

EDITORIALS

Teams enjoyed great seasons

Hello Readers,

First a quick apology and thanks for your patience and understanding with last week's missing issue. But, here it is and please bear with the late dates, we know you always do.

Congratulations to both the men's and women's basketball teams for great seasons. Both teams battled through tough seasons with exciting results and great anticipation for next year.

Post season honors were placed on Bishops Misty Carneal (Sr.), Dixie Conference Player-of-the-Year, First Team All-Conference, and Verizon Academic All-District; Bradley Blue (So.) First Team All-Conference, Keith Sudler (So.) Second

Editor's Column

Team All-Conference, and Donta Jenkins (Fr.) was named the Dixie Conference Rookie-of-the-Year.

We hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable spring break and invite you to share stories or experiences you had, or have had, with *The Decree*.

Softball, Baseball, Golf and Tennis have all gotten underway; look for schedules in the next issue.

Hope you enjoy the issue!

Shannon St. George
Editor-in-Chief

Letters to the editor policy

The Decree welcomes letters from the entire Wesleyan community. We print only signed letters to the editor, although unsigned letters are kept on file and may form the basis for future news articles.

Letters should not exceed 400 words.

Letters may be submitted in one of these ways:

- placed in the post office with the word "Decree" on the envelope;
- placed in the door box of the adviser's office, Rm 182 PC;
- sent in the body of an email message:

TO: SEStGeorge@ncwc.edu

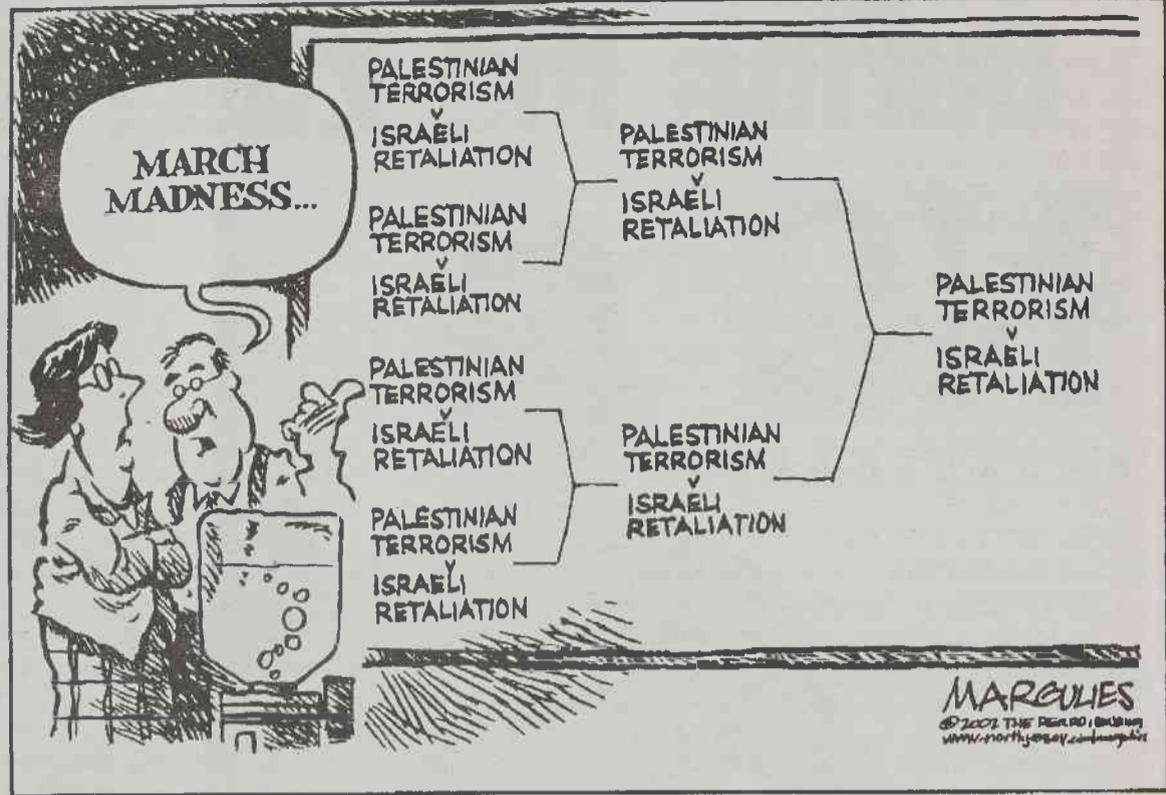
CC: AJKirch@ncwc.edu

DKCampbell@ncwc.edu

Subject: Decree [and short title]

All letters must be received by Friday of the week prior to the next issue in order to be printed in that issue.

The Decree Editorial Board and Publisher reserve the right to edit or reject letters for grammar, libel, and good taste.



The unsung heroes

New products excite consumers

By DR. STEVE FEREBEE

To paraphrase Keats, Happy American consumers, O Happy, Happy American consumers. As we devour our way through contemporary life we may forget that someone has to think up new consumer products. Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison, Bill Gates. Sure, but what about the inventor of the Popsicle stick? The button-down collar? The eyelash curler? Who remembers them?

I thought about these unsung heroes when I read that on the list of billionaires is the family of the guy who invented the zipper. The zipper! Think of American culture without the zipper. How many cheesy jokes in those teenager movies center on the sound of a zipper zipping? (Now being replaced by the less titillating Velcro(c).)

What if you had the patent on baseball caps? T-shirts? The rake? The back pack? The straw? Bumper stickers?

For all of these daily objects there's a story. Someone, somewhere, some time had an idea, played around in a basement or a garage or a barn, created a prototype, filed a patent request, found some starter money, began production, sold a first one. Zoom.

After all, where did the plastic sandwich bag come from? What about the dust jacket? And what rich idiot came up with the glue

for those pesky bar-code stickers that are supposed to but won't peel off? Who designed the CD cover? (Are we supposed to need an 800 number help-line to get a CD unwrapped and into the player?)

Chewing gum? Loose-leaf notebooks? Snorkels and fins? Those little paper umbrellas in fancy drinks? I mean, it's not just the pet rock or oven mittens with the face of JFK. The American consumer insatiably demands new products, many of which we then simply cannot do without.

I remember when the 33 rpm. vinyl record albums replaced 45s (which had replaced 78s). Then came eight-track and cassette tapes, CDs, DVDs, internet downloading, and CD burning. All of these called for fancier equipment, storage holders, cleaners, monthly service fees.

(You can mail order a solid wood cabinet sized either for records, cassettes, CDs, DVDs, or VCR tapes. \$300 to store 150 CDs. New!)

One of the weirder developments in happy consuming is the word "New!" in advertising. (Followed closely by the words "and

Improved!") Pudding that I've been eating all my life is still packaged as New! (Maybe it really means "fresh"? Just how long can a product be new?)

Another development in happy consuming is the calendar industry. When I was a kid, most calendars I saw were "gifts" from banks or stores. (Marilyn Monroe was first sold to happy American consumers as a pin-up on a calendar.)

Now we have calendar stores. Page-A-Day calendars give us advice on everything from in-laws to Zen Buddhism. Greece, pop stars (live, dead, or both), puppies, famous ax murderers. You name it, we evidently want to hang it on our walls.

So I am in awe of human ingenuity and of happy American consumers' eagerness to buy. Disposable lighters. Car deodorizers. Computerized Mr. Potato Heads. 100 flavors of shampoo. A \$350 TV Guide holder for those who save the magazine ("Holds a Year's Worth! New!").

Of course, if I were to talk about the rich consumer, I would start with the \$250,000 sterling silver Monopoly set. But, I'm not rich, so I'll stick to the New! And Improved! old standby puddings. Anyway, according to my Sale-A-Day calendar, bankrupt K-Mart is having a sale on Make-Your-Tires-Look-Like-New Cleaner.

So I'm out of here.