chancellor's decision to use part of the largest single alumni donation in UNC history to fund construction.

That decision is a perfect example of the University's commitment to diversity. But while the intent of that commitment is undeniably good, its implementation is sometimes shaky.

For instance, the University requires that students fulfill a cultural diversity perspective for graduation. The requirement clearly illustrates the administration's desire to ensure all students take away a greater appreciation of other cultures along with their degree.

But in practice, a kid who spent his whole life in rural North Carolina can take a class on life in rural North Carolina and satisfy that perspective. A black student can satisfy it with African and Afro-American Studies 40. How diverse is that, really?

And the very examples I just used highlight a larger problem. When UNC talks about "diversity," all too often what is really being discussed is "a good mix of black and white." Sometimes someone will remember something about Muslims or Hispanics — whereas a truly diverse group of people ought to include a mix of not only races, but also of ages, genders, political ideologies, nationalities, sexual orientations, religions, areas of study, economic backgrounds, tastes in music and more.

But attempting to create a truly diverse experience for students poses two main problems.

First, there's really not a whole lot the University administration can do to encourage contact among people who differ in all those ways. The admissions office already does a fairly decent job of admitting a truly diverse crowd — that's what being "the University of the people" is all about. This year's huge freshman class is the most varied in University history. Now that they're all on campus, it's up to the students themselves to interact.

The good news is that in most cases, they will: with people living on their hall, taking their classes, joining their clubs.

In fact, most students should already be well on their way to embracing diversity by the time they first arrive on campus.

And as for those students who refuse to accept diversity socially, how likely is it that anyone can force them to do so with programs like the perspective requirement? Unlikely, if you ask me. The second problem with a commitment to teaching students about diversity is that it would be close to impossible to show every UNC student the entire spectrum of human diversity, simply because it's such a huge range. The number of perspectives, such-and-such Cultural Centers, programs and lectures would capsize the whole University.

All that being said, I would still urge you to check out the BCC Awareness Week events. Because despite my practical objections, acknowledgement and acceptance of diversity is still an important lesson.

Whether you personally are black or not, take some time to learn about that particular segment of our society. Understanding other races, cultures and so on makes us more compassionate, better able to fit in in a diverse workplace after we graduate, more accepting of other cultures when we encounter them, more ready to appreciate the best things that culture has to offer.

Plus, there's free food. That alone should be enough to get you out of bed.

Columnist Geoff Wessel can be reached at vroomsplat@hotmail.com.

PETA Seeks End to University Lake Fishing

University Lake, which UNC built in 1932, rents out boats and fishing supplies to Orange County residents.

By KELLIE DIXON
City Editor

His green fishing rod shines in the sunlight as 8-year-old Pablo Willink reels in a crappie — the young fisherman's first catch of the day at University Lake.

The lake, located in Carrboro, has recently gained the attention of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

On Aug. 15, PETA sent a letter to officials at Orange Water and Sewer Authority asking them to ban recreational fishing at the lake.

"It's mostly an educational cam-

paign," said Daniel Shannon, fishing campaign coordinator for PETA. "We're trying to get the word out to people that they should reconsider this."

"People consider this a very benign activity and there's this misconception that fish don't feel pain," Shannon added. "Fish, like any other animal, possess the biological and neurological capacity to feel pain."

University Lake, which UNC built in 1932, is now operated by OWASA on a long-term lease with the University. The facility is open from March to November for recreational fishing and boating.

The lake rents out boats and supplies to residents of all ages.

On the dock, Jack Griffith loads up a rented boat with bait and provisions. Griffith clasps the green and white life vests onto his 6-year-old son, Nick, and then onto 7-year-old Ian.

"Today we decided to come out here to fish," Ian Griffith said, excitedly.

"We enjoy fishing," Jack Griffith added. "I'm sure they're people that perhaps don't. For these guys it's a great chance for us to get together. I work everyday so this is a great opportunity."

Greg Feller, spokesman for OWASA, said the lake exists to benefit residents.

"We're a public nonprofit water resource agency," he said.

"Recreation is something we provide. We don't operate it like a private business would."

Feller said the plant's board of directors was informed of PETA's request at its most recent meeting. He said the board will most likely address the matter at an upcoming meeting.

"There was no discussion about how to respond," Feller said. "It was just sim-

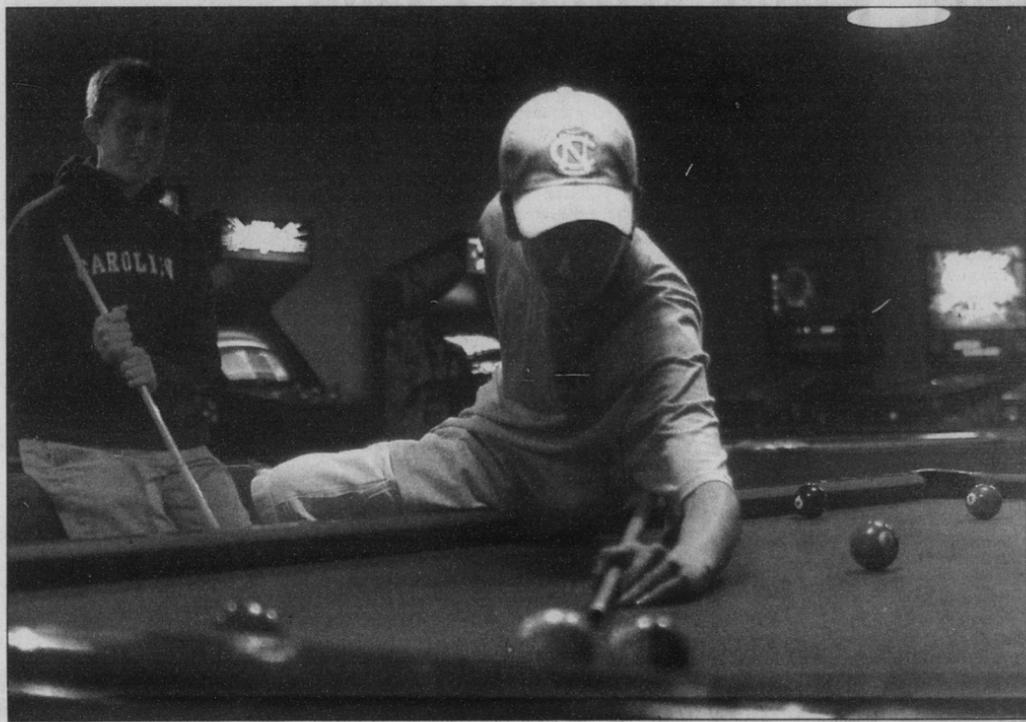
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DTH/KARA ARNDT

Taking advantage of the nice weather, Ian Griffith, 7, (far right) and his brother Nick, 6, go fishing at University Lake with their father, Jack.

BILLIARD BREAK



DTH/KIMBERLY CRAVEN

Freshmen Thomas Whittington (left) and Nirav Vora (right) avoid studying by playing pool in the Union Underground on Sunday night. Whittington and Vora went to high school together in Charlotte but first became friends when they came to UNC. Vora won the game, but Whittington promised there would be a rematch.

Vinroot Makes 3rd Attempt at Statewide Office

Richard Vinroot is the only Republican who has declared his intention to run to fill the Senate seat left vacant by Sen. Jesse Helms.

By ALEX KAPLUN
State & National Editor

Former Morehead Scholar and UNC basketball player Richard Vinroot is hoping the third time is the charm in his bid for a statewide office.

Last Thursday, Vinroot, a former Charlotte mayor, announced that he will run for the U.S. Senate. Vinroot's announcement came just one day after long-time U.S. Sen. Jesse Helms announced that he would not seek a sixth term in 2002.

So far, Vinroot is the only Republican to announce his intention to seek the vacant seat.

Vinroot has run twice for statewide office in North Carolina and has lost both times. In 1996, Vinroot lost the Republican gubernatorial primary to Robin Hayes. Four years later Vinroot lost a close election for governor to Democrat Mike Easley.

But Vinroot said his two losses will not hinder his senator-

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Republican Richard Vinroot doesn't feel that his previous losses will hinder his Senate campaign.

College Programs Urge Professor Retirement

By MICHAEL MCKNIGHT
Staff Writer

Incentives to encourage faculty members to seek early retirement are becoming increasingly popular among American colleges and universities, according to a survey conducted last year by the American Association of University Professors.

The "Survey of Changes in Faculty Retirement Policy" included 608 higher education institutions nationwide with more than 75 full-time faculty members. Of the institutions surveyed, 46.2 percent reported the implementation of one or more incentive programs to encourage faculty members to retire before reaching the age of 70.

Ronald Ehrenberg, chairman of the

professor association's Committee on Retirement, which administered the study, said the survey was conducted because faculty retirement programs are currently a hot topic in higher education.

"Many faculty members who were hired in the 50s and 60s are coming up on retirement ages," he said. "Many institutions wanted to find out the relevant practices currently in existence in American colleges and universities."

Ehrenberg said universities usually use the incentive programs so they can hire younger, more diverse faculty members. "There's a lot of reasons why universities would like to see turnover in their faculties," he said. "A lot of times they have a newer and fresher perspective on things."

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School Funds Focus of Hearing

By STEPHANIE FURR
Staff Writer

A public hearing scheduled for tonight will provide an opportunity to address concerns raised by some school officials about funding priorities in Orange County's upcoming bond referendum.

The Orange County Board of Commissioners will hold the public hearing at 7 p.m. tonight at the Hillsborough courthouse.

Of the \$75 million bond referendum, \$47 million has been earmarked for educational needs in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City and Orange County school districts.

But not all officials agree about how to divvy resources between the two school systems should the Nov. 6 referendum pass.

Commissioner Alice Gordon said she has reservations about the referendum's

provision for the construction of a new Orange County middle school without also providing for a new high school in Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools. The bond package designates \$18 million for a new Orange County middle school and \$13 million apiece for construction of two Chapel Hill-Carrboro elementary schools.

But there is no provision for a new high school in Chapel Hill — an omission that Gordon said was a poor use of resources. "The plan the commissioners have on right now is to build three schools and



Commissioner Alice Gordon says a provision for a new Chapel Hill-Carrboro high school should be made.

ignore the fourth," Gordon said. She said existing high schools and middle schools in both systems should share facilities until the need for new building is more pressing.

But Richard Kennedy, a member of the Orange County School Board, said Gordon's plans do not take into account reasonable classroom sizes, which he thinks are essential for a good education.

"All the options and opportunities that they have in Chapel Hill we have given up on for one thing, and that is small classroom sizes," Kennedy said. "We have waited in line fair and square, and now she's treating the folks in Chapel Hill like their problems are greater than ours."

But Chapel Hill-Carrboro School officials also think their needs are getting minimized. Some officials are ques-

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BCC Awareness Week

This week, the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center is hosting a series of events to generate student interest in its programs.

All the programs occur in the Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center

Monday, Aug. 27

KICKOFF
12:00 BCC Video
12:30 Open House/Meet the New Director and Staff

Tuesday, Aug. 28

11:30 BCC Video/BCC Ambassadors
12:00 Meet the New Director
1:00 Hekima Reading List Interest Meeting
1:30 Sauti Mpya Interest Meeting
4:00 Black Graduate Student Open House

Wednesday, Aug. 29

12:00 Around the Circle Interest Meeting
1:00 BCC Video/BCC Ambassadors
1:30 K97.5 Salute to Higher Education
3:30 Community Youth Programs Interest Meeting (Union 205)

Thursday, Aug. 30

1:00 BCC Video/BCC Ambassadors
1:30 Cross-Cultural Communications Institute Interest Meeting
2:30 Community Youth Programs Interest Meeting (Union 205)

Friday, Aug. 31

12:00 BCC Video
12:30 Sauti Mpya Interest Meeting
1:00 Freshman Open House/Movies/Pizza Party

BCC Awareness Week Begins Today

The week's events will include videos, open houses, interest meetings and time to interact with the center's new director.

By MEREDITH NICHOLSON
Staff Writer

The Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center kicks off its awareness week today to provide students with opportunities to learn about the BCC and its upcoming activities.

Although students are encouraged to visit the BCC at any time, officials hope this week's events will attract new students on campus and those who know little about the organization.

"Students tend to be a little hesitant to just stop by," said Lorie Clark, BCC information and communications specialist. "This week is a chance for them to just drop in, grab some food and hang out."

All the events will take place at the BCC's offices in the front of the Student Union.

Each day will include a showing of a BCC video that discusses the center and its activities during the last year and a half. The video also

addresses some of the common misconceptions in the University community about the center and highlights the BCC's collaboration with faculty and students.

The awareness week also will give students the opportunity to formally meet Joseph Jordan, the new BCC director.

Jordan took the helm Aug. 13, leaving his job at Atlanta's Auburn Avenue Research Library to replace interim director Harry Amana.

Although the BCC begins its open house with the video at noon today, the week officially kicks off at 2 p.m. with an interest meeting for the Cross-Cultural Communications Institute, a BCC project. "Everything we do is intended to cross whatever boundaries exist," Jordan said. "This group gives us a chance to explore why these boundaries exist. Communication gives us access to the boundaries to expel and eliminate them."

Tuesday's events include interest meetings for the Hekima Reading List and Sauti Mpya, an annual literary magazine.

The Hekima Reading List is an informal book club that meets to read and discuss a list of books determined by members in early fall. Sauti Mpya is produced by the BCC to offer students opportunities in working on magazine production.

Tuesday's events will culminate with a black

graduate student open house at 4 p.m.

Food for Tuesday's events will be donated by Durham's The Know Bookstore, which is the first black bookstore in North Carolina.

James Jackson of The Know Bookstore said the store's staff feels it is important to be involved in this week's activities because the store has a good relationship with the BCC.

An interest meeting for the Community Youth Programs will be held at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday in Union 205. A second interest meeting for the programs, which aim to link college students with community youth, will be held at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday at the same location.

Jordan called this program a "legacy of Dr. Stone and her sense and sensibilities of social responsibilities."

"This is a chance for students to get involved in community work, especially to work with children and young people," Jordan said.

On Wednesday, Salute to Higher Education — a radio program on Raleigh's K97.5 — will be broadcasting from the BCC starting at 1:30 p.m. The week's events culminate at 1 p.m. Friday with a pizza party for freshmen.

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