

New group inches to fruition Moroccan suspects number 6

BY SHANNAN BOWEN
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

UNC, town and business leaders sat at the same table Tuesday to discuss the future entity that will represent all three groups in an attempt to guide economic development in downtown Chapel Hill. The Chapel Hill Downtown Steering Committee, a subcommittee of the Downtown Commission that comprises these leaders, decided on a membership structure and mission statement for the new, nameless entity that will combine the three groups historically known for butting heads. At a Feb. 26 meeting, the steering committee decided to organize the new entity as a nonprofit corporation funded in three equal parts by the town, the University and business community. "It's the first time in four years that we had the University, town and business community on the

same page," committee member Betty Kenan said. The committee decided on a mission statement: "Bring the resources of the town, University and downtown community together to maintain, enhance and promote downtown as the social, cultural and spiritual center of Chapel Hill through economic development." The group will consist of seven members, two from each constituency, who will hold two-year terms and will select on by the seventh member as chairman. Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy will recommend that the Chapel Hill Town Council appoint one business and one property owner to the new organization and choose other candidates from a slate of individuals the Downtown Commission will select. In an effort to attain equal voluntary funds from each group for the new entity, the committee

decided Feb. 26 not to levy a special tax on downtown property. But Charles House, chairman of the Downtown Commission Board of Directors and a local business owner, said the commission proposes keeping the district tax to ensure that all downtown property owners and merchants pay their fair share toward the future success of the organization. However, Chapel Hill Town Manager Cal Horton said he would not support funding handled by the Downtown Commission. "I'd rather the money go straight to the entity than pass through someone else's hands," he said. "My experience is when money passes through somewhere else, it doesn't always pass through." After Foy's recommendation is presented to the council, a public hearing will be set on the structure and mission of the group. The council then will appoint board members by late May or early June. "We need to start something before July," Foy said. "Someone's going to have to find people to sit on this board. It's not a matter where we can put an ad in the paper. We are going to have to go out there and recruit."

Death toll nears worst since Sept. 11

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MADRID, Spain — Police reportedly now suspect at least six Moroccans took part in the Madrid train bombings, and the United States is assisting a growing international investigation increasingly focused on Islamic militants possibly linked to al-Qaida. A 45-year-old woman died of her injuries Tuesday, raising the death toll from Thursday's bombings to 201. Of the more than 1,600 wounded, eight are in critical condition. Cardinal Antonio Maria Rouco Varela led a Mass at Madrid's cathedral Tuesday remembering the victims of the bloodiest terrorist attack in Spain's history. "To kill your own kind, to kill a brother, is to attack God himself," Varela said. The main suspect in custody in the attacks, Moroccan immigrant Jamal Zougam, has been identified by Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzon as a follower of Imad Yarkas, the alleged leader of Spain's al-Qaida cell who is jailed on the suspicion that he helped plan the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the United States. The daily newspaper El Pais reported Tuesday that police believe they have identified five other Moroccans who participated in the attacks and are at large. Spain's Interior Ministry refused comment. Two people who were traveling on one of the attacked trains said

Zougam was aboard just before the bombs began exploding, El Pais said. With signs that the bombings were carried out by Islamic extremists who operate and have confederates in several countries, FBI agents are helping Spanish police in using fingerprints and names to seek a full picture of Zougam and four other suspects in custody, a senior U.S. law enforcement official said in Washington, D.C. Spanish police have also arrested two more Moroccans and two Indians, but their possible role in the attacks has not been specified. European countries were searching their databases for any information pertinent to the attack. A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that "it's increasingly likely Islamic extremists were involved in these attacks. In terms of assigning responsibility, it isn't clear." A suspected link between the Madrid bombings and suicide bomb attacks in Casablanca, Morocco, last year grew stronger Tuesday when French private investigator Jean-Charles Brisard described a phone tap in which Zougam said he had met with Mohamed Fizazi, the spiritual leader of Salafia Jihadia, a clandestine Moroccan extremist group. Salafia Jihadia is suspected of involvement in the Casablanca attack, which killed 33 people and

12 bombers and has been linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network. Brisard told The Associated Press the tapped call is cited in a report written for Garzon's inquiry of the Sept. 11 attacks. Brisard, who is helping investigate the Sept. 11 attacks for lawyers representing some victims' families, has a copy of the report. The Garzon document says that in the August 2001 monitored phone call, Zougam told Yarkas: "On Friday, I went to see Fizazi and I told him that if he needed money we could help him with our brothers," Brisard said. Fizazi was among 87 people sentenced in Morocco in August in a trial that centered on the Casablanca attacks. Fizazi received a 30-year sentence after being convicted of preaching radical Islam in mosques and meeting with the Casablanca attack's perpetrators. Police in the Basque city of San Sebastian said they detained an Algerian who allegedly talked about a terrorist attack in Madrid two months before it happened. Authorities have been tracking Islamic extremist activity in Spain since the mid-1990s and say it was an staging ground, along with Germany, for the Sept. 11 attacks. The Madrid attacks are now one death short of the 202 killed in October 2002 in a nightclub bombing in Bali — blamed on an al-Qaida-linked group — which was the deadliest terror attack since Sept. 11, 2001.

CORRECTION

A photo caption on page 9 of Tuesday's paper misidentified a North Carolina women's tennis player as senior Kendrick Bunn. The photograph was actually of junior Kendall Cline.

To report an error, contact Managing Editor Daniel Thigpen at dthigpen@email.unc.edu.

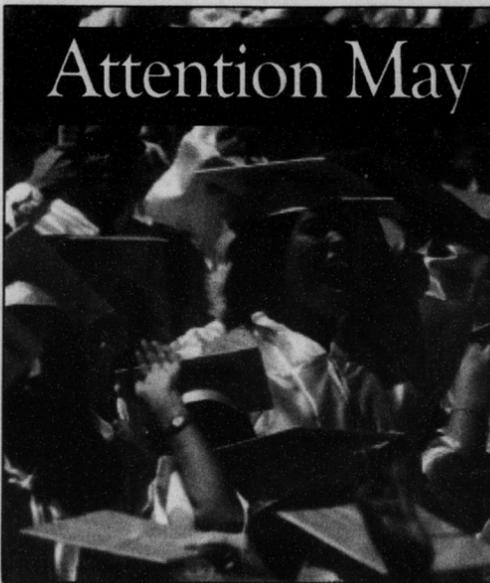
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Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.



Attention May Graduates

Commencement Information Day Wednesday, March 17

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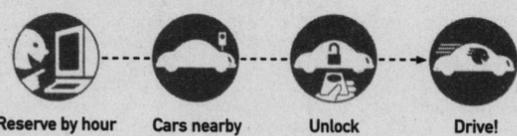
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PUBLIC NOTICE

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations will conduct an accreditation survey of the Student Health Service Laboratory Department on Friday, March 26, 2004.

The purpose of the survey will be to evaluate the organization's compliance with nationally established Joint Commission standards. The survey results will be used to determine whether, and the conditions under which accreditation should be awarded the organization.

Joint Commission standards deal with organizational quality of care issues and the safety of the environment in which care is provided. Anyone believing that he or she has pertinent and valid information about such matters may request a public information interview with the Joint Commission's field representative at the time of the survey. Information presented at the interview will be carefully evaluated for relevance to the accreditation process. Requests for a public information interview must be made in writing and should be sent to the Joint Commission no later than five working days before the survey begins. The request must also indicate the nature of the information to be provided at the interview. Such requests should be addressed to:

Office of Quality Monitoring
Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
One Renaissance Boulevard
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

The Joint Commission will acknowledge such requests in writing or by telephone, and will inform the organization of the request for interview. The organization will, in turn, notify the interviewee of the date, time, and place of the meeting.

This notice is posted in accordance with the Joint Commission's requirements and may not be removed before the survey is completed.

Date Posted: 03/09/04

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations is an independent, not-for-profit, national body that oversees the safety and quality of health care and other services provided in accredited organizations. Information about accredited organizations may be provided directly to the Joint Commission at 1-800-994-6610. Information regarding accreditation and the accreditation performance of individual organizations can be obtained through the Joint Commission's Web site at www.jcaho.org