

# Opinions

## The Blue Banner

### Editorials

#### All eggs in the basket

The bond referendum passed with flying colors Nov. 7, with 76 percent of N.C. voters and 99 out of 100 counties standing behind it.

Now the long-awaited renovations and additions to our university will become a reality. We'll see no more leaky ceilings, outdated labs or cramped offices after this money makes the university architects' grandiose plans come to fruition.

Not to put a damper on the great and needed success of this referendum, but how will the \$3.1 billion be paid back?

All given information about the bonds stresses that taxes will not increase, and neither will student fees. So where is all this money is coming from? It has to materialize somewhere.

It's nice to know that student fees won't go through the roof and taxes won't rob us blind, but there has to be another variable to this equation that identifies the source of payment. Free money does not exist in the state system.

An assumption the state seems to be banking heavily on is that economic growth will increase with the same trends as the past few years. Money that is a result of economic growth is often used to pay back bonds of this nature, according to an Oct. 22 article in Raleigh's *News and Observer*.

Using extra money to pay back \$3.1 billion sounds like a great idea – if, of course, there's no recession, no major floods and no awful hurricanes. But isn't the state putting all their eggs in one basket, so to speak?

It's not that optimism is a bad thing. It's just that \$3.1 billion might not seem so warm and fuzzy when some uncontrollable natural disaster or economic recession sends that economic growth money down the toilet.

So here's hoping that this bond is really as big a boon as expected. If all goes as planned, we'll have a beautiful, competitive, well-outfitted campus with no mountain-sized debt to remember it by.

#### Watch your back

After a former UNCA and WCU student was charged with five separate counts of indecent exposure, obstructing/resisting an officer and breaking and entering, we students are left wondering just how safe our dormitories are.

Sure, it sounds great to tell prospective students that we have human beings sitting in the lobbies of all the dorms at night except Governor's Village, which is locked 24 hours a day.

But if the area flashers are getting in the buildings in the early afternoon, all those lock-down hours don't do much good.

All it takes is one wacko, one nutcase, to cause harm to the residents of those buildings. We enjoy an exorbitant amount of freedom in the UNCA dorms, a freedom that most students and staff take for granted. We assume that Asheville is a innocent little mountain city, and we're far enough away from downtown to avoid the rabble.

As little fun as it may be, the time has come to redefine the way people have access to campus living areas. With last year's Governor's Village intruder incident, a recent string of thefts and the campus stalker, it's obvious that something needs to be done.

The callous way in which UNCA students handle their personal and group safety is disturbing. Granted, no one wants to lock their door every time they go to the laundry room or visit a friend, and many people don't think twice about giving out building codes, but therein lies the problem.

Maybe at one point UNCA was safe enough to disregard personal safety measures or nighttime dorm entrance policies, but the past year should demonstrate that the need is definitively present.

A campus-wide discussion needs to begin to ensure that an incident does not occur that is more harmful than the occasional disturbing oddball. Again, it only takes one.

## Elect Ben or Jerry for president



Andrew Thomasson

Columnist

The United States of America will have a new president by the time this column reaches your eyes. I know not whether it will be Vice President Al Gore or Governor "Dubya" Bush; deadlines prevent your humble columnist from knowing such things before I write this column. However, I come to you not to criticize the lack of opportunity for third and fourth party candidates, nor do I come to bemoan the lack of choice presented us this election year.

Though there are viable arguments for each of those positions, I choose not to dwell on the past. The President-elect is going to be the one, unless he commits some horrific impeachable crime, that will lead the United States of America and the free world through the next four years. I simply choose to move forward, to the election that will be held in 2004, and propose a candidate tandem that will lead our great nation forward through the current haze surrounding the new millennium. They are both staunch environmentalists and international quasi-celebrities. I speak of Ben and

Jerry, Vermont ice cream moguls and flavor geniuses.

It is a known fact that appealing to more than one sense of the general public in ads is a very effective advertising ploy, and it would be the ultimate coup d'etat for a candidate to appeal to not only pocketbooks, sight and sound, but to the public's sense of taste. Especially their sense of taste by such culinary delights as B&J chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream, which the good boys would have unlimited access to.

Imagine such a taste-rally. "Here, have a tub of Cherry Garcia. Vote Ben and Jerry."

Can you fathom a more effective, more popular way to garner votes? No, I can't either.

Think of the possibilities, though — they could run on the Green Party ticket. They are ecologically sound. A quote from their home page at [www.benjerry.com](http://www.benjerry.com) reads "the new Ben & Jerry's pint is being manufactured with unbleached paper. This is a bigger deal than you might think. Bleaching paper with chlorine to make it whiter is one of

the largest causes of toxic water pollution in the United States."

And that's just their newest innovation. Ben and Jerry's has long been known as a "down home" company, even as they've gone international, and one that has great concern for the environment. Down home appeal has won people elections before. There have been multimillionaire presidents that have won because they showed ads of themselves dressed in working man's clothes, sitting on the front porch of a log cabin. Ben and Jerry can work the same angle.

Also, though I alluded to this before, Ben and Jerry are already international celebrities. There would be no need for the Green Party to spend a great deal of money introducing the general public to and familiarizing the general public with them. People with star power usually win elections anyway. Just ask Ronald Reagan, a former movie man himself, who arguably was running with his mental tank at least half empty for most of his eight years of presidency. Jesus, the man got re-elected.

Ben and Jerry are infinitely more bona-fide celebrities than an actor from the fifties who was in a great deal of B-rated movies.

There is no real need to comment on the allure that these two ice cream gods have to the female population, but for the sake of argument, I must include them. After all, this is something of a political ad.

It is a documented fact, as a result of a study conducted by a research group comprised of myself, and a study group composed of my girl-

friend and a small group of her friends that attend Agnes Scott College, an all girls' school in Atlanta, that Ben and Jerry's is the greatest thing known to woman.

I have heard words such as "simply divine" and "orgasmic" in reference to Ben and Jerry's ice cream from these girls. There are apparently lines in front of the freezers there in the late evenings; they have been described to this columnist as having "heavier traffic than rush hour Atlanta." I also believe, as an editorial comment, that there would be a much higher income to be made by Chick-fil-A if they were to stay open later in deference to late night ice-cream runs.

I have a belief that a large part of the success of the local chapter of Chick-fil-A that has established itself in the student center lies not in the sale of chicken and chicken products, nor does it come from the devastatingly cute "Eat Mor Chikn" ads that have corrupted billboards nationwide.

No, the success of the Chick-fil-A lies in that freezer at the front, the freezer that contains all the frozen products, half of which is full of names such as Coffee Heath Bar Crunch and Chubby Hubby ice creams by the good folks at Ben and Jerry's.

So mobilize, good citizens of the U.S.A. Call and write Ben and Jerry up in their cozy nook of Vermont, and tell them you want them as the next president of our nation. What is there to lose, besides a little weight? Eat Mor Ice Cream — It's Phish Food for thought.

## Double standards in religion



Sean Clancy

Columnist

As a non-Christian I'm beginning to feel a bit repressed already by our newly-elected country-wide representatives. Christianity has worked its way into everything, and everybody has lost sight of the fact that it is a personal spiritual belief, and that you just have to share. Some examples of the blatant prejudice of Christian groups are the debates over religious involvement in public schools.

Christian parents want their children to pray together in school so their faith won't be partitioned. How would those parents feel if their child went to a school that had Muslim prayers at set times everyday? What if their child wanted to become Muslim? God forbid, there would be outrage, but as long as Christianity is popular, it's OK to

do that to everyone else.

At my high school, every few months, representatives from various Christian religions would hand out little bibles to students leaving class. God doesn't need propaganda. If it were Hindus handing out religious pamphlets, someone would call the police.

As long as were talking about religion in schools, what about birth control? Anybody who believes that not giving high school students birth control will keep them from having sex is an idiot. It's not as if when schools hand out condoms students are suddenly exposed to sex for the first time. Unless those kids have been locked in a basement their whole life, they know all about sex. There is no such thing as a pure mind. They may even know more

than their parents. It's unfair to deprive any children from a realistic and safe childhood, much less all children, because your religion makes you afraid of sex. I don't think every high school student should be having sex, but some will, and it is narrow-minded to ignore that.

In related religious encroachment, anti-abortion lobbyists are largely supported by Christians who think that abortion should be outlawed because it is against their religion. Well, do you really think we should make laws that protect everyone from sinning? If someone is Christian and they believe that abortion is wrong, there are no pro-choice agencies making them have abortions, so what's the problem? What ever happened to the almighty God and judgment day? Besides, I don't remember Jesus forcing people into things.

Speaking of which, what would Jesus do? He used to be out helping people and teaching those that would listen. Today he is sitting behind a huge oak desk in a high-rise office lounging in a tailored suit leafing through the new Mercedes Benz catalog as he sips on a Coke. He has a huge team of telemarketers calling endless mailing lists to convert people. He is selling little pieces of junk emblazoned with W.W.J.D., and is delighted that, in spite of the fact that no one really has any idea what Jesus would do, people are buying them up.

Everywhere I go, I see "we still pray!" bumper stickers, and wonder if the people displaying them would be offended with a bumper sticker that said "I never pray." I don't go walking around all day trying to get people to believe and act like good upstanding atheists. Why should it be OK for them to do it to me?

I know, because God's on their side. Someone was telling me that those "we still pray" bumper stickers belong to people who get up and pray during high school football games after they made it illegal. If I went to a football game in the South and said, "God is not real, he's made up by humans trying to explain the unexplainable," I would probably be beaten or lynched by an angry mob of cheek turners.

The point is not that I'm in an active struggle against Christianity or any other faith, it is that if we are all going to live together in this country, double standards need to disappear. Hey, even if deep down in your heart you feel that your all loving, all powerful, all knowing God will burn me in hell for eternity, don't try and save me. If God really loves me and is all-powerful and knows everything, then I'm sure he'll figure out a way to help me. So keep praying, meditating or whatever it is you do, but remember that, just because a bunch of people think one way, it doesn't make them right.

Current students, faculty and staff: Register for carpool/ ride share online. From UNCA's homepage, go to Faculty and Staff or Current Students, then the Web for Students. Scroll down to Carpool and click it.