

Franklin St. Could Use Big Names

There was a time when I did enjoy strolling Franklin Street. Those first few months as a freshman, I was thrilled at the idea of a commercial area adjacent to the campus that provided students with a place to shop, eat and drink.



CAROLYN PEARCE
CITY COLUMNIST

But after more than two years here, Franklin Street has left me disappointed.

I haven't just become bored with the stores and restaurants. I also don't see the drabness of the vendors as adding to the "charm" of the college scene.

They just look, well, for lack of a better word - shabby.

Some vacant store fronts have either been vacant for years or are constantly changing over from one unsuccessful small business to another.

Even Chapel Hill institutions that have been on Franklin for years are beginning to show their age. Window fronts are dark and gloomy, signs and awnings are faded and ragged, and storefront styles are seriously outdated.

The whole street looks worn and aged. Only a few of the stores that have actually managed to stay alive are more than mediocre.

To say the Chapel Hill business district is in need of a facelift is a gross understatement.

There are exceptions to these generalizations, of course. Some national names such as Gap, Starbucks and Sephora, as well as new specialty stores like The Laughing Lurle and Julian's, are attractive, modern and appealing. These few "destination" stores have put the pressure on surrounding locally owned businesses to shape up their image. But these few stores can't do it alone.

I don't want to see Franklin Street become the newest extension of the Streets at Southpoint. I do believe the exclusive, independent boutiques and restaurants are what add the most flavor to this college town.

And the last thing I want to see is unoriginal chains, impersonal superstores and blasé food purveyors replace our favorite Chapel Hill establishments. I mean, I love Hector's and Cosmic as much as any other student - I would hate to see them bought out by corporate superpowers.

But I do believe that Franklin Street can benefit from the acquisition of a few large, popular and (dare I say) mainstream stores. They could make the strip not only more profitable but more aesthetically pleasing to students and residents alike.

Note my use of the word "few" before you accuse me of advocating the evil corporate takeover of our beloved Franklin Street.

Recently, Downtown Commission officials have worked with consultants to develop a plan for Franklin Street's retail revitalization. Chamber of Commerce President Aaron Nelson said the plan still calls for maintaining the 80/20 ratio of locally owned stores to nationally owned ones.

He cited Charleston, S.C.'s downtown revitalization as an example where every fifth store is a "destination" store, and stores and restaurants between offer "spillover" shopping.

Nelson also suggested that national organizations could actually lower Franklin Street rents because of their strong negotiating power.

The fact is, people want to do their shopping in a clean, attractive, and unique environment. It isn't surprising, given Franklin's current state, that some stores are having problems staying in business for more than a few months.

Opportunities abound on Franklin Street for both national organizations and local business. Chapel Hill houses plenty of students who do not have access to a vehicle and can't make the commute out to Southpoint or U.S. 15-501 to do their everyday shopping. And college kids, no matter how broke they might claim to be, are always dying to spend money. Our credit cards are burning holes in our pockets.

And with student population expected to increase dramatically in the future, revitalization of the business district is well worth the effort.

Small, independent vendors won't necessarily be driven out of business by a few bigger names. They will flourish when the entire street looks more appealing and attractive.

By strategically integrating some big-name vendors with the local spots we all know and love, Franklin Street has the possibility of being a much more pleasant destination for both students and locals.

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Cuts Lead to Computer Lab Closure

The Ehringhaus lab is closed indefinitely

By LAURA BOST
Staff Writer

Ongoing budget dilemmas this year have affected yet another area of campus life - this time the Ehringhaus Residence Hall computer lab.

The closing of Ehringhaus' lab this summer marked the beginning of long-term cost-cutting reforms that are in the planning stages for campus computer labs.

Last spring, the Residence Hall Association and student government met with Academic Technology & Networks officials to discuss possible lab closings as a way to trim costs on campus.

RHA President Joanna Jordan said ATN suggested closing four or five labs on campus.

Those recommended for closing were unstaffed labs on South Campus and a lab in Cobb Residence Hall, which has poor handicapped accessibility and occasionally floods.

But Jordan said students fought the loss of multiple labs. "The labs provide a great service to residence hall stu-

dents," she said.

"It's very important for them to stay open."

After the meeting last spring, officials decided only to close Ehringhaus' lab. Other labs, including those at Morrison Residence Hall and Cobb, will remain under watch to judge their demand.

"We decided on this plan of action as a reasonable way to manage the existing lab structure to maximize availability and still recognize the decrease in demand in the computer labs," said Steve Fearington, assistant director of distributed services at ATN.

Requiring students to purchase per-

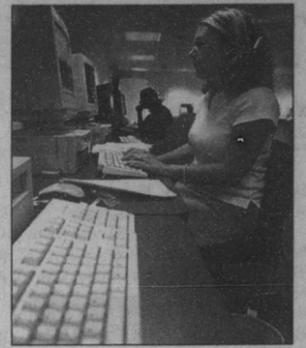
sonal laptops upon enrollment as part of the Carolina Computing Initiative has greatly reduced the demand for computer lab accessibility, Fearington said.

Tommy Mann, chairman of the student government Information and Technologies Committee, agreed that the role of computer labs is changing on campus.

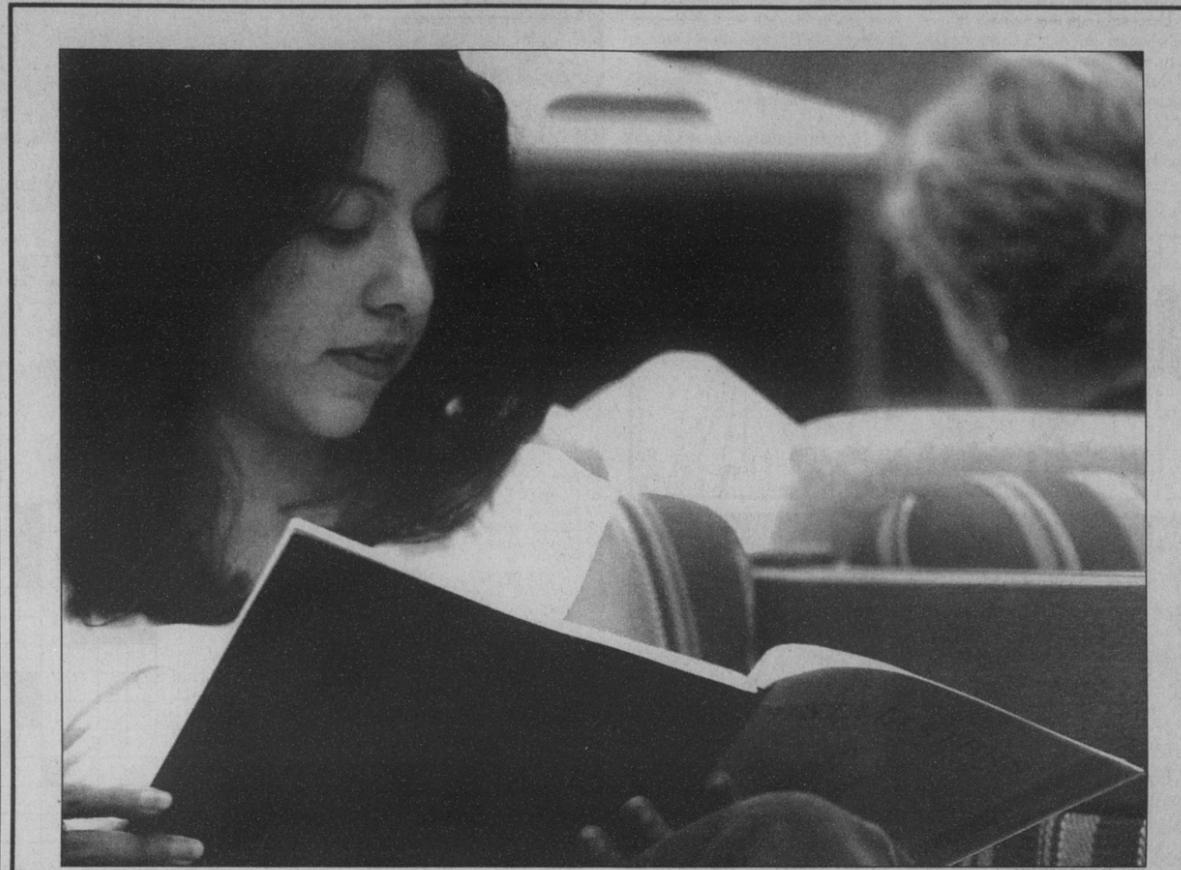
"Students rarely need computers for typing papers, so we are considering other uses," Mann said.

"We will not take away free printing, but we are considering adding new soft-

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DTH/GARRETT HALL
Junior Tommie Sears, a journalism major, uses the computer lab in Cobb Residence Hall on Tuesday night. The lab is under watch.



DTH/KIMBERLY CRAVEN
Senior Nisha Chandak, a health policy and administration major, studies for the Law School Admissions Test on Tuesday afternoon in the Health Sciences Library. Chandak said she studies at least three hours a day for the test she will take Oct. 5.

GRE, LSAT: Seniors Hit the Books

By JOSHUA D'AGOSTINO
Staff Writer

Their best friends have forgotten what they look like. They haven't been home in days. And whenever people need to find them, they head straight for the library.

Many UNC students are busy preparing for the exams that might determine whether they will have a future in graduate school - in addition to handling a normal course load.

Many seniors spend time and money on test prep and studying

"I studied for 10 to 12 hours a day for a three-week period during the summer," said senior James Haltom, who plans on taking the Law School Admissions Test on Oct. 5. "I dropped a summer course I was

taking, and when the time came (to take an earlier test) I still didn't feel ready."

Haltom said that after dropping the summer course, he now has a full load of courses and has cut back on other activities.

The LSAT and another graduate school test, the Graduate Record Examination, are consuming hours of many students' time this fall.

The LSAT is taken by those students wishing to go to law school. It consists of a multiple choice section of 101 questions and one essay

section. Test takers are given a percent ranking comparing them with the last three years of applicants.

The GRE is a multiple choice admissions test for students applying to graduate programs. It consists of verbal, quantitative and analytical abilities sections. Students are charged about \$100 for each of the tests.

But the fees don't stop there. Most students opt to take a Kaplan or Princeton Review preparatory course, both of which cost well over \$1,000.

"I didn't want to pay for the course, but it is worth it even if it only raises my score a few points," Haltom said. "That's what it takes to get into a better law school."

Mimi Keever, director of the UNC Learning Center, teaches an LSAT prep course on campus that students may enroll in as a regular class. She said she is sympathetic toward students' concerns about the test.

"Students pay for courses to give them the hope that they will perform well on the LSAT," Keever said. "Many do benefit from this expensive preparation; some do not."

Nisha Chandak, a senior health policy and administration major, said the prep course helps.

"The prep course definitely helps me manage the test more efficiently," said Chandak, who is also busy writing her honors thesis and is immersed in upper-level major courses.

But she said the LSAT remains her top priority. "I dream LSAT," she said.

Winston Crisp, associate dean for student services at the UNC School of Law, said he believes the LSAT provides highly relevant information to law school admissions personnel. "The LSAT provides very useful insight into a student's thinking and argument analysis skills," he said.

But Keever said she believes the test is somewhat overrated. "The test is vaguely connected to the stuff you do in law school, but its value to admissions officers rests in its nature as a convenient tool for sifting through applications."

Senior Kathleen Wirth said she had a unique experience with another graduate test, the GRE.

Wirth, a senior economics major, said she found out about the Marshal Scholarship on a Monday and decided she wanted to apply, but the scholarship required scores from the GRE.

Wirth registered for the test that Friday, checked out a prep book from Davis Library, did every question and took the test the following Friday. "I was definitely stressed," she said. "But everything worked out in the end."

Although some might defend the tests as a relevant academic assessment, Keever said the problems outweigh the benefits. "The (LSAT) worries (students), frightens them and makes them exceedingly anxious," she said.

"On average, it is a good representation of a student's abilities, but one standardized test cannot accurately assess the individual."

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N.C. State Protests Budget

Students canceled plans at legislature

By EMMA BURGIN
Assistant State & National Editor

RALEIGH - About 50 students and faculty gathered around the N.C. State University campus bell tower Tuesday to protest cuts to the UNC system's budget.

The group of students who organized the rally, which included members of the N.C. State student government and Andrew Payne, former UNC-system Association of Student Governments president, had initially planned to walk from the bell tower to the legislative building in downtown Raleigh.

But the format of the march was changed Monday evening when N.C. State administrators expressed concern about the purpose of the march, said Amanda Devore, ASG vice president of finance and development.

"We got thrown a little curveball," she said. "The administration said it would be bad political timing."

Instead, the organizers of the event turned it into a voter registration rally, Devore said.

Everyone who attended the rally filled out an "I Pledge to Vote" card, she said.

"Each person made a pledge to make sure the legislators who don't support higher education are not in office anymore," she said.

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Town Mourns Loss of Local Music Legend

Hot Nuts founder Doug Clark dies

By JILL SPIVEY
Staff Writer

In college towns such as Chapel Hill, there are performers - and then there are legends.

Doug Clark, a town icon for 50 years, left no question as to which group he belonged.

Clark, founder and drummer of the Chapel Hill-based band Doug Clark and the Hot Nuts, died Monday after enduring an extended illness. He was 66.

Known for its unique mix of cover songs, R&B grooves, beach music and raunchy rock 'n' roll tunes, his band was a mainstay in the Chapel Hill party scene for half a century.

"I'd known him all my life," said Eugene "Pops" Lyons, a waiter at the Rathskeller. "He lived in the neighborhood - he was a friend of the family."

After performing at UNC fraternity parties and other social functions for nearly five decades, Clark was considered to be a longtime friend by many UNC students.

In 1955, he organized the original lineup of the Hot Nuts while a junior at Chapel Hill's Lincoln High School. Nine albums, one greatest hits collection and 75 bandmates later, Clark carried on the band's reputation for smooth grooves and lewd jokes.

The band received its memorable name from such a joke. After performing in the 1950s as The Tops - which would change to Doug Clark's Combo - the band's song "Hot Nuts" became a hit with audiences, and the name stuck.

While Clark toured the nation for 47 years as a performer with the Hot Nuts, his home remained in Chapel Hill, where

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2 Candidates to Run in Congress Election

The special election will be in a week

By WILL AREY
Staff Writer

Only two names will appear on the ballot in next week's special election for Student Congress, officials said Tuesday.

With only a week remaining before the election to fill four empty seats in Congress, only two candidates have taken the necessary steps to ensure their names make the Sept. 24 ballot.

The two candidates are Michael Spinks, a graduate student in the curriculum in folklore, and John Surface, a graduate student in the curriculum in Russian/East European studies.

If elected, both candidates on the bal-

lot will represent District 5.

Board of Elections Chairman Brian Fauver said that because only Spinks and Surface attended a Sept. 10 interest meeting, the two remaining congressional seats must be filled using write-in votes.

"Besides the two on the ballot, anybody else choosing to run for the empty seats will have to run as a write-in candidate," Fauver said.

To get their names on the ballot, candidates needed to attend the interest meeting and gather 10 signatures from constituents, to be turned in to the elections board by 5 p.m. Tuesday.

Fauver said that although he wished there were more names to put on the ballot, he still believes the election will result in a full Congress.

"We can still fill these seats using write-in votes," he said. "The fact that

the Graduate and Professional Student Federation was able to find two people willing and interested on such short notice is awesome."

When Student Body President Jen Daum called the election Sept. 5, there were only three empty Congress seats. Another congressional seat was vacated Sept. 10.

The recently vacated seat in District 21 is an undergraduate seat for students living off campus in Carrboro.

Of the other three vacancies, one is in District 2, and two lie in District 5. The three seats in districts 2 and 5 are all reserved for graduate students.

District 2 includes the graduate programs for the schools of Education, Social Work and Journalism and Mass Communication. District 5 is composed of the graduate programs for the School of Information and Library Science and

the College of Arts and Sciences.

The special election will be held from 6 a.m. until 10 p.m. Sept. 24 using the online voting system through Student Central.

Fauver said that when there are vacancies in Congress, the student body president is mandated by the Student Code to call a special election. Subsequent elections must be called until all vacant seats are filled.

He said that despite the lack of names on the ballot, it is important that the election be productive and fill the vacancies.

"These seats need to be filled," Fauver said. "If we can't get them filled with this election, we'll have to have another one again 30 days later."

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