

Square's renovations near completion

BY LAURA OLENIAC
STAFF WRITER

After years of renovations, those who shop and those who sell at University Square say they are excited to see the projects nearing completion.

Recent construction projects at the Franklin Street retail spot are a part of the owner's original vision to transform the center into a concentrated array of merchants catering to Chapel Hill's eclectic demographics.

Stores now boast awnings and glass fronts, and sidewalks have been renovated as part of the transformation, which began almost three years ago.

"We're especially thrilled that it is almost over; we have sort of

been a construction zone," said complex owner Betty Kenan, who is also a member of the Chapel Hill Downtown Economic Development Corporation.

Mark Moshier of Graham Associates, which manages the property, said the renovations have increased the complex's aesthetic appeal and have helped attract the upper-scale businesses that some merchants had hoped to see in the square's repertoire.

Kenan said Apple Boutique, which offers upscale clothes for young women, is slated to open in August next to Kilwin's of Chapel Hill.

There also are some prospective renters interested in putting a restaurant in the space that once

housed the Grand Café, located at the back corner of the complex, Moshier said.

"It will create a lot of synergy," he said of the changes. "The merchants we're putting there are a complementary mix that will feed off each other. That's what the owners envisioned when they came up with the idea."

Construction is about 80 percent complete, Moshier said — the sidewalks will be finished in about six weeks, and new signs will be done in about a month.

Pam Patterson, a long-term employee of women's clothing store Fine Feathers, is looking forward to a boost in business in the wake of renovations. "Business is wonderful, but it can always be better,"

she said.

Some locals exploring the retail center suggested that the bright orange construction color has brought attention to businesses.

"I haven't really noticed the changes except for the orange barriers moving," said David Griffin, a University sophomore who walks through the complex everyday.

Merchants say the center is unique in that its stores cater not only to University students but also to residents of Chapel Hill.

"I'm delighted that they focus on those of us who live here," said Nick Didow, interim executive director of the corporation.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.



Construction workers continue Wednesday with improvement projects to update the aesthetic appeal of University Square on Franklin Street. DTH/PERRY MYRICK

Month targets sexual violence

BY JENNIFER FAIR
STAFF WRITER

On the heels of a recent downtown rape, local advocates hope to use the next month to raise awareness of sexual violence.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month, and the Orange County Rape Crisis Center has several events planned to bring attention to the problem.

Chapel Hill Police Department domestic violence and sexual assault specialist Sabrina Garcia said 41 cases of sexual assault have been reported this year.

That number includes incidents ranging from sexual assault and rape to indecent exposure and secretly peeping, she said.

Eight of the incidents were reported rapes.

But not included in that figure is the number of incidents that go unreported.

"Sexual violence is one of the most underreported crimes," said Krista Park, community response director at the center.

"The numbers really don't reflect how often the events can be occurring."

To combat the problem, the rape crisis center is working in tandem

with the Carolina Women's Center and Advocates for Sexual Assault Prevention during Women's Week, which began Monday.

An ongoing event is the Clothesline Project, a national project that will display T-shirts with messages illustrating the effects of sexual violence at locations throughout the community.

Some of the T-shirts are on display in the Student Union, bearing messages such as: "You were eighteen. I was fifteen. I said NO, But you called yourself a man."

"(Making the shirts) makes the effects of violence and how people feel about it come to life," said Diane Kjervik, director of the women's center.

Margaret Barrett, executive director at the rape crisis center, said the public cannot turn a blind eye to the issue.

"The fact is that sexual violence is happening," she said. "It's a difficult issue for people to talk about, but we need to break the silence so we can create an environment where people can come forward, know they're not alone and it's not their fault."

From 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. April 14, the center will hold a reception at the N.C. Women's Hospital

to honor UNC Hospitals' Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program for enhancing evidence collection in sexual assault cases.

At 7:30 p.m. April 18 in Bingham Hall, sexual violence survivors and other volunteers will read and perform written works at the center's third annual Shout Out Against Sexual Violence, co-sponsored by the advocates.

The public can e-mail its works to shoutout@ocrc.org. The deadline for all entries is April 8.

The center also will join the Eastgate Shopping Center Hallmark on April 19 and the University Mall Hallmark on April 22 in a Beanie Baby fund-raiser.

All of the money raised will go directly to the center, Barrett said.

More information can be obtained by visiting the center's Web site at <http://ocrc.org/>.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

Softball snaps 5-game losing streak

BY CASEY FERRELL
STAFF WRITER

The North Carolina softball team brought its five-game slide to an end in dramatic fashion Wednesday, as it swept a doubleheader against College of Charleston. But the pair

of wins could not have been more different. Crystal Cox allowed a stingy one earned run and struck out 10 Cougars en route to a 9-1 laugher in game one that ended in the fifth inning.

But in game two, the Tar Heels could find no answer for the pitching of Cougars ace Natalie Smith. Shortstop Anna Evans finally broke through with a leadoff home run in the bottom of the sixth inning, sparking a three-run rally that gave North Carolina (22-19) a 3-2 comeback victory.

"We really needed to turn a corner," said head coach Donna Papa.

"(Wednesday), there were two ends of the spectrum. There was one game where we blew a team out, and then we had to come back from behind. So we got both done, which is great for your team."

Tar Heel freshman Jennifer Jacobs led the offense, going 2-for-2 with four RBI in the first game. In game two, Jacobs drove in the go-ahead run, capping the Tar Heel comeback.

"I'm really happy to finally get my hits," said an excited Jacobs. "I haven't had that much opportunity, so it's good to come through."

During the fourth inning, North Carolina broke the game open with six runs, and Jacobs provided the game's highlight — a two-run homer crushed over the right field fence.

Cox said she was comfortable on the mound, adding that the UNC offense was "a pitcher's dream" in game one.

"You can really throw your pitches with ease, and it really takes some

of the pressure off," Cox said.

Pressure, though, was exactly what Cox faced in game two. Papa sent Cox to the mound in the top of the seventh inning to close out the game — replacing Alison Yin, who had relieved Ashley Allen in the third — and protect the team's one-run lead.

After allowing a walk, Cox struck out two of the next three batters and picked up her fourth save of the season. Yin earned the win.

"We fought back from behind, and I kind of felt like I had to do it for them," Cox said.

The victory against the Cougars (29-12) was the first her team has won after trailing in the fifth inning this season.

UNC dropped two games to South Carolina on Tuesday, but Papa said, "(Wednesday) we told them, 'You have got to do better than this. Step up and get it done.'"

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

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Sublets

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