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dth online
• N.C. State aims to improve safety
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1 Down, 2 to Go

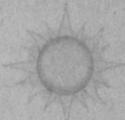
Women's soccer demolishes Wake Forest
3-0 to advance in ACC tournament.
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Tipoff

The Daily Tar Heel previews
UNC's basketball season.
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Weather

Today: Sunny; H 67, L 40
Saturday: Partly Cloudy; H 65, L 49
Sunday: Partly Cloudy; H 74, L 54



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OWASA Eliminates All Water Restrictions

By **BILLY BALL**
Staff Writer

The Orange Water and Sewer Authority voted Thursday to eliminate all water restrictions for Chapel Hill and Carrboro in the wake of improving drought conditions.

A proposal to downgrade restrictions only from Stage 2 to Stage 1 was defeated by a majority decision. All of the board members except one, Mark Marcoplos, agreed that dropping the restrictions entirely would be in the area's best interest at this time.

Just over a month ago, the University Lake and Cane Creek Reservoir were severely below full capacity in the midst of what many have called the worst drought in 75 years. But a surge in October rainfall was enough to return the reservoirs to more comfortable levels.

Latest estimates placed University Lake at full capacity, while Cane Creek was 6 feet below full.

"The key thing to remember is the reservoir system is at 75 percent full capacity," said OWASA Executive Director Ed Kerwin.

Marcoplos was concerned that lifting all restrictions

would result in a resurgence in water scarcity by next year and that residents would think they do not need to continue water conservation efforts.

Board Chairwoman Bernadette Pelissier said leaving restrictions in place would be unnecessary because the reservoir system is almost full, although OWASA officials are concerned about recurring water shortages. "OWASA would lose credibility if it was maintaining restrictions meant for a water shortage," she said.

Board member John Smith also said a downgrade to Stage 1 restrictions would be unnecessary. Under Stage 1 restrictions, lawns could be watered three days a week.

Smith said Stage 1 restrictions had no significant impact on water demand but was a serious drain on certain area businesses, including local nurseries. "(A Stage 1 restriction) precludes certain businesses from operating," he said.

Smith said Stage 2 restrictions triggered a significant drop in local water usage, not Stage 1 restrictions. Under Stage 2 restrictions, homeowners could water outside one day a week and no commercial car wash could use OWASA water.

While projections placed water levels low again by

next year, Smith said a downgrade to Stage 1 would be ineffective in water preservation and too costly to the local economy.

He said that dropping all restrictions would give much-needed aid to area businesses and that OWASA could determine the impending future of reservoir levels in six months. "OWASA will have a much more effective set of measures in place in six months," Smith said.

The board's concerns about lowering all drought restrictions were quelled by Smith, who argued that the costs of continued water restrictions were too heavy for local businesses.

OWASA officials say area residents can expect to reap the benefits of unrestricted water usage immediately.

According to the OWASA Web site, officials will hold a public hearing Nov. 20 to continue drought discussions, namely how OWASA and the community should manage droughts and prepare for future ones. They also will debate whether water-use restrictions for droughts should be changed.



DTH/JON KIRBY

Bernadette Pelissier (left), chairwoman of the OWASA board of directors, and board member Peter Gordon discuss water restrictions Thursday.

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

Voter Turnout Up Slightly in Election

By **LAURA YOUNGS**
Staff Writer

Voter turnout increased in Orange County and across the state for Tuesday's general election, though reports show that less than half of registered voters statewide came out on Election Day.

Voting statistics for the election are not final, but Carolyn Thomas, director of the Orange County Board of Elections, said turnout for the county appears to be 10 percent higher than in previous years.

But so far, statewide turnout numbers are average, though they are up from the 21 percent achieved in the Sept. 10 primaries, said Gary Bartlett, director of the N.C. Board of Elections.

Bartlett said that at 46 percent, this year's voter turnout falls in the exact middle of the historic range. Average turnout in non-presidential election years usually falls between 42 percent and 50 percent.

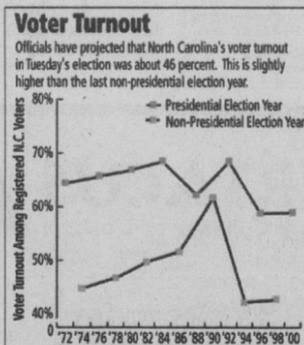
Though voters didn't make a historic showing at the polls this year, turnout was up from about 42 percent in 1998 — the last non-presidential election year.

"It's clear the turnout went up from 1998, but it's still below presidential

(election) standards," said Ferrel Guillory, director of UNC's Program on Southern Politics, Media and Public Life. "It's not good; it's not bad."

President Bush might have been a contributing factor in voter turnout this year, as he campaigned heavily for Republicans, Guillory said.

Preliminary data indicated that the increased voter turnout can be attributed



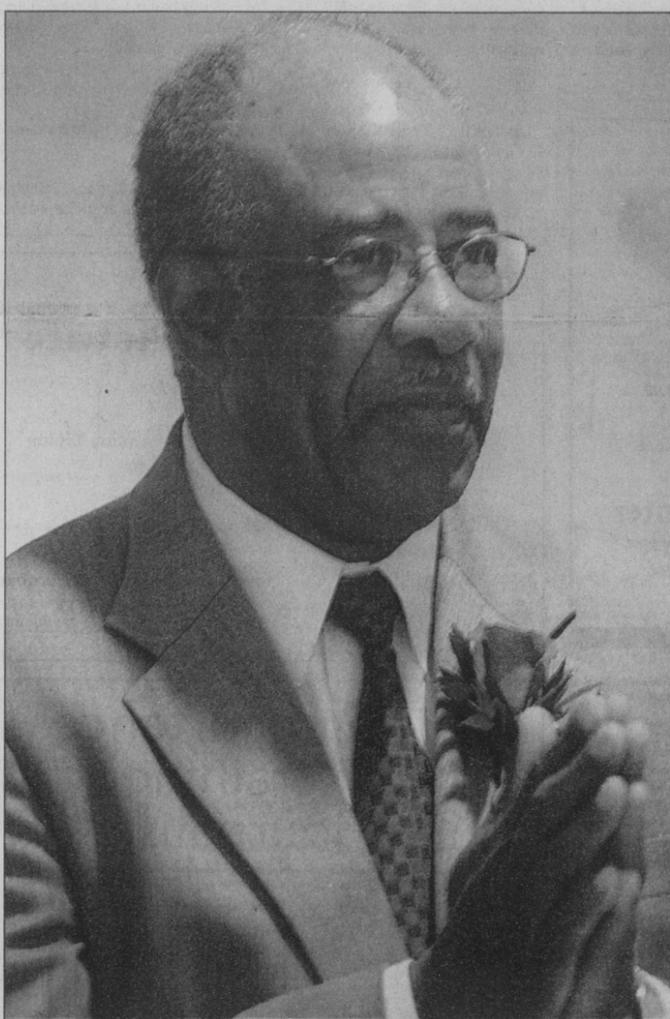
largely to a strong Republican showing. Despite talk of high turnout improving the chances of Democratic candidates, N.C. voter growth seems to have favored Republicans such as Sen.-elect Elizabeth Dole, Guillory said.

Dole's principal challenger, Democrat Erskine Bowles, lost Tuesday's elections with about 1 million votes, a number almost identical to the amount cast for Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., who won his seat in 1998.

That data indicate that the nearly 300,000 extra people who showed up at the polls voted for Dole, Guillory said.

Along with a hefty Republican turnout, Bowles' and Dole's experience as national leaders also affected the elections. North Carolinians saw the two

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DTH/LUCAS HAMMONDS

Sen. Howard Lee, D-Orange, will leave the N.C. Senate in January after 10 years in office. He previously served as the first black mayor of Chapel Hill.

LEE REFLECTS ON POLITICAL PAST, FUTURE

By **CLEVE R. WOOTSON JR.**
Assistant State & National Editor

When the Democratic primary for Orange County's N.C. Senate seat pitted two longtime allies against one another, one man's decades-long career in politics was put on hold.

And although Sen. Howard Lee, D-Orange, did not appear on the general election ballot for the first time in more than a decade, he says he'll continue fighting for North Carolina.

For now, Lee says he is deciding where he will go from here — or if he ever will run for political office again.

Lee — a politician in Chapel Hill, Orange County and the state for more than 33 years —

made history in 1969 when he became the first black mayor of a predominantly white town south of the Mason-Dixon line.

But his seventh and most recent bid for the N.C. Senate ended when he was defeated by Sen. Ellie Kinnaird, D-Orange, in the Sept. 10 primary election.

The 68-year-old statesman said he is considering taking a position with the Hunt Institute, an organization started by former Gov. Jim Hunt that will focus on giving legislators a better understanding of educational policy at the state level.

Lee said he has thought about becoming a lobbyist for the UNC system but likely won't

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Yale, Stanford Next in Line To Eliminate Early Decision

By **ALEXANDRA DODSON**
Staff Writer

Officials at Yale and Stanford Universities announced Wednesday their plans to eliminate binding early decision programs beginning with fall 2003 applicants.

Under the new policies, students still will be able to apply to the schools early but will not be forced to attend if accepted. Early decision became popular with admissions officers at high-ranking universities in the mid-'90s as a tool to ensure top students enrolled at their schools.

UNC officials made national headlines earlier this year with their announcement that the school was discontinuing its binding early decision plan.

Yale's decision was based on what university administrators believe is best for applicants, said Tom Conroy, spokesman for Yale's Office of Public Affairs. He added that administrators, specifically Yale President Richard Levin, were considering dropping the program for about a year prior to the decision.

Binding early decision programs benefit a universi-

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Employee Forum To Make 2nd Try At Seat on BOT

Claims it can offer a unique perspective to trustees

By **CAROLINE KORNEGAY**
Staff Writer

Although the UNC Board of Trustees made it clear in September that faculty and staff would not have a seat on the board, University employees want another chance to make their case.

The Employee Forum passed a resolution Wednesday vying for the opportunity to argue for employee representation on the BOT.

Employee Forum Chairman Tommy Griffin said Thursday that the group will submit a resolution to the chancellor's office asking for approval to go before the trustees at an upcoming meeting.

The resolution also asked once again for the board to provide employees a nonvoting seat and voice on the board. Griffin said the resolution should be submitted sometime next week.

Employee Forum members did not get an opportunity to present their case to the BOT at its Sept. 26 meet-

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DTH/STREETER LECKA

Martha Clark (left) votes Tuesday at Cameron Park Elementary School in Hillsborough, where people voted in the halls because of high turnout.

The opportunist thinks of me and today. The statesman thinks of us and tomorrow.

Dwight D. Eisenhower