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# stentorian

vol. XXXII, issue 2

the north carolina school of science and mathematics

september 2012

stentorian@ncssm.edu

## Political speaker series invites discussion of key election issues

BY: JORDAN HARRISON

Professors Peter Feaver and Bruce Jentleson spoke at NCSSM on the foreign policy position of the two main presidential candidates on Sept. 12.

Congressman Brad Miller also spoke about financial issues on Sept. 24, and NC State professor Andy Taylor will hold a domestic policy talk on Oct. 11.

These professors and politicians participated in an on-going speaker series sponsored by instructors Mark Dubois and Kyle Hudson.

Said Dubois, "One purpose [of the series] was to inform students of key issues in the election. I wanted to find a way as a community that we could have a relevant discussion about these issues...because the election is not something a lot of classes would address."

Feaver and Jentleson largely answered student questions, but student awareness in the discussion was mixed.

"I think there are a few students [at NCSSM] who are news junkies and are very much informed about current events, although students have such busy lives otherwise that they find it hard to stay informed," said Dubois.

Senior Cyrus Homesley

attended the foreign policy debate, noting that both speakers' knowledge of the subject was "extremely high." The Sept. 12 talk focused mainly on foreign policy in the Middle East.

"Generally, [the talk was about] foreign policy dealing with Iraq and Afghanistan," said Homesley. "They were really in-depth with each argument. They brought up facts that I was unaware of."

"I asked about the significance of the Russians and the Chinese voting against the United States concerning U.N. Security Council resolutions about the use of force to aid the Syrian rebels," said senior Paul Kushner. "My response was much more focused on Syria then I would have liked, although they did expound on that situation very well."

"I was particularly interested in Syria and asking the question, what does it look like in a post-Assad world?" said Dubois.

Miller represents NC District 13 in the House of Representatives and serves on the House Committee on Financial Services and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology. His discussion focused on financial

policy and on the creation of the CFPB, or Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

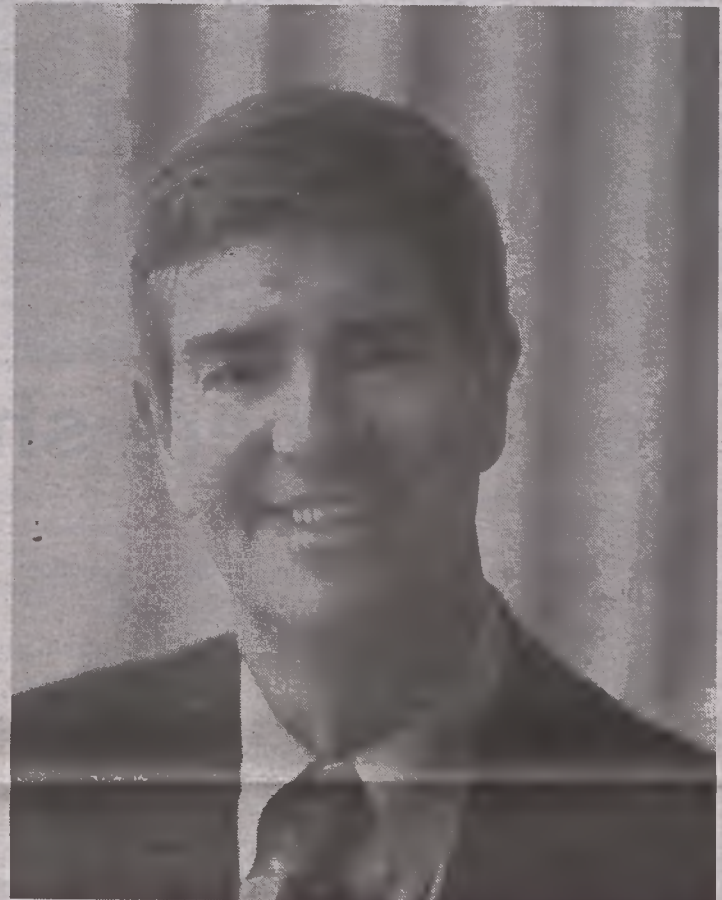
Miller spoke largely on the reasons behind the housing market crash in 2007 and about the need for more consumer protections legislation.

"Some people bought houses they shouldn't have bought," said Miller, "but the majority of people who got subprime mortgages qualified for subprime mortgages. They were people who already owned their homes who borrowed money against them...[Brokers] were getting paid by consumers and banks, and they got paid more for rates borrowers did not qualify for. That struck me as a breach of faith."

"Here's what the market is supposed to do—it's supposed to squeeze and get consumers the best deals. That obviously is still not happening with banking," said Miller.

Miller received questions from students on a range of topics from STEM education to partisanship in the current political climate.

"I don't want politics to be between a party that wants a corrupt oligarchy and hates gay people and a party that wants a corrupt oligarchy and is okay with gay people," said



Congressman Brad Miller

Courtesy of bradmiller.house.gov

Miller. "I want politics to be about how the economy works, which is how people's lives work."

Taylor is an American politics expert and a political science professor.

"I requested he think about

discussing Medicare, Obama's handling of the economy, taxes, and the debt ceiling," said Dubois.

According to Dubois, NCSSM held a similar series of talks four years ago before the 2008 election.

## Neil Armstrong dies twenty days after Curiosity landing

BY: ROSALIA PREISS

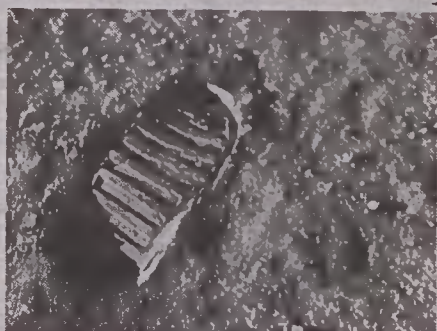
Just weeks after the landing of NASA's new Mars rover, one of NASA's brightest stars fell. 20 days after the landing of Curiosity, astronaut Neil Armstrong passed away due to complications from a cardiovascular operation.

Armstrong is best known as the first man to walk on the moon. On July 21, 1969, he stepped off the Apollo 11 on to the surface of the moon, stating the iconic words "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Armstrong was not the only NASA veteran to pass away in 2012. Janice Voss, director of the Kepler Space Observatory, Alan Poindexter, the pilot of the first two trips to the international space station, and Sally Ride, the first American woman in space, died this year.

Upon his passing, Armstrong's family issued this

statement: "For those who may ask what they can do to honor Neil, we have a simple request. Honor his example of service, accomplishment and modesty, and the next time you walk outside on a clear night and see the moon smiling down at



Neil Armstrong's footprint on the moon. Courtesy of NASA

you, think of Neil Armstrong and give him a wink."

NASA is continuing to move forward with new discoveries with the Mars Rover project.

Curiosity, NASA's newest rover, launched from Cape Canaveral on Nov. 26, 2011,

and made its first landing on Aug. 6, 2012. The rover traveled over 350 million miles to reach its targeted touchdown site.

The goals of the Curiosity rover include investigating the climate and geology of Mars, assessing whether or not the selected field site has conditions favorable for microbial life, examining the role of water on Mars, and studying planetary habitability in preparation for possible human exploration in the future.

Photos released by NASA from the Curiosity rover depict the stunningly rugged landscape of Mars. The rover captured Mount Sharp, its primary photography target, on film.

Curiosity gave NASA a glimpse at the incredible variety in terrain on Mars, with gravel fields, impact craters, dunes, and gaping canyons between hills and mesas.

Scientists discerned distinct layers in the

photographs, including clay-like minerals that only form in the presence of water. By studying the composition of the stratified rocks, scientists hope to gain knowledge on the former environment of the red planet.

Even at full speed, it will take the rover at least 100 days to reach its final destination.

During this time, one can expect more discoveries about Mars and its planetary climate, both in the past and now.



Curiosity takes its third drive on Mars

Courtesy of NASA