

Some came to buy, others just to say 'bye'

SOUND OFF

LYNN ROAD EXTENSION: As our story on page 3N notes, the City Council plans a public hearing in March on this disputed road.

QUESTION: What solution do you support to improve traffic in northwest Raleigh?

Sound off by calling 829-8930 or by sending an e-mail message to soundoff@newsobserver.com. Tell us your name, address and phone number.

North Views

North Raleigh News

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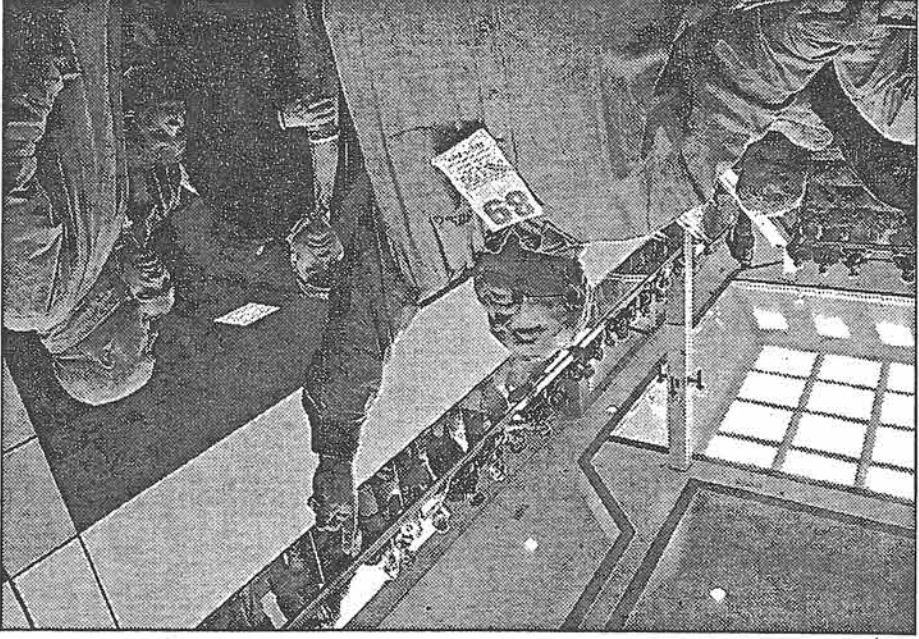
TO REACH US

Though you can't really put a price on history, you can sometimes buy a piece of it. And at the North Hills Mall auction last weekend, such pieces ranged from \$15 — for a "30-minute park-ing" sign — to \$1,000 for the snazzy glass doors that graced the front of Victoria's Secret. Nearly everything but the escalators and elevators was fair game as hundreds crowded the mall for one of its last big sales before it is demolished this spring. Certainly some folks were there for bargains, and they

weren't disappointed. Large swaths of carpet — albeit very worn — went for less than \$50. And you could pick up North Hills' giant reindeer holiday decorations for less than \$100. Other people turned out Saturday not so much for good deals but for the sheer oddity of the selection. Where else, exactly, could you bid on rows of silk poinsettias or an oak kiosk cart? Linda and Phil Stroud of Wake Forest paid \$35 for a, uh, plastic male posterior once used to display briefs in the Dillard's underwear department.

"It's a conversation piece," Linda said, adding that her husband just had to get it for her after buying a plastic female bras at the mall — for himself. "A fool and his money are soon parted," Phil joked. But beyond those who were

looking for the unusual or the underpriced, there were the rest of us. We came to the auction



Auctioneer Randy Wester calls for bids during the first North Hills Mall auction. Similar sales are planned for Feb. 1 and 8. STAFF PHOTO BY SCOTT SHARPE

Many people walking around the mall Saturday afternoon said they felt that they ought to bid on something just to have some tangible reminder of the place, which will soon disappear to make way for a \$200-million mixed-use development.

Auctioneer Randy Wester, whose company is handling the sale, said he's heard many stories about the mall's glory days recently. He's sure that helped fuel the "fantastic" response to the auction.

North Hills fans who couldn't make it out last week will get a couple more chances. A second auction will start at 10 a.m. Feb. 1, right where Saturday's event left off — at those expensive Victoria's Secret doors.

Among items up for bid, Wester noted, will be the vault from the former First Citizens Bank branch just across Lassiter

out of a sense of duty, to pay our respects to a place that was a part of life here for 40 years.

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Mill Road from the mall. And because Christmas decorations were a big hit Saturday, North Hills' owners promise to offer up some retired ornaments from their other properties. The Feb. 1 auction will end at 4 p.m., and Wester doubts everything will be gone by then. He's already making plans for a third and final auction on Feb. 8. It's a safe bet that on both dates, there will be people like Jane Burris in attendance.

She's a West Raleigh resident who came out Saturday because she has years of fond memories about North Hills Mall. While Burris looked on wistfully, "I brought my camera to document it," she said.

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