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## Culture Fuels Weekend Festival

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Staff Writer

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(Photo: DTH/Laura Giovanelli) Aristotelis Michail (left) and Lordanidis Lagoudakis, members of the Duke Hellenic Societ, perform traditional Greek dances for the crowd at East Chapel Hill High School on Saturday.

alone, with the line for food stretched almost the full length of the cafeteria on Saturday. This is our best festival ever, said Helen Paliouras, festival chairwoman. The festival raised money for a new church building and other charitable endeavors, such as the Orange County Red Cross. St. Barbara's parish priest Father Andrew said the festival was so successful because of its new, larger venue the festival was formerly held in the American Legion Hall on Legion Road and the lack of competition from other events. Last year we were up against the State Fair, Andrew said. The biggest draw, however, seems to have been cultural interest. This is a way of exposing people of our community to drabs and bits of our culture, Andrews said. All of the booths featured at the festival were maintained by parishioners of St. Barbara's Greek

East Chapel Hill High School cafeteria was filled with the aroma of spices and sounds of the bazouki this weekend as visitors to the sixth annual St. Barbara's Greek Festival ate, danced and spent for a good cause. The festival, stretching from Friday afternoon to Sunday night, drew more than 4,000 people in its first two days

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were maintained by parishioners of St. Barbara's Greek Orthodox Church. Their fare included a wide variety of Greek cuisine. Festival visitors feasted on Greek delicacies such as moussaka, a Mediterranean eggplant casserole, and spanakopita, a pastry of phyllo dough, spinach and feta cheese.

The food is great, and we are looking forward to the dancing, said Beth Burns, a Chapel Hill resident. The Duke Hellenic Society Dance Troupe, composed of international students from the Balkans, performed several traditional Greek dances.

Other people join us who are not necessarily Greek, said Michail Lagoudakis, leader of the dance troupe. (There are people from) the cultural area around Greece who are attracted to this kind of dancing. The festival helped raise money for a building fund, which will provide for a new church in the next five years. The small, 50-year-old church on Watts Street in Durham does not satisfy the needs of his growing congregation, Andrew said. I think as our parish expands, we need to provide some essential services, Andrew said. If I go to church, and I can't find a parking place, I'm going to think about not going. The festival also contributes 10 percent of proceeds to the Orange County Red Cross on Ephesus Church Road. We're going to get some money, and they're allowing us to greet everybody and disseminate information, Red Cross volunteer Vidabeth Bensen said. St. Barbara's will also contribute \$500 for a scholarship to an East Chapel Hill High School graduating senior bound for classics studies at the university level. It's the community that supports us, Paliouras said. We feel that we need to give something back. The City Editor can be reached at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).



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