

## CITY BRIEFS

## Orange County offers free tax assistance to residents

Free tax services are being offered through April for county residents of all ages.

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance, a free tax service for low- to middle-income clients, offers volunteers who will prepare computerized federal 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ, state taxes and related forms, with special assistance for the elderly or disabled. Complex or lengthy tax situations may be referred to the IRS.

Volunteers are trained and tested according to IRS and state guidelines. Non-English-speaking clients need to bring an interpreter. Spanish-speaking clients should call 245-2010 for appointments.

The services are administered through the Orange County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program with the county Department on Aging.

Anyone interested should make an appointment at one of the three county locations: Carrboro Town Hall; the Chapel Hill Senior Center, at 400 A-1 South Elliot Road; and the Hillsborough-Central Orange Senior Center, at 515 Meadows Drive.

Participants are asked to bring a copy of last year's tax returns; W-2 forms; all 1099 forms for interest, dividends, Social Security and other retirement income; totals for tax deduction information; tax forms received in the mail; mortgage interest paid; evidence of interest paid on taxes; and Social Security cards for yourself and all dependents being claimed.

Phone number and location hours for assistance are as follows:

■ Carrboro Town Hall, 968-2070

Hours: Mondays until April 11, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.; Tuesdays until April 12, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

■ Chapel Hill Senior Center, 968-2070

Hours: Thursdays until April 14, 1 p.m. to 9 p.m.; Fridays until April 15, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturdays until April 9, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

■ Hillsborough-Central Orange Senior Center, 245-2015

Hours: Wednesdays until April 13, 12 p.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturdays until April 9, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## Carrboro budget may call for property tax increase

Assistant Town Manager Bing Roenigk told the Carrboro Board of Aldermen on Sunday that the projected budget outlook for the 2005-06 fiscal year calls for a 2.42-cent property tax increase.

While there will be a property tax increase, the overall tax rate is expected to drop, as this year's property revaluation should increase the value of properties being taxed, Roenigk said.

The increase is driven by debt service for a fire truck, the Adams Tract acquisition and debt payments from sidewalk bonds, as well as services for the newly annexed areas.

## STATE &amp; NATION

## Driver's education teacher gets run over by student

STONE MOUNTAIN, Ga. — A driver's education instructor was run over by one of her students and pinned beneath the car for 15 minutes, officials said.

Two cars driven by students collided on the DeKalb County Schools driver's education lot, then one of the students backed into Patricia Erwin, running her over.

She was hospitalized Friday in stable condition and underwent surgery for multiple broken bones.

Erwin, 64, who has taught driving for 20 years, was working with the students on a drill that included pulling forward and backing up at slow speeds, said Kal Kelliher, the district's driver's education coordinator.

## Drunken birds eat berries, crash into building's glass

COLUMBIA, S.C. — Dozens of birds, drunk from eating holly berries, crashed into the glass of an office building and died last week.

"It was like an Alfred Hitchcock movie," said worker Denise Wilkinson. "It was spooky. You could hear them where they flew into the glass."

Warm weather and an ample supply of berries attracted hundreds of cedar waxwings into the enclosed courtyard of the three-story building Tuesday.

The birds began getting drunk on the berries. They got so loopy that some were falling off branches and others were slamming into the glass walls that enclose the courtyard, said Burgess Mills, the building's owner.

About half of the 100 birds that slammed into the building died, workers said. Groundskeepers have tried to help the birds by putting tape on windows or nets over the holly trees to keep them from eating the berries, Mills said.

— From staff and wire reports.

## Locals fight marriage act

## Seek protection of partners' benefits

BY MICHAEL TODD

STAFF WRITER

Chapel Hill and Carrboro are planning challenges to a proposed constitutional recognition of the state's Defense of Marriage Act statute, which, if passed, would revoke the towns' landmark domestic partner benefits.

The act gives states the right to ignore same-sex marriages performed elsewhere and limits marriage rights to only heterosexual couples.

The Chapel Hill Town Council has put pressure on Sen. Ellie Kinnaird, D-Orange, to voice opposition to the act and the amendment proposal that would constitutionally fix its ideas.

"(Chapel Hill wants) to make a statement. We, as a democracy, are working our way through a very big discussion," Kinnaird said.

The town is submitting a legislative request that would recognize same-sex unions performed in other states.

Both towns submitted similar requests to last year's General Assembly, which were denied early in the process.

This year might be no different.

"(It doesn't) have a chance to pass,"

Sen. James Forrester, R-Gaston, who introduced the amendment proposal, said of Chapel Hill's request.

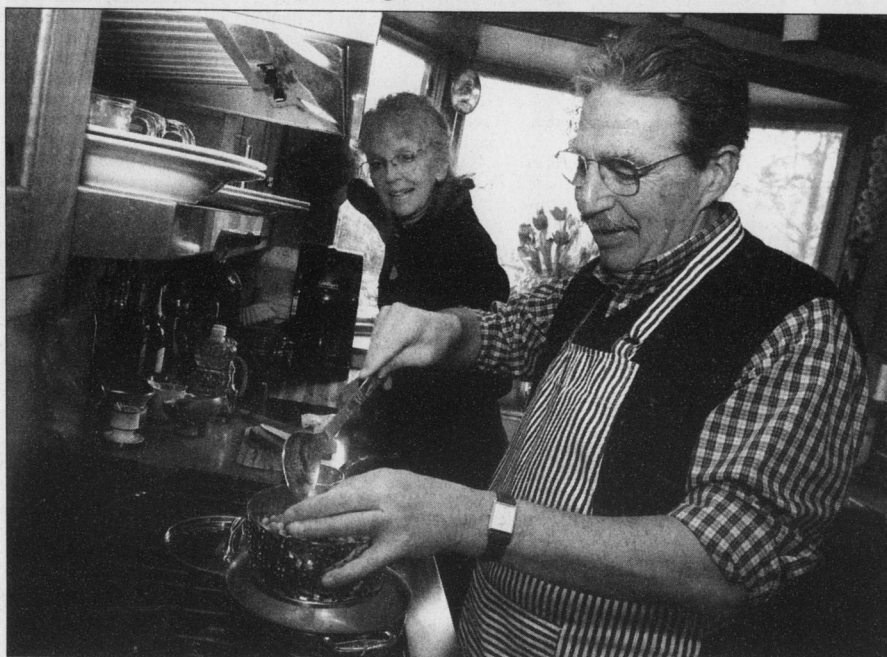
But Town Council member Mark Kleinschmidt said putting the town's position on record is important.

Chapel Hill is an alluring area because of its inviting and tolerant atmosphere, and because of that, the act poses a threat to future progress and the town's system of offering benefits to domestic partners of town employees, he said.

"The amendment is not just a small step back. It is actually going back in time," Kleinschmidt said.

SEE MARRIAGE, PAGE 5

*"It's not all roses and valentines. ... But Steve and I have had an awful lot of fun together."* DOROTHY BERNHOLZ, UNC EMPLOYEE, ON MARRIAGE



DTH/JUSTIN SMITH

University employee Dorothy Bernholz and her husband, Steve, prepare lunch Sunday. The two met as undergraduates at UNC in 1961, were married less than a year later and kept the union a secret from their families for more than a year.

## VALENTINE SPIRIT ENDURES

## Couples share past, present romance

BY ALI GRAY

STAFF WRITER

In the midst of today's overwhelming divorce rate, two local couples' lasting marriages give reason not to give up on love.

Dorothy Bernholz, who works at UNC Student Legal Services, met her husband, Steve, in 1961 when they were both undergraduates at UNC. He was dating one of her Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority sisters at the time but soon became more interested in dating Dorothy, he said.

"I called her up quite a few times, and she wouldn't respond," Steve said. "Finally, she agreed to go have coffee with me at Lenoir Hall."

The two were married less than a year later. Because they had different religious backgrounds and were still in school, they decided to keep the marriage a secret from their families.

"We were scared to death of our parents," Dorothy said. "We thought they would disapprove."

The couple kept quiet for more than a year until Dorothy became

pregnant with their first child. When they finally did reveal their secret, their parents were accepting.

"I think my parents were surprised, but they liked Dottie very much, so they got over the surprise," Steve said.

During that time, getting engaged in college was important to most women, Dorothy said. "There were 10 men for every woman at UNC," she said, laughing. "If you couldn't snag one, you were dead. But of course, that's not why we got married."

After graduating college, the couple had another child and went on to graduate from law school.

The couple admitted they were surprised by the number of failed marriages in recent years. "Marriage is hard work," Dorothy said.

"It's not all roses and valentines. So many people are willing to just walk away. But Steve and I have had an awful lot of fun together."

"If you stay married long enough, you're rewarded by things like that," Steve said as he pointed to the picture of their 2-year-old granddaughter

on Dorothy's office computer screen. "Wouldn't you say that's just the cutest girl you've ever seen?"

Doug and Olga Eyre, who are both 83 years old and will be celebrating their 60th anniversary in May, have also thrived over time.

They met during World War II while Doug was involved in the military in northern Virginia. Olga was working as a civilian for the war effort in Washington, D.C.

"What attracted me to him was he played softball on the office's league," Olga said. "He was a mighty good softball player." Doug noticed Olga later in the office.

"She had a nice figure," he said. "She had to deliver messages to my department. She caught my eye."

The two married a year later in 1945. "We came out of the church, and they brought a car for us," Olga said. "He didn't know how to drive, so I had to drive. Everyone laughed at that."

Doug and Olga had three children and moved to Chapel Hill in 1957, when Doug took a job at UNC.

"In our generation, it was an

SEE VALENTINES, PAGE 5

## 16 MISSIONS, ONE VISION

Part 6 of a 16-part series profiling the campuses of the UNC system.



TODAY:  
NCCU

## N.C. Central stays true to its mission

BY DANA BSEISO

STAFF WRITER

DURHAM — As one of three UNC-system schools in the Triangle, N.C. Central University has some sizeable competition.

Just a few miles from UNC-Chapel Hill and N.C. State University, it has had to prove itself in years past.

Chancellor James Ammons said N.C. Central stands as No. 1 among historically black colleges and universities in the state and No. 3 in the country. In just the past few years, it has grown not only in enrollment but also in the development of its facilities, curriculum and the number of programs offered to students.

During the past four years, N.C. Central has seen a tremendous upturn in enrollment, growing by almost 40 percent. The student population stands at 7,727 this year, up from 5,595 in 1999.

## A mission of service

The UNC system's mission strongly emphasizes the aim of each university to provide for the state as well as for its people. N.C. Central's mission statement is very much in line with that philosophy.

"The university recognizes ... the mutually reinforcing impact of scholarship and service on effective teaching and learning," it reads. "North Carolina Central University, therefore, encourages and expects faculty and students to engage in scholarly, creative, and service activities, which benefit the community."

N.C. Central is one of few institutions in the UNC system that makes community service a requirement for graduation.

Ammons said this aspect of the university is what makes it stand out among others in the area and helps to fulfill the overall mission of the system.

"Our students have embraced it. They really value that component of their college experience, and the community and the state are really better off because we have this as part of our institution," Ammons said.

André Vann, assistant dean of students and director of Greek life, said the university's fraternities and sororities assume a large leadership role in the community, leading service projects in which students participate. Despite making up only 10 percent of the student body, the Greek community works hard to give back to the university. Their famous step show during Homecoming raises thousands of dollars annually for the school.

## Development

Ammons said he is eager to see the university grow both in numbers and programs. He said the university has continued to evolve for the better since he took office.

"Our institution was the first public liberal arts institution for African-American students," he said. "Since that time, our mission has grown to include a number of other disciplines and has prepared our students for the North Carolina economy, as well as the global economy."

N.C. Central started as a small liberal arts school that catered to the area's black community, focusing mainly on programs such as teacher education. Today, the university offers a much wider array of programs and majors.

The university's nursing school, as well as its law school, are among the best in the state and attract many students from the area.

Stesha Brooks, a junior political science major from Charlotte, said one of the reasons she chose N.C. Central is because of the law school's reputation.

N.C. Central is developing a bio-manufacturing program to add to the biotechnology program that was recently expanded.

On the university's west campus, two new facilities will be open at the end of this academic year.

The first is a \$36 million science complex which

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## Va. universities gain autonomy

## Bills to reduce reliance on state funds

BY AMY EAGLEBURGER

STAFF WRITER

Two similar bills passed in both houses of the Virginia General Assembly last week, granting all universities in the commonwealth a greater degree of autonomy.

The legislation stemmed from a bid last year by the College of William and Mary, the University of Virginia, and the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University for charter-school status. This standing would result in more administrative distance from the bureaucracy in Richmond.

The major difference between the original bid by the three universities and the bill that passed last week is the extension of partial autonomy to all public universities in Virginia.

Though public schools nationwide — including UNC — have received less money from state funding in recent years, officials

stressed that Virginia's plan goes off the beaten path.

"It's quite a dramatic step," said Thomas Davis Rust, an assemblyman in the Va. House of Delegates who supported the bill.

The bills, which have some differences, have been sent back to committee to be merged accordingly. Once that process is complete, it will be the governor's decision whether to sign it into law.

"By giving them more freedom they will save money," Rust said. "They will put more money into their academic endeavors, and they have said that by doing that, they will be less reliant on state resources."

The legislation would classify schools into one of three tiers of autonomy based on the financial and academic makeup of each indi-

SEE VIRGINIA, PAGE 5

## Fraternities aid tsunami efforts

## Benefit raises \$11K for relief

BY STEPHANIE NOVAK

STAFF WRITER

A star-studded cast of University and community leaders joined together at a benefit dinner Sunday night to help those struck by the tsunami in Southeast Asia.

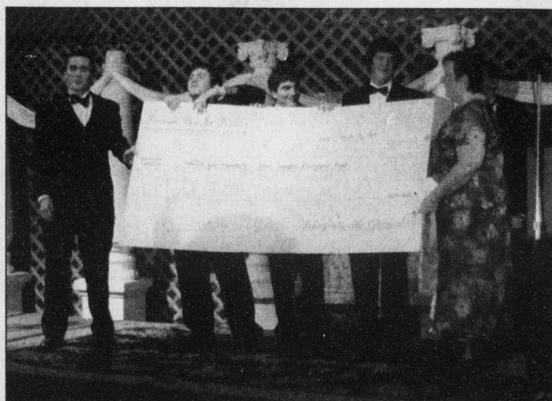
With a check of \$11,230, UNC's Interfraternity Council added a boost to Habitat for Humanity's efforts to help resume normalcy in the countries hit by the tsunami.

"This gives hope for the future," said Dean Smith, legendary basketball coach and special guest at the event. "We're in good shape."

Anson Dorrance, coach of the women's soccer team, also attended the event. He said that he had lived in Singapore during his youth, which made the disaster hit closer to home.

"I feel partly close to this kind of disaster," he said. "The response from this group is overwhelming, and it's to their credit."

The idea for the benefit dinner came together during Winter Break when Nick Armstrong, vice



DTH/DAN BLUM

Members of the Interfraternity Council present a check to Habitat for Humanity at a benefit dinner Sunday night that will aid tsunami relief.

president of the council, decided that his organization needed to do something to respond to the tragedy.

More than 100 members of the community attended the \$125 per-plate dinner, held in Fearnington Village in Pittsboro.

Armstrong said the turnout exceeded his expectations.

All of the proceeds generated from the dinners, \$20 raffle tickets and other donations went straight to the Asia Tsunami Response Fund.

Raffle prizes included a basketball signed by Smith and a football signed by coach John Bunting.

Mary Ellen Taylor, southeast

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