

The Daily Tar Heel

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Pit attacker gets up to 33 years

Taheri-Azar's Jeep struck nine people

BY KRISTEN CRESANTE
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

HILLSBOROUGH — The UNC graduate who attempted to kill people when he drove a rented sport utility vehicle through the Pit will face 26 to 33 years in prison.

Mohammed Taheri-Azar struck nine people in the March 2006 incident. The victims who testified at the sentencing hearing Tuesday said the emotional impact has lasted longer than the physical injuries.

Taheri-Azar chose not to comment, call witnesses on his behalf or introduce evidence. When given

an opportunity to speak, he said repeatedly, "The defense rests, your honor."

His younger sister, Lida Taheri-Azar, spoke on his behalf.

ON CAMPUS

Students reflect on the Pit attack of March 3, 2006.

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"We know he was very wrong, and we are grateful that nobody was seriously injured.

"My parents need their little boy, and I need him, too."

Senior Resident Superior Court Judge Carl Fox sentenced Taheri-Azar after he pleaded guilty Aug. 12 to nine counts of attempted

first-degree murder.

Tuesday, two of the victims appeared in court to testify, one sent a representative, and others had written statements read.

"There's an involuntary clench in my back every time I see a car go by," said Susan Burgin, who was a sophomore at the time.

Burgin was walking past Davis Library on her way to class when she saw the Jeep drive onto the sidewalk, she said. She was struck by the right-front part of the vehicle.

Karen Harman, a part-time student at the time of the incident, was walking in front of Lenoir Dining Hall when she saw the Jeep coming toward her, she told the court

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DTH/DANIEL VAN NIEKERK
Mohammed Taheri-Azar appears in court with his lawyer on Tuesday to receive his sentencing in the presence of his family and victims.



arts | page 3

FITTING THE PART

Directors casting for three Lab! Theatre shows say the process is difficult because so many talented actors audition.

university | page 5

GENERAL EDUCATION

Students can fulfill general education requirements with classes 'clustered' around a certain theme beginning this semester.



join the DTH

INTEREST MEETING

Talk with editors at 5:30 p.m. in Union 3209 and pick up an application. Visit dailytarheel.com/recruitment for more information.

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HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Private business and public universities will work together at the N.C. Research Campus. Last week, UNC's Nutrition Research Institute opened.

online | dailytarheel.com

STUDENT CONGRESS

The finance committee starts the year and approves funds.

ELECTION 2008 BLOG

UNC-Greensboro student serves as delegate at DNC.

EDITOR'S NOTES BLOG

College newspapers seeing shrinking newsrooms.

this day in history

AUGUST 27, 1981

James Larkin Pearson, N.C.'s poet laureate since 1953, died at a Wilkes County hospital of pneumonia after several months of declining health. He was 101.

Today's weather

T-Storms
H 79, L 69

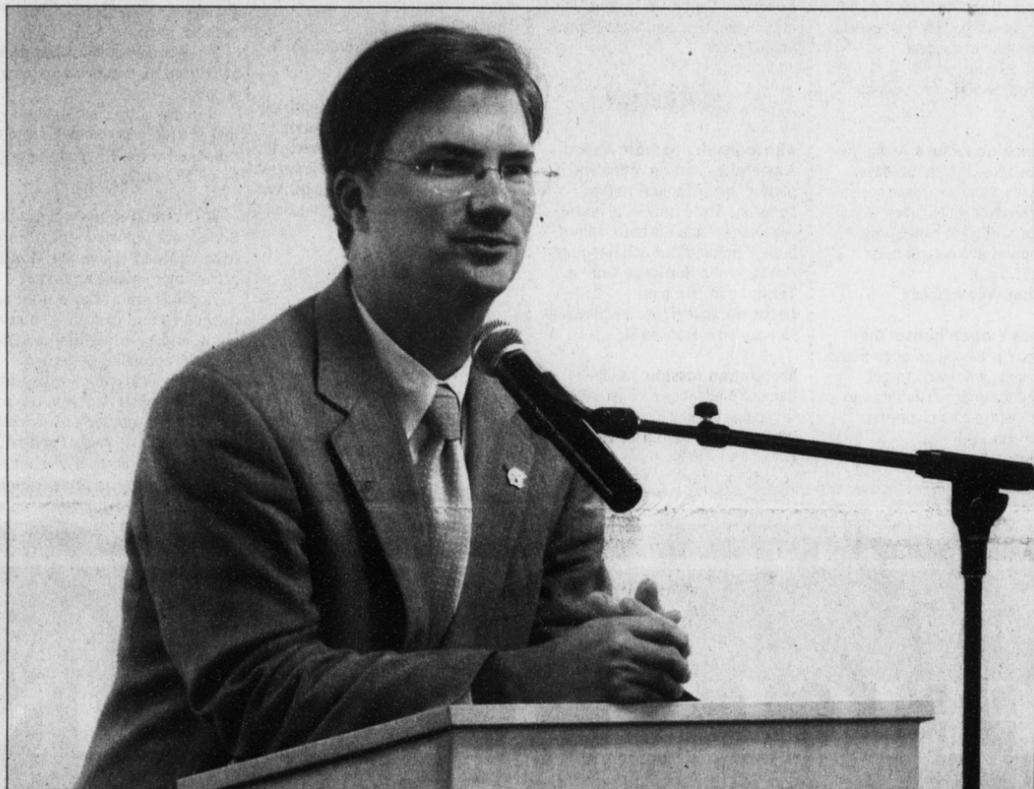
Thursday weather

T-Storms
H 82, L 68

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THORP'S HOUSE



DTH/SARAH BOWMAN

Chancellor Holden Thorp addresses questions Tuesday at his first open house, hosted by the student advisory committee. About 50 people attended the meeting in the Student Union. Thorp highlighted academics, research at Carolina and campus safety issues.

BY KESHA HUDSON
STAFF WRITER

Chancellor Holden Thorp offered concrete promises in response to student questions Tuesday in the Student Union at the first of three open house meetings planned for this semester.

Thorp pledged to:

- Raise more money for merit scholarships and lead student recruitment efforts.

- Raise \$20 million to increase enrollment in first-year seminars.

- Double the size of the Honors Program.

- Improve employee welfare in regard to compensation and training.

Questions were answered in an agenda-style format — different than in previous years. This was done to keep the conversation positive and on topic, Student Body Vice President Todd Dalrymple said.

On academics

When asked how he would maintain the quality of the student body amid growing enrollment, Thorp said he would raise money for merit scholarships and do a better job of recruiting prospective students.

"We're going to have to take a much more active role in persuading folks to come to Carolina," Thorp said. "And I'm going to have to lead that effort."

Thorp said he wouldn't stop at improving study abroad programs, encouraging undergraduate research and reducing class sizes.

"We've been saying those same things for a long time and we need to come up with some other ideas," he said.

Thorp said he would need \$20 million to raise first-year seminar enrollment from 60 percent to about 90 percent of the class.

On employee issues

While Thorp said some employee issues can't be fixed, he said he'll keep an eye on three specific ones: compensation, transportation and management training.

He said that UNC probably will raise the minimum pay rate this year and craft policies to ensure adequate training for management positions.

"There are a lot of folks that have become managers who don't have any training in how to be a manager," he said.

On safety

Thorp said he would look into lighting Coker Arboretum, a plan that has been con-

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Main St. face-lift details heard

Five-story renovation plans in works

BY KATY DOLL
SENIOR WRITER

Main Street in Carrboro is closer to a new look.

The property at 300 E. Main St., which includes Cat's Cradle and the ArtsCenter, is expected to be completely renovated and overhauled, with five-story residential and commercial buildings.

The first phase of the project was approved in 2007, but developers sought approval of updated plans from Carrboro's Board of Aldermen on Tuesday.

The aldermen extended the public hearing to Sept. 16 so a lighting and wastewater study can be reviewed.

The ArtsCenter and Cat's Cradle most likely will remain in the same spot, and are expected to remain open while construction begins.

"We know there's the space for everything those venues desire but we don't know exact configurations

at this point," said Jim Spencer, the Main Street project's architect.

There are stipulations to protect the ArtsCenter's current space to ensure its continued service to the town, according to the agenda.

There has been mention of moving a Carrboro library to the ArtsCenter's space, but it's too premature to tell if this will become a reality, said Jon Wilner, executive director of the ArtsCenter.

"It does really speak to the reality that the ArtsCenter does have some options," Wilner said.

"Regardless of how things have gotten rearranged on the site over the years, what has been consistent is the architectural design, which will fit perfectly with Carrboro."

Laura Van Sant, partner and spokeswoman for Main Street Properties of Chapel Hill LLC, the owners of the property, said they will attempt to ensure no disrupt-

"We live here. We designed it with Carrboro in mind."

LAURA VAN SANT, PARTNER AND SPOKESWOMAN FOR MAIN STREET PROPERTIES LLC

tion of businesses by completing a new building before tearing down the existing location.

Parking was of concern to the aldermen Tuesday, as the development is expected to need 1,195 spaces, while the proposal only creates 843.

But Van Sant said this will not be a major problem, citing the different times people use the parking lot. The Cradle's business is generally at night, while offices generally only need parking during the day, she noted.

SEE MAIN STREET, PAGE 4

SBP races launch early

Elections board unclear on rules

BY KEVIN KILEY
ASSISTANT UNIVERSITY EDITOR

At least two potential student body president candidates have begun holding large meetings with students.

Though planning at this point in the year is common in student elections, the size and publicity of these meetings blurs the distinction between private and public campaigning.

Juniors Ashley Klein and Matt Wohlford held campaign interest meetings this week and said they are interested in pursuing the office.

Last weekend, Wohlford sent an e-mail to more than 50 students to solicit help. He had an interest meeting Tuesday night and has another scheduled for today.

Klein said she had a big turnout at a campaign staff meeting Monday, packing the Faculty Lounge of the Campus Y. She said she contacted students individually to invite them to the meeting.

"Candidates in the past have shown that we can have large meetings like this if we've contacted campaign workers on a one-to-one basis," Klein said.

The Board of Elections, which oversees student races, hasn't taken action against any candidate for holding similar meetings in at least the last three years.

The Student Code states that students may not publicly campaign until they declare candidacy at a mandatory meeting 28

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Ongoing UNC study links MSG to obesity

Additive may have long-term effects

BY ANITA RAO
STAFF WRITER

The effects of using the flavor enhancer monosodium glutamate, commonly known as MSG, are unclear and controversial.

And a recent study from UNC's School of Public Health that has linked MSG to obesity is the first product of an ongoing research project that will investigate long-term effects.

The consumer confusion can be attributed to the different names and forms of MSG, said Dr. Ka He, co-researcher and assistant professor of nutrition and epidemiology at the school.

"MSG is an additive to an additive, and even within an additive they could refer to MSG by a dif-

ferent name," he said.

While MSG can be used as an independent food additive, it is also a part of other sauces and seasonings.

"MSG is most commonly associated with Asian-style cuisine," he said. "But MSG is also common in Western countries."

Though the chemical has reached notoriety for being found in Chinese food, it also is found in canned vegetables, soups and processed meats in most any grocery store.

A 1995 report from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology found no evidence of long-term health effects related to MSG. But the short-term effects can include headaches, nausea and numbness.

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