

Posting Farewells, Memories

It's comical how terrible I am at saying goodbye.

When I leave home for summer adventures, I plant parting Post-it notes for my family around the house — which they find weeks later — and I hold back my tears until I'm safely seated in the departing airplane.



KATY NELSON
UNIVERSITY COLUMNIST

My parents are accustomed to a quick hug in the airport and mumbled parting words from me rather than articulate speeches. At best I can provide a "to do" list of last-minute errands,

and in my last column, I want to do more than ask you to make a dentist appointment for me, although I could use a cleaning in December, if you know an Asheville dentist ...

Given that I frequently frighten strangers on airplanes with my emotional displays, I am reluctant to even attempt explaining how much I have appreciated the honor of being your University columnist this semester. As I have two other papers to write after I finish writing this column, however, I'm going to risk smearing some ink with a tearful eulogy for this weekly rant.

Here goes my first public, farewell Post-it.

Looking back, dear readers, on our good times together, I realize how much this experience has taught me about our University. Writing this weekly column has solidified some of my outrageous opinions and also widened my made-for-TV perspective to cinema-scope proportions.

It turns out Chancellor James Moeser is not the great and powerful Oz, hiding in South Building plotting international UNC franchises, and that the Board of Trustees knew night parking was as fishy as Bob Knight's escapades with the Transportation and Parking Advisory Committee.

A woman can indeed be elected student body president (Who knew?), and real students can fill perpetually empty Student Congress seats — if only on Election Day. I'll leave it to my successor to check attendance.

It is true that in the not-so-distant future, underground parking, public art projects and a revitalized curriculum will improve the UNC experience.

Like Madonna, UNC is constantly reinventing itself. Change is constant at UNC, and the campus might be unrecognizable to current students when we return to campus with our own children.

It is true UNC is slowly becoming the first publicly funded Disney World — a sprawling complex overflowing with fun attractions and theme parking lots. Even if UNC leaves building another Animal Kingdom to N.C. State University, there are many UNC attractions awaiting discovery.

One of my professors wonders how students have time to study with so many wonderful lectures, plays and concerts, just to name a few opportunities enriching our college experiences. Somehow we manage to ride all of the attractions while learning how to think and who we are.

There are thousands of interesting people walking around campus with stories of self-realization during their undergraduate journeys. After three years at the University Desk, I think the real story of this University has little to do with the politics newspapers cover and a lot to do with young people discovering who they are in this magical place.

How has the University changed in the last semester? And how have those changes been affected by our mix of students? Beyond tuition increases, what did we protest? What frustrated us? What did we fight for? How did we spend our time?

As the University grows, we must remember the students studying in the quad, protesting on Franklin Street and hanging out in the Pit. We must remember those individual experiences as the University grows for the masses.

Our expectations and visions of the UNC experience can influence South Building's choices. Students have to be the quality-control monitors of our University's growth.

When we come back to Chapel Hill in 2030, we may not recognize the buildings, but we should recognize the spirit of the place. We should recognize the faces of students bleary-eyed from late-night studying and long conversations. We should see a part of ourselves in the future.

I hope this column was as good for you as it was for me. Consider yourself hugged — I've got to finish writing my other papers and catch a plane in a few weeks.

Columnist Katy Nelson can be reached at knelson@email.unc.edu.

Officials Urge Faculty to Fight Cuts

By Brook Corwin
Staff Writer

University officials stressed the importance Friday of fighting state budget cuts this summer at the Faculty Council's final meeting of the academic year.

Speakers at the meeting specifically focused their concerns on how the University will be directly impacted by the state budget deficit, which is estimated to amount to more than \$1 billion.

"I realize that all of us are feeling a great deal of stress and anxiety about what we don't know and what we fear," said Chancellor James Moeser in his opening remarks. "The more news we hear from the state, the greater cause we have for concern."

Moeser emphasized looking at the long-term potential of the University when dealing with short-term budget cuts. He cited the Horace Williams tract

— a parcel of land owned by the University — as the prime example of UNC-Chapel Hill's untapped potential.

Moeser invited the Faculty Council to become engaged in the process of developing the tract, which he said will now be referred to as "Carolina North."

Finding alternative sources of funding and collaborating with other universities were both presented by administrators at the meeting as ways to deal with the budget cuts.

N.C. State University Chancellor Marye Anne Fox spoke at the meeting about the possibility of UNC-CH and N.C. State sharing research facilities and academic resources.

"In this time of a budget crisis, we must recognize that cooperation is vital," Fox said. "We don't compete with each other, we go forward together."

Fox also spoke on the subject of receiving additional funding from feder-

al grants and private contributions, a suggestion Moeser endorsed.

Moeser said his conversations with Senate President Pro Tem Marc Basnight, D-Dare, have convinced him that increasing private funding will improve the University's chances of receiving greater allocations from the state.

Provost Robert Shelton said representatives from the governor's office have asked UNC-CH to prepare for a 4 percent to 5 percent budget cut for next fall. Shelton said the reduction would likely force UNC-CH to revert between \$120 million and \$240 million in state funds.

Shelton said that he plans to lobby the state legislature this summer to maximize the flexibility UNC-CH officials will have in dealing with the cut but that such a shortfall will probably result in the loss of funding for unfilled faculty positions. "This is a long and difficult process," Shelton said. "We need to be

in this with stamina."

Little discussion and no debate took place at the meeting, which was one of the few Faculty Council meetings of the year to adjourn early.

But Faculty Council Chairwoman Sue Estroff urged faculty members to exert pressure on University administrators and state legislators when budget decisions are made. "I ask that you speak out, stand up and be heard," she said. "Resignation for us is defeat."

The council also unanimously approved a resolution to revise the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance to make the document easier to use and amend. The revisions were recommended by student government in March and by the Committee on Student Conduct earlier this month.

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

Clean Air Plan Gets Backing

Duke Energy and Progress Energy would freeze their electricity rates for five years but would recover the losses.

By Rachel Leonard
Staff Writer

Environmentalists are lauding a plan announced by Gov. Mike Easley last week that would reduce pollution emissions from North Carolina's 14 coal-fired power plants without increasing utility rates for consumers in the near future.

To finance pollution-reducing equipment, electricity rates would be frozen for five years, followed by a seven-year period during which electric utilities could recover the estimated \$2.3 billion needed to make the improvements.

The state's two largest electric utilities, Duke Energy and Progress Energy, also have thrown their support behind the plan, which would reduce sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions by about 70 percent from 1998 levels. Mercury emissions also would drop substantially.

N.C. Sierra Club Director Molly Diggins said Friday that the plan holds great promise.

"If passed as proposed, it would be one of the strongest pieces of environmental legislation ever approved by the (N.C.) General Assembly," she said. "Everyone will benefit."

A similar plan, called the Clean Smokestacks Act, was passed by the N.C. Senate last year but stalled in the N.C. House because of questions about who would finance the costs.

The Senate bill allowed for modest electricity rate increases amounting to less than \$5 per month for average residential consumers. But large manufacturers, who would have seen substantial electric bill increases, opposed the rate increase.

Easley stated in a press release that the new clean air plan would "benefit the health of our people by reducing lung disease and asthma; benefit our environment by reducing smog and acid rain and benefit our economy by preserving our investments in tourism."

Easley spokeswoman Amanda Wherry said the new plan has a better chance of passing in the House because rates will not increase and utility companies support it.

"The holdup was working with utility companies," she said. "The governor didn't want the consumers to have to pay for it."

One sponsor of the clean smokestacks bill in the House, Rep. Phillip Haire, D-Jackson, said that although the details of the plan are still unclear, he is pleased with the new framework.

"I think it's a win-win bill," he said. "I think we're going to be able to get the 61 votes to pass it."

Haire said he and others would work

See CLEAN AIR, Page 7

Party Aims to Take Back Area Streets

By Jennifer Johnson
Staff Writer

Residents, with their children in tow, congregated at Sykes Street in northwest Chapel Hill on Saturday to socialize with neighbors — an activity that residents say is often hindered by frequent drug deals.

For three hours, starting at 2 p.m., a vacant lot at the corner of Graham and Sykes streets, which community members say is notorious for drug activity, took on a different look.

The picnic tables that outlined the gravel lot were loaded with food and games. Laughing children sprinted between the activities as older residents chatted with neighbors. The second "Take Back the Streets" block party, which drew between 60 and 70 residents, was even more successful than the one last fall.

EmPOWERment Inc., a local affordable housing advocacy group, and the Sykes Street Steering Committee organized the event. The committee is composed of various community members, including representatives from UNC's Department of City and Regional Planning. "This is really great," said Mark Chilton, director of EmPOWERment. "Last time we had about 30 people, and 15 of them were cops."

Fewer than 10 cops and fire officials mingled with the residents, while the blaring beats of Destiny's Child were interrupted periodically to conduct a drawing for free prizes.

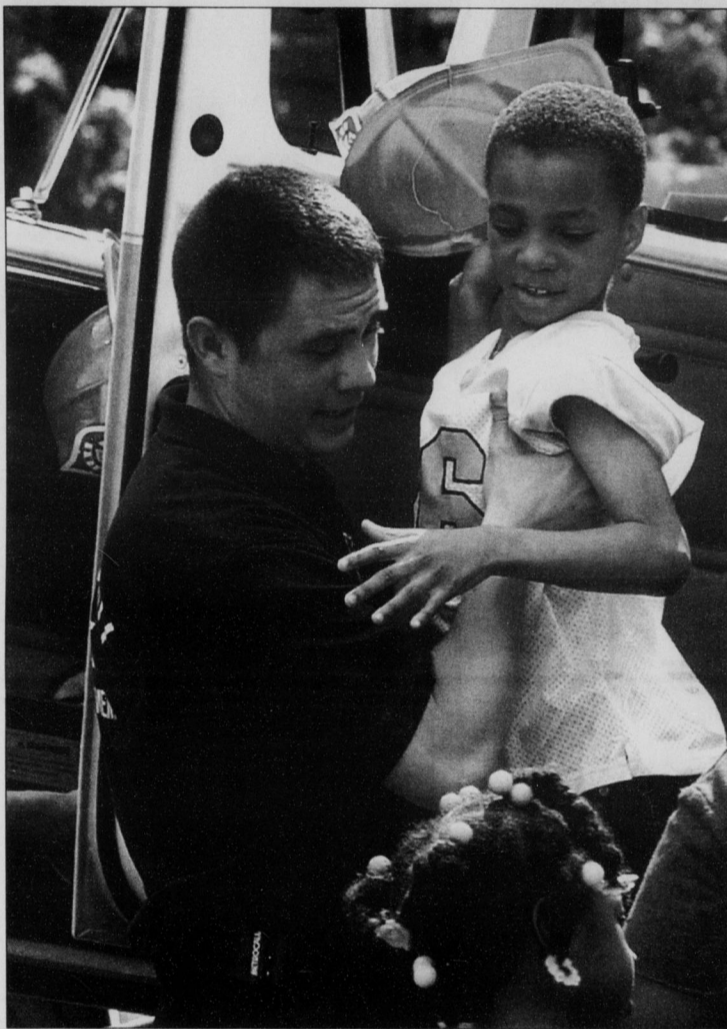
Deborah Bailey, a Northside resident and an active member of the steering committee, was the emcee for the party, announcing that there were free cookies for children 10 and under and later for children 13 and under. "The connotation is that (the party is) just for children, but we want everyone to come out," Bailey said.

As promised, the party delivered free food, good music and fiery speakers. But some residents said they got more out of the event. Vera Compton, who lives at 620 Sykes St., sat with her friend Dekisa Denning while her two grandchildren played. "I've been here three months on Sykes Street, and I've seen some drugs," she said. "I think it'll help if everybody sticks together."

As a second attraction, EmPOWERment took advantage of the party to market an affordable house in the area. The one-story house, which stands across the street from the party at 501 Sykes St., is for sale for \$70,000 after EmPOWERment gutted it and made it livable. The average home in the Chapel Hill-Carboro area costs about \$237,355, according to the Chapel Hill-Carboro Chamber of Commerce's Web site. "The old tenants actually abandoned it, but we've put in new windows, carpet and fixtures," Chilton said. "It's totally reconstructed."

Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy made an appearance at the party and commended the work of EmPOWERment and the steering committee before he joined in on the cha-cha slide. "They're changing the nature of this neighborhood one house at a time."

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



Chapel Hill firefighter Jamie Joseph helps Jequan Currie, 8, out of a fire engine during a neighborhood block party organized by EmPOWERment Inc. on Saturday afternoon.

DITH/ANNE MEADOWS

Access Advocates To Work to Expand

A UNC educational access advocacy group is hoping to create chapters at more campuses systemwide.

By Michael Davis
Staff Writer

N.C. Students for Educational Access, a UNC-Chapel Hill student program geared toward attracting underprivileged students to universities, is expanding its efforts by encouraging other UNC-system schools to join.

The program is running in conjunction with GEAR UP North Carolina, a nonprofit organization that stresses the importance of higher education, with the aid of a federal grant filtered through the system administrators.

UNC-CH senior Eric Johnson, who spearheaded the initial program in Chapel Hill, said the expansion has yielded positive reactions.

Johnson said he hopes other UNC-system students will soon participate in the outreach.

"We are trying to get other universities involved ... so that we get more than just (UNC-CH) students going to high schools," he said.

Johnson said the program's mission is similar to the UNC-system Association of Student Governments' Keep N.C. Educated campaign, a program designed to demonstrate the affordability of higher education and encourage

N.C. residents to support the system.

He said the UNC-CH chapter plans to contact each UNC-system school's student government and encourage it to seek out interested college students for the program.

"I think long-term we'll have all 16 (campuses) involved," Johnson said.

Although the UNC-CH branch will create a loose organizational model for other UNC-system schools, Johnson said it will not oversee the program's expansion.

"It's not going to be something that's UNC-Chapel Hill-run," he said.

ASG President Andrew Payne said that the mission of N.C. Students for Educational Access mirrors that of Keep N.C. Educated but that the campaigns differ.

"Part of the Keep N.C. Educated campaign is to inform ... about the opportunities for education," Payne said. "We show that there are benefits still about going to college."

Payne said he is pleased with the reactions from various UNC-system schools.

"There was a lot of enthusiasm about doing this and opening chapters across the state," he said. "This is an avenue for students to give back in their community."

He added that N.C. Students for Educational Access should help improve UNC-system fund-raising efforts.

See ACCESS, Page 7

Minority Leaders Support Ruling

About 15 people showed their support for a ruling to pull state funds to help minority students excel.

By Jennifer Samuels
Assistant State & National Editor

RALEIGH — Black leaders urged the N.C. State Board of Education and other state officials at a press conference Friday afternoon to support a ruling requiring that state funds provide equal education for all students.

About 15 people gathered outside the Legislative Office Building to speak out in support of an April 4 ruling by Wake Superior Court Judge Howard Manning. In a 112-page report, Manning wrote that the state must take action to ensure every classroom has a "competent, certified, well-trained teacher and every school has the leadership and resources it needs."

Manning's ruling concludes an eight-year-old legal dispute over inequalities in school funding. As part of his report, he directed the state to provide written reports every 90 days on the steps it has taken to comply with his order.

Organizations represented included the North Carolina branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the N.C. Black Leadership Caucus and the Latin American Resource Center.

Gladys Robinson, chairwoman of the N.C. NAACP Education Committee and a member of the UNC-system Board of Governors, said the ruling cannot be enforced unless school officials recognize the potential of all students. "We stress that teachers and principals must have high



Gladys Robinson, chairwoman of the N.C. NAACP Education Committee, speaks at a press conference Friday afternoon.

DITH/PATTY BRENNEMAN

expectations," she said. "To deny access to education is denying civil rights."

Robinson said she hopes that by speaking out, the speakers will make it clear to the state board of education that it should not appeal Manning's ruling.

The state education board will meet Wednesday to discuss several issues, including eliminating the achievement gap between whites, minorities and low-income students on end-of-course tests.

Several speakers said denying minorities and low-income children equal access to education is equitable to enslavement. "Let (neither) race, geography, income nor poverty be the litmus test for educa-

tion of North Carolina's children," said James Rayford, president of the Carolinas Associated Minority Contractors.

Lavonia Allison, president of the Durham Committee on the Affairs of Black People, said it is important that state officials address the problem of unequal education at every level.

She cited the amount of funding prisons get in comparison with schools as an example of an area where officials should look to reallocate funds. "It is important that North Carolina realizes it is not important to pay \$30,000 for peo-

See RULING, Page 7