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N.C. leaders say gas tax repeal unlikely



House Speaker Jim Black has indicated that a special session will not happen.

CITE SCHEDULING CONCERNS, HIGH COSTS AS DISADVANTAGES

BY KAVITA PILLAI
STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

High gas prices have led some people to call for a temporary tax break at the pump, but North Carolina's legislative leadership says no such action will be taken in the state.

Though several states have suspended the gas tax, the impact on revenue

in North Carolina would be too great for the idea to be considered, said Julie Robinson, spokeswoman for House Speaker Jim Black, D-Mecklenburg.

"It would cost upwards of \$120 million to suspend the tax for a month with very little impact on the cost (of gas)," she said.

According to the N.C. General

Assembly's Fiscal Research Division, the state gas tax rate is 17.5 cents per gallon plus 7 percent of the average wholesale price during a six-month period.

One penny of the tax brings in about \$54 million in revenue each year, which feeds state highway funds. The rate is set to change again Jan. 1.

To suspend the state's gas tax, the legislature would have to reconvene in a special session, an action that both Black's and Senate President Pro Tem Marc Basnight's offices said is not

planned.

"The initial discussion stemmed from the governor's office," said Tony Caravano, assistant director of communications for Basnight, D-Dare. "It was nothing more than a general conversation."

But Rep. Louis Pate, R-Wayne, said he plans to make the conversation more specific.

"I'm going to be sending out a letter to all of the leadership advising them of my feelings about it," he said.

Pate said he doesn't want to sus-

pend the entire state tax, only the variable portion. The Jan. 1 rate will be set at the end of this month, and the price spike following Hurricane Katrina could alter significantly what consumers pay.

"We certainly, in this world of high-priced gasoline, do not need to add 5, 6, 7 cents a gallon," he said. "I think we should call for a moratorium or a cap or temporarily displace this gas increase until the price comes back to

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HURRICANE KATRINA: THE AFTERMATH

School funds incite debate

BY ERIC JOHNSON
ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

A Bush administration plan to provide federal aid for schools that enroll Hurricane Katrina evacuees is facing criticism from opponents of school vouchers.

The proposal would allocate \$1.9 billion to help cover unexpected expenses for schools that accepted students displaced by the storm, paying up to 90 percent of the average per-student cost in each state.

The amount of federal aid received by each school or school district would be determined by the number of new students who have enrolled.

But school voucher opponents have balked at a provision that would set aside up to \$488 million to support those displaced children enrolling in private schools.

"Federal funds and public dollars should go to public schools," said Denise Cardinal, a spokeswoman for the National Education Association. "We've never supported public funds going to private schools."

The U.S. Department of Education noted that some of the areas most affected by Katrina had an unusually large portion of students in private schools — 25 percent in four of the hardest-hit parishes of Louisiana, compared with 11 percent nationally.

Cynthia A. Thornton, a member of the Texas State Board of Education since 2001, said the extraordinary circumstances of

SEE KIDS, PAGE 4

HOW TO HELP

The Red Cross seeks volunteers and donations. E-mail oochapnc@intrex.net for more info.

The Center for Public Service has full listings of ways to help online at www.unc.edu/cps

FUNDRAISERS

Supplies fundraiser

The DTH is collecting new socks and underwear all month. We have a drop-off box in Union Suite 2409, and will be in the Pit from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Friday.

INSIDE TODAY

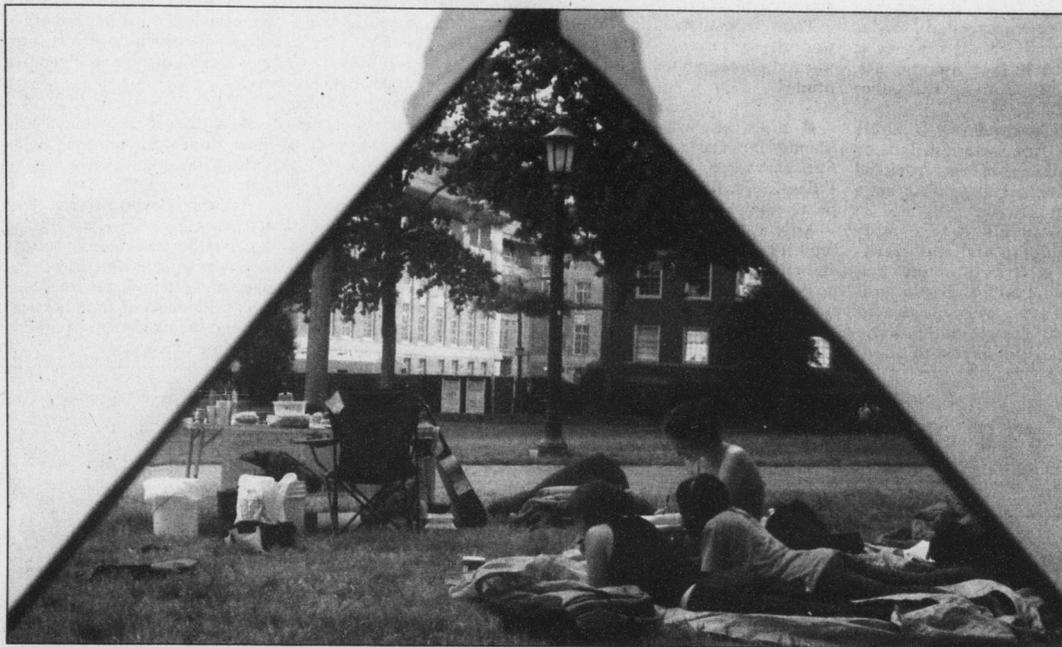
Yet another Hurricane Rita smashes Florida, heads toward Katrina-ravaged areas
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LOCAL EVENTS

Dollar\$ for Disaster

Student groups will continue to canvass classrooms for One Card donations.

Carolina relief The Katrina relief planning committee will meet. 6:30 p.m., Union, Room 3413



The view from inside of tent of Liz Mason-Deese (left to right), Jillian Johnson and Catherine Kronk out on the quad Thursday evening. DTH/SARA LEWKOWICZ

STAKING OUT REFORM

Student activists set up camp in Polk Place as part of a weeklong schedule of activities, leading up to a Washington, D.C., protest.

BY KATIE CLINE
STAFF WRITER

Polk Place has long been regarded as one of the more laid-back areas on campus.

But some students have taken that feeling a step further this week, turning the lower quad into their own living room.

A group of student activists has literally set up camp in the lower portion of Polk Place and is inviting students to come in, sit down and discuss world issues.

The discussion will build into the student activists' trip this weekend to an anti-war demonstration in Washington, D.C.

Anna Carson-Dewitt, a senior anthropology major, said she hopes the campsite will provide people with a place to engage in dialogue about issues in local, national and international communities.

"By creating a temporary community here, we are hoping to explore together what an ideal community can look like," Carson-Dewitt said.

The students have planned various other activities this week that are intended to raise awareness and allow people to voice their opinions on the war in Iraq.

At the end of this week, students will participate in a protest in Washington D.C., led by anti-war activist Cindy Sheehan — the mother of a U.S. soldier killed in Iraq, who has traveled the country spreading her ideals since August.

Sheehan is most widely known for her especially long stop at President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas.

Student activists will pile into six buses for the protest, and many more students are

traveling by car, Carson-Dewitt said.

The students camping out said they hope their efforts will spark the interest of students and inform them of the reasons to protest.

A variety of students interested in engaging in dialogue came together to stage the campsite, Carson-Dewitt said.

"It's a group of students concerned with the way government policies have affected our communities," she said.

Though the group will be living on the lawn, they still will venture home for showers.

And the activism will not get in the way of class, Carson-Dewitt said.

Activities for the week include speakers,
SEE PROTEST, PAGE 4

Nation goes 'all in' on poker trend

Successive generations take to game

BY NATALIE HAMMEL
STAFF WRITER

Do a Google search on "Texas Hold'em" and more than eight million links appear at your fingertips. Turn on the TV and see amateurs, professionals and celebrities alike all anteing up at the table.

It appears that everyone, including most college-aged males, have jumped on the poker bandwagon after Chris Moneymaker's 2003 World Series of Poker victory proved that even an average-joe accountant could transform himself into a multi-millionaire.

"Anybody, regardless of how

long they've played, can sign up and win a huge amount of money," says Steve Carman, a 19-year-old sophomore who is a regular player himself.

"Kids have always looked for the quickest and easiest way to make money as possible," he says.

A study by the National Annenberg Risk Survey of Youth showed a huge increase in card-playing among males ages 14 to 22. The number of youth saying they gambled in card games at least once a week jumped from 6.2 percent in 2003 to 11.4 percent last year.

SEE POKER, PAGE 4



Large-scale competitive poker tournaments are becoming increasingly common among younger generations, especially at college campuses. DTH PHOTO ILLUSTRATION/BRADY NASH

Protester's NCSU visit leads to campus spat

BY ERIN GIBSON
ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

First Amendment rights are a hot topic at N.C. State University after protesters disrupted a Thursday night rally for Cindy Sheehan's Bring Them Home Now Bus Tour.

The N.C. State Campus Greens hosted the event to give students a chance to hear from the mother of a U.S. soldier killed while serving in Iraq. The N.C. State College Republicans also were scheduled to hold a counter demonstration in the university's brickyard.

NCSU-American Civil Liberties Union and Campus Greens now are considering taking legal action against the College Republicans for

violating their freedom of speech.

Elena Everett, chairwoman of the N.C. Green Party, said she and the College Republicans were told that the groups were supposed to stay on opposite sides of the brickyard.

"They had taken me in for a couple special meetings beforehand because the permit office knew there would be a counteraction," she said. "They drew us out a map and gave copies to us and to the campus police, so it was clear where we were going to be and where they were going to be."

College Republicans Vice Chairman Adam Downing said the
SEE STATE, PAGE 4

CORRECTION

Due to a reporting error, Monday's front page story, "An unbalanced meal plan," incorrectly stated that Top of Lenior has 250 seats.

The facility actually has seating for 650 people.

The Daily Tar Heel apologizes for the error.

online | dailytarheel.com

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR Read about some of the DTH's new style changes

AND THE READERS SAY Discuss the letters to the editor printed in this edition

A DRINK FROM THE WELL Discuss Seth Dearmin's role on the UNC trustees



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GOTTA HAVE IT
College campuses such as UNC run wild with caffeine addiction. Most rely on coffee and other beverages to get through busy schedules.

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CAN I SEEM SOME ID?
Opposition gathers against a recent Georgia state law that would require all voters to present identification before being able to vote.

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