

The Guilford woods: trash or treasure?

By Amanda Dahill-Moore
STAFF WRITER

The Guilford woods comprise approximately one-third of the college's campus. This 90-acre parcel of land represents a rare resource of undeveloped wilderness amidst the concrete sprawl of greater Greensboro. The prevalence of litter in the woods is a long-standing issue among some faculty, students, and staff who wonder why trash accumulates and what should be done about it.

"It drives me crazy," said Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Aaron Fetrow. "Trash in our woods sends a message that is very opposite from who we are. We are in the midst of a year of sustainability, but then we have all this crap in our woods."

Community members relate to the woods in many different ways. A half-acre garden is being developed in the meadows, and beehives are in use. Many people run and walk along the trails and hold bonfires during the weekends.

"I go out there two to three times a week," said sophomore Russell Connelly. "I like to walk, and it's really peaceful in the woods."

Junior Sarah Foster has never been to the woods.

"I have absolutely never been out there," Foster said. "But it's rumored that people go out there to smoke pot."

Sam Kelly, sophomore and member of the Outdoors Club, believes that such rumored activities are responsible for a great deal of the refuse.

"Most of the trash comes from people

partying in the woods," said Kelly. "Most people are high or drunk, and it's dark out there, so it's out-of-sight, out-of-mind."

The Outdoors Club takes on clean-up initiatives one to two times per semester. Other clubs, including the Guilford College Republicans and Photo Club, have been part of organizing clean-ups.

"We can take out ten or more big plastic trash bags," said sophomore Lizzie Ross, a member of the Outdoors Club. "It's pretty ridiculous."

Students concerned about the trash have suggested placing waste receptacles along the trails and working to emphasize more clean-up initiatives.



Although generally appreciated as a resource for outdoor enjoyment, the Guilford woods is consistently clogged with trash left behind by those less respectful.

"Then again, that just addresses the symptom and not the cause," said Kelly.

Fetrow believes that part of the cause is first-years who party in the woods and have not yet learned to love and respect the woods.

"This will probably be an unpopular opinion, but let's be real," said Fetrow. "Which of the residence halls are the ones that get trashed? Binford and Milner."

Eric Mortensen, assistant professor of religious studies, recognizes partying as one of the causes but also identifies the ideological roots that allow trash to accumulate.

"The idea that someone will clean up my mess is entitlement," said Mortensen. "It's possible that as intoxication levels go up, so

does a sense of entitlement. This is also part of a larger cultural phenomenon. We have an anthropocentric idea that the woods are here to be used by us."

Stewardship is one of the college's core values, and leaving trash behind is in contention with this ideal.

"My idea of environmental sustainability is stewardship of the land that we are blessed with," said Jim Dees, environmental sustainability coordinator. "I don't think smoking dope and drinking beer and leaving all your crap represents a very meaningful relationship with a place, and it's certainly not good stewardship."

David Petree, landscaping and grounds manager, sees litter as a larger issue on campus.

"If you were to walk in my shoes or my staff's shoes, you would have a hard time not getting depressed by the amount of litter we pick up on this campus," said Petree. "If we were to stop picking up trash for a month, the health department would shut us down."

Tammy Alt, associate dean for campus life, believes that picking up trash after students just enables the behavior.

"My question to the community is how do we take care of this beautiful natural resource?" said Alt. "And as much as people are going to get tired of hearing me say it, peer accountability is one of those ways."

At this point, no consensus has been reached as to the best course of action to deal with litter in the woods. With trash continuing to accumulate, greater awareness of the implications for the community and the land at stake may help to spark dialogue and change.

Congress may cut Pell Grant funding

By Victor Lopez
STAFF WRITER

A U.S. House bill currently waiting to pass through Congress threatens to cut Federal Pell Grant funding by 15 percent, which could affect 1,418 students who rely on Pell Grant funds at Guilford College.

Vice President for Finance Greg Bursavich told The Guilfordian that the college is 80 percent tuition-driven, and anything that could potentially threaten enrollment is a cause for concern.

"Any institution where students are relying on Pell Grants to attend will be affected by the changes," said Bursavich. "The college's tuition will remain the same, but it's the potential student that is affected."

Congress has already approved Federal Pell Grant cuts, which will come into effect during the 2011-12 academic school year. These cuts will decrease the maximum amount of aid for the neediest students from \$5,550 to \$4,705, a difference of \$845.

Guilford College receives about \$5 to \$5.5 million from the Federal Pell Grant program.

Bursavich says that every college in the country relies on Federal Pell Grants.

"Those colleges that have students with a greater financial need will have more students affected by the decision," said Bursavich.

According to the News and Record, the plan to cut Pell Grant funding mixed with state budgetary issues in the UNC system will greatly affect students' access to classes. UNC-system leaders recently asked campuses to prepare plans for the 15 percent reductions.

According to the News and Record, that means a loss of more than \$15 million for A&T; UNCG will prospectively lose \$25.9 million, which will

effectively eliminate funding for 2,000 positions. Over 6,400 course sections on UNC campuses would be eliminated, according to the News and Record.

President and Professor of Political Science Kent Chabotar says he hopes Guilford will be spared the plight that the UNC system is facing.

"Most at risk in Congress is the ability to use grants in the summer, which provides \$250,000-\$280,000," said Chabotar. "Even at this late date, we do not know how this affects summer 2011 because we do not have a federal budget approved."

Director of Student Financial Services Paul Coscia told The Guilfordian that at this juncture, the college is sending financial aid packages out to students with the reward amount that will hopefully come.

"At this point, the major cuts are only prospective, so we are advising potential students that the reward could change," said Coscia.

Sophomore Tim Leisman believes that educational budget cuts are part of a backwards trend within the U.S. government.

"We are cutting the wrong things in our government," said Leisman. "We are not looking at how these cuts will affect our future, but looking at how we can achieve short-term resolution to our crisis. Cutting education is going to cripple our country and cause its collapse; we cannot continue these policies and hope to achieve a sustainable future."

As Congress continues to deliberate on balancing the national budget, colleges around the nation are still unsure how this will affect them.

"We are waiting on Congress to come to a decision before we know how to prepare for the affect the bill will have on students and, ultimately, the college," said Coscia.

COMMUNITY SENATE UPDATE

April 13

I. Student organizations budget allocation

II. Experiential learning proposal

Social Honor Code

Dick Dyer Awards Ceremony
April 18, 5:30 pm
Carnegie room - Hege Library

Contact:
senate@guilford.edu or
Senate President
Dana Hamdan
hamdands@guilford.edu
Community Senate meets every
Wednesday from 7-8 p.m.,
Boren Lounge,
Founders Hall

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