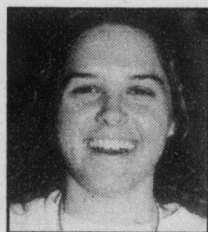


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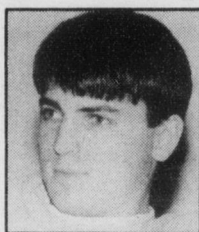
What changes, if any, should be made in the core curriculum?



I don't think I would change anything. I like it because they don't require math, and everything else is fine.
- Kimberly Maddox, first year



I would let credits double count not only for the core but also for your major.
- Stephen Wilcosky, first year



I don't think the FYS should be a requirement. I feel that freshmen should be allowed to explore the classes or go directly into the classes they need for their major.
--- Charles Edward Norton, first year



I really don't see any problems with the core curriculum right now because we really enrich ourselves through what we learn and that's what Guilford is all about.
--- King Tang, Sophomore

The real roots of Christmas

LINDSAY OLDENSKI
editorials editor

It's that time of year again. People are hanging up stockings, decorating trees. . . the air is thick with the sound of Christmas carols and the smell of candy canes. Everyone's holly-jolly and dropping pennies into the tin buckets of Salvation Army Santas.

Occasionally, someone even brings up the real reason behind Christmas: the birth of Christ.

At this point, all the non-Christians of America sputter over their egg nog as they are forced to reconcile their religious beliefs with their love of cheesy Christmas movies.

Is it hypocritical for a devout atheist to give gifts on the twenty-fifth of December? What about the holiday spirit of giving? Surely donating gifts to needy families is at least as compatible with celebration of the winter solstice as putting up plastic nativity scenes is with Christmas.

Guilford's furry friends

STACEY VINCENT
staff writer

You see them everywhere. Lying around on the grass, sunning themselves like they haven't a care in the world— and breeding like crazy. No, I'm not referring to Guilford's students. I'm talking about the wild cat population on campus.

Many students, and faculty, enjoy the presence of the cats. Not only have they practically become school pets, but they are excellent for controlling the less favored rodent population. Before the cats came, the mice in dorms and faculty offices, such as the Archdale building, were almost unbearable. Now they are almost non-existent.

I have spent many years working professionally with all types of domestic and exotic animals, and have recently spent a great deal of time working with Guilford County's Animal Control Department. Due to this, I tend to see the big picture that many may be missing. The cats, for all of their benefits, also pose a serious health risk to the campus.

The primary risk is rabies. The cats, being wild and feeding primarily on wild rodents, are highly susceptible to contracting the rabies virus.

North Carolina, including Guilford County, has come to the end of a rabies-free era. Last year there were 466 reported cases of rabies and one of those, a raccoon, was less than 13 miles from the Guilford campus.

Rabies is the primary concern, but

there are other zoonoses, or diseases that can be transmitted to humans from animals, that we need to be concerned with. Most, however, like *campylobacteriosis* and *ancyclostomiasis*, are bacterial or parasitic, low risk, and easily treatable.

The overpopulation problem is another factor to be considered. The reproduction rate in cats is astronomical due to their polyestrous breeding cycle. It is highly possible for one unsplayed female cat and her offspring to produce 4,000 or more cats and kittens in her breeding lifetime.

For the sake of the school, the cat overpopulation, and the health of students here at Guilford, something must be done. One solution is the permanent removal of the cats. Though this would be the most cost effective means of controlling the situation, I by no means feel it is the best situation.

Another solution would be to capture the cats, have them vaccinated, spayed or neutered accordingly, and then released back into the community. The treated animals could be marked by a notched or tipped ear for easy identification.

Dr. Wendy Stockard at Friendly Vet at Guilford said that she would be more than willing to offer her services. They are willing to treat the cats at an almost 50% discount (females \$66/ males \$42).

Traps will also have to be purchased. The Have-A-Heart traps are the most safe, humane, and easy to use. The cost for one of these traps, however, is \$59. Purchasing the traps for the school would allow us to use them in continual control

and an ongoing health and maintenance program.

The money needed to support this effort could be acquired easily through donations. If approval is received from the school administration, donation jars and drop boxes will be set up at random spots around campus.

By solving the problem in this manner, we are benefiting the animals, as well as the campus community. The college would also be sending an important message to the rest of Guilford County.

The population of cats needs to be controlled, but there are more humane methods than destroying the animals. I can't begin to count the number of cats, wild and domestic, I saw destroyed during my time with Animal Control. Last year alone there were over 11,000 animals destroyed there and the overwhelming majority of those were cats.

One last point to consider before making decisions on how we want to handle this situation: we must remember that even if the school decides to have the animals permanently removed, this choice will by no means solve the problem. Cats are highly territorial and will generally resist newcomers. Permanently removing the present population would be an invitation for another to take its place. By treating and releasing the cats we have now, we can more effectively control the health of the animals we come in contact with.

Many of the traditions associated with Christmas, such as decorating trees and hanging holly and mistletoe were taken from pre-Christian religious celebrations

Consider the roots and meaning of this winter holiday. Originally it may have been intended just to celebrate Jesus's birth, but how do gifts from Santa Claus or decorating evergreens really relate to this religious origin? Many of the traditions associated with Christmas, such as decorating trees and hanging holly and mistletoe were taken from pre-Christian religious celebrations. Because the true date of Jesus's birth is unknown, the twenty-fifth of December was chosen because it coincides with the pagan holiday of Yule, another term also used around this time of year.

So there is more to this holiday season than commercialization and church services. Next time you decorate your Christmas tree, Hanukkah bush, or Yule log, remember that the values of peace, love, and giving to others are universal. They extend beyond one religion and should also extend beyond one month of the year to become a real part of our daily existence.