

UNIVERSITY BRIEFS

Trustee adds to \$1 million gift to creative writing grant

UNC Board of Trustees member Sallie Shuping-Russell presented the creative writing department a donation that, combined with a grant from the N.C. Distinguished Professors Endowment Trust, will total \$1 million.

Beginning in the fall semester of 2009, the gift will allow students to work and study alongside active writers in a program called "Living Writers."

This is the first gift received under new Chancellor Holden Thorp. The "Living Writers" course will be the only semester-length class offered on campus that is solely based on visiting writers.

UNC School of Public Health receives toxicology grant

The UNC School of Public Health received a \$3.4 million grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help with the creation of the Carolina Center for Computational Toxicology.

The center will develop new methods by which scientists can predict the effect of drugs and chemicals released into the environment on people who might be susceptible to such climate disruptions.

PlayMakers to participate in Shakespeare program

PlayMakers Repertory Company, the professional theater company at UNC, has been chosen as one of 40 theater companies to participate in "Shakespeare for a New Generation," the largest Shakespearean tour in American history.

Chosen by the National Endowment for the Arts, their production will be directed by producing artistic director Joseph Haj.

The companies will perform live Shakespeare for middle and high school students at the Paul Green Theatre in UNC's Center for Dramatic Art on Sept. 24 to Oct. 12.

STATE BRIEFS

Durham Couple accused of practicing violent satanism

A Durham couple active in the county's Democratic Party has been accused of involvement in satanic practices, which included starving people, tying them to beds and trapping them in cages.

Joseph Scott Craig was charged with second-degree kidnapping, rape and assault with a deadly weapon. His wife, Joy Johnson, former third vice chairwoman of the Durham County Democratic Party, was charged with aiding and abetting.

The couple appeared in court June 30 after spending the weekend in county jail. Johnson's bail is currently held at \$270,000, while Craig's is held at \$500,000.

Mary Easley & Co. spend \$109,000 on trips to Europe

During the past 14 months, Mary Easley, North Carolina's first lady, visited France, Russia and Estonia "to visit major museums for sister city cultural arts exchanges," according to the expense report filed with the state.

Easley, along with an entourage which included her executive assistant and a state trooper for security, flew to Russia in business-class seats that cost a total of \$34,388.

In St. Petersburg, the group was chauffeured in a Mercedes-Benz that cost more than \$27,000 and stayed in an \$800-a-night hotel. In total, the trips cost taxpayers \$109,000.

The trips were intended to build relationships with museum officials, which could lead to a loan of their exhibits similar to the Monet exhibit in late 2006 and early 2007 that came to the N.C. Museum of Art. The trips have produced no tangible results thus far.

SPORTS BRIEFS

UNC athletes nominated for ESPN's national awards

Two athletes from North Carolina have been nominated for ESPY awards, the end-of-year honors doled out by ESPN.

Tyler Hansbrough and Rachel Dawson have been nominated for best male and female college athlete, respectively. Hansbrough was a consensus all-American and the NCAA men's basketball Player of the Year.

Dawson led the UNC field hockey team to an undefeated season and a national championship.

The award show will be televised July 20 on ESPN. The winners will be determined by online votes at www.espy.com between July 1 and July 12.

-From staff and wire reports

Amber Alley to get face-lift

Stairways and lighting to be improved

BY ANDREW CUMMINGS
STAFF WRITER

One of Chapel Hill's most famous alleyways will be renovated soon with the hope of making it safer and more prepared to handle its large amounts of foot traffic.

Amber Alley, which runs between Bandido's Mexican Cafe and the building that used to hold the famous Rathskeller restaurant, is a popular cut-through for pedestrians going to Franklin Street from Wallace parking deck.

"The alley is considered a major gateway to Franklin Street," said George Draper, owner of the building that houses Bandido's and the popular club Players.

Draper said talks to improve the alley have been going on for years but really took steam near the beginning of 2008.

But one of the main problems was finding the funding to support

the renovation project, he said. The alley is privately owned, with Draper owning half and the owner of the building that houses the Rathskeller owning the other half.

"Most people don't even think of it as private property," he said. "Police even use it. People mainly use it as a cut-through."

Draper said that the original plan was to give the property to the town but that the town's attorney decided the town didn't need the liability. Instead, Draper proposed that the town help pay for the renovations but not take control of the property.

On June 25, the Chapel Hill Town Council passed a resolution setting aside \$60,000 for the renovations from the town's Streetscape Bond Funds. Draper said alley owners also will put up around \$43,000.

Town Council member Sally Greene said that the project is an important one, and that she hopes it

will encourage cooperation between the public and private sectors.

"I think it's an excellent use of the Streetscape Bond Fund," she said. "This is a good example of the kind of public-private cooperation that the town wants to continue to see."

Draper said the development plans are in progress right now.

"We are trying to get it all done before fall session starts," he said. "Now is the best time."

Though the walkway, which gets slick when wet, sometimes can be tricky, the back stairs closest to the parking deck are an area of real concern, Draper said.

"The back stairs are worn down and can be dangerous," he said.

"There is about a 30 degree slope after the last stair. So they'll probably excavate and add about three steps to the bottom."

Draper said the owners of the alley also will replace the awnings and improve the lighting in the alley.

SEE AMBER ALLEY, PAGE 9



Though Amber Alley is a convenient cut-through between Rosemary and Franklin streets, many users find its dark atmosphere disconcerting.

Student officials see job benefits

Stipends, perks differ by position

BY SARAH E.F. SMITH
STAFF WRITER

While some student leaders receive monetary stipends or other perks for their work, others who put in the same long hours do not receive any compensation.

Some executive branch offices of student government such as student body president, vice president, secretary and treasurer receive varying annual stipends, which are financed by student funds.

"Generally, stipends and other forms of compensation help to make student leadership opportunities possible because of financial needs," said Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Christopher Payne.

Originally, the idea behind stipends grew out of a desire to include those student government leaders who might have otherwise had financial difficulty, Student Body President J.J. Raynor said.

"On top of school work, there are added responsibilities and a lack of privacy," Raynor said. "It's a full-time job — all hours of the day — with meetings at night and during class. It's a lot of fun, but it's something that would impair ability to hold another job."

At \$3,600 per year for the student body president and \$2,400 per year for the vice president, UNC gives some of the lowest stipends for student government leaders in the UNC system. N.C. State University, Western Carolina University and UNC-Greensboro offer higher stipends to executive branch leaders.

Even so, many student government leaders find the stipends helpful in offsetting costs of gas and the professional wardrobe required for the job, Student Body Vice President Todd Dalrymple said.

"This job prevents you from working part time," Dalrymple said. "And if you have to be around in the summer like me, it prevents you from taking that internship in the city. So it really does help."

In addition to or in place of stipends, some student leaders receive non-monetary compensation for their work. The student body president receives a parking pass for any spot on campus and basketball season tickets from the UNC Board of Trustees.

Andrew Coonin, Carolina Athletic Association president, does not receive a monetary stipend, but receives basketball tickets to every game, he said.

Still, other student leaders, many who also do not have time for a part-time job because of their on-campus duties, do not receive compensation of any kind for their work, such as the president of the Campus Y or the senior class officers.

In the past, proposals made within the executive branch to provide stipends for a wider range of positions were rejected, Raynor said.

"I personally think it would be a good idea to have involvement stipends for other student leaders, especially those who have made a significant commitment to student life," Raynor said.

SEE STIPENDS, PAGE 9



Local youth rehearse a key scene in the play "The Music Man," which they will be performing later this summer. This is the second year in a row that PlayMakers joined the ArtsCenter of Carrboro in providing local youth with the five-week theater training program.

FROM RIVER CITY TO UNC

PlayMakers sees kids shine in "The Music Man"

BY BENNETT CAMPBELL
SENIOR WRITER

Tom Quaintance is directing a play. Never mind the fact that some members of his cast are as young as 9 years old or that they have about a month to prepare.

For Quaintance, one of the directors at Chapel Hill's esteemed PlayMakers Repertory Company, things aren't much different than usual.

"I don't really deal with kids much differently than I deal with adults," said Quaintance, director of "The Music Man."

"We had a sing-through yesterday that was amazingly successful considering we just started rehearsing last week, and it was a lot of fun. I think we're exactly where we want to be right now."

"The Music Man" is the production put on as part of the Summer Youth Conservatory — a dual effort, now in its second summer, between PlayMakers and Carrboro's ArtsCenter that gives 40 area students a chance to get involved in a production.

The actors, ranging in age from 9 to 18, have taken notice of the air of professionalism.

"Everyone here is very professional," said Alex Daly, a recent graduate of Durham Academy who plays the lead role of professor Harold Hill.

"Tom's very intense, but he's a really smart guy. There are some cool staging things and a lot of dancing. Everything is very intense. My particular role is very intensive, but there's so much help available," he said.

Daly's character is a scam artist who enters a town attempting to convince its residents that he can lead a band, and he tries to sell them uniforms and instruments.

It's a striking contrast to the role of this summer's conservatory itself.

Jeffrey Meanza, PlayMakers' director of education and outreach, said the conservatory is a long-overdue collaboration with the ArtsCenter that has resulted in a challenging but enjoyable experience for the young actors — certainly no scam.

"There are very high expectations for the students in what we're encouraging them to develop as artists," Meanza said. "The experience itself is a testament to how successful it is — we have a very high return rate from

last summer." Daly also said working in UNC's Center for Dramatic Art has been a positive experience.

"The space is fantastic. We're working in a professional theater with a professional set and costumes and lighting and everything," he said. "The resources for dramaturgy and research are great, and you just have tons of creative brains to pick."

Nora Burgard, a rising sophomore at Chapel Hill High School who plays the female lead, Marian Paroo, agreed.

"The bar is so high, and since the adults are so demanding — in a good way — everyone is really focused," she said. "It's really nice to have a whole cast that can sort of just dive in and be easy to work with."

Until the opening show July 24 at Paul Green Theatre, the students will continue to block the scenes, memorize their lines and develop their characters.

But the results of the conservatory, Meanza said, will stretch much longer than that.

"Character development isn't just in the artistic sense," he said. "It's really about developing your own character."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

Rail system talks renewed

Increased sales tax may be revenue

BY DEVIN ROONEY
STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

The Special Transit Advisory Commission's proposal for light rail in the Triangle might be getting a boost if a bill in the N.C. House of Representatives, sponsored by N.C. Rep. Becky Carney, D-Mecklenburg, gets passed.

The bill went to a vote before the House in June but was passed back into committee.

The bill would allow counties to hold referendums to impose a half-cent sales tax that would help fund and earn matching funds for new mass transportation systems. It's modeled after the same system Charlotte used to get its light rail and bus system, which began operation in 2007.

The funding could be used to support the \$2 billion transportation development plan, which includes light rail, proposed earlier this spring by the Special Transit Advisory Commission.

It would increase bus services and build light rail and diesel motor lines to expand public transportation options in Orange, Durham, Wake, Franklin, Johnston and Chatham counties.

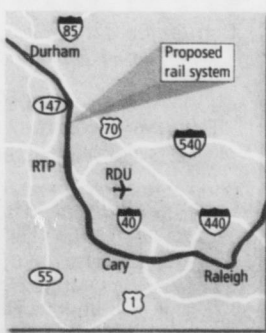
But plans are still in the works, said Kenneth Withrow, senior transportation planner for Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

"There has not been any closure on that at all," Withrow said.

CAMPO was part of the Special Transit Advisory Commission, although Withrow was not part of the commission himself.

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization also was involved in the process of designing the potential light rail system for the Triangle and deciding how to integrate the system into the area.

The commission met from May 2007 to April 2008 and presented its final report to the planning



SOURCE: GOOGLE MAPS
DTH/MAGGIE HUTAFF

organizations at a joint meeting May 21.

The central part of the plan is to build 56 miles of light rail by 2020, including a line from Chapel Hill to Durham. A heavier rail system would connect Durham, Cary, Raleigh and the airport.

Weekday ridership on a light-

SEE LIGHT RAIL, PAGE 9

Consultants say campus will add jobs to town

BY BRIAN AUSTIN
UNIVERSITY EDITOR

Consultants hired by the University have estimated that research campus Carolina North would result in the creation of more than 8,600 jobs, but town officials remain wary of the project's potential effects on local communities.

Consultants Howard Kohn of The Chesapeake Group and Carson Bise of TischlerBise presented a fiscal impact analysis of the first 15 years of development on Carolina North to the Chapel Hill Town Council, the Orange County Board of Commissioners and the Carrboro Board of Aldermen on June 26.

The analyses showed direct and indirect consequences of the project, further broken down between two scenarios that would both develop 2.5 million square feet of the site.

Direct impacts come immediately from the site itself, such as taxes and increased services. Indirect benefits create "economic spin-

"It's one of the most incredibly fruitful economic development projects I've ever seen."

JESSE WHITE, DIRECTOR OF UNC OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

off" in local communities, including more jobs and higher incomes that result from the project, but are not directly related to it.

More than 5,000 new jobs are expected to be indirect benefits.

Projecting deficits

Since most property at Carolina North will be exempt from tax rolls because it will be owned by the University, there will be little direct benefit to the town. In fact,

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