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The Daily Tar Heel

92nd year of editorial freedom

Building the expedient solution

By PAUL PARKER

For many students, coming back to school is a pleasant return from a deserved summer. For most, however, it is a renewal of an old battle: trying to find a place to park. A record 2,000 students have applied for limited hardship parking permits — most of which are located in the infamous, remote F-lot near the Student Activities Center. Faculty and staff members continue to complain that available parking space on campus is both inconvenient and scarce. An amazing 61,000 parking tickets were issued last year.

With the campus parking problem having reached critical proportions, one would have to wonder how anyone could oppose building a parking deck on the Bell Tower lot — seemingly the easy way out. What could be better than providing 2,700 centrally located parking spaces? After all, the two main criticisms of such a plan have been readily rejected. The \$14 million price tag had seemed prohibitive, but for such a deck the Educational Foundation (Rams Club) recently has shown interest in helping to defray most of the costs involved. Secondly, the assertion that a parking deck would take away from the natural beauty of the land hardly seems valid — the current black asphalt lot that would be covered by the deck is hardly a piece of art.

Parking problems solved! Seems too good to be true? It is. A comparison of costs and benefits implies that the construction of a parking deck on the Bell Tower lot would be undesirable and unfortunate. These points must be considered:

- The University traditionally has been porcupine in its commitment to the positive relationship that exists between buildings and remaining open space. Though the deck itself would not cover any existing "green space," the access roads that would have to be built in order to accommodate the traffic flow would mean the removal of trees on the south side of Kenan Stadium. The increased volume of traffic in this concentrated area would result in increased air pollution and congestion. Automobile, pedestrian and bicycle mobility would be greatly reduced.

- The construction of a deck is a major long-term land use commitment and would preclude that any academic buildings could be built in that space. A deck would allow little flexibility to respond to changing parking demands. As



Coming to a campus near you?

construction on South Campus continues, so changes the central focus of the campus. The deck would do little to meet the growing parking demand on South Campus.

We can hardly afford to lose the current 700 spaces of the Bell Tower lot. Construction of a 2,700-space deck would take at least two years. The 700 spaces would be lost for that time and the entire net gain is only 2,000 spaces. If the existing resources could take care of the current demands of the Bell Tower lot, then it would seem that an additional 2,000 are not needed.

- Feasible solutions to the parking crisis have been suggested, yet remain unimplemented. An extensive study by the Department of CLity and Regional Planning for the Office of Business and Finance has, in addition to providing the criticisms of the Bell Tower deck plan, suggested four other management options that would work to resolve many of the current parking headaches. Given the criticisms against constructing a parking deck, these options should be given full attention.

- What to do? The University currently does not have explicit goals with regard to parking or campus construction. According to the "Delegation of Duty and Authority to the Board of Trustees" as adopted by the Board of Governors, the Board of Trustees is responsible

for "preparing and maintaining a master plan for the physical development of the institution, consistent with the total academic and service mission of the institution. . . ." Though a stated land use policy is being developed, one does not currently exist. Without such a policy, even under the best management, the University is forced to look narrowly at current needs instead of planning appropriately for the future. This assertion can be evidenced by the rapidly growing maze of buildings that seems to bear little similarity to one another.

Before further campus construction is approved, the University must complete an appropriate land use policy and master plan for this campus. As Arthur C. Nash, the University's architect in 1920 and one of the developers of the most recent comprehensive campus plan (vintage 1921), stated: "An official plan for the University's future growth can be best regarded as a sort of Architectural Constitution — subject to amendments now and then; but of value chiefly as a stabilizing influence, and as a valuable break upon popular fads and fancies, as they come and go."

Paul Parker, a senior international studies and French major from Jacksonville, Fla., is student body president.

Fancy but futile flight

The Reagan administration operates in fairly predictable ways, and we have certainly seen the following pattern before: The administration feels it has alienated a certain bloc of voters . . . the administration extends a token gesture to this bloc, knowing it may only recover the favor of a few in the group but banking on the appeasement of those in tacit sympathy with the group . . . the administration goes on to brazenly extol its record in the area in question and to refer back to the token gesture as proof of sincerity and good intention. The end result — Reagan, the Teflon president, comes away smelling like Mr. Clean.

The objects of the Reagan administration's most recent appeasement efforts are teachers. Reagan announced Monday that he had directed NASA to carry an elementary or secondary-school teacher as the first civilian to travel into orbit aboard the space shuttle. He cited the integral role teachers play in guaranteeing the United States a future as proud as its past. NASA administrator James M. Beggs echoed the president's sentiments and assured skeptics that no political considerations, namely the silencing of those critical of Reagan's first-term budget cuts in the area of education, had influenced the decision. "(NASA) lives and dies on whether we can attract top talent," Beggs explained. "A good teacher can have an impact on an individual . . . all through his life." The statements made by Reagan and Beggs are indisputably true. The irony is how ignorant of these sentiments Reagan's policies have been.

That President Reagan's actions in this case are so out of sync with the actual improvement of this country's schools is lamentable, as is his administration's belief that the American public can be so easily placated by such tokenism. But we shouldn't be surprised. This is, after all, the administration of bipartisan committees, of hunger reports conclud-

ing there are no hungry people in the United States. This is the administration that paraded women like so many exotic animals at its convention in an undisguised attempt to show both voters and the Democrats, a party whose nomination of the first female vice presidential candidate is too significant and risky an act to be perceived as mere tokenism, that Republicans can be just as fair. Of course, the Reagan administration only intends to manipulate public opinion.

Education is the area most often targeted by politicians attempting to balance a budget. The effects of poor schools only manifest themselves years later and in subtle, immeasurable ways; in a democratic society where a politician may come up for re-election as often as every two years, our public servants cannot help but worry more about the short than the long term. But Reagan's budget cuts have exceeded those of most of his predecessors, and many of his gestures, such as his efforts to grant tax exemptions to citizens sending their children to private schools, cast serious doubts on his commitment to public education.

What we have in the place of actions are words. "When that shuttle lifts off," Reagan proclaimed Monday, "all of America will be reminded of the crucial role teachers and education play in the life of our nation." Bravo, Mr. President, for the overdue recognition. But is the fancy flight of one teacher going to help the more than 2 million other educators in the United States pay the rent? Is it going to redirect into the classroom the many talented college graduates who might once have chosen to teach but now find more lucrative careers? Is it going to improve ailing public school facilities and student-teacher ratios? Of course not. Reagan's directive is an empty, if benevolent, gesture. We might do well to remember in November that we will be choosing the leader whom we feel can best effect change, not the mere illusion of progress.

Beyond the realm of relevance

Print journalists, such as ourselves, take pleasure in ridiculing our TV counterparts. We laugh disdainfully at their preoccupation with appearance. We think them arrogant — more concerned with maintaining their perfectly coiffed hair, straight teeth and applied makeup than with preparing an informative product for their viewers.

Of course newspapermen, if pressed, will concede that the nature of television is largely to blame for the faults of electronic journalists. Because the time devoted to TV news is but about 10 percent of all total programming, balanced and complete coverage is too frequently sacrificed for that which is short and visually appealing. Yet still we act righteous, confident that we who are devoted to the printed word do a better job of informing the public. Perhaps the reason is envy: anchormen with their plastic smiles make the big bucks while newspaper reporters' meager salaries can hardly sustain the roaches in their apartments.

However, two recent incidents of television "reporting" suggest that our criticisms aren't all that harsh, our presumptions of superiority not that far off base.

The first occurred at the Democratic convention in San Francisco when CBS

correspondent Tom Bradley concocted his own little media event by bringing together Chicago Mayor Harold Washington and his much-loathed political opponent Eddie Vrdolyak for questioning. Neither knew the other would be present, and the result was an immediate display of fireworks. Outraged, Washington called Bradley the "lowest human being on Earth" while Vrdolyak smirked and CBS anchorman Dan Rather chuckled from his booth above.

The intention behind Bradley's staged show undoubtedly was the same that lay behind Sam Donaldson's recent persistence in hounding Nancy Reagan about what she thought of the furor over Geraldine Ferraro and John Zaccaro's finances. Nancy replied she wasn't qualified to answer — a legitimate response — but Donaldson continued on camera to press the point until Mrs. Reagan could only utter a helpless protest.

While a reporter should try his best to ferret out any information that the public has a right to know, enough's enough. Dogged pursuit of sensational moments, while not confined solely to television journalists, is especially rampant among that group. Our counterparts in network studios should stick to what's relevant.

By MARK STINNEFORD

The wizened instructor did little to alleviate the feeling of unease that's been dogging me lately.

"Most journalism students want to work for *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*, but the truth is that most of you will end up at a weekly newspaper somewhere," he said with a finality that suggested his words had come directly from the Book of Deuteronomy.

Not surprising, but not exactly the kind of thing that you want to hear. Most students reacted to the news about as enthusiastically as if they had just been told: "Hey, I just saw your sister heading for the Naval Base."

While the idea of writing pet obituaries for a mimeograph newspaper in Swain County doesn't thrill me, I've never been one to spend my evenings scanning the classifieds in Editor and Publisher.

From the start of my college career, I've vowed that I would seek learning for its own sake. If I wanted to go to school to earn a trade and make a bunch of money, I could have gone to a vocational institute like Sherrill's Academy of Hair Styling or worse, N.C. State.

But there's something about starting your senior year that makes you say: "Flush the intangible benefits of learning." Instead of singing along with the Tar Heel fight song this year, the senior class (except those ready to move into the family construction business) will want to shout the Jesse Jackson refrain: "We need JOBS."

For me, the employment worries started once I wrote my first resume and bought that darn tie. It's not so much getting a job that worries me. It's the uncertainty. Like whether the people in Swain County speak English and what the legal penalties are there if the people discover you're a UNC graduate.

I'm also bothered by the thought that I've done everything I can do in three years of college to get a job. Senior year seems a little superfluous. I sit in class and wonder why I need to memorize the name of the company that bought



the Voice of America transmitters after World War I. Many underclassmen, lulled into a false sense of security by the promise of a few more comfortable semesters here, probably don't question the need to ingest such trivia. They probably think it will help get a job with IBM.

So, it's no wonder I'm feeling a little detached. Still, there's more to my morale problem than concern about employment. If Jimmy Carter had to pick a name for my mental state, he'd call it "Senior Malaise." Things are so bad I can't even get worked up about textbook prices, which seem to be pegged to Israel's inflation rate. I don't even have the energy to cuss the Rams Club over the cluster of hereditary fiefdoms they're building on a hill behind Hinton James.

Like I said, it's bad. For the first time since I got here, I'm feeling my age a little bit. The

problem is not helped by the fact that I, as a 27-year-old navy veteran, am nine years older than the average member of the Class of 1988. Standing amidst a flock of freshmen in the bookstore the other day, I felt that I had been transported back to the 5th grade. I was worried that if I looked at any of the freshmen women too long I would be arrested on a morals charge. I swear one of them went to the counter and asked: "Where do you keep the phonics books?"

The increased emphasis on fashion on campus also has me looking for an exit. When I was in high school in the mid-1970s there wasn't any fashion. Anyone showing up wearing more than jeans, a T-shirt and maybe sneakers was laughed out of the school. In the Navy, clothing choice was also reasonably easy, for obvious reasons. Nowadays, people seem to

spend more time in front of a mirror than in the library. I've thought about catching up with the times, but I just can't bring myself to put on Bermuda shorts stretching to my knees or the regulation square-framed sunglasses complete with a wimpy headstrap.

Perhaps it's best that I'm leaving for Swain County. All the things that once seemed so quaint about Chapel Hill are getting on my nerves. I'm getting edgy in this blue powder puff world, where much of the citizenry act as if they're sewers run with ice cream. I feel like telling the street corner musicians to get a job.

I thought college would be a neat way to extend my youth a little longer, but now I feel that I've been around too long, like a bunch of overripe bananas that has become infested with fruit flies. The chimes on the Bell Tower seem to be saying: "Time to move on. Better get out in the real world before you hit retirement age." Old men in leisure suits may try, but you just can't extend your carefree youth forever.

Maybe this itch isn't such a bad thing. A child who sucks his thumb when he's six is considered abnormal. Perhaps it's equally abnormal to want to extend the pacifiers of keg parties and pom-poms into your late 20s. There's a time to turn to the realities of a steady job, financing an automobile, buying life insurance and fixing the plumbing. Yet, even with my urge to leave, I have the strange sense that four years of college is far too fleeting. My thoughts turn to courses unattended, lectures unattended, opportunities missed, women not asked out. During my years in the Navy, I dreamed of college as some glorious leap to adulthood, the chance to become literate, knowledgeable and well-spoken. Before summer returns again, I'll have my diploma, and I don't even know Spinoza from Mickey Spillane.

To bastardize the words of Lyndon Johnson: College is not the end. It's not the beginning. Maybe it's the beginning of the beginning.

I hope I keep that in mind as I head off to Swain County.

Mark Stinneford is a senior journalism major from Raleigh.

The Bottom Line

If most of us were to find a bottle with a worded message inside of it while on the beach this Labor Day weekend, we would immediately look downshore for the inebriated friend who obviously launched the glass vessel as a joke. Our skepticism, however, would be ill-founded. There are indeed message-filled bottles adorning, if not exactly permeating, the high seas. And they are there for a reason.

The reason, of course, has nothing to do with pseudo-Gilligans stranded on uncharted islands, but rather with the mapping of ocean currents. Researchers at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in Boston, Mass., used to drop would-be beverage containers in the North Atlantic to track currents. Between 1960 and 1979, the scientists at the Institute dropped 165,566 coded bottles into the North Atlantic. Counting on the

general willingness of people who happened across the bottles in the surf of Atlantic beaches, the Institute's messages included a plea for the finder to contact scientists at the Institute and inform them of the place and date of the bottle's discovery. The message also included promise of a 50¢ reward.

But only 10 percent of the original fleet has been recovered, and while the reason may be the interminable voyages of many of the bottles, human flippancy may also be to blame. Or so the case of a woman from Vero Beach, Fla., would seem to indicate. The woman, apparently displeased with the Institute's frugality in awarding, wrote them: "I have one of your bottles. I collect things of this sort when I find them. I also collect \$2 bills. That is what it will take to get the number off this bottle and where I found it."

Only in America.

Letters?

If you've got an opinion you'd like to share with us, whether it be in regards to an issue you've seen discussed on the back page or one that you feel merits discussion, we'd like to hear from you. That's what this page intends to be: an open format for the discussion of issues that touch our university, our state, our nation and our world. We also entertain criticism on stories you've read in the paper. Letters to the editor and editorial columns should be typed on sixty-character line and should be triple-spaced. Deadline for letters and columns is 2 p.m. on the working day before publication, and contributions should be placed in the green box outside the offices of *The Daily Tar Heel* in the Carolina Union annex.

