

Your Town, Community Need Help

The marker near Municipal Road and Airport Road is not encouraging.

The marker shows Triangle United Way donations for this year – and the red bar barely eclipses the halfway mark. The goal is \$26 million. The total raised so far: about \$14 million.



JONATHAN CHANEY
CITY COLUMNIST

For the first time in its history, the group had to extend their deadline for contributions by three weeks, until Dec. 13. It's understandable that the fund-raising campaign hasn't

made its goal. A lot of locals gave to New York City-related funds, the Red Cross, and donated blood. Psychologically, many feel they have done their good deeds for the holidays.

And with a slowing economy, people are tightening their belts in order to keep their head above water.

But we cannot forget the charity groups that do so much social work in our own neighborhoods.

These organizations raise a majority of their yearly budgets during the holidays, when people are in the giving spirit.

This year, however, local groups are finding fewer and fewer givers.

It's unfortunate that a group like the Triangle United Way, which gives so much to the community, faces these financial strains.

Roughly 300,000 people annually benefit from United Way-funded programs, which include programs involving education, crisis intervention and the homeless.

The Triangle United Way is a huge funding source for 82 social services groups – 28 of which are in Orange County.

Since 1995, when the group raised \$15 million, they have consistently raised more and more funds. Last year, the total was a little over \$26 million.

And since 76 percent of donations come from individuals, the turn of events since Sept. 11 could put many of the organizations which rely on United Way funds in a serious bind.

In fact, some nonprofits already are making cutbacks in anticipation.

One such aid agency seeing increased demand and fewer donations is the Inter-Faith Council in Chapel Hill on Rosemary Street.

During the last three months, the IFC has seen a 31 percent jump in people seeking assistance over the same period last year.

Requests for food are up 56 percent.

And it is not only the really down-and-out that need a little extra help.

Of the applicants at the IFC, 26 percent more have jobs and 23 percent more are first-timers compared to last year.

With the cost of living so high in the Chapel Hill area, many people living off anything less than \$12 an hour could easily find themselves in economic limbo.

How many people have to ask, "Should I pay rent, or buy groceries?" And that's where services like the IFC become a matter of eating or keeping a roof over one's head.

In fact, an annual fund-raising event for the IFC just concluded: Restaurants Sharing V (5) and V (5) Percent Day.

Participating restaurants donate 10 percent of their total sales from Nov. 13 to the IFC shelter. Last year the event raised \$22,023 in Chapel Hill and Carrboro.

Though the final tally is not slated to be announced until Dec. 31, this year's receipts will most likely be lower than last year. After all, only 75 eateries participated this time around – compared to 105 last year.

A lot of people are going through harder times this year, especially considering how high the economy has been riding in years past.

Social services organizations around the Triangle provide services where governments, both federal and local, fail to meet the need.

They are a crucial backbone of any town or city – and their contributions usually go unnoticed for much of the year. During the holidays, they ask for a little help from the community.

If you're able, give what you can. It can be a little donation or a few cans of food. These days, local nonprofits will gladly take anything.

And some of your neighbors could use a little extra help.

Columnist Jonathan Chaney can be reached at jchaney@email.unc.edu.

Residents Oppose Opening Hunter Hill Road

By BRETT GARAMELLA
Staff Writer

More than 40 residents filled the seats at the Chapel Hill Town Hall on Monday night to voice discontent about a development proposal they say will change the character of their neighborhood.

The residents, representing the Northwood Subdivision, said using Hunter Hill Road, which runs through Northwood and the proposed subdivision, to connect the developments would increase traffic.

But some Chapel Hill town officials say the access road is needed to make sure emergency vehicles can enter the

development.

Chapel Hill Town Manager Cal Horton stated in a memorandum to the Chapel Hill Town Council that the town "recommends a full-access vehicular connection from Hunter Hill Road."

Northwood resident Bob Dougherty, who spoke at the hearing, said having full vehicular access to the proposed development – dubbed the Larkspur Cluster Subdivision – will disrupt the recreational atmosphere of the neighborhood.

"Opening Hunter Hill Road for through traffic will have severe consequences for our entire neighborhood," Dougherty said.

"Many of our neighbors use the streets of our neighborhood for recreational purposes."

Also included in Horton's memorandum to the council was a recommendation by the Chapel Hill Planning Department, the Parks and Recreation Commission, Greenways Commission and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Board to restrict access to include only pedestrians, bicycles and emergency vehicles.

Council member Bill Strom said he agreed with the various groups' recommendation for restricted access to Hunter Hill Road.

"The arguments for having a pedes-

trian-bicycle connection along Hunter Hill instead of a vehicular connection makes perfect sense to me," Strom said.

But many residents said they still are concerned that further development will interfere with Northwood's quiet setting.

"I, as well as my neighbors, are very concerned about the noise impact that will result from the use of Hunter Hill Road as one of the entrances to Larkspur," said Northwood resident Deb Smith.

Larkspur's developer said officials have tried to address the residents' fears in an amended proposal that meets town ordinance requirements.

"We have tried to be a good listener

and a good neighbor with the people in Northwood, particularly those who have had concerns about what we are doing," said Carol Zinn, who represented the developer at the hearing.

Northwood resident Jay Smith said he and his neighbors plan to stay committed to their cause.

"If you tear down the last barrier separating us from the traffic and the commotion ... you'll sacrifice the safety and the seclusion that gives Northwood its special character and then hope to make it uniquely desirable."

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



DTH/JOSHUA GREER

Jane Holding (left) and Kathleen Jardine prepare salad at the Inter-Faith Council homeless shelter. Jardine has been working at the shelter for almost 11 years, while Holding has been working there for two years.

Shelter Fills as Economy Struggles

By LUCY BRYAN
Staff Writer

Sammy Nelson leaned against the railing on the back porch of the Inter-Faith Council homeless shelter.

"I'm living here until I get back on my feet," he said. "I'm trying to do better."

Nelson, a 30-year-old originally from Georgia, has been at the IFC shelter for the past three weeks. He's been without a home for the past six months.

Chris Moran, executive director of the IFC, said that within the past year, and especially the past few months, an increasing number of people have found themselves in financial distress and in need of the shelter's services.

"The state of our economy long before Sept. 11 was beginning to erode – particularly in our community," Moran said.

Moran said the IFC provides food, clothing, shelter, job referrals, career

counseling and medical treatment to people who are homeless, physically impaired, financially distraught or victims of abuse.

Last year, the IFC shelter served more than 75,000 meals, had 1,775 overnight stays and had 1,200 clinic visits.

Between July and October, the IFC assisted 39 percent more households and received 56 percent more food requests than it did last year, Moran said.

Jim Cameron, who has helped out at the shelter for 11 years, said he's noticed an increase in attendance. On average, the shelter prepares for 80 people, Cameron says.

But the numbers are growing, and Cameron said he expected more than 90 people to show up Tuesday night.

Moran added that until the economy turns around, the number of people in severe financial trouble is going to continue to increase.

He also said it is essential that the

Chapel Hill community respond to this problem. "Our community needs to stay focused," Moran said. "We have to work on increasing wages, job training and our relationships with one another."

Moran added that the focus on the Sept. 11 attacks has distracted the community from local issues and the IFC is finding it necessary to broaden its support base.

"We're trying to be positive and productive and to consider new methods for fund raising," Moran said. "We want to be more visible in the community."

Raney Norwood, who has been on staff at the IFC homeless shelter for 16 years, said that without community support, people like Sammy Nelson would have no place to sleep and nothing to eat. "For somebody that doesn't have money it's a blessing from God to have food and shelter."

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

30 Extra Days Given To Zoning Violator

By COLIN SUTKER
Staff Writer

Orange County officials decided Monday night to wait 30 more days before levying a \$3,600 zoning fine against a man who illegally has housed a trailer on his property since Feb. 21.

The Orange County Board of Commissioners moved to withhold the civil penalties against Hulan Bradshaw, of 3714 Mill Creek Road, in an action described by several commissioners as keeping with the "holiday spirit."

Bradshaw has incurred a \$3,600 fine, which will be removed if he complies with the commissioners by Dec. 19.

If Bradshaw does not remove the trailer by Dec. 19, the commissioners will require him to pay the fine and also will fine him an additional \$100 each day that it remains on the property.

But Commissioner Barry Jacobs said the decision had less to do with the spirit of the season and more to do with the often sluggish process of bureaucracy that might be hindering Bradshaw from removing the trailer.

"When dealing with the government it's often frustrating, and we feel it's better to give (people) the benefit of the doubt," Jacobs said.

According to a report by the Orange County Department of Planning, Bradshaw was responsible for a "continuing zoning violation pertaining to the storage of an unanchored, unse-

cured single-wide manufactured home on property with a residence located on it."

If no effort has been made to resolve the violation within 30 days, the fine will be imposed, the report states.

Two homes presently are located on Bradshaw's lot, but county zoning regulations state that only one principal structure is permitted on one lot of land.

The department responded to the initial complaint filed Feb. 21 by sending a notice of violation to Bradshaw on March 1.

The planning department also sent out two subsequent notices.

At the board meeting, Tom King, the zoning enforcement officer who has been handling the Bradshaw case, said Bradshaw had expressed some interest in moving the trailer to another property.

Bradshaw did not attend the meeting and could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

Planning department inspectors confirmed the continuing violation at the Bradshaw property on four separate on-site inspections, the last one being Oct. 15.

King said the board's decision is representative of the flexibility local government gives people.

"The motion is to give him one last chance to meet regulation," King said.

"We're not here just to penalize people."

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

Local Residents Challenge Meadowmont Development

By ADRIENNE CLARK
AND JENNY HUANG
Staff Writers

Lancaster Drive residents fired complaints at the Chapel Hill Town Council on Monday night, claiming that a proposed Meadowmont park would disrupt their neighborhood.

The residents said they think a nature trail, which would be built in conjunction with the park, would bring an increase in traffic flow to their neighborhood. The council will vote on the park Nov. 26.

Discussion between residents and council members began when the town and a development company jointly filed an application to modify a special-use permit. The modified permit would allow the park to be built in the Meadowmont mixed-use development, which is now under construction.

The land that would be home to the park is a 70.45-acre parcel of land that lies north of UNC's Paul J. Rizzo Conference Center.

The proposal includes a 4-foot-wide, natural-surface hiking trail with pedestrian access off Lancaster Drive. But some residents who attended the meeting said the

pedestrian access would create a safety hazard because more cars would use Lancaster Drive if the access is added.

"My concern is that this walkway will disrupt the peace and tranquility of our entire neighborhood," said Carolyn Costello, a resident of Lancaster Drive.

Dan Sheffy, also a Lancaster Drive resident, said he welcomes the park but not the increased traffic that might follow. "We would love the access, we just don't want cars parked on the street," Sheffy said.

Planning Board Representative John Hopkins, who spoke at the council meeting, said he recognizes the problem the walkway might cause but doesn't think it will be an issue. "The addition of a trail head on Lancaster Drive would encourage parking on the street," he said. "This park should be accessible but shouldn't present dangers."

Chapel Hill Mayor Rosemary Waldorf said she wants safety issues to be considered. "I hope we approve the park," she said. "But we also need to initiate a process to investigate the safety measures that need to be taken."

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

UNC, Duke Receive \$25,000 Grant for Robertson Projects

By RACHEL CLARKE
Staff Writer

Duke University and UNC received \$25,000 this month to continue breaking down the barriers caused by decades of rivalry between the universities.

On Nov. 15, the Robertson Scholars Fund awarded students and faculty between \$500 and \$4,000 for 12 projects, all of which involve collaboration between the Duke and UNC communities.

This semester is the first time the money has been awarded, but the fund will continue to donate \$25,000 to projects in each fall and spring semester, said Eric Mlyn, the program's director.

A committee chose the 12 winning proposals from a group of 47 applica-

tions – more than double the number of proposals Mlyn expected to get.

The chosen projects include a Judaic studies seminar, a colloquium in classics and an initiative to increase the documentation of Islam and the Middle East in libraries on both campuses.

Journalism Professor Carol Pardun, who teaches advertising and public relations, said she plans to use her \$2,000 grant to take some of her students to Duke's advertising history library for a one-day treasure hunt.

In the process, they will be trained by Duke's staff. The students then will participate in a discussion panel, which all journalism students will be invited to attend.

"In this case, it's my students using Duke's resources," Pardun said. "But in

some other year, it could be the other way, with Duke students using our resources."

Duke junior Pavel Molchanov, a member of the committee that chose the projects, said preference was given to projects that either involved or directly benefited students. For example, any student studying Islam will find more information when he or she goes to the library because of projects done with these funds, he said.

Molchanov said the committee didn't have money to fund every project they wanted, but those that were turned down can always try again next semester. For example, he said, one student requested \$5,000 to bring four speakers from the aerospace industry to speak. "We gave her \$1,250 for one speaker, and if that is successful she can come

back for more money," he said.

Mlyn said the committee also looked for proposals that might continue. "We look for proposals that might lead to something more permanent."

Mlyn said this grant system is an innovation in higher education. "This is the first time joint projects between Duke and UNC have been funded this way," he said. "I think this collaboration fund is 100 percent unique."

The fund is a division of the Robertson Scholars program, a merit-based scholarship program. The first class of undergraduate Robertson Scholars entered both universities in August, with 15 students at UNC and 15 students at Duke. By 2005 the program will have 120 students enrolled between the two universi-

ties, with the students taking classes and living at both campuses.

The program also sponsors a free daily bus service between Duke and UNC, which Pardun said she hopes students will use to attend the advertising history panel discussion.

Molchanov said the committee supported proposals that planned to incorporate the Robertson bus because they wanted to encourage face-to-face interaction between the two universities.

He said, "We chose projects that wouldn't limit themselves to the ivory tower, so to speak – ones that would actually reach the students."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.