

One Of Those Rare Occasions Brings Three Prexy Candidates



5-Year Man on Campus
With Ellison Clary

This year's student body presidential election offers students here their widest voting choice since spring 1964. Three candidates are actively seeking the most prestigious campus office.

It's one of those rare local occasions when both the University Party and the Student Party have candidates. In addition, there is an independent hopeful.

Bill Billups of the UP, Phil Wilson of the SP, and independent Hank Heidenreich are vying for students' favor. All will be senior's next year.

Twenty-year-old Billups filed first for the office after copping the UP nomination in convention against competition from Phil Wilson and Joe McCorkle. He is certainly no stranger to the large majority of students.

Offices he's held run the gamut from various class positions to legislature committee jobs to consolidated student council. As a freshman he won the Bonnie E. Cone award. This year he is included in the students' Who's Who list from this campus.

Thus experience is a strong point for Billups. "Experience plus my desire to do the job well may give me an advantage over the other two candidates," he maintains.

"Holding the position of vice president taught me a great deal about the presidency," he says. "I worked closely with John (Gaither, present president) and we've exchanged suggestions all year.

Not Only Thing

"Experience is not the only thing that counts but it has taught me where to use my intelligence and ability more wisely and where I need to be firmer and more open minded. I have a wider scope and see things with more perspective now."

Billups and David Guy, UP chairman, got together on an eight-point platform last week. It includes the following:

Support for keeping the University Union open on weekends;

Immediate reform for the Judicial Act to remedy controversial procedures in the student court;

An academic calendar change which would place fall semester exams before Christmas;

The establishment of an inter-club council to aid in co-ordinating activities of various campus organizations and lubricate communications between them;

Extension of library hours on weekends;

More non-credit or pass-fail courses offered;

More efforts to present this university to the community as a whole;

Educating students to understand more fully what student government can do and encouraging them to bring their problems to it.

Billups makes it very clear he believes he will win the election but admits to worrying about possible repercussions brought on by the three-man race.

May Have Split

He agrees that Wilson "may have split the UP in some way" when he accepted the SP nomination after losing his quest for the UP nod. "But the party has usually been built around the man here," he quickly points out. "The variable has been the man rather than the party."

In regard to Heidenreich's appearance, he says he had heard rumors there would be an independent candidate so this wasn't too much of a surprise.

As do the other two candidates, Billups thinks he can win on the first ballot. However, "A runoff

is quite possible," he admits. "I can't count it out; I can't count on anything."

He says he plans to run what he calls "a personal campaign, meeting students." He says he'll use discretion in placing his signs. "They'll be large but there won't be one on every block of cement."

Thus the lean yet muscular crew-cut Billups, who hopes someday to become a college chaplain enunciated his positions. He ended his interview saying, "This is the way I am and how I want it."

Phil Wilson, who graduated from Concord High School in the same class with Billups, presents somewhat of a physical contrast to him. He seems to project the all-American look with his shining blonde hair, his blue eyes and fair complexion, and his bordering-on-heavy build.

Wilson says he rather expected to lost the UP's nomination. Therefore he had switching parties in mind before hand, he admits.

Saw Anxiousness

Of his new-found political backing, Wilson bubbles, "I definitely think the SP will give me good backing. I've never seen so much anxiousness in a convention out here before. We had about 50 people there."

"I think I can win after seeing that SP strong backing," he says. "I realize Bill is very qualified and if I hadn't gotten that strong backing I wouldn't have run."

Like Billups, Wilson had a feeling there would be a third challenger. "Hank's entry surprised me but I wasn't surprised that an independent filed," he explained.

Wilson is aware of the complications a third candidate brings. "Realistically I think there's a good chance of a runoff but I think I may win on the first ballot."

Again like Billups, Wilson has quite a bit of experience in campus offices and positions. He's been deeply involved with the yearbook since his sophomore year and is its managing editor this year. He is also junior class president and a legislature member and serves on several Union committees.

Experience is one of his major campaign points, he says, but "My big issue is the strengthening of presidential authority."

And this brings up the meat of his platform. "My platform is based on presidential authority for students. Since the president is elected his whole government should be made public through the newspaper or some other campus news media."

No Psychedelic

He has definite ideas about how he'll run his campaign. "I'll have a couple of big signs but mostly just small posters. There'll be no psychedelic posters and no flowers on them. It'll be a sophisticated campaign."

Hank Heidenreich is the independent runner, the man who threw the monkey wrench into the orderly two-party election which had been forming.

A veteran of four years of marriage and the father of a boy and a girl, 21-year-old Heidenreich spent two years at Central Piedmont Community College after his graduation from East Mecklenburg high school.

This is his first year on this campus and unlike Billups and Wilson, he has little experience.

But what he worries about most is the fact that he is relatively unknown by students. "This definitely hurts but in the last two weeks I've made tremendous strides," he says.

He emphasizes that he is an independent and not an ACTION can-

didate as some have tagged him. "I am an independent; I want individual backing."

Why did he decide to pitch his hat into the ring? "As the situation stood last weekend," he explains, "I felt if I entered I'd be the only person able to lead all the students toward building a large university."

Generally, his platform is constructed around two major points. First, he maintains, "There should be more student involvement in determining the quality of education we get here."

Set Patterns

He explains the second point as follows:

"At the large universities around the country, students are involved in questions like the free

university, the pass-fail system, etc. We must get involved here to be a large university. Student politicians now have the responsibility to set pattern for growth. These patterns are for ourselves and those who come after."

He harbors some sharp-focused ideas as to the president's role. Specifically, he feels, "The president should represent all students while acting as a liaison between students and the administration and using his position responsibly but effectively for the welfare of all students."

Heidenreich thinks students who are dissatisfied with campus political procedures will identify with him. "We need a new surge for development," he contends.

The thought of a second vote doesn't cross his mind, so he says.

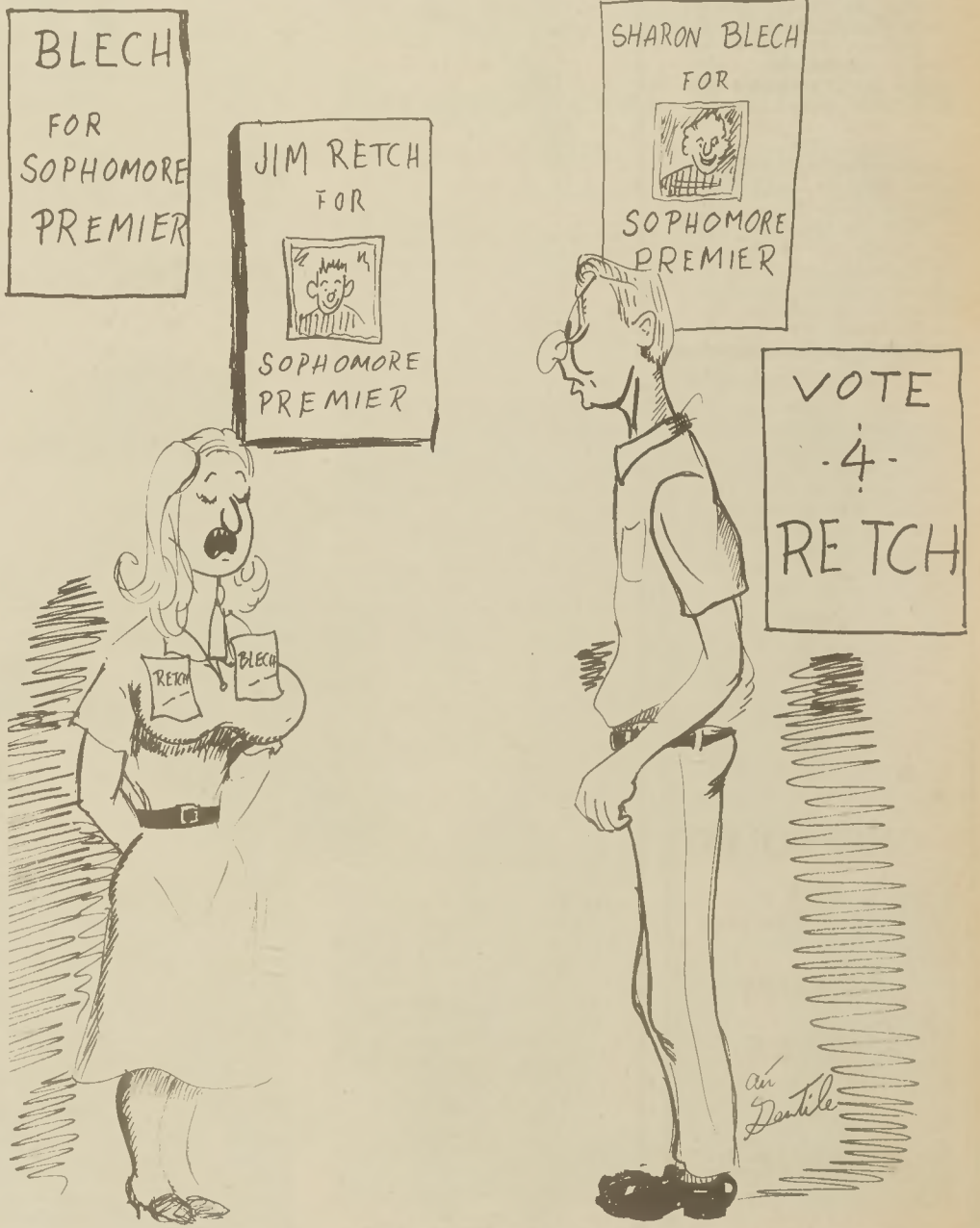
"I'm campaigning to win on the first vote."

He plans a campaign based "on the issues." He says he's been very encouraged while talking to students. "I don't have to pull any stops. It'll all be in good taste."

3 Confident Men

So there you have the three confident men. Two of them can't possibly realize their goals but only time will tell which two these are to be.

It's my personal opinion that there will be a runoff election and that the man eliminated in the first vote will enjoy a pretty sizeable say in who finally becomes the next president.



"I say give both candidates equal time..."