

The Daily Tar Heel

96th year of editorial freedom

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RHA's stress-saving suggestion

Freshmen may sleep more easily this spring if the Housing Advisory Board passes a proposal which would guarantee them a home for their sophomore year.

The advisory board will make a recommendation to Wayne Kuncel, director of housing, about how to best meet the demand for on-campus sophomore housing. But the board will have to choose between two proposals — one from the Department of University Housing and one from the Residence Hall Association.

Now, rising sophomores must go through the lottery process for housing along with juniors and seniors who wish to remain on campus. If they do not get in the residence hall they request, they are placed on a waiting list.

The Department of University Housing has already submitted a proposal to the advisory board which would guarantee rising sophomores the same room for another year. Unless they wanted to change rooms or residence halls, the sophomores would not have to go through the lottery with juniors and seniors.

RHA opposes the proposal because it could virtually eliminate the chances for juniors and seniors to live in "choice" dorms or in dorms they may have lived in for two to three years.

RHA proposes that sophomores go through the initial lottery process with juniors and seniors, to give all vying for popular spaces an equal chance. But for those sophomores who don't get in their first choice, RHA suggests the University guarantee a room on South Campus.

The RHA proposal takes advantage of the fact that the space problem varies from one part of campus to another. North Campus dorms are overcrowded, but South Campus dorms are not being filled to capacity.

Randolph said studies published in the housing department's literature show the second semester of a college student's freshman year to be the most stressful and the one which sets the tone for the rest of his or her college career. So, alleviating stress for freshmen during the spring lottery could increase the numbers of those who make it — successfully — through college.

RHA's proposal would not only help rising sophomores sleep more easily (in a residence hall) but also help the University fill South Campus dorms. The Housing Advisory Board should support the RHA proposal to ensure sophomores and the Department of University Housing a less stressful spring semester. — **Sandy Dimsdale**

Testing for more than grades

The University took a step in the right direction last week when Student Health Service (SHS) announced a new program created in response to the growing national epidemic of AIDS. When UNC students return to school next semester they will have a new service available to them — free and anonymous AIDS testing.

Studies have indicated that college students may face an above-average risk of exposure to the virus that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

The program represents a new University commitment to providing students with information that could help curb the spread of the AIDS virus on campus. UNC will become the first university in the state to offer such a testing service, which was established after students expressed a desire for AIDS testing in a study by the UNC AIDS Task Force.

The plan is a good one for two reasons. First, students will be able to undergo testing for the AIDS virus in

complete anonymity. Holman said student identification and registration cards would be placed in a sleeve showing only the student's picture and validation sticker. This should eliminate apprehension that some students might have about being tested.

Second, counseling both before and after testing will be a major component of the program. Counseling will focus on methods of protection or, if a student tests positive, appropriate measures for treatment. It also will be designed to help students better understand the results of the test.

The main purpose of the plan is to inform. The SHS will not keep statistics or records of any kind — the program has been instituted purely as a service to UNC students.

For students who are in a high-risk group or who believe they may have been exposed to the AIDS virus, the test is a must. Although there is yet no cure for AIDS, early knowledge is the key to containing its spread. — **Louis Bisette**

The right cause, the wrong way

It's a vote-a-thon of sorts. The senior class will be asking groups and businesses to pledge money for every vote students cast in the University's campus elections this spring. The money will go to the Make-A-Wish Foundation, an organization that grants the wishes of children with life-threatening illnesses.

The goal of the fund-raiser is primarily to raise money for charity, according to Steve Tepper, senior class president. Organizers also hope to get students thinking about voting and perhaps even to increase the traditionally abysmal voter turnout in campus elections.

The senior class deserves points for creativity and dedication. But while their hearts are in the right place, this fund-raiser has disturbing implications.

There's something disquieting about adding ulterior motives and special incentives to the voting process. The Make-A-Wish Foundation is certainly a worthy cause — but why turn voting into a business venture? This only cheapens and trivializes the voting process: It suggests that voting doesn't have intrinsic value. Voters should turn out because they are concerned, not for door prizes — even when the prizes are going to sick children.

Of course, giving up on raising money for this worthy cause is not the answer. The time and energy being

spent on this event could be better channeled into a more appropriate pledge-oriented fund-raiser. Luckily, the election day event is still in the planning stages. If the event's organizers are set on associating the fund-raiser with campus elections, they could place boxes near the polls into which students can drop their names — whether they vote or not.

The Elections Board has no jurisdiction over the matter, according to Wilborn Roberson, elections board chairman. Roberson added that the board can — and soon will — give the senior class an advisory opinion about the fund-raiser. But because no one can force the senior class to change its plans, the group should voluntarily restructure the event. This will no doubt be a hassle: Organizers have already billed the event to some potential sponsors as a pledge-per-vote arrangement.

Mixing money with votes is never a good idea, even when it benefits the best of causes. The great amount of time, energy and good intentions that would be invested in this fund-raiser would be better spent on a less questionable method.

Students who wish to learn more about Make-A-Wish can write to: Make-A-Wish Foundation of Eastern N.C., P.O. Box 32298, Raleigh, N.C., 27622; or call 919-755-5555. — **Matt Bivens**

A columnist's version of a Christmas Carol

David Rowell

Pardon Me

I must relate what happened to me the other day, and please, any similarities to Dickens are purely coincidental. Besides, it's not like I'm getting paid for this — how much originality do you expect for free?

I was in a terrible mood. The math exam I thought I had done so well on came back with the score of a hockey game; the motorheads next door had kept me up all night blasting the Motley Crue Christmas album *Hell is for Santa*. I had a 50-page philosophy paper to write on "Plato: the early years," and I had been turned down on 17 separate occasions for a little holiday snuggling because the mistletoe I was carrying was actually poison ivy.

"I've had it with school!" I shouted to passers-by. "I've had it with girls! I've had it with everything!"

An elderly woman ringing a bell for the Salvation Army stopped me and asked, "Why so glum? It's Christmas."

I looked her in the eyes and stepped on her toes. "Christmas?! What do I have to be merry about? You deck my halls, lady!"

I went back to the dorm to take a nap. Just as I was drifting off, I heard a low, blood-curdling voice. "You, David Rowell, will be visited by three ghosts."

I turned to look. It was the ghost of Ranzino Smith.

"Ranzino! What are you doing in my room? I thought you were playing ball in Pakistan."

"SILENCE! Three ghosts, David Rowell. The first will come by noon. Expect him. You have been warned."

"Ghosts? But I've got work to do."

"Noon today," he shrieked.

"Well, all right. Thanks, Z."

"Yeah man. Take it light." Then he disappeared.

Soon I left for my 12 o'clock class, muttering obscenities. I settled into my seat in 212 Greenlaw, but no one else showed up. Not even the teacher. Furious, I got up to leave and saw that someone had appeared in the front row.

"We're not having class," I said. Slowly the mysterious figure turned around. It was the ghost of Dick Crum. "Aw Dick, don't tell me you're the ghost of Christmas past," I exclaimed. "No offense, but I was hoping for someone a little more lively."

He had on headphones and apparently didn't hear a word. "All right," he said, motioning to me. "Let's go get 'em." We flew through the walls of Greenlaw and back to 1975, back to my old school. It was my second grade Christmas party.

"Look Dick, that's me over there. I'm doing the old reindeer and light bulb joke. You could tell I was going to be funny."

Dick turned to me. "You know, if I had just told them to punt in that Clemson game I think —"

"Dick, Dick, do you mind? This is my Dickens dream."

My teacher, Mrs. Clayton, spoke to the class. "All right. We're going to exchange

gifts now. You can give your gift to the person whose name you drew last week."

"Look Dick, it took me four days of wheeling and dealing to get Julia Rollins' name, but I got it. God I loved her. And she had my name, too. I know she did. This is great — watch."

I mingled through my stupid classmates and got to Julia. She looked great. She was wearing that blue dress, the one with the Peanuts characters on it. "Here Julia. I got your name. Merry Christmas. Do you wanna give me mine now, or should we sneak off somewhere and do long division?"

She snatched my present. "Butthead!" was her only reply.

"Wait a minute!" I yelled to Dick. "Something's wrong with the tape. I don't remember this happening."

He had on his headphones again and didn't hear a word. Dick was a boring ghost.

So there I stood alone in the corner, having poured out my heart and my hard-earned change for the type of girl who would like a guy just for the kind of lunchbox he had. Then Jeffrey Campbell, a veritable moron, came over. "Hey Dave! Hey Dave! I got your Christmas present. Want me to tell you what it is?" He had Kool-Aid stains around his mouth and pants that dangled around his shins. "Wait a minute." He rummaged through his dirty bag. "Here it is. Go 'head. Open it."

It was light, and I knew damn well what it was. I opened it. "Oh boy," I said drolly. "Nerf Hoop. How did you know?"

"My mom got it." Then he sneezed all over me, and I stood out in the hall, trying to get drunk off flat ginger ale.

Dick returned me to my seat in Greenlaw.

"You've got another one coming up in about an hour," he said. I didn't want him to stick around and chat, so I uttered the name Mack Brown to make him vanish.

I went back to my dorm and made a little lunch. Then, while brushing my teeth in the bathroom, I saw two feet appear under the stalls. Quickly I rinsed and headed for the door. Someone said, "Wwwwwait. I believe we have an appointment."

Out came an incredibly old-looking man, dusty and smelling like mothballs. "I'm your present of ghosts. Uh, Christmas ghost."

"My ghost of Christmas present."

"Something or other. Let's just get it over with."

"You know," I said, "I must admit I have no idea who you are."

"Gardner. O. Max Gardner. Wha's a matter boy, never take any Econ?"

"Never."

"There you have it." Off he took me to the DTH office. "And remember boy, they can't see or hear you."

"Gee, could we maybe stop by some sorority houses after this? It seems such a shame to waste all this here."

"Hush boy." There we were in Editor Jean Lutes' office, and the other columnists were there, all discussing their Christmas plans. Or so I assumed.

It was Yelverton who started. "Hey, did you guys all get the same cheap Christmas present from Dave?"

Williams mocked: "Boy Dave, how could I ever repay you. A blank tape. Having cash flow problems?"

"That's a practical gift!" I shouted.

Then McCuskey: "The sperm banks must not be laying out the cash he thought they would." They all went into hysterics. "Get me outta here," I said.

After that display, I was not ready to bear the ghost of Christmas future. Could it possibly be any worse than the present? I would soon find out.

In an hour a figure draped in black climbed through my window. It said nothing and held out its hand. We flew straight into the year 2000 — and straight to the car wash next to Go Jyu Karate.

A crew of men in orange canvas uniforms huddled together, drinking egg nog from a bag. There I was, wearing my blue graduation gown with my cap tilted back. I sat on the curb clenching a rag with frozen hands. My gown was wet and soapy.

"Hey Mr. Dave," one called out. "You going home for Christmas?"

My voice was strained and ragged. "Home? Otis, I am home."

Then a long, green car pulled into the lot. I grabbed a sponge and got to my feet. "Heads up!" I called to the men. "We got a Plymouth."

On the way home (we took a bus), I lifted the ghost's hood to reveal its identity. To my surprise, it was the ghost of Dale McKinley.

"Dale McKinley? What are you doing in my Dickens story?"

"Well," he said quietly, "there's nothing else really to do. I've protested everything. I got rid of the CIA. South Africa's not fighting, got intramurals now. The ghost gig came up, it gave me something to do."

When he brought me back, I was a changed man.

"Classes are wonderful!" I shouted across campus. "Every girl I've ever known was completely trustworthy. We had a great football season. Exams will be a breeze. Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!"

David Rowell is a senior RTVMP major from Fayetteville.

Readers' Forum

BCC won't segregate races

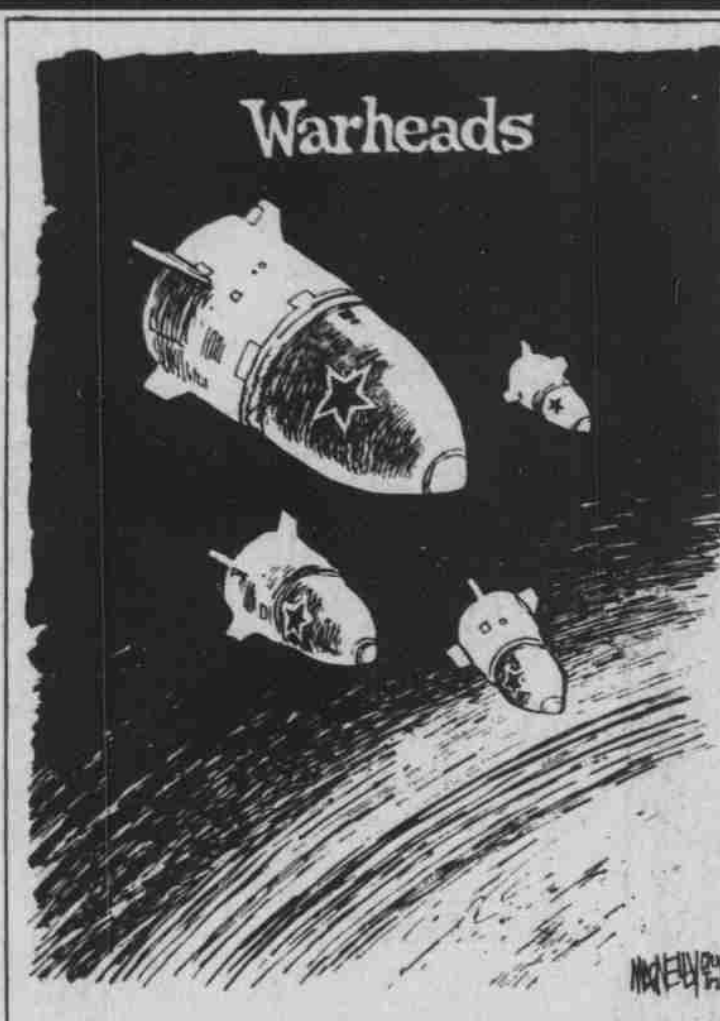
To the editor:
I ask those who believe that the Black Cultural Center will foster segregation to consider the following:

There are a number of successful black cultural centers at predominantly white colleges and universities across the country. At my undergraduate school, for example, the cultural center was much needed and much appreciated by the entire university community. For black students, attending events at the center did not preclude exposure to or friendships with students of other backgrounds. You see, a black cultural center is neither a dining hall nor a dormitory nor a classroom nor a gymnasium. Interaction among people of different backgrounds is not threatened by a cultural center. Life goes on as usual, only enriched by the presence of the black cultural center.

Why is the burden of assimilation so often put on minorities? Why is white American culture considered by some to be the only culture worthy of public funding? A great number of events and speakers booked on campus represent the tastes and interests of white America. Black culture is not just the expression of some special-interest group; it is a vital part of American culture. This is especially true in the South. Exposure to black culture can benefit all who take advantage of it.

Given the history and make-up of the United States, it is no surprise that schools such as the University of North Carolina provide students with endless expressions of white American culture. By matriculating at UNC, black students make clear their commitment to integration. To accuse them of separatism for wanting a black cultural center is illogical. The true separatists, it would seem, are those who are unwilling to look beyond their cultures and broaden themselves by supporting as worthwhile a cause as the Black Cultural Center.

PRECIOUS STONE
Graduate
Folklore



Take reviews at face value

To the editor:

Although I agree with many of Eric Rosen's arguments ("Theater critics need a lesson in technique," Nov. 29), I think he is missing a crucial point of theater reviews (and concert, book and movie reviews for that matter). A critic's review is simply his opinion. I think that by now, being of college age, we knowingly take this fact into consideration when reading a DTH review. (This fact can also be well applied when reading some DTH articles.)

In attempting to disclaim Andrew Lawler's "laughable efforts" or Beth Buffington's "misleading and timid" review, Rosen supports his arguments with — what else? — his opinions. Who is to judge whose opinions are more accurate? Certainly not DTH editors, as Rosen proposes.

I, for one, chose to see "Candida" despite its poor review. I read Lawler's criticism and accepted it for what it was — Lawler's opinion — be it in agreement with mine or not.

BARBIE STUCKEY
Junior
Business administration



Christmas trees not exclusive

To the editor:

In response to the article "Some object to spending fees on Christmas trees," (Dec. 6), I feel the need to speak out in favor of holiday celebrations throughout the residence halls. This time of the year, for most students, brings to mind images of family and friends and a general sense of togetherness, regardless of religious affiliation. Historically, the Christmas tree has been synonymous with such feelings of generosity and goodwill. The tree itself, however, is not a religious symbol, nor has it ever been used to exclude anyone on the basis of religion.

The original intention of the Morrison Legislative Council was to create a festive atmosphere by putting up and informally decorating a Christmas tree. After the question arose as to the religious significance of the tree, a compromise was proposed that would allow funds to purchase a menorah. The menorah was suggested to represent the significant Jewish minority, not to merely appease the complainant. Mr. Bagenstos could not consent to this proposal. I cannot accept his rationale that a menorah was not good

enough because it might exclude other religious groups. What does he expect us to do; forget the entire holiday season, ignore the Christmas tradition? The holidays have always been a major part of American heritage and we cannot simply forget them for fear of offending a few individuals with a Christmas tree.

JENNIFER FOSTER
Freshman
Political science

Letters policy

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. When writing letters to the editor, please follow these guidelines:

■ All letters must be signed by the author(s), with a limit of two signatures per letter.

■ Students should include name, year in school, major, phone number and home town. Other members of the University community should include similar information.

■ The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Remember, brevity is the soul of wit.