

## LANDFILL

## Possible landfill reopening sparks debate

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Currently, such trash is driven to the Uwharrie Landfill in Montgomery County, costing the city an extra \$8 million a year. The city's contract with Uwharrie Landfill is set to expire this summer, leaving the Council to debate what steps to take next.

Despite the utilization of numerous trash consultants and years of debate, the Council still has not declared exactly how much the city could save by reopening the landfill, according to the News & Record. Estimates range from \$1.5 million to \$15 million.

Last March, the city accepted proposals to "determine the best course of action for waste management for the City and surrounding communities," according to the Official City of Greensboro website. Seven private companies submitted their proposals, but none were selected.

On March 8, the city will collect a second round of bids from trash companies, all revolving around the reopening of the White Street Landfill.

The state of North Carolina does not allow the creation of new landfills. According to former Mayor Keith Holliday, this means that the Council is receiving pressure from the waste industry to use the city's existing and permitted landfill, reports the News & Record.

Many worry that if the landfill reopens, it could limit the city's expansion.

"All the growth is going east," said Ralph Johnson, president of the Concerned Citizens of Northeast Greensboro. "The problem is that if you reopen the landfill, companies will be hesitant in terms of setting up business."

The benefits of reopening the landfill have been under debate since the decision was made to close it in 2001.

"The whole argument, in terms of reopening (the landfill), has been how to save most residents of the city money on the backs of a few people," said Professor of Economics Bob Williams. "That's just not fair."

Other community members see the

benefits of reopening the landfill. In 2008, former Councilman Mike Barber began promoting the landfill's reopening.

"I am not an expert on waste disposal," said Barber, according to the News & Record. "But I do have a responsibility, when I observe a horrible misuse of our citizens' money, to shine a light."

With the current economy and state budget cuts, cost effectiveness has become a predominant topic among the Council.



"Landfill" stickers were recently placed on trashcans around campus as part of the 2011 Recyclemania initiative.

"I think closing the White Street Landfill is a very poor use of public money," said Dr. G. Donald Jud, professor emeritus and research fellow in the Office of Business and Economics Research at the Bryan School of Business and Economics at UNCG in an e-mail interview. "The costs greatly exceed the benefits. If you drive around the White Street neighborhood as I have, I don't think you will find 100 homes that are damaged by the landfill."

Residents living in the area who were

once affected by the landfill express a different opinion.

"At night, the smell would get real bad when the wind would blow a certain way," said five-year resident Harold Bethea.

Bethea said that he would move if the landfill was reopened.

Betty Little has spent over 50 years in her house on Nealtown Road, less than a mile from the landfill's entrance.

"It used to stink so bad — I don't know

energy, and I believe it will be the solution for all of Greensboro."

The Council has considered some alternatives, but ruled out technology such as incinerators due to cost. According to the News & Record, Holliday said seeking a regional landfill would be the best solution in the long term.

"They are solving a social issue (by closing the landfill), but they are definitely not solving the environmental one," said junior Linnea Saby. "There obviously has to be a discussion about decreasing waste."

One alternative proposed by Williams is to charge individuals for how much trash they produce, either by weight or by volume.

"Most people just put out anything as garbage, and whatever they put out, the city just takes away," said Williams. "It doesn't encourage recycling."

"We need landfills because we don't recycle and reuse," said junior Michelle Severance. "People need to be educated on where their waste goes and what they can do so that their waste doesn't affect communities like those surrounding the White Street Landfill."

With fuel costs rising, junior Dima Hanania proposes biodiesel trucks to transfer the garbage, stating that initial costs would offset themselves in the long term.

"The city using biodiesel to move garbage would also be a great, yet ironic, image-booster of Greensboro," said Hanania.

Around Guilford, trash cans have been labeled with "landfill" stickers to raise awareness of the trash's final destination.

"The idea is to drive home that this is not an innocuous trash can," said Environmental Sustainability Coordinator Jim Dees. "It's a landfill collection device."

What will happen to the landfill in the coming months is unknown. Residents of northeast Greensboro only hope they will not be subjected to the traffic and smell once again.

A meeting will be held on March 28 at Laughlin Memorial Church to gain community opinion on the issue.

## QLSP alumni apply Quaker values to life post-Guilford

By Sage Donpino  
STAFF WRITER

On the evening of Tuesday, Feb. 22, Guilford alums Alex Kern '95 and Becca Grunko '93 returned to their alma mater to speak about how their experiences in the Quaker Leadership Scholars Program influenced their career choices and dedication to service.

Their talk, "Life after Guilford: Adventures in Quakerism, Activism, and Family" was part of the Friends Center annual series of speakers.

"Quakers are known for service," said IFP Gifts Discernment Coordinator Frank Massey. "We try to instill the idea of service, of a life of service to humanity. It's part of the Quaker DNA."

QLSP was started in 1992 by Max Carter. Devised as a way for Guilford College to identify dedicated Quakers seeking scholarships, Grunko and Kern were some of the first clerks.

After a brief introduction by Carter, Kern took the podium. He opened by saying, "Guilford opened up my life."

Since graduating, Kern's work has taken him from post-earthquake Haiti to Christian-Muslim conflict zones in

northern Nigeria. He is currently Protestant chaplain for the Interfaith Chaplaincy at Brandeis University and executive director of Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries in Boston.

Grunko came to Guilford right after high school.

"While at Guilford, my understanding of what Quakerism was expanded and exploded," said Grunko. "I

**"Guilford opened up my life."**

Alex Kern '95

worshipped at programmed meetings and read the writings of early Friends. During my time (at Guilford), I attended YouthQuake and the World Conference of Friends in Honduras — both incredible inter-Quaker experiences."

After graduating, Grunko moved to Philadelphia, and she and Kern started dating a year later. While in Philadelphia, Grunko worked for the Friends World Committee for

Consultation.

"Moving to Philadelphia was one of the bravest things I have ever done," said Grunko. "I moved to an entirely new city where I knew only one person, just because I had a low-paying job for an organization I was excited about. Even though much of what I did was data entry, it was a small office and an interesting place to be."

Eventually, however, she started thinking about the life she and Kern wanted to have long-term. "I wanted to have a balanced life," said Grunko. In July 1999 Grunko and Kern were married, and after the honeymoon moved to Massachusetts.

"Even though I was only in QLSP, it had such a major impact on my life," said Grunko. "It was exciting to feel supported in my exploration into Quaker belief, and I learned so much about service and what it means."

"I am grateful to hear confirmation that the journey of discerning one's calling is an ever-present process," said sophomore Bonnie Hardee. "(Kerns and Grunko) seem avid to pursue their life callings as they fluctuate through different communities, and energetic to follow their leadings about parenthood and larger life decisions."