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The Daily Tar Heel

88th year of editorial freedom

Election forum

Readers comment on issues and candidates

No study = no increase

More than a year ago, the Board of Trustees asked the University to complete a study of the costs and efficiency of the Student Health Service. That was after a \$35 increase in student health fees the previous year and before a \$20 increase this year. The University, specifically the Office of Student Affairs, still has not begun that study, much less completed it, yet students are now being asked to pay another \$4 increase for next year.

This situation may prompt some students to wonder if this is just another breakdown in the relationship between Student Affairs and Student Government, yet another example of the lack of concern on the part of the administration for the opinions and concerns of students. We, however, remain optimistic, certain that Student Affairs will have that report ready before the Trustees meet to discuss the increase.

The \$130 health fee students now pay for medical care here is the highest in the 16-campus UNC system, and administrators have not shown enough wisdom in dealing with numbers to justify a further hike in health fees. For the fiscal year 1979-1980, administrators predicted a final deficit in the student health services budget of \$76,000—actually the final deficit was only \$6,703. For this year the health services expected a surplus of \$92,000—actually the surplus was \$172,000. In other words, in the last two years, the health services have done a whole lot better than they ever thought they would—\$150,000 better.

Now, these same health service administrators are predicting a \$70,000 deficit for next year and are asking us to pump an additional \$80,000 into the health service program to compensate for this loss. Editors of the *Tar Heel* are generally not business or statistics majors—difficult math problems tend to be as easy for us to comprehend as the Oklahoma wishbone. But even we can see that if after each of the last two years, the student health service has finished roughly \$80,000 better than their earlier pessimistic predictions, there is good reason to assume that next year they will fare as well. Thus, we ask the health service to have a little confidence in itself—precedent has shown that the health service will probably live up to its reputation for beating the odds. A smart bettor would scoff at the predicted \$70,000 deficit for next year; if the health service maintains its trend of underestimating itself by \$80,000, then no doubt it will finish with a \$10,000 surplus next year, even without the additional money of struggling students.

This year we have faith in our Board of Trustees—there is a good chance that they will take one look at the proposed increase and tell Student Affairs to compile its report on the health services first. They will remember asking for the program and cost assessment of the services and, like us, wonder what became of the needed study. Inflation is an overwhelming problem these days and health care across the country has been hit hard by rising costs. Indeed, in the final analysis, the fee increase might be justified, but certainly not until a careful study of the health service has been completed and administrators have proven themselves reliable financial seers.

Hello, Toronto

The 39 University of Toronto exchange students who arrived in Chapel Hill Friday could hardly have picked a better weekend to visit. Given the goings-on associated with Halloween, the Oklahoma game and the presidential election, they should be steeped in American culture by the time they leave, which is the point of the whole exchange.

The Toronto-UNC exchange began in 1959 as a sort of junket for Student Government types. Now groups of 40 or so make the annual pilgrimage down to Chapel Hill and up to Toronto, and this weekend it was the Canadians' turn to visit. Their UNC counterparts threw a Halloween party Friday and planned activities through Monday including a banquet at the home of Chancellor Christopher Fordham and seminars on American culture and politics given by UNC professors.

The Toronto students have already formed some impressions of North Carolina and Chapel Hill, however. They were amazed that a single football game could elicit so much interest from so many for so long; UT games generally draw about 5,000 of a student body of 55,000. They are also eager to see an American Election Day, although the possibility of a Ronald Reagan presidency has some of them worried.

This kind of cultural empathy, again, is what the Toronto Exchange is out to foster. We welcome the Toronto students warmly, certain that their next few days here will prove educational to Canadians and Carolinians alike.

To the editor:

I generally agree with your endorsement of Gov. Jim Hunt for re-election, and plan to vote accordingly. But how, in one paragraph, can you couple Hunt's decision to reduce the sentences of the Wilmington 10 with his refusal to offer "politically expedient solutions to difficult problems"? At the time of his decision Hunt faced just such a problem; not only had the core divided North Carolina citizens, but it had also attracted national, even worldwide attention. What better way to avoid alienating a segment of the state's voters than to take such a middle-of-the-road, non-committal stance?

By refusing to yield to the pressures from those people supporting a pardon, as well as from those who opposed any change in the sentences, Hunt effectively removed the issue from this election's polemics and closed potential political watershed.

Hunt indeed has many strengths which establish him as the superior candidate, but refusal to resort to political expediency is not one of them.

Mac D. Bishop
1802 S. Lakeshore Dr.

For Cobey

To the editor:

As a staunch Democrat, and an informed supporter of President Carter, I would like to urge UNC students to vote on Tuesday.

You often hear politicians say vote for the man and not the party. Believing in the two party system, I never take that very seriously, but, in the case of the race for Lt. Governor in North Carolina, I must sway. Former UNC Athletic Director Bill Cobey, who has for the most part been abandoned by the Jesse Helms Congressional Club, has waged an un-Republican-like positive campaign. Because of his administrative success at UNC, his sensitivity to the needs of black and white, male and female student-athletes and because of his positive campaign tactics, he has convinced this straight-party voter to vote for the man—Bill Cobey.

Bert Woodard
615 E. Rosemary St.
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514

Bus referendum

To the editor:

I couldn't agree more with the last paragraph of Ray Warren's column, "Carrboro should avoid more tax increases," (*DTH*, Oct. 30), concerning the Carrboro public transportation referendum. It is necessary that we say "yes" to a more stable method of budgeting our public transportation system than federal revenue sharing can provide.



I also agree with his admonition to the Carrboro Board of Aldermen that we should not equate the power to use money for public transportation as an approval to raise taxes. I certainly don't.

In spite of my agreement with his conclusions, there were some statements in the article that may be misleading. Carrboro's present tax rate may be high when compared to North Carolina as a whole, which Warren did state, but it is low when compared with taxes in our geographic area. Carrboro's present tax rate is only \$1.10 per \$100 valuation. The Chapel Hill rate is \$1.31, city of Durham is \$1.25, and Durham County and Orange County are approximately \$1.17 and \$1.095 respectively.

The county rates vary somewhat depending upon the particular fire district. City residents do not pay the fire district tax. While Chapel Hill and Orange County have raised their tax rates, Carrboro has maintained the same tax rate for the past five years. This kind of fiscal responsibility merits the voters' trust.

Public transportation is a necessity for many segments of our town. Some routes serve predominately University of North Carolina students, who are a very important source of tax and other revenues to our town. Other routes, however, serve predominately working people. Even those people who drive a car or bicycle on Carrboro's streets benefit by the reduction of traffic because others use public transportation.

One must also remember that public transportation also means transportation for handicapped people.

We have a moral and legal obligation to make our town accessible to everyone.

Remember that the effect of this referendum is to authorize the town to budget its public transportation expenses from tax revenue rather than uncertain general revenue sharing funds, as it is done now. This does not mean an automatic increase in taxes.

For a stable public transportation system in Carrboro, I urge a "yes" vote for the Carrboro referendum on Tuesday, Nov. 4.

Steven J. Rose
Carrboro Alderman

Reagan the charlatan

To the editor:

In the short space of some 10 weeks, Ronald Reagan has:

- said pollution was substantially under control.
- said he never said such a thing (a few hours later).
- led the Republican Party away from a two-decade commitment to the Equal Rights Amendment that would help American women achieve equality under the law.
- called the Vietnam War "a noble cause."
- made tons of political hay by castigating President Carter for Carter's refusal to take part in a three-way debate.
- shifted his economic game plans and projections so often that few people can now say what he does stand for.
- sent George Bush to Peking and seized the occasion to promote an

undoing of a China policy painstakingly engineered by President Nixon and Ford (and acutely embarrassing Bush).

• sallied forth recklessly with public statements about U.S. policy toward Iran, which could have jeopardized the lives of the 52 American hostages.

• indulged in saber-rattling with the Soviets by talking favorably about an arms buildup and questioning the value of the SALT talks, then cried "foul" when President Carter suggested that Reagan's attitudes could trigger a war.

Obviously, the man is an actor still, not a statesman or a serious political thinker. He is glibly going through the motions of playing the role of presidential candidate, while utterly failing to come to terms with the worlds of economics, realpolitik or statesmanship in which he expects to maneuver. Reagan is a charlatan of the most dangerous sort.

If we think he will behave less erratically or less mindlessly in the White House than he has behaved on the campaign trails, we delude ourselves, sadly.

John Patrick Grace
Chapel Hill

ERA

Spring of 1982 is the deadline for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Because the North Carolina General Assembly's 1982 session will be a budget session and held during the summer months, its 1981 session will be the last opportunity we have to gain passage.

In the last several years, the ERA has fared well in the House but not in the Senate. A solid majority of votes in the Senate is essential for passage of the Amendment in North Carolina.

A vote for Charles Vickery for state Senate is a vote for ERA.
A vote for Russell Walker for state Senate is a vote for ERA.
Vote Nov. 4.

Joe Hackney
candidate, state House
Verla Insko
first vice chair,
Orange County Democratic Party

Carla House
former UNC professor
Representative Trish Hunt

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Chapel Hill

Bobette Eckland
Chapel Hill



A lesson in humility

Masters of the obvious are wretched pests

By DAVID POOLE

They're everywhere, I tell you, everywhere.

They sit in my classes, they work where I eat, they always stand in front of me in line or sit behind me at football games.

They are the masters—masters of the obvious. Masters of the obvious are the people who pipe up in class and answer the perfectly obvious answers to questions everyone knew the answer to anyway.

Their mastery of their subject is amazing. I sat in a class once and listened for 15 minutes to a guy tell a political science professor that the United States Congress was made up of a House and a Senate and how that was the greatest thing since sliced bread. This guy actually came out and said that direct election of U.S. Senators gave the voters more of a voice in the political process. And he thought that he was the first person in the world who ever thought that.

One of the quickest ways to spot a master of the obvious is to hear somebody analyze the muggy weather by saying, "It's not the heat, it's the humidity."

I sat in front of a guy at a football game one time who really knew the obvious. He told the young lady who had accompanied him to the game that it was important for Carolina to establish its running game. Then, when one team had a fourth and goal from the

one with the score tied late in the game, he proclaimed that this would be a key play. He was simply amazing.

Some of the masters don't like to show off their knowledge of the obvious, so they ask questions which, if you answer, will confirm what they already knew.

Take, for example, the people who answer the phone for a local pizza delivery service. "Yes, we're busy right now, could you hold?" they ask. It's perfectly obvious that no one who isn't absolutely famished would eat this rotten pizza anyway, so it's a question they already know the answer to.



Anyway, this master comes back on the phone and takes your order. Then he pops his second jewel. "Okay," he says, "and would you like your two free Cokes?" Just once, I think I'll say, "No, just pour them out for me."

Another time these folks get me is when I go into a local fast food restaurant and order for most of North Campus.

"Yes, I'd like 32 cheeseburgers, 9 hamburgers, 41 orders of fries, nine chocolate shakes, 30 large Cokes and two medium Tabs please," I say.

"Fine, sir," the master behind the counter will say, "that comes to \$79.46. Is that to go or eat here?"

One of these days, when someone asks me a question like that, I'm going to have the nerve to say, "I'll eat that here, just back the truck up to my table and dump it there."

I walked to the *DTH* office one day a few weeks ago through a drizzling rain. My shirt was spotted by the raindrops and I knew someone was going to ask me if it was raining outside. Someone did. "No," I answered, "I have a new hobby. I spit up into the air and run around underneath it when it falls."

There are times when people who are otherwise tolerable lapse into periods where they grasp control of the obvious. My roommate isn't obnoxious all the time, but once last semester he really asked a good one.

I had gotten out of bed about 3 a.m. and was on my hands and knees in the bathroom burping myself inside out. Suddenly, my roommate stuck his head out from behind the door of his room and asked "Hey man, are you sick or something?"

He's fine now and the doctors say there shouldn't be any permanent damage because my hand around his neck only cut off the air supply for a short time.

David Poole, a senior journalism major from Gastonia, is assistant sports editor and columnist for The Daily Tar Heel.

The Daily Tar Heel

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