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The Daily Tar Heel

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New meaning for BCC

B-C-C: What do those three letters stand for? For years, we've known them to stand for the black cultural center, a University-funded organization that educates members of the campus community and adds to the academic experience at UNC.

But recent events draw a different meaning for the three letters: Bureau for Canceled Cooperation. That's because, while members of the chancellor's working group and the Black Cultural Center Advisory Board are close to completion on planning a free-standing BCC, they came one step closer Monday to ditching the entire process.

As Harvey Gantt pointed out, the process is subject to sabotage if supporters of the center and members of the working group can't come together to pick a site on campus. After much deliberation, including agreement on a \$6.9 million, 48,000-square-foot building, two potential sites remain — one between Wilson Library and Dey Hall and another between Coker Hall and the Bell Tower.

Both sites are near the center of campus and accessible. The BCC Advisory Board wants the Wilson site, while Provost Richard McCormick and his colleagues support the Coker site.

Unfortunately, both sides are debating the matter like children. Members of the advisory board present only symbolic reasons for wanting the Wilson site,

repeatedly citing the history of slavery (an issue totally unrelated, considering unanimous support on the working group for a free-standing BCC).

They say the issue is *not* what's best for the University but what's best for the BCC. Why don't they point out that what's best for the BCC is what's best for the University? Why not emphasize that the academic nature of the center might require a location on the main academic quad?

Meanwhile, McCormick and architect Gordon Rutherford are incapable of explaining why they support the Coker site, other than to say the BCC will look better there. In addition, McCormick says he can't understand how he's lost credibility, even after acknowledging he wasn't totally up-front about potential conflicts on the Wilson site.

Why can't administrators *prove* to the community that the Coker site is indeed the most feasible, while a larger science building would use the Wilson site to its full potential?

This debate should focus on facts — the size and feasibility of each site — not on emotion, personal insults and symbolism.

That would be understandable if the BCC were only a dream or hypothetical topic of debate. Instead, the emotional browbeating and saber rattling have become barriers to finalizing a stand-alone BCC.

Wasteful activism

Triangle activists and residents who are protesting the possible construction of a low-level radioactive waste dump in Chatham County might have a rude awakening when December rolls around.

Since North Carolina is a member of the Southeast Compact, an eight-state organization that jointly disposes of nuclear waste, the state has committed to find a suitable waste site by Dec. 31 of this year. The Low-Level Radioactive Waste Authority has narrowed the state's site selection process down to two sites — one in Chatham County and another in Richmond County.

Naturally, both counties' residents have their fingers crossed that their area will not receive the nod, but the "not-in-my-backyard" mentality of some Triangle activists has to end.

Some environmental activists are urging Chatham residents to protest to the General Assembly and their prospective legislators. They maintain that choosing the Chatham site is considered environmental racism because the area is a predominately black, rural area. Some environmentalists charge that the government knowingly chose the Chatham site because its rural residents would not, and could not, organize a full-fledged protest.

These activists need to realize that 'rural' is not a synonym for 'incapable'. Chatham residents are capable of protesting on their own and do not need activist handouts.

The primary factor activists seem to be missing is that the waste authority chose *both* sites because rural land is less expensive and because fewer people are located close to the sites. Rural areas simply are easier places to construct large waste sites, nuclear waste or otherwise. This would explain why downtown Raleigh is not on the state's top-two list.

The only open question is the geological soundness of the sites. While the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Authority has assured residents and N.C. legislators that the Chatham area is free of geological hazards, other independent geologists are researching the site for their own peace of mind.

If the Chatham site is not geologically suitable, then the state immediately should pursue another area. But if all physical aspects of the Chatham site are acceptable, the state should pursue its plans to meet the Southeast Compact obligations.

In this case, residents and activists should lose the childish "not-in-my backyard" attitude and accept the low-level waste dump.

Health care gets a booster

At a time when 35 million people do not have any health insurance, there's no question that some type of health reform is needed.

Where better to start than with youngsters? President Clinton's proposal to expand the immunization program by spending \$300 million is the first step that need to be taken to develop some type of comprehensive health plan for all Americans, including those who are too young to vote.

Although \$300 million seems like a lot of money, no price is too high to pay for the lives of children. Clinton's purpose is to guarantee that every child is immunized and to put a stop to high cost of vaccines, which provide pharmaceutical companies with "profits at the expense of children."

By providing children with free vaccines, the government is ensuring that all of the 2-year-olds in the United States will be fully vaccinated. Currently, only half of the population adequately is immunized. Obviously, the number of children who

die each year from measles and other epidemics will drop. Three hundred million dollars is peanuts compared to the money the government will save by not having to treat children *after* they are deathly sick.

The program will establish a tracking system to follow up on children who have not been immunized. School systems also should play an important role in ensuring that the program is a success. The school system provides a comprehensive infrastructure through which county and state health services easily can access the nations children.

Free booster shots for everyone is not only a sign that this country cares about its young but that it also is looking out for the future. By taking steps now, government is ensuring that it won't have to spend a lot of money later.

Clinton's immunization proposal is one of the most intelligent spending programs to ever come out of Washington. All citizens should hope this is a sign of what is to come.



Duke is expensive while Carolina is priceless

Charlie Higgins
Wednesday To The Point

In the spring of 1989, I faced a decision all of us here at UNC faced at some point. Where would I go to school? While my blood always has run Carolina blue, the decision hinged on much more than the fact that I was browbeaten into being a Carolina fan before I could even walk. Yes, I knew the words to "Hark the Sound," and yes, I could name all 13 members of the 1978 basketball team. But like many of you, I considered some expensive private schools.

And like many of you, for me, the cost factor played into the calculus of the decision. Carolina is so dirt cheap that it's almost unbelievable. In hindsight, it was not even a decision at all — of course I would come to Chapel Hill. In the process, I would save tens of thousands of dollars.

Carolina is not only a steal for North Carolina residents but also for many out-of-state residents. We attract students from all over the country because of the high educational quality to dollar ratio. And while our school was chartered to educate the sons and daughters of North Carolina, the environment is enhanced greatly by the presence of top-notch out-of-state students.

But in this era of budget woes, the historically low tuition is threatened. Everywhere we look, the economic problems inherent in our University manifest themselves. The Academic Affairs Library has lost a substantial part of its buying power. Faculty salaries lag far behind those of peer institutions, impairing our ability to attract and retain national-caliber professors. Units throughout the University deal daily with dreadfully inadequate facilities. Classes become harder to enroll in as fewer and fewer sections are taught. The list goes on.

It becomes impossible to look at tuition without evaluating other complex, related problems. Unstable state appropriations, inadequate facilities and resources, the constitutional provision that the cost of education remain as low as practicable and inconsistent priorities form a financial Gordian knot. As a result, our University suffers from a severe budget crisis.

Recently, the state legislature embarked on a bold new attempt to stream-

line the operations of state government. An outside auditor conducted the Government Performance Audit and submitted numerous proposals to the General Assembly for consideration. One of those recommendations was to bring tuition levels up to 25 percent of the total cost of education for students — North Carolina residents currently pay around 11 percent.

But the logic is flawed. The Government Performance Audit Committee's recommendation is geared only toward generating additional operating revenue for the state — NOT toward increasing available funding for UNC-system schools. Were the proposals enacted, it does not automatically follow that UNC will receive additional state appropriations. As the proposal currently stands, the tuition increase will not be matched with adequate financial aid provisions. In effect, such a substantial tuition increase amounts to little more than a higher education user tax.

Proponents will claim that a tuition increase will cover the cost of increasing enrollments across the UNC system. That might be true. In such a case, schools with steadily increasing enrollment will benefit. Not Chapel Hill — our enrollment is relatively fixed. In short, the marginal return realized in Chapel Hill by any tuition increase will be minimal to nil.

To top it off, tuition already has been raised twice since I've been in school. When the class of 1993 enrolled as freshmen in the fall of 1989, tuition for in-state students was \$302, and fees were \$201.75. The total cost of education was \$503.75. But for this spring semester, tuition was \$411, and fees \$231.10. Total cost: \$642.10. An additional 20-percent increase would jack tuition up another \$82.20 per semester, not to mention the possibility of student-initiated fee increases. As you can see, the cost of education for North Carolina residents is rapidly escalating.

And for out-of-state undergraduates, the proposed increase would be even more staggering. Currently, a nonresi-

dent student pays \$3,708.90 per semester in tuition, plus the \$231.10 in student fees. A 20-percent increase would result in an additional \$741.78, bring the total for tuition plus fees to \$4681.78 per semester. Tuition and fees alone would amount to more than \$9,000. Not to mention the cost of books, food, housing and all the rest. All of a sudden, UNC does not look so attractive compared to the expensive private schools.

These increases pale in comparison to the proposed increase for graduate students — 50 percent. I'll let you do the math.

The proposed tuition increase, if enacted, would move higher-quality education further from the financial reach of many North Carolina residents and would undoubtedly hinder our ability to compete with other schools in recruiting cream-of-the-crop nonresidents. We will, in short, receive less bang for our educational buck, while the state uses our tuition dollars to fund other government programs. We must let members of the state legislature know that students here — all of whom are old enough to vote — unequivocally oppose a tuition increase.

Join the fight. Write and call your state legislators. Get your parents and friends to write and call. Preferably, call them during the weekend while they are home in Raleigh. And come to a meeting at 4 p.m. today in Room 205 of the Union so we can make plans to let people in Raleigh know just how strongly we do feel about another tuition increase.

My time here in Chapel Hill has been priceless. I would not trade it for anything. I've gotten a wonderful education at a Carolina Blue Light Special price. But if the legislature adopts a proposal to raise tuition without guaranteeing that the added revenue is appropriated straight back to Chapel Hill for academic programs and financial aid — and not to Broughton Hospital for mental health care, for example — our University will start down the slippery slope toward financial inaccessibility.

Charlie Higgins is student body vice president and a senior political science major from Charlotte.

READERS' FORUM

BCC discussion needs more rational discourse

To the editor:
I would like to thank Harvey Gantt for his appropriate response to the BCC Advisory Board. He correctly noted that Margo Crawford *et al.* are completely unwilling to negotiate. Fortunately, Gantt can assert this truth without being labeled a racist, although when Chuck Stone stood up for common sense, he was promptly called an "Uncle Tom" at the Spike Lee speech. Please, enough of these cheap shots.

Plainly, the BCC Advisory Board needs a reality check. BIG HINT: It is time to drop your infatuation egos and grandstanding and engage in the art of compromise. This might come as a surprise to you, but actually you might be more successful in reaching your goals if you don't try to play this whole thing out in the pages of *The Daily Tar Heel*.

I do not claim to be free of prejudice, nor should anyone whether they be black, white, gay, straight, Republican, Democrat or whatever. I also do not want to appear as an apologist for the administration, for I think there have been some errors committed by them along the way. What I do wish to stress is that Gantt is speaking with the voice of reason. Please, listen to him.

MARK DONAHUE
Class of 1990
Chapel Hill

Letters should address issues, not personalities

To the editor:
This letter is in response to Ms. Zingaro's letter to the editor, ("First thing in revolution: We kill all the lawyers", Feb. 12) and those that preceded it that *allude* to a debate on the tuition issue. As much as I enjoy reading our

distinguished students sniping at one another about their families and grammar, it is evident that the central issue has been overshadowed by personal attacks. This seems to be a pattern in Readers' Forum. Whenever an issue sparks debate, the opposing viewpoints are voiced with an emphasis on attacking those persons not sharing their opinion, and objective arguments are relegated to an aside. Whether you agree with Ms. Happer's view on tuition, she made an argument based on the issue. The letters that followed were personal attacks and counters. If the University community could put aside the bickering, name calling, etc., maybe we could have a constructive airing of views that leads to understanding and resolution of the issues that are so divisive.

R. STEVENS
Graduate
Law

Gish not alone in battle against modern ignorance

To the editor:
I am writing to express my solidarity with the gentleman from the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship who could not find a UNC professor to take on his champion of creationism, Dr. Duane T. Gish, in a debate. We at CAFFE (Carolinians Associated For a Flat Earth) have had exactly the same problem. No UNC professor has had the courage to take me on in a debate regarding the shocking conspiracy of rounder-earthers.

As everyone knows, Galileo, Copernicus and those other closet atheists made up the preposterous theory of the round earth in the 16th and 17th centuries. Yet what could be more plain than that the earth is flat! I have been in Saskatchewan wheat fields, and I can tell you, looking as far as I could, all I saw was FLATNESS! How could anyone reject such self-evident proofs?

Ptolemy and the early church fathers agreed to this. More shocking yet, many today do not realize that the earth is not only flat, it is also square. Would God make a round earth, I ask you ...

My expertise in this field has been clearly established (see my letter published in *The Daily Tar Heel*). Yet the local learned doctors not only refuse to debate me, they are even rude about it. One astronomer said, "Every idiot knows that the world is spherical." Well, now I know that these scientists are kidding themselves, since *this* idiot doesn't know that.

If you want to join this debate, call me at 555-1212. It's not my number, but at least the operator will speak with you rationally.

NICHOLAS BULL
Graduate
Philosophy

Driving a car at 200 mph can't possibly be a sport

To the editor:
I am writing to protest the placement of Monday's article, ("Future of 24-hour Daytona tradition uncertain", Feb. 15) written by Zachary Albert. The article in question dealt specifically with a race. I am hoping that it was a mere oversight that this article was placed on the sports page. While some folks might actually believe that racing is some form of crude entertainment, it is obviously not a sport. There is no skill involved, plus it's boring. As a true sports fan, I should hope that Zachary will in the future write about some real sports. If this is not possible, move him to another section, or better yet, send him back to "Corn County," or "Tobacco Hill," or wherever it is he's from.

KEVIN BEAMAN
Junior
Applied Science

The Daily Tar Heel

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Layout: Lisa Swayne.

Editorial Production: Stacy Wynn, manager; Lisa Reichle, assistant.

Distribution and Printing: Village Printing Company.

The Daily Tar Heel is published by the DTH Publishing Corp., a non-profit North Carolina corporation, Monday-Friday, according to the University calendar. Callers with questions about billing or display advertising should dial 962-1163 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Classified ads can be reached at 962-0252. Editorial questions should be directed to 962-0245/0246.

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