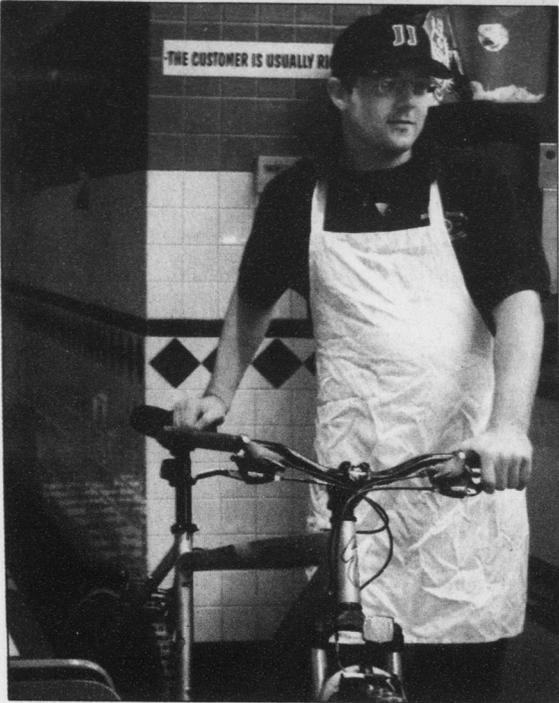


Gas fare hikes affect business prices Restaurant reopens as ethnic hookah bar



Due to rising gas prices, business owners such as Jimmy John's general manager Drew Russell is asking employees to use bicycles for deliveries.

BY BRIANNA BISHOP
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

For individuals, finding a way to get around rising gas prices has been manageable, but for local businesses and organizations, finding a solution has been a little more murky.

Some businesses that depend on gas for day-to-day operations have been forced to raise the prices of their services indefinitely.

"We raised all of our fares a dollar beginning (Monday)," said Latesha Velez, co-owner of Airport Taxi, at 500 W. Rosemary St.

The new taxi fare will be implemented until the costs go down again, Velez said, adding that finding gas sometimes has been difficult.

"There's times when we can't find anything but premium (grade gas)." Like Airport Taxi, Papa John's Pizza at 607B W. Franklin St. has had to up the cost of delivery to continue providing the same service.

"Usually, we give each driver 80 cents per run (for gas), and now we give them a dollar per run," manager Penta Septariento said.

With gas prices still hovering above \$3 per gallon in most places, businesses are not the only ones to alter operations.

The Chapel Hill-Carrboro Board of Education on Thursday addressed how the gas situation might impact the schools, school board member

Nick Didow said. "As of Thursday evening we had no indication that there's a pending shortage."

He said the city schools, which collaborate with Orange County Schools for bus fuel, likely would be safe from higher fuel costs because established contracts dictate their gas bill. Where trouble might arise for the schools, however, is the purchase of gas for service vehicles.

"The superintendent has followed the lead of Governor Easley and the others," Didow said.

Easley has asked citizens to conserve fuel and encouraged state employees to carpool or use teleconferencing, according to a press release from the governor's office.

The town of Chapel Hill has taken some similar action.

According to a press release, town employees have been asked to drive less or use the bus system, and residents are encouraged to do the same. Chapel Hill police will be doing a larger portion of their patrol on foot, and officials will review public transportation in order to have it operating at maximum efficiency.

In addition, Research Triangle Park employees living in Durham, Wake and Orange counties are eligible to participate in the Smart Commute Challenge from Aug. 15 to Sept. 30.

The event challenges employees to find an alternate means to get to work at least once and offers prize incentives for those who do.

More information about the challenge can be found at <http://www.smartcommute.org/>.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

BY LAURA OLENIACZ
STAFF WRITER

There's a different kind of party happening on Franklin Street this Friday — likely to be a smoky night of belly dancers, wild colors, shimmering lights and spicy cuisine.

Aladdin's Grill & Catering, at 153 E. Franklin St., will reopen this weekend as an ethnic restaurant and hookah bar where Chapel Hill residents can choose to smoke strawberry, cherry, apricot or apple-flavored tobacco from sculpted contraptions after sampling dishes and tea from five Middle Eastern countries.

"Hookah has a nice aroma, like incense," manager Musa Firat said, adding that smoking from a hookah is enjoyable because the tobacco is filtered through water, removing the tar taste.

Guests will then be invited to dance with belly dancers on a stage that will be placed in the center of the room on weekend nights. Aladdin's also will feature African music some weeknights.

Firat has expanded the restaurant and remodeled the deli to include ethnic dishes, ornate wall paintings and glowing lanterns. "It's a part of an exotic experience," he said.

And for him, that experience is an opportunity for the Chapel Hill community to satisfy its curiosity about another culture.

Firat said all people would benefit from learning about the world's diverse cultures in order to gain a better perspective on the human experience.

"We want people to enjoy

(Aladdin's) because we are now going to a global culture, and we deserve to learn of each other's culture."

And despite recent tensions in the Middle East that have inflamed world politics, Firat said he has no fears people will hesitate to try his distinctive restaurant and bar.

"I'm very glad that here in Chapel Hill people are very intelligent and open-minded," he said. "The more you know about each other, the more you remove your barriers, and the more you remove your fear."

The exotic experience Firat envisions will be unlike any of the current downtown nightlife spots.

"Hopefully it doesn't fit in — all the bars I like have something unique about them," said Luke Stepleton, head server at Top of the Hill. "There are bars that are exactly the same as the last one you were just in."

Sebastian Gomez, owner of a hookah bar in Wilmington, said there are already similar venues in Asheville and Raleigh.

Gomez, a former touring circus performer, owns the hookah bar The Juggling Gypsy, whose festival atmosphere serves as a hideout for local artists.

"It's not us, it's the lifestyle we represent," he said. "People just come because there's a bunch of cheesy clubs."

Aladdin's will be open for lunch and dinner Friday, and the hookah will be available after 10 p.m. for all age-appropriate customers.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

POLICE LOG

■ A Durham man reported being assaulted by numerous individuals in a parking lot on the 200 block of West Rosemary Street at 2:15 a.m. Sunday, according to Chapel Hill police reports.

■ A Chapel Hill man's bicycle was stolen, then recovered, on West Franklin Street on Saturday, according to Chapel Hill police reports.

The Trek bicycle, valued at \$100, was reported stolen at 1:18 p.m. Saturday, police reports state.

■ The wallet of a Brooklyn man, who said he left it lying at a check-out station in University Mall at 201 S. Estes Drive, was reported stolen at 10:10 p.m. Saturday, Chapel Hill police reports state.

The wallet and the cards it contained are valued at \$100, according to reports.

■ According to police reports, a Chapel Hill man's vehicle sustained \$50 worth of damage when someone stole two hubcaps.

The incident, reported at 1:04 a.m. Sunday, took place at 136 E. Rosemary St., according to police reports.

■ Freshman Bradford Shannon was arrested and charged Thursday with possession of drug paraphernalia and intent to sell and deliver hash, hydrocodone, oxycodone and amphetamines, according to University police reports.

Shannon, 18, of 250 Hinton James Residence Hall, was found possessing multiple smoking pipes, rolling papers, a digital scale, a box of plastic sandwich bags and a cigarette rolling machine. Also in his possession was hashish, amphetamines, hydrocodone, oxycodone, colonipin and marijuana, reports state.

Shannon was detained in Orange

County Jail with a secured bond set for \$10,000. His trial date was set for Friday in Hillsborough.

■ A UNC freshman was transported to the UNC Hospitals emergency room early Sunday morning after falling in front of Ehringhaus Residence Hall, according to University police reports.

The student exited the P2P at the Manning Drive bus stop and fell, striking her head on the street. Reports state there was a strong odor of alcohol about her.

■ Freshman Dane Bradshaw was charged early Sunday morning with possession of alcohol by a person under the age of 21, according to police reports.

Bradshaw, 19, of 225 Ehringhaus Residence Hall, was approached by a police officer for possession of alcohol, and Bradshaw admitted it belonged to him.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

■ N.C. Hillel will host its weekly "Tuesdays with Dorie" from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. today at the Daily Grind. Come drink some coffee and hang out with Jewish Campus Service Corps Fellow Dorie.

■ Lab! Theatre will hold auditions for the first set of the 2005-06 season today and Wednesday in the Center for Dramatic Art. Come to room 102 between 4:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. with two audition forms and a two-minute monologue.

■ There will be a meningitis vaccine drive from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. today in the Student Recreation Center Conference Room.

■ College Republicans will host Rev. Jesse Lee Peterson at 6:30 p.m. today in the Great Hall of the Student Union.

■ The Campus Y is sponsoring "The Politics of Race and Class — Past, Present and Future" with Cynthia Brown at 7 p.m. today at the Sonja Haynes Stone Center, room 210. She will discuss the impor-

ance of historical injustices and current race and class relations in the Triangle and North Carolina.

■ Pauper Players will hold auditions for the musical "Assassins" today and Wednesday from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. in the Student Union auditorium. Students should sign up for a 10-minute time slot in the Pauper Players' Union folder and come prepared to sing two minutes of a song of their choice a capella. Visit <http://www.unc.edu/student/orgs/pauper/> for more information.

■ Student Congress will hold a meeting at 7:30 p.m. today in Peabody Hall, room 8. The group will discuss changes in how referendums will be put on ballots as well as monetary appropriations.

■ CHiPs, UNC's student improv and sketch comedy team, is holding auditions at 8 p.m., 9 p.m. and 10 p.m. today in Student Union room 2510. Callbacks will be Wednesday and Thursday.

■ "From Franklin Street to

Bourbon Street" — a hurricane relief event sponsored by WCHL, All About Insurance, The Mark Vitali Family of Agencies, Performance Auto and Citgo Mini Mart — will open at 7 a.m. Wednesday at the Citgo at 1200 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Sponsors will trade nonperishable items for up to 10 gallons of gas per person.

The sponsors plan to give away up to 1,360 gallons of fuel to those who donate to the hurricane victims.

To make a calendar submission, visit <http://www.dailytarheel.com> for a list of submission policies and contacts.

Events must be sent in by noon the preceding publication date.

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