

Opinions

The Blue Banner

Editorial

Regatta who??

Yep, it's that time of year again.

The birds are chirping, chipmunks and squirrels are going crazy, and despite the cold snap this week, everybody's wearing shorts.

That could only mean one thing...UNCAMONT (sounds like somebody screaming, doesn't it?). Only three days until that make-it-or-break-it event that is hyped for weeks and invariably sucks. Everyone has heard "fond" memories of UNCAMONT's predecessor, Rockmont, and the drunken, doped, wild sex that followed a Saturday afternoon at a local camp near Black Mountain.

But, in case you haven't noticed, the affair did a complete 360 after it moved its location to our campus. Of course, I'm not saying that drinking, drugs, and wild sex are a good idea (others can do that for me), but now the event has metamorphosed into a kiddie fair with goofy games and cheap cafeteria food served outdoors (and let's not forget all that free Pepsi).

The thing that everybody seems to be complaining about is the crappy bands that have graced the campus during the past years. Has anybody ever heard of Regatta 69?

The advent of UNCAMONT seems to suddenly re-remind all of us that Underdog hasn't done much lately in the way of entertaining student entertainment. With the exception of Wendy Liebman, who I heard was a real hoot, Housing and Resident Life is kicking Underdog's butt in the "fun stuff for students" department, and all they really do is Bingo. That's pretty sad, isn't it?

But, hey, wait, we don't want to NCUR the wrath of Underdog with our words (huh, huh, just had to throw that in before the joke gets any older). It would just be nice if we could get at least half of the cool bands that schools like Mars Hill and Western get.

So, with our tongues in our cheeks, we present a list of things we are expecting Underdog to unveil for us in the way of campus entertainment.

Watch out! It's the Scottish Highland dancing exhibition (reserve your seat today!)

Olympic synchronized swimming trials
David Wilcox (again, and again, and again...)
Another two-pizza pizza party at Dante's
CHIPS-the musical

Karaoke with all your favorite RAs and night assistants
The only hope for UNCAMONT, as we can see it, would be to kick the little kids off the quad, crank up some decent music (even if it's just off the radio), and get a liquor license. Sad as it may seem, the days of Rockmont look like a lot more fun than the family fun we're stuck with. But, we'll go to UNCAMONT, pretend like we're having a great time, and wait with bated breath for the next retro-eighties break-dancing exhibition.

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The Blue Banner welcomes submissions of letters and articles for publication. All submissions are subject to editing and are considered on the basis of interest, space, taste and timeliness.

Letters must be typed, double-spaced, and must not exceed 300 words. Letters for publication must also contain the author's signature, classification, major or other relationship with UNCA.

The deadline for letters and classifieds is noon on Tuesday. If you have a submission, you can send it to:

The Blue Banner
208A Carmichael Hall
One University Heights
Asheville NC 28804

Government responsible for veteran illness

John Edwards

Columnist

Perhaps the Unabomber represents the negative extreme of the radical on the educational spectrum — a former professor going way beyond voicing his opinion — but UNCA seems to represent something on the other end of the spectrum — a wimpish kind of voice.

For instance, one group on campus asks students to wear jeans to express their alliance with this group's cause. Now there's a loud "all for one and one for all!" What more muted way to sound off?

The Associated Press recently reported that a number of American universities are boycotting Pepsi products, including Pizza Hut and Taco Bell, because PepsiCo is reaping profits from the economy of Burma, whose government is guilty of massive human rights violations. UNCA was not among those universities mentioned. George Will addressed this issue of campus apathy recently, saying professors are "politicized," meaning they are aware of what's going on in the world — they just don't discuss politically charged issues in the classroom. Thus, students' minds aren't challenged to question real world events. Perhaps there is some room for debate on this point, but I'm inclined to agree with Will. Certainly, if any issue warranted a protestive voice, it was the initiation of the Gulf War five

years ago.

What sent me along this tangent was a recent Gannett News Service report regarding the health of some 90,000 Gulf War veterans — what the story didn't mention was how the families of these vets are also affected.

Let's consider some facts: First, this was no war, but a hastily orchestrated political maneuver to win public favor for a presidential candidate. When the enemy immediately drops his weapon and throws his hands up in surrender, one can hardly call this war, and this certainly lacks any qualifying definition of heroics. Saddam Hussein's army didn't offer resistance.

Secondly, 98 percent of American casualties were caused by "friendly fire." We shot ourselves.

Thirdly, we were told at the onset that the Patriot missile was nearly 100 percent effective. This figure continued to drop after the war until it reached a miserable 50 percent, exposing the political lie factor.

The president who initiated this "war" was not reelected. Saddam Hussein is still in power and he is in constant violation of UN safeguards established following the end of the war. And 90,000 American veterans, and their families, are suffering from a mysterious Gulf War ailment. Many children born to soldiers suffering from this ailment have birth defects. So

the effects of this "mystery ailment" are much further reaching than the 90,000 soldiers.

In the Gannett report, James A. Tuitt III, a former Senate investigator, suggests that this mysterious ailment was caused by the bombing of Hussein's chemical weapons storage facilities. "Pentagon strategists expected the agents [stored] to burn readily when bombed," the report said. But according to Tuitt, one agent, Sarin, "a deadly nerve agent," didn't burn. It isn't flammable, and Tuitt believes the Sarin lingered in the atmosphere, and though it did become diluted, it fell back to earth onto American troops stationed in the desert. Proof positive that "military intelligence" is an oxymoron?

What irritates me is that the Persian Gulf War was considered by so many Americans to have been a heroic feat; that so very many voters were favorably affected by the political rubbish and hoopla. Soldiers were welcomed home with the frenzied excitement of ticker tape parades... And Vietnam War soldiers were spit on upon their return home.

My own personal belief is former president George Bush should be tried and convicted of war crimes. But then, I grew up in the military, on military bases during a time when "killed in action" was heard on virtually every newscast. For the whole of my youth, an unpopular war was raging, and I knew some of the fathers and brothers who never came home — and those who

never came back the way they were before they left. I just wonder: am I the only one who sees the stupidity of this Persian Gulf thing?

The Persian Gulf War should never have been — certainly not without loud protest from America's bastions of intelligence. And though it's too late to prevent the mysterious Persian Gulf Syndrome, it's high time to let our leaders know this country has a responsibility to the veterans of this deceitful and humiliating political charade, and their families. Ever since the government has known about this mysterious ailment, it's been something akin to listening to the pro-tabacco rhetoric — "we weren't aware," or "we aren't responsible..."

Ninety thousand people who risked their lives, and perhaps lost their health, and many suffering the heartache and guilt of watching their armless or legless child trying to adapt, deserve full governmental support, and the recognition of the obvious. This mysterious ailment didn't pre-exist Bush's Swan Song.

So I propose that all UNCA students who are against this and any human rights violations wear shoes the entire week of exams. Or if you're really radical — potential Unabombers — a black arm band will let the authorities know just who to look out for. 'Cause we can't have people supposing the worst of our government.

Stay out of my life, and I'll stay out of yours

Kristi Howard

Columnist

Anyone who reads *The Blue Banner* on a regular basis knows about the recent uproar over "Lysistrata." Apparently, some people were offended by the sexual nature of the play, and therefore felt the need to write letters to the editor criticizing the morals of the actors, directors, etc., who participated in the play's production.

This led to a back-and-forth between people speaking out in defense of the play and people who thought it sucked.

One of the latter was a "campus minister" (Do we have one of those? Is my tuition helping to pay his salary?) who expressed the view that Aristophanes had a hand in creating an "immoral" and "self-destructive" society back in the fifth century.

Yep, he was one of the great minds of classical Greece, but he was also a rip-roaring pervert. When he wrote "Lysistrata" it wasn't at all meant to be a comical comment on war and human relationships.

No, it was all part of his evil master plan to corrupt today's society. Forget being a uni-

versity with a Humanities program as the base of our educational experience—we should throw all that immoral crap out. We ought to get rid of that dirty old man Will Shakespeare while we're at it! Just limit our reading material to White Dove romances and Rev. Billy Graham's latest bestseller. Sure. It could happen.

Personally, I have nothing against giant day-glo penises. I thought the play was hilarious, and that the actors handled the subject matter like the adults and artists that they are. But the true issue here, at least as I see it, has nothing to do with the play itself. It goes deeper than that. It is a matter of the sense of taboo that seems to surround anything sexual these days.

Case in point, the "Hands off" policy. I'm not going to get into the pros and cons of the policy here, because both sides of the debate have valid points, and I don't have the space to go off on that tangent. What I will discuss is the quote that I particularly liked from the Banner article, about how sexual relations between un-

married people (presumably, even consenting adults) is illegal in the state of North Carolina. I keep waiting, now, for the SWAT team to descend upon campus and haul off half the population in handcuffs.

There have always been people who proclaim loudly to anyone listening that sex is a bad, evil, filthy, ugly thing that you should only do with the one you love. I don't expect that to change any in the near future. However, what we humans need to remember is the fact that we, as sentient beings, have the right to make our own choices about what is right for us. What two adults do in the privacy of their own home (parked car, motel room, etc.), whether it involves heterosexuality, homosexuality, rope trapezes, or collie dogs, does not concern me. I have the choice not to involve myself in their lives.

We should all exercise our right to choose for ourselves. If we insist on letting others—example: the Moral Majority—make decisions for us about what is right, then we are setting ourselves up for a nasty surprise. Censorship has a way of sneaking up on you. If we give people,

like, say, Bob Dole, or good old Rev. Stubbs, the power to make our decisions for us, it may already be too late to change when we realize what we've given up.

Instead of criticizing the morals of those involved in something that offends you, the morals of their mother, their siblings, their religion, and their dog, just make the conscious choice, for yourself, not to participate. If a TV show offends you, turn off the tube and read a book. If the book is offensive, return it to the library. If a CD has explicit lyrics that disagree with your personal morality, don't buy it. If the play offends your delicate sensibilities, don't go. I don't think that any professor on campus would force a student to go to an event that was offensive to him or her, anymore than they would force a vegetarian to eat a big, sloppy hamburger!

In closing, and especially directed at those who would quote the Bible to support contradictions of what I've said above, I give you my version of the Golden Rule: don't peek into my bedroom window, and I won't peek into yours.