

**FORUM**  
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"A lot of people have problems that they have seen," Hodges said. "This is how you fix that problem."

Tuck emphasized that the newspaper's involvement in the forum will not compromise the DTH's integrity or contribute to coverage bias.

"I don't have to worry about bias creeping into my coverage," he said. "I'm not generating the content, so I feel that any bias is pushed to the side."

He said he was compelled to organize the forum because of consistently low student turnout.

During the 2003 municipal election only 329 students aged 18 to 22 turned out at the polls — just 10 percent of the registered voters in that demographic.

"It embarrassed me as a fellow student," Tuck said. "It embarrassed me as politics enthusiast. It embarrassed me as a Chapel Hill citizen."

He said he hopes the forum will be something that future DTH editors and student leaders will continue to organize in election years.

"The Daily Tar Heel will be a strong advocate for issues that people should care about," Tuck said.

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**TOURNAMENT**  
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The agency faced financial difficulty and loss of leadership when executive director Tina Siragusa stepped down from the position this summer. Program Director Ben Balderas has assumed her duties.

El Centro is moving in November to a building owned by the Interfaith Council for Social Services in Carrboro at 110 W. Main St.

The organization, Balderas said, is on the upswing. El Centro sent out mass mailings for the first time this year to create a new sponsor base in the community and strengthen its bonds with former sponsors.

The publicity might help with more than just fundraising — it could build the organization's presence and trust in the Hispanic and greater communities.

"You need to show them that you want to be a part of their life, and then they will come to you like family," Flanagan said.

El Centro's goals, Flanagan said, are about helping to eliminate prejudice by promoting the Hispanic community's values, culture and celebrations to the greater community.

"(Hispanics and non-Hispanics) pass each other in the streets, but we're really in different worlds," he said. "This will be a great service for the community as a whole."

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**GYMS**  
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classes still will be held at the SRC, Rams Head has its own unique options, Hinton said.

For example, there is a class that is a combination of cycling and jogging on the indoor track.

Lindsey Weaver, a junior philosophy major, said the SRC was constantly busy when she came by last year.

"The things that I liked to do, like the elliptical, were always taken," she said. "It's not worth it to me to come just to lift weights."

Weaver said she comes to the SRC because it's conveniently located, not because she particularly likes it.

"It's not conducive to working out," she said. "If I lived on South Campus, I'd probably go to Rams Head regularly. But I live in Granville (Towers)."

Stephen Clark, a senior biology major, said he usually visits the SRC three times a week.

And he recently discovered you don't even need a workout buddy at the center.

"The gym staff is over the top," he said. "It's one of the best I've ever seen."

Having worked at the SRC since her freshman year, Gretchen Hutter, a senior and a member of the staff team, said she feels like she lives there.

"There are always friends here," she said. "It's a good place to come socialize. We want everyone to incorporate fitness into their lives who hasn't yet."

Casey Sturgill, a junior who works as a fitness monitor at Rams Head, said the new facility allows for a more diverse workout.

"I think it's a little more geared to cardiovascular health, and that's nice," he said. "Even the guys who are disappointed at first get the benefits."

The new facilities hopefully will get more students involved in exercise and activities, Hinton said.

"It's exciting to me to see the group of people who may not have engaged in exercise before the opening of the center engaged in some on-campus activity."

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**NEIGHBORS**  
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proposed theater site.

For board of education candidates, the definitive issue was clearly the minority achievement gap.

Incumbents Lisa Stuckey and Pam Hemminger emphasized that data is becoming available to help them to assess and improve the various tools the district is using.

"We must look at the data, figure out which of these strategies is working the best and then use those strategies," Stuckey said.

The challengers, Jeff Danner and Jean Hamilton, said while the data will be helpful, it should not just be arriving after five years of district efforts.

Residents said that they enjoyed having the candidates on hand to talk with and answer questions but that they also valued the event as a way to keep the local Democratic party active.

Mary Garren, chairwoman of the Booker Creek precinct said, "It was really an event for the precincts."

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# Protesters urge care for rats

## UNC under investigation by NIH

BY STEPHANIE NOVAK  
STAFF WRITER

As many students headed to the bars for their own alcohol experiments during Saturday's football game against N.C. State University, protesters outside the Franklin Street post office spoke out against the University's use of rodents in alcohol studies.

Armed with images of rats post-laboratory use, Stop Animal Exploitation Now! protested against researchers who use rats to conduct alcohol studies.

The protesters talked to passers-by and asked them to sign a petition that will later be sent to Chancellor James Moeser. They had collected 145 signatures by Saturday night.

The protest specifically targeted UNC's Bowles Center for Alcohol Studies, which receives federal funding from the National Institute

on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

Missy Cooper, one of the activists for SAEN, questioned the usefulness of the alcohol experiments undertaken by the center, especially considering they are funded by taxpayers' dollars.

"There's millions of dollars ... wasted on this research, and we feel there are better things we can do," Cooper said.

Protesters also said they wanted to raise awareness that UNC has been investigated for animal abuse that was caught on tape.

The protesters suggested a number of alternative methods of conducting alcohol studies that do not require testing on rats, such as MRI and PET scans.

"We'd like a win-win situation for everyone," Cooper said.

SAEN members said they want to have an open debate with

researchers at the center to discuss such alternatives.

Cooper also said studies done on rats do not always match exactly what happens in humans, citing Merck & Co. Inc.'s use of animal studies with their drug, Vioxx.

Vioxx was taken off the market after studies showed it doubled the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Andi Morgan, assistant student record manager in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, brought two rats from Raleigh Rodent Rescue to dispute rat stereotypes.

With colorful personalities like dogs and cats, rats can be domesticated, protesters said.

Pictures the group displayed came from two undercover investigations at the University that were led by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. The months-long investigations occurred at separate times between October 2001 and November 2003.

After the first investigation, Kate Turlington, then an undercover investigator for PETA, reported to the National Institute of Health that University lab researchers were mistreating their animals.

Backed by video proof, she said researchers often were denying rats and mice basic veterinary care. When animals were found to be in critical condition, researchers did not euthanize them.

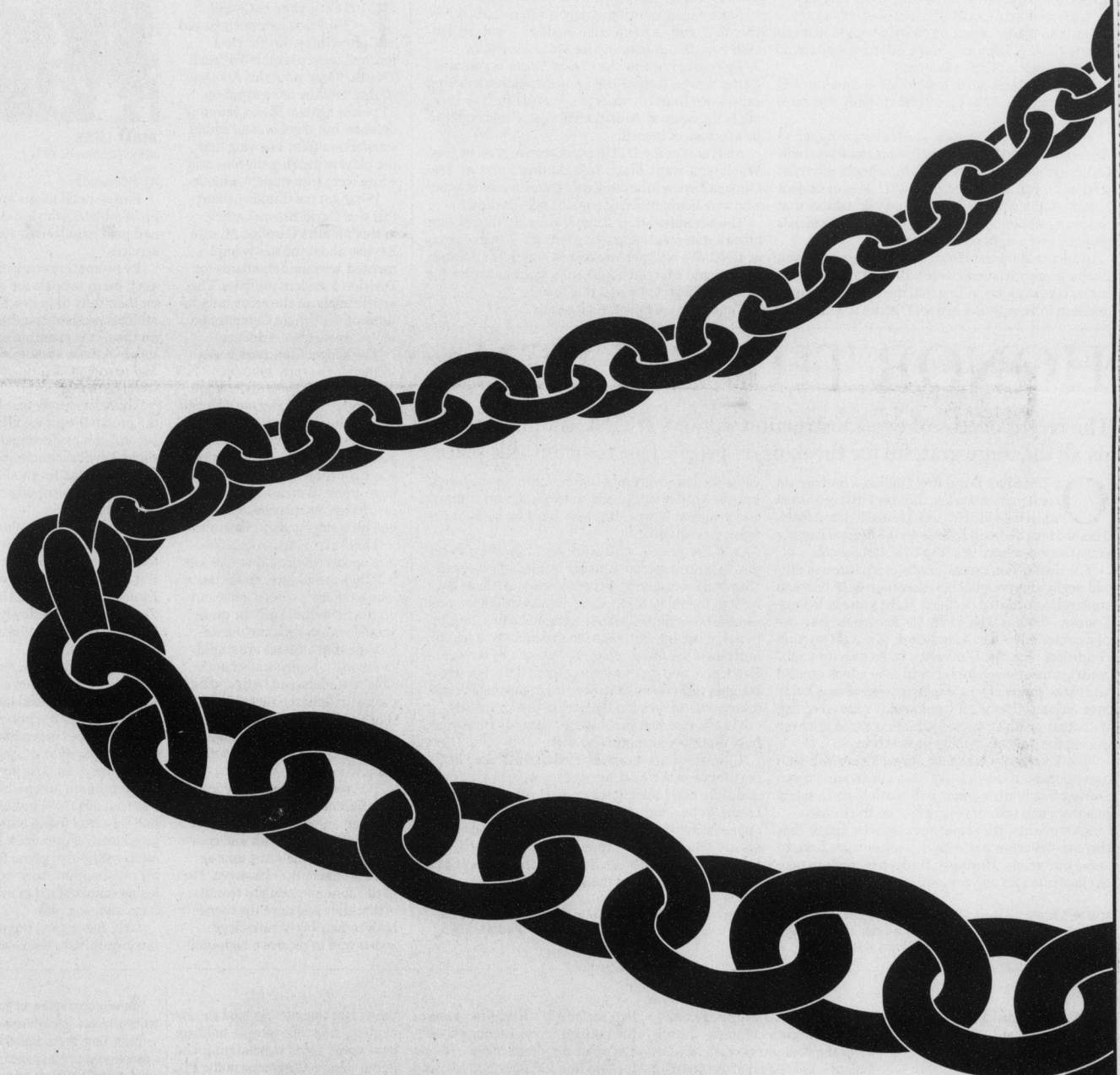
After the reports, NIH led its own investigation of UNC, making similar discoveries to PETA's, protesters said.

A year later another undercover investigator came in and discovered the same practices.

"It leaves me with very little faith that UNC is capable of doing the right thing," Turlington said.

The University was still under examination by NIH as of July.

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