

Opinions

The Blue Banner

Editorial

What are you waiting for?

The time of sweet summer mornings and long gentle evenings has once again faded away into September and we are reminded harshly of reality as it splashes us in our faces and shocks us into submission. Tyranny is back.

Of course, no university is a democracy and even if UNCA were, no democracy is perfect. But the injustices seem to have multiplied like rabbits over the summer and taken on a much larger space in our lives than they once did.

Frankly, we're fed up. And it's only the second week of classes. We suspect that there are lots of changes that you, the student body, would like to see as well. But it's not up to us to demand change, it's up to you.

Be like Rosa Parks and refuse to sit in the back of the bus. Be like the American revolutionaries who dumped their tea in the Boston Harbor. Be like Gandhi and walk hundreds of miles to the sea to make your own salt rather than submit to an injustice.

It's the little principles that must be fought over as strongly as the large ones, because little injustices grow and grow.

Are you sick of paying fifty bucks a year for a parking space that seems to exist only in the imagination of Jeffrey Van Slyke? Why don't YOU tell him so? His phone number is 251-6710.

Are you sick of paying three hundred and fifty bucks a year in athletics fees so that they can treat women unfairly? Why don't YOU tell them so? Tom Hunnicutt's phone number is 251-6926.

If you think UNCA was built for the students, and not for the administration, why don't YOU complain to the chancellor? Patsy Reed's phone number is 251-6500.

Think the *Blue Banner* is a really crummy paper? Why don't YOU write a letter and tell us so? We'll print it, which may be a lot more response than you'll get from the tyrants. And that brings us back to our first point. It's not up to us to foment change. This newspaper is only a tool for airing a wide variety of opinions and ideas. Real change is up to YOU, YOU, YOU.

But we have faith. We know that YOU can do it. And after you've finished fixing this university, you might try complaining to your representatives in the larger world for a while. If YOU don't let your voice be heard, someone whose voice is louder and stronger will step in front of you. They'll get their way, and you'll be left in the cold. It's September out there as well.

We'll just remind you of who to get in touch with, when YOU feel ready to let YOUR voice be heard.

Sen. Jesse Helms P.O. Box 2944 Hickory, NC 28603 704-258-3667	Sen. Lauch Faircloth P.O. Box 2137 Asheville, NC 28802 704-254-3099	Rep. Charles Taylor Jackson Bldg Pack Sq Asheville, 28801 704-251-1988
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The Blue Banner is the student newspaper of the University of North Carolina at Asheville. We publish each Thursday except during summer sessions, final exam weeks and holiday breaks. Our offices are located in Carmichael Hall, Room 208-A. Our telephone number is (704) 251-6586. Our campus e-mail address is UNCAVX::BANNER.

Nothing in our editorial or opinions sections necessarily reflects the opinion of the entire *Blue Banner* editorial board, the faculty advisor, or the university faculty, administration or staff.

Unsigned editorials reflect the opinion of a majority of the *Blue Banner* editorial board. Letters, columns, cartoons and reviews represent only the opinions of their respective authors.

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
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Temple of the tree or bowl of vegetable medley?

Kristi Howard

Columnist

Sometimes it's good to have the stability of things that never change. When the world seems to be spinning out of control, it's nice to know that some things remain constant. But sometimes it's also good for the soul to experience change, because it helps you change your perspective.

As the new school year begins, I can't help but notice that UNCA is a mixed bag of things that have changed since last semester, and things that have remained the same.

Probably the change that has caused the most headaches is the parking situation. I don't mean to step on the toes of whoever is in charge of the parking lot construction below Highrise, but wouldn't it have been easier just to pave the "gravel pit," instead of digging a big ugly hole?

Maybe I'm wrong. All I know is that if you dare to leave campus on a weeknight and come back expecting to park near Highrise or Mills, you will probably be sorely disappointed. And you will have to walk home, in the

dark, from however far away you had to end up parking.

I don't mean to gripe, but come on, guys, how long can it possibly take?

On a more pleasant—but somewhat bewildered—note, the plaza next to Rhodes/Robinson is certainly a beautiful change.

But why, might I ask, are those spotlights pointing up into the tree? Is it so that,

when you're hurrying from a night class to Dante's to grab a

Snapple before "Seinfeld" comes on, you'll be able to look up and make sure there are no psychotic squirrels waiting to drop nasty bombs on your head before you pass by?

Would common sense not dictate that the spotlights be used to light the path that runs next to the "tree plaza," or the bushes across from it, where a person could conceivably hide?

Or why not shine them across the kinda' dark, kinda' spooky quad? That might make it seem safer at night.

Maybe the design was intended for dramatic effect, and I'm just too dense to get it. Or perhaps it is a special tree, exulted above all other trees, and lighted so that all the other unworthy trees can gaze day and night on its greatness.

Thankfully, the aforementioned plaza connects to steps that lead down the hill to the cafeteria. This is a change I applaud, since it keeps me, and

Don't get me wrong—I know how hard it must be to feed so many people with so many different tastes, and still keep it nutritious. I'm not saying the food is bad, just that it hasn't changed.

And finally, somewhere in a kind of gray area between changing and remaining the same, is the path of worn-down grass marching proudly across the quad to Lipinsky.

New grass was sewn there in the spring, and yet the path has returned, worn by the dragging feet of countless students trudging bleakly to Humanities lecture—yet another part of UNCA that hasn't changed a bit.

So on that note, I'll end my rant about what has and hasn't changed here over the summer.

But I know that if I need a change of scenery, I'll head on down to the Temple of the Tree, to gaze up into its wise, brilliantly lighted branches.

And when I feel like everything is way too hectic, and I need some stability to ground me, I'll go to the Caf—and treat myself to a nice bowl of vegetable medley.

anyone else fond of heels, from having to navigate that treacherous, loose gravel covered slope.

Speaking of the Caf, that is one thing that hasn't changed a bit. I'm talking about the creative way the folks at Marriott have of serving up leftovers. Have you ever noticed how one day we'll have corn, the next day peas, the next carrots, and then—ta-daa!—vegetable medley?

It's not quite like high school, where my friend Steven once found a spaghetti noodle in his hot-dog chili, but it's close.

U.S.A.—land of the free, home of the terrified

James Hertsch

Columnist

How wise, how great, how noble are our leaders. As Americans, we can feel safe knowing that our elected officials have only our best interests at heart, and would never cross those interests.

In the last two years, these courageous men and women have worked "to secure the blessing of liberty for ourselves and our posterity," passing laws insuring a prosperous, free nation.

Right. If you buy that, you probably also invested in *Last Action Hero*, and continually buy those collector's plates because, of course, their value will go up.

The past several years have been filled with government at its worst, the politics of fear, the politics of hypocrisy, and unconscionable inroads on American civil liberties.

Between the Republicans and the Democrats, we have seen irresponsible governance, and a frighteningly paternalistic bent from our government.

Let us start with the most recent of these inroads: the Defense of Marriage Act.

In response to a possibility that the Hawaiian courts might legalize same-sex marriages in that state, Congress went all atwitter with fear.

Traditional American Values were under assault! Call out the Army! Call out the Navy! Call out Jesse Helms!

In a fit of terror at the impending attack by the gays and

lesbians of America, Congress passed a law stipulating that a) other states don't have to recognize same-sex marriages if they don't want to and b) the federal government wouldn't acknowledge these marriages for the purposes of taxes, benefits and free congressional junkets to Disney World.

Now, if you'll pardon me a second, doesn't this seem just a tad paranoid? Allowing a few same-sex couples to get married would hardly mean the end of the American way of life.

As a matter of fact, such marriages would enhance American life, adding yet another ingredient to the much-vaunted melting pot.

But, Congress and the President, in their infinite wisdom, decided that such couples are a threat, and, as such, nixed them before the fact.

God forbid that somebody choose whom he or she wishes to marry! Such an exercise of liberty is clearly dangerous.

Secondly, Congress passed an anti-terrorism bill.

Interesting piece of legislation, that. Seems that much of it was subsumed into an anti-crime bill, and it includes little provisions like making it unlawful to raise money for groups officially designated as "terrorist groups" by the government.

Freedom of association, anybody?

One of our longest-standing beliefs, deeply rooted in the

First Amendment, is a person's right to champion unpopular causes. It's political speech, pure and simple, and the designation "terrorist group" could easily be abused.

As a matter of fact, it is precisely those people supporting those groups who must be defended—unpopular views must not be silenced.

To do so turns on its ear everything we stand for as a nation. Everything.

Therefore, we must not re-elect the incumbents in Congress. They have responded to the fear sweeping the nation, and have enacted—

Actually, I would argue that Congress has enacted the laws we demanded as a people, the laws we clamored for when mad bombers blew us out of our tight, suburban cocoons, or when a new group, such as gays and lesbians, called for rights and liberties the majority already enjoys.

And that's what it comes down to in the end. Us. The constituents. For too long, we have allowed ourselves to be stripped of our civil liberties, one by one. In fact, we sometimes cheer ecstatically when these liberties are reduced.

After all, somebody engaging in a same-sex marriage or unpopular political activities is clearly an evil influence on our society.

Only somebody in that position would need these rights. Only somebody in prison already would need *habeas corpus*.

Only somebody who has com-

mitted a crime needs his *Miranda* rights read.

Unfortunately, this mentality breaks down when it's one of the rest of us who finds himself on the wrong end of the law, or in an uncomfortable spot.

Before you know it, your privacy, your free speech, your freedom of religion are swept away, and you are bound in shackles of iron, as surely as if you had been imprisoned in the Tower of London.

But, the part which stings the most, the part which you'll never escape is this: *you asked for these shackles*. You put them on yourself, when you screamed and writhed in the politics of fear.

You asked for protection from the Internet "pornographers," from same-sex marriages, from the terrorists, or Commies, or whoever the bad guy of the week is. And look where it'll get you.

We have to take a stand against the politics of fear, because we do stupid things when we're afraid.

We have to remove the bars from our political windows. We need to face our fears—sometimes they're not that bad at all, just imagined beasts in the shadows.

And, like the monster under the bed of our childhood, they might just go away if we say "boo" back.

And, perhaps, it's time we decided to live free—and fearless.