

# Sen. Sam: telling stories and pushing credit cards

By MERTON VANCE  
Staff Writer

Television viewers may have seen a recent commercial that shows retired Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. promoting American Express credit cards. He is seated in an airplane telling about how he is still remembered as a famous senator at the Watergate hearings but now that he is just a country lawyer from North Carolina and has time to travel, he got himself an American Express credit card. "Don't leave home without it," he tells viewers.

Ervin said American Express called him shortly after Christmas and asked him to do the commercial. Apparently, he said, they already had someone else lined up to do the commercial but the arrangements did not work out, so the firm called Ervin to pinch hit.

"They flew me out to Hollywood to film it. They said it was the same movie set where they filmed *Gone with the Wind*. They had a set there that looked like the inside of an airplane and that's where they filmed the commercial. For an old filibusterer like me to cut his speech down to 10 or 20 seconds was quite a task," Ervin said.

Ervin was in Chapel Hill Thursday to be inducted into the Order of the Old Well, a campus honorary society. At a reception following the tapping ceremony someone asked Ervin if he used the credit card when he checked into the Carolina Inn. "No, but I never leave home without it," he chuckled.

Ervin is now 81 but his blue eyes are still alert and he still wiggles the bushy eyebrows that twitched their way into national news and political cartoons while Ervin presided over the Senate Watergate hearings in the waning days of his Senate career. He now spends much of his



Former U.S. senator Sam Ervin came to Chapel Hill Thursday with his bag of stories... and his credit card. Staff photos by Joseph Thomas.

time traveling around and talking—mostly telling the folksy, funny stories for which he is noted.

At the initiation ceremony held at the Old Well, Ervin recalled a time when he was in American History class, which met in a second floor classroom in Old West.

The instructor, he said "was the most serious-minded man I've ever seen. He would have made a wonderful undertaker's assistant. I didn't think he had any sense of humor. One Halloween night, some boys got a hold of a cow and got it up the steps to the second story. All of us had heard about the presence of the cow, so all of us were on

time that next morning for the 8:30 class. This professor we thought had no sense of humor walked in, took one look at the cow, another look at us and said 'young gentlemen, I am deeply gratified to note that the intellectual strength of my audience has increased over previous lectures.'"

Ervin repeated the same story Thursday night at a ceremony held by the Dielectric and Philanthropic Literary Societies, in which a bust of him was unveiled.

While he was an undergraduate at UNC (he graduated in 1917) Ervin was a member of the Di-Phi and remembers being elected Keeper of

the Archives for the group.

"That officer made a report every three months to report. He was asked if the archives were in good condition."

When he was elected to the post, Ervin went to his predecessor and asked, "Where are the archives?"

"He said, I don't have the remotest idea. I asked that same question to my predecessor and he said the same thing. So I don't know if those archives have ever been found or not."

His freshman year at Carolina, Ervin ran for editor of the *Daily Tar Heel*, along with seven other candidates. "I was too modest to vote for

myself then, so I voted for Jimmy Hoover of High Point," Ervin said.

Hoover won the election, beating Ervin by one vote.

Ervin studied law at UNC and Harvard, graduating in 1922 and starting his law practice in Morganton.

Ervin recalled some of his early days as a lawyer, when he spent much of his time defending moonshiners who had stills in the hill country around Morganton in Burke County.

"One of my favorite stories is about a man named Joshua Hawkins, who was charged with moonshining and was waiting for his case to be heard in court. The western district judge at that time was James Boyd of Greensboro, and Judge Boyd liked to kid everybody in his courtroom.

"When he called the case and Hawkins stepped up to the bench Judge Boyd said 'I see, Mr. Hawkins, that your first name is Joshua. Are you the same Joshua the Bible tells us about who made the sun stand still at Jericho?' And Hawkins said, 'No sir, I am not the Joshua the Bible tells about who made the sun stand still at Jericho. I am the Joshua who is charged with making the moonshine still in Burke.'"

Ervin, of course, went on to the North Carolina General Assembly and eventually to the U.S. Senate, where he participated in the Senate hearings which toppled two political scandals—the Joseph McCarthy army hearings and the Watergate hearings.

Having become something of a folk hero and a widely recognized expert on constitutional law, Ervin has returned to his law office in Morganton and is still handling cases. He currently has two pending in court.

## NOW leader urges stridency

DETROIT (UPI)—The new president of the National Organization for Women called Sunday for adoption of a "multiplicity of means and tactics" as the feminists mapped out their strategy for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

"We are determined to gain constitutional equality for women," Eleanor Smeal of Pittsburgh told nearly 2,000 cheering delegates at NOW's national conference in Detroit.

"I urge that we adopt no one single tactic, that we adopt a multiplicity of means and

tactics and we commit ourselves to a plan which includes economic sanctions, high visibility and militancy," she said.

Smeal's acceptance speech was delivered as delegates gathered for the last session in a three-day convention to consider resolutions and adopt a strategy to get ERA ratified before the March 1979 deadline.

Thirty-five states have ratified the amendment. Three more—for a total of 38—are needed in the next two years for it to be added to the U.S. Constitution.

Smeal said that as the 55,000-member

organization enters its second decade, it should work toward closing the economic gap between women and men and fight for a comprehensive national reproductive health care program.

"It is time for the National Organization for Women to finally recognize that we are made up in a large part of homemakers and that our goal is to create economic security and independence for all homemakers," she said.

Smeal, mother of two children who halted work on a doctorate because she decided "NOW was more important than a PhD," defeated Shelley Fernandez of San Francisco for the presidency by a vote of 526-66.

She said her margin of victory "symbolizes that the National Organization for Women is entering the second decade strong and unified behind its goals, especially the final drive for the ratification of the ERA."

Martha Buck of Morrow, Ohio, was elected administrative vice president while Arlie Scott of Cambridge, Mass., was elected to the new post of "action" vice president.



## Now that you're leaving Carolina, don't leave Carolina behind . . .

There are easier ways of taking Carolina with you. Join the UNC General Alumni Association.

Keep up with what's happening on campus and with your classmates through the *Alumni Review* magazine and the *University Report* newspaper. You'll receive special invitations to alumni association parties and events—on campus or wherever you live.

Class of 1977 graduates may join at a special half-price rate—\$6 a person or \$7 for a Carolina Couple. Graduating seniors also receive a free Carolina key ring. If you lose your keys on this key ring, they can be returned to us and we'll mail them back to you free of charge.

You don't have to leave Carolina behind. Stop by the Alumni House (next to the Carolina Inn) or call 933-1208. We'll be happy to tell you more.

Schedule of dues: \$12 a year (\$14 for a Carolina Couple); \$6 a year for members of the Class of '77 (\$7 for a Carolina Couple).  
Make checks payable to "UNC General Alumni Association" and send to Alumni Office, Box 660, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class/Degree \_\_\_\_\_  
Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
City and State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**TRIANGLE OFFICE EQUIPMENT AND COPY CENTER**

FEATURING—  
OLYMPIA PORTABLE TYPEWRITERS  
WE SERVICE ALL MAKES

COPIES STILL \$9.00 PER 1000

KROGER PLAZA 929-4203

**CAMPING?**  
Why not do the unexpected.

Surprise people

Bring MICHELOB.

BY ANHEUSER-BUSCH, INC., ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI • SINCE 1896  
Distributed locally by Harris.

**Tar Heel Classifieds**  
Cost Only \$1.50

Bass makes great summer sandals. From our Bass collection...the thong 15.00; the toe-hold 15.00; the double buckle 15.00.

**ROSCOE GRIFFIN SHOES**  
University Mall

PLEASE, MA'AM... NO HARD QUESTIONS THIS MORNING

THE SUN IS SHINING... IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY... LET'S NOT SPOIL IT.

WHO WAS MOSES MENDELSSOHN?!

YOU SPOILED IT!

DOONESBURY

I THINK IT'S YOUR EDITOR AT "PEOPLE" RICK...

YEAH, BRENDA, WHAT IS IT?

RICK! WHO WAS THAT SILKEN-VOICED WOMAN WHO ANSWERED?

NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS, BRENDA.

NONE OF MY BUSINESS? MY RICK, HOW DARKLY SECRETIVE WE ARE! IT'S VERY ATTRACTIVE, YOU KNOW!

BRENDA, I THOUGHT I HAD TO DAY OFF...

SORRY, DARLING. WE JUST GOT A CODE THREE FARRAH FAWCETT ALERT.

CODE THREE? GOOD GOD! I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN!