

Aldermen Request No Tax Increases

By KATHRYN GRIM
Staff Writer

Because of economic hardships, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen requested at its annual retreat Sunday that the town staff propose a budget without any tax increases for the upcoming year.

The board will begin in April to review the proposed budget, which it must pass by June 30, the last day of the fiscal year. Usually the budget proposal is coordinated by the town manager. But while the town searches to replace former Town Manager Robert Morgan, Mike Brough, the town attorney and interim manager, will assume responsibility for the task.

Board member John Herrera said the board does not wish to place the economic burden on Carrboro's citizens. "Everybody's hurting," he said. "The citizens have done their part. I feel that we need to tighten up our belts."

In December, the N.C. General Assembly passed legislation preventing the state from withholding revenues municipalities generate from its utility franchise, state telecommunication, natural gas and sales taxes.

The aldermen had not included those revenues in the budget for this fiscal year because they were not sure if the governor would reimburse the funds to Carrboro.

Today the town has accumulated \$225,000 from two quarters of the utility franchise and state telecommunication taxes, and it expects the total to grow to between \$400,000 to \$600,000, said Assistant Town Manager Bing Roenigk.

Carrboro began this fiscal term at a loss of \$700,000, which the town could have covered with a 10-cent tax increase. But the board managed to balance this year's budget without using the revenues by cutting back expenses and imposing a 2.84-cent tax increase instead.

When the board discovered Carrboro could access the revenues in December, it approved funding for a list of programs that included resurfacing the roads and adjusting the pay of town employees such as police officers and firefighters.

The board hopes to save some of the revenue money for the next fiscal year and to search for more money-saving solutions within its own offices.

Herrera said the town staff could reduce expenses by abstaining from hiring new staff and purchasing new equipment. "There's always, always some place where you can become more efficient or some place you can cut," he said.

Budget issues were the focus of this year's board retreat, which was run differently from the retreats of previous years. Past retreats have been opportunities to set new initiatives, but this year, the board just reviewed the goals and programs it planned last year.

The board decided to continue programs that are already in progress but has placed some previously proposed programs on the back burner while Carrboro weathers its economic troubles, said board member Jacquelyn Gist. She said, "This is a year to pull in and keep the home fires burning."

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

New LGBT Office to Facilitate Peer Mentoring

Service designed to provide support

By AUSTIN MORRIS
Staff Writer

Starting Feb. 17, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Office will provide a peer mentoring program for students who are coming out, questioning their sexual identity or seeking to understand an issue dealing with sexuality.

Officials said the program will provide a comfortable environment for discussing issues of sexuality or coming out.

The need for a peer mentoring program originally was established last fall at a meeting of LGBTQ undergraduate and graduate leaders, said Marcie Fisher, program coordinator of the LGBT office.

Fisher said the program is designed to provide a first point of contact for students who are not sure where to start finding support for their sexuality.

These services are not intended to duplicate counseling services already provided at the University's Counseling and Psychological Services Center. Instead, the mentoring program is meant to solve problems on a short-term basis.

Stephanie Chang, volunteer coordinator for the LGBT office, said she thinks the atmosphere of the mentoring program will facilitate communication about sexuality and coming out.

"This is a place people could feel comfortable starting out," she said. "Hopefully, people will feel comfortable coming here."

Mentors will work to get interested students in touch with campus and community resources such as student organizations, social events and community referrals.

Fisher suggests students turn to the

LGBT office's peer mentoring program to meet people who will share the joy of accepting sexuality and mentors who will let students know that they are not alone in their sexuality.

"There are not a lot of mirrors for us out there, so we need to see there are other people like us," Fisher said. "People coming out have to confront a stereotype. Part of getting over that is meeting other people."

According to the office's application for volunteers and peer mentors, potential volunteers and mentors should be good listeners and be supportive of any questions or concerns students might have.

The LGBT office is hoping for a diverse volunteer base to accurately reflect the diversity of the University community.

Peer mentors also may be available to present information about sexual orientation issues to campus groups and make referrals to resources available both on and off campus.

The LGBT office's peer mentoring program isn't just for students exploring personal sexuality issues.

The office will welcome any student who would like to discuss general issues of sexuality. Fisher said peer mentoring is a resource available for students doing research work or dealing with issues involving the sexuality of family members or friends.

Officials say students interested in becoming peer mentoring volunteers should contact the LGBT office as soon as possible to get an application.

The LGBT office is located on the bottom floor of the Steele Building and will be open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office already is providing LGBTQ community-friendly consultation and support, with drop-in hours from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Thursdays.

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

Distribution for Duke Game Gives Preference to Seniors

Staff Report

Bracelet distribution for the March 9 home men's basketball game against Duke University will continue today and Thursday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Students can pick up a bracelet at Gate 5 of Kenan Stadium.

Unlike other distributions, this one gives preference to seniors and graduate students graduating in May because the home Duke matchup is the senior basketball game.

Two ranges of bracelets are being allocated, one for seniors and the other for all remaining students. At noon Friday in the Pit, Carolina Athletic Association officials will draw two "magic" numbers, one for each corresponding bracelet range.

Ticket distribution for graduating students will be held at 7 a.m. Saturday at the Smith Center Ticket Office.

Graduating students have a first shot at the 4,000 to 6,000 student tickets available for the game, said Kris Willett, CAA president. Distribution for all other students will take place at 10:30 a.m., and any remaining tickets will be allocated.

Both graduating and non-graduating students can receive up to two tickets by presenting their UNC ONE Cards and a second valid ONE Card.

Because the game falls during Spring Break, housing for on-campus students who want to stay in their residence halls for the game is being accommodated.

Willett said that to take advantage of the housing options, on-campus students who receive game tickets must fill out a housing request form and bring it to distribution Saturday morning. The forms can be found online at the Department of Housing and Residential Education Web site at <http://housing.unc.edu>.

Campus Calendar

Today

3:30 p.m. - Interested in studying abroad in Asia? Learn more about opportunities for UNC students from the **UNC Study Abroad Office** at an information session in Union 226.

3:30 p.m. - The **International Center** is holding an information session in Union 3502 for the Class of '38 Summer Abroad Fellowship, which is open to sophomores and juniors. For information, call 962-5661.

4 p.m. - Come learn from the **UNC Study Abroad Office** about all study abroad programs in Africa in Meeting Room 3 of the Union.

7 p.m. - The **Sonja H. Stone Black Cultural Center** is hosting the Souls of Black Folk Symposium Series with guest

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panelists UNC philosophy Professor Bernard Boxill, Ajamu Dillahunt and Sylvia Hill. The series will take place in the Toy Lounge of Dey Hall. This program is co-sponsored with the Mu Zeta Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, the James M. Johnston Center for Undergraduate Excellence, the provost's office, philosophy department and Wilson Library.

7 p.m. - The **Student Environmental Action Committee** is hosting a panel discussion on renewable energy in 207 Venable Hall. North Carolina's state energy director, the UNC sustainability coordinator, UNC faculty members and students will discuss economics, health and policy and how they are related to renewable energy at UNC and in North Carolina.

7:30 p.m. - Poetry Slam for Peace and Justice will be held until 11 p.m. in the Union Film Auditorium. At a time when the drums of war can be heard, join spoken-word and hip-hop artists from all over the Triangle and Triad in their beats for peace. Admission is free at this event sponsored by **Students United for a Responsible Global Environment and Poets for Peace**. For information, contact 843-6548 or surgenc@yahoo.com.

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The Portable Promised Land: Stories

Touré, a long time writer for Rolling Stone, has a new book of short stories called **The Portable Promised Land: Stories**.

"In dazzling language and startling images, Touré invents a place called Soul City, America's most miraculous metropolis. In an astonishing array of voices and styles, the book celebrates the most soulful corners of America while questioning the very nature of Blackness."

Thursday, January 30 at 3:30 p.m.

presented by the Bull's Head Bookshop call 962-5060 for details



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