

THE GAMECOCK

NO PLACE LIKE HOME



After a week of hard work, students and Habitat volunteers complete a house, which is being moved today to Graham's Alley off Gervais Street PHOTOS, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP, BY ROBERT GRUEN, ANNIE LEE AND AARON HARK.

Workers air grievances to NAACP

USC maintenance employees speak at forum about discrimination

BY DARRYL GREEN
THE GAMECOCK

In a forum with USC's NAACP chapter on Thursday, three university maintenance workers spoke about what they perceive as discrimination, including pay gaps and unequal promotion practices, by the university.

Ron Derrick, one of the workers, discussed the pay gaps he has experienced during his 23-year tenure at USC.

"Here's my biggest problem. I make \$32,000 per year, whereas my white counterpart makes \$44,000 with a limited education."

"I have to work with people who can't spell the word 'cat' or 'dog' and who do not have a high school education. I have a college education, and they don't," he said.

Twenty-six African-American maintenance workers have filed complaints in federal district court seeking relief for employ-

ment discrimination. The State Human Affairs Commission and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have found probable cause that discrimination had taken place.

Derrick said the EEOC discovered black workers at USC are normally started at a lower rate per week or per hour than are white workers.

"We were told to 'just wait and see' or 'we'll get back with you shortly.' Those things never worked out."

Derrick said he and the other workers who filed the suit haven't felt any tension from their coworkers but have experienced "a small amount of harassment from management."

He said students can help by making other students aware of the discrimination claims.

The workers claim they and other African-American maintenance workers have routinely been overlooked for promotions.

The university denies allegations the maintenance workers were ever discriminated against.

Of the 137 maintenance workers at the university, 34 are black.

◆ NAACP, SEE PAGE 3

Forum clarifies ambiguities of advisement

Students express frustration, ask faculty questions at SG event

BY ADAM BEAM
THE GAMECOCK

At a public forum to help students better understand the advisement process, second-year English major Alissa Cooper wasted no time in asking the faculty panel questions when the floor opened.

"I wish you guys would have been my advisers," she said.

Like most freshmen, Cooper came to USC in the dark about what classes she should take and how she should sign up for them. "I don't feel that I was given enough information about what I needed to do, how I needed to plan, and how I was going to get an education," she said. "I basically had to do it all myself."

It was problems like these that sparked Chrissy Stauffer, a student senator for the College of Liberal Arts, to plan three public forums for the Colleges of Science and Mathematics and Liberal Arts and Moore School of Business. She wanted to provide students with an opportunity to ask advisors questions about how the process works.

"When we hear of students concerns, we always try to think of

the best way to voice them to the administration and the powers that be," said Stauffer, who also serves as chair of the Academic Committee. "This is just one way that that could happen, that students can do something constructive with their complaints and their praises."

Tom Cafferty, a psychology professor and member of the panel in Gambrell Hall, said, "I think it's uneven."

"I think it can be very good at parts of the university and some departments; others, it could be better," he said.

As psychology department undergraduate director, Cafferty was pleased with the forum's results.

"I think ... getting feedback and input from students is an important part of the process," he said. "It's difficult sometimes to know what people need to change."

One proposal to improve the advisement process is the implementation of DARS — Degree Auditing Report System. A totally electronic system, DARS would allow students to perform a degree audit for the major of their choice and see which program best suits their interests.

According to Mel Miller, director of Research, Grants and Planning, the program, already in pilot tests with the Business School and College of Journalism, has had "very positive" reactions

◆ ADVISEMENT, SEE PAGE 2

USC set to top last year's blood donations

BY KEVIN FELLNER
THE GAMECOCK

Hundreds of USC students and Columbia residents have filled the Russell House Ballroom all week to donate blood to the American Red Cross, and organizers said Wednesday night that USC was on pace to exceed last year's blood drive's total.

American Red Cross staff member Nikki Brown said this year's turnout has exceeded expectations. "We have seen over 300 people each day," she said. "I've been doing this for four years, and this is by far the best year I've seen."

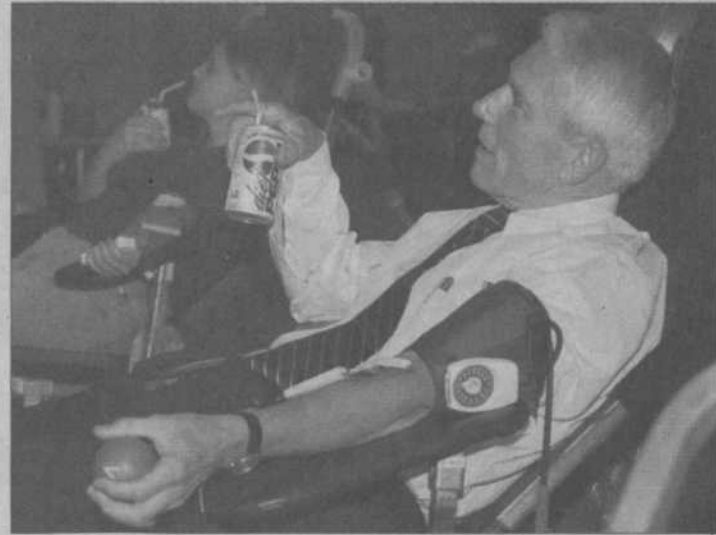
President John Palms donated on Thursday evening.

Brown said the average wait was about 30 minutes, which she said shows the students' dedication to donating. She said the cumulative amount of donated blood wouldn't be totaled until Saturday. But she speculated USC would top last year's donations.

The blood drive is an annual competition against Clemson University during the week of the Carolina-Clemson football game. The USC Fraternity and Sorority councils and Clemson's Alpha Phi Omega cosponsor the event.

Fraternity Council co-chairman Lyon Bixler of Chi Psi said this year's blood drive was promoted at USC more extensively

◆ BLOOD DRIVE, SEE PAGE 3



USC President John Palms, out to beat Clemson this year, donates blood Thursday evening. PHOTO BY ANDREW ROGERS

Taliban power shrinks as leader threatens U.S.

BY ELLEN KNICKMEYER
ASSOCIATED PRESS

BANGI, AFGHANISTAN — Northern alliance forces and Pashtun tribesmen encircled two of the Taliban's last remaining strongholds at opposite ends of the country Thursday. The Taliban's supreme leader vowed to fight to the death and to seek the "extinction of America."

Backed by U.S. warplanes, the alliance laid siege to the northern city of Kunduz, where the defenders include an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 foreigners loyal to Osama bin Laden.

In the south, the Taliban clung to tenuous control of its birthplace, Kandahar. Opposition leader Hamid Karzai said his

sources told him there was "turmoil" in the city; other sources said local Pashtun tribesmen had surrounded the city.

A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there were spurts of fighting near the city center as the Pashtun fighters advanced. Most of Kandahar province, outside of the city, is in the hands of anti-Taliban rebels, he said.

Gen. Tommy Franks, the U.S. commander of the Afghanistan campaign, said American special forces were operating near Kandahar. Inside the city, Franks said, "we do see signs of some fracturing" within the Taliban ranks.

Pashtuns are Afghanistan's largest ethnic group, and served as the back-

bone of the Taliban's harsh five-year regime.

Pakistan strengthened its border defenses closest to Kandahar with tanks and extra troops, worried that unrest — and bin Laden supporters — could spill across the frontier.

In other developments:

— Eight international aid workers arrested three months ago for preaching Christianity in Afghanistan were reported in good condition in Pakistan after being helicoptered to safety by U.S. special forces. The women in the group, including two Americans, signaled to their rescuers by burning the body-covering burqas they had been forced to wear.

— U.S. Homeland Security Director Tom Ridge confirmed

that documents that would be helpful in making a nuclear device were found in a building in Kabul, described as an al-Qaida safe house. But Ridge said the documents contained information taken off the Internet that could have been widely available to people other than terrorists.

— In Washington, the Pentagon said some senior Taliban and al-Qaida leaders were killed in airstrikes this week, but had no evidence bin Laden was among them. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld told a news conference the United States will find bin Laden even if he leaves Afghanistan.

The Taliban supreme leader,

◆ AFGHANISTAN, SEE PAGE 3

USC'S PAST

Nov. 21, 1987

The 12th-ranked Gamecocks upset the eighth-ranked Clemson Tigers in a nationally televised football game in Columbia.

WEATHER



Today
Mostly cloudy,
68/46



Tomorrow
Sunny,
73/45

INSIDE TODAY'S ISSUE

Harry Potter casts spell on theaters

Highly anticipated movie opens today. ◆ PAGE 7



USC-Clemson set to kick off Saturday

Gamecocks try to stop losing streak to Clemson. ◆ PAGE 10

ONLINE POLL

Out for blood

Do you plan on giving blood this week?
YES 51%
NO 41%
MAYBE 8%