



COURTESY OF THE BIG UNEASY  
“The Big Uneasy,” a movie directed by Harry Shearer about Hurricane Katrina, will screen at the Varsity Theatre.

# Varsity will screen new Katrina film

By Tyler Confoy  
Staff Writer

As tornadoes and floods dominate the summer headlines, one filmmaker is claiming that one of the worst natural disasters in American history was anything but natural.

On Friday, “The Big Uneasy” opens at the Varsity Theatre on Franklin Street. The film stresses that the same artificial failures that intensified the damage of Hurricane Katrina are still present in New Orleans.

Harry Shearer, the film’s director and a resident of New Orleans, is a comedian famous for his voice acting on “The Simpsons.” He stepped away from his comedy roots to show what he believes were the main sources of damage in the Katrina catastrophe, including faulty designs by the US Army Corps of Engineers, he said.

Recently, the Corps completed a levee system designed to protect the city from a once-in-a-century storm, said Rick Luetlich, director of the University’s Center for the Study of Natural Hazards and Disasters.

But even this system is inadequate, Shearer said.

“The pumps never passed their tests even when the standards

were continuously lowered to try to make them pass,” Shearer said. “They still didn’t pass. They were installed anyway.”

The film follows three individuals — two of whom investigated the causes of the 2005 flooding. The third is a whistleblower in the Corps in charge of installing the pumps in the new system.

Shearer said he had had enough of the media perpetuating the hurricane as a natural disaster, and decided to take the film on the road as a way to raise awareness with local media around the United States.

“I decided to make the film in October of 2009 when President Obama came to New Orleans and told the town hall meeting that the flooding was a natural disaster,” Shearer said.

Paul Shareshian, owner of the Varsity Theatre, said the film has received critical praise.

“I think it’s a good movie,” Shareshian said. “It looked interesting. It won some awards here and there.”

Shearer said his film serves as a warning of future design-related disasters that could occur in cities also protected by the Corps’ systems.

“The Corps was given responsibility for managing

the Mississippi River and the Missouri River,” Shearer said. “So you have a lot of people angry at the Corps up and down the river.”

Luetlich was on a review committee for the Corps’ new system in New Orleans. He said the committee felt the new system was inadequate.

“We can’t prevent the hazard, but what we hopefully can do is prevent that hazard from becoming a disaster,” Luetlich said. “That all boils down to the concept of resiliency.”

Luetlich said he thinks the movie’s message can be taken as a reminder that communities need to be better prepared to handle these types of situations.

“New Orleans is a canary in the coal mine for what may happen not only in New Orleans again, but somewhere else like Sacramento or Dallas,” Shearer said.

Contact the Arts Editor  
at [arts@dailytarheel.com](mailto:arts@dailytarheel.com).

# Master’s candidate had passion for social justice

By Christina Austin  
Staff Writer

Hana Staub, a master’s degree candidate in the School of Social Work with a background in community service, died on May 31.

Her father, Jacob Staub, said she committed suicide. She was 25.

“We do not want to hide this,” he said. “It has become an epidemic.”

Officers from the Carrboro Police Department were sent to check on her on May 29 after receiving warning, said Sgt. Chris Attack.

She was transported to UNC Hospitals after the police checked her residence, he said.

Staub began the Master’s program in the School of Social Work at the University this summer.

She graduated from Warren Wilson College in Asheville with a double major in psychology and social work in 2008, said Cathy Kramer, dean of service learning at Warren Wilson.



Hana Staub was working toward a master’s degree in the School of Social Work. She committed suicide, her father said.

She said Staub was a student leader on campus.

“She was an excellent student,” Kramer said.

“She was very conscientious and very active on campus. She was a very warm person and people felt comfortable with her.”

She was awarded the 2008 Summer Policy Fellowship by the National Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors.

The fellowship is awarded to one undergraduate student in social work from the United States to serve as a Summer Policy Fellow in Washington, D.C.

During her senior year at Warren Wilson, Staub worked

with the Homeless Initiative of Asheville and Buncombe County to help reduce and prevent homelessness.

Her projects included finding a way to include the voice of the homeless within the Homeless Initiative and advocating for policies on both the local and federal level.

Iris Carlton-LaNey, one of Staub’s professors at the University, said she noticed Staub’s passion for social issues.

“She was an advocate for social justice,” Carlton-LaNey said.

Aaron Thompson, a doctoral student in the School of Social Work and one of Staub’s instructors during summer school, said Staub was well-liked by her classmates and seemed to make friends easily.

A memorial service has been planned for Saturday at Warren Wilson.

Contact the University Editor  
at [university@dailytarheel.com](mailto:university@dailytarheel.com).

# Ph.D. student remembered for impact in classroom

By Christina Austin  
Staff Writer

Those who knew Melody van Lidth de Jeude, a doctoral candidate in UNC’s Department of Communication Studies, said she was a good person and skilled educator.

Van Lidth de Jeude died May 27 after what Philip van Lidth de Jeude, her husband, said was a brief but intense illness. She was 58.

He said his wife was a cheerful and welcoming woman.

“We always used to feel that she had ‘be positive’ blood,” he said.

Van Lidth de Jeude was an adjunct instructor at Elon University for the past four years, where she taught courses in public speaking, interpersonal communication and the communication process.

“Students really loved her and always had wonderful things to say about her,” said Don Grady, associate professor and associate dean at Elon.

In April, van Lidth de Jeude received the Martha Nell Hardy Award for Outstanding Teaching.



Melody van Lidth de Jeude was a doctoral candidate in UNC’s Department of Communication Studies.

Patricia Parker, an associate professor in the communications department and van Lidth de Jeude’s adviser, said the award meant a lot to van Lidth de Jeude.

“Melody is the kind of teacher to which students gravitate because of the warm and inviting learning environment she creates,” Parker said.

Philip van Lidth de Jeude said his wife worked to help her students get out of their comfort zones.

“She believed very strongly in helping people overcome their fears,” he said. “Polls show that one thing people fear most is pub-

lic speaking.”

Courtney McCluney, a former student of van Lidth de Jeude’s who graduated from UNC in May, said van Lidth de Jeude changed the way she looked at her field of study.

“It has given me confidence to use this knowledge to help work for social justice and otherwise help to make the world a better place,” McCluney said of the small group communication course she had with van Lidth de Jeude.

Elon’s School of Communications has planned a memorial ceremony for September.

Philip van Lidth de Jeude said he has been contacted by more than 200 of his wife’s students and colleagues.

“It is quite a demonstration of how Melody touched people,” he said.

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