

Opinion

Student rec center: To fund or not to fund?

A chance to provide for future students

The Carolina Athletic Association has the responsibility of responding to student athletic concerns and complaints. One of our most frequently heard complaints has been that there are inadequate Nautilus/weight facilities for student use on our campus. Many students have also complained that aerobics classes and fitness facilities in general are crowded and open during limited hours or at inconvenient times.

After working on the situation for about a year, we found that there is really no place to expand in the Woollen-Fetzer complex — its space is used very efficiently all day for basketball games, physical education classes and intramurals. We also looked into the possibility of creating weight facilities in the individual residence halls. However, we found that very few dorms have either the money or the appropriate space and supervision for such a facility. More importantly, off-campus residents would be left out of this solution.

After about six months of calling and visiting universities such as N.C. State, Appalachian State, Indiana, Purdue and others, we found that they were meeting their students' fitness needs by building new recrea-

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tional facilities financed by student fees.

Given that background, we have come up with a plan for the building of an addition to the Woollen-Fetzer complex. This new facility would house Nautilus circuits made for both men and women, universal weight sets, an extensive free weight area, exercise bikes, rowing machines, treadmills, sit-up and push-up stations, etc. The first level of the building might include an indoor track and a climbing wall. The second floor would be a large room with a hard spring floor, for use in activities such as aerobics, dance, martial arts, etc. This two-story addition would also include a place to house the Wellness Center. Trained professionals at the center could help students assess their levels of physical fitness and set up workout plans. This would be the only recreational facility open for student use at all times.

The concern of most students, we realize, is the proposed \$13 per

semester student fee increase to pay for the new facility. We do not like the idea of raising student fees; however, it appears that this is the best way to finance the building. N.C. State just opened a new student recreational facility paid for with a student fee increase of \$32; they say their students claim it's the best spent \$32 they've paid. Using student fees ensures that the administration will always be responsive to our needs in this facility because we paid for it. Because the building will probably be completed in three years, most of us will never get to use it, but we also will not have to pay for it.

We would like to provide affordable fitness facilities for everyone. So please think about the problem. We need to fix it. We have researched the possibilities well and have come up with a practical, feasible solution. We have the opportunity to make student life better for future students, and we ought to do it.

Carol Geer, CAA president, is a senior psychology major from New York. Kevin Martin, student body president, is a senior political science major from Weddington.

A sham of democracy and fairness

Thanks to the hard work of Carolina Athletic Association President Carol Geer and other CAA members, students will have the chance to vote on Feb. 21 for a \$13 a semester increase in student fees to finance an elaborate athletic facility known as the "Student Recreation Center." This rec center will expand the present weight-lifting and exercise facilities available to students here at Carolina. While Geer's good will in this matter is not questioned, the fairness of this proposed fee increase bears closer attention.

Although the rec center is supposedly for the use of all students, making the fee increase fair in the eyes of Geer, some thought on the matter reveals otherwise. There are many beautiful people on campus who obviously have time to work out regularly, and certainly the proposed rec center will appeal to them especially. For every one of these people, however, there are several who either don't work out, or who work out in other ways, such as running, biking or swimming. It is certainly a great injustice to make all of these students pay for the few who want to work out with University facilities. The very

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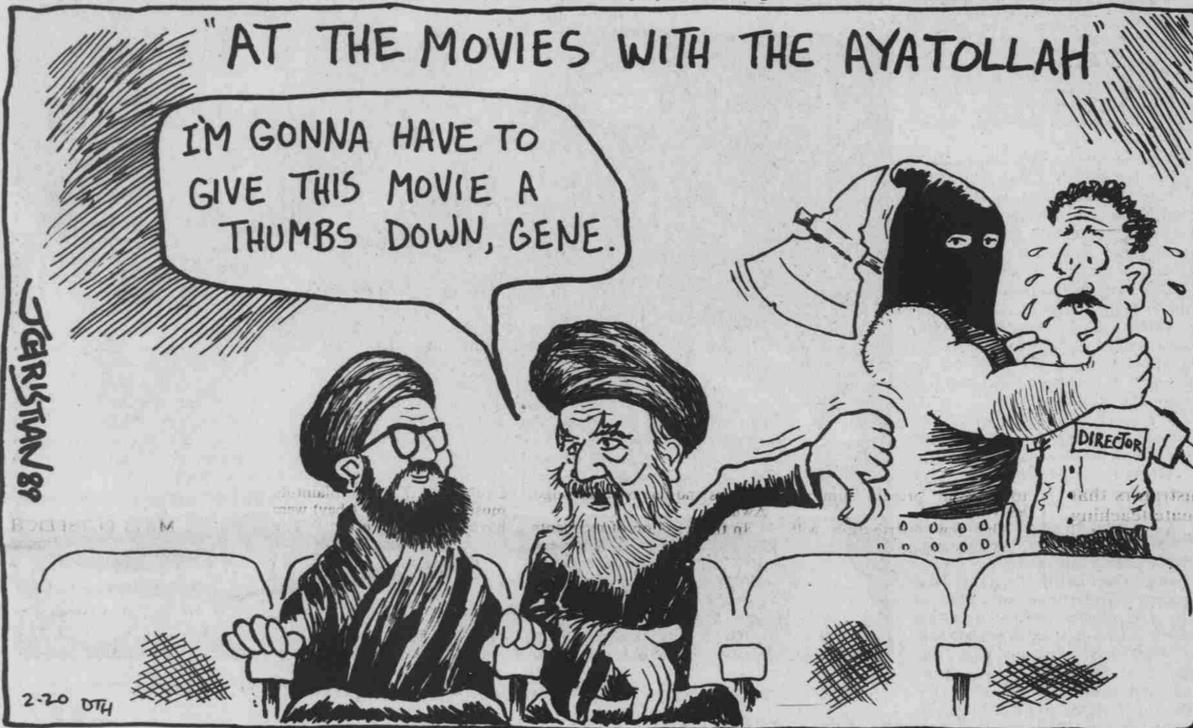
The threat in this instance is in the way the CAA is trying to push this proposal through.

reason the rec center will "only" cost \$13 a semester per student is because the cost is being spread over the entire student population, rather than just over those who would use the facility. It is a very naive person who thinks that if every fees-paying student at this University chose to exercise his or her right to the use of the rec center,

that the proposed complex would be able to meet such a demand.

The threat in this instance is in the way the CAA is trying to push this proposal through. By using our student fees to print posters urging students to vote "yes" for the rec center proposal (someone apparently forgot to mention the \$13 a semester fee increase when designing the posters), and by promising that no one will have to pay until the center is built, Geer has an intelligent strategy. She mobilizes the supporters of the rec center to vote yes, but ensures that those who don't want the rec center will not vote on Feb. 21. The people who will have to pay for the rec center aren't even at the University yet — they are the future Carolina students. I never thought I would do this, but I urge students to recognize the rec center proposal as the pretense at fairness and democracy that it is and vote no on Feb. 21.

Anthony Woodlief is a junior political science major from Winston Salem.



DTH editorial board ignorant of facts

Kevin Sisson is neither deliberately misleading students nor laboring under a vastly distorted view of his role as student body president, as the DTH editorial board stated on Feb. 17 ("Brien Lewis for SBP").

I have repeatedly clarified my position on the Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association at forums, in my platform and in interviews. Anyone who has followed my campaign will realize that my platform is based on representing the wishes of the majority of students on this campus. A leader is not a true leader unless he can get things accomplished. In dealing with the issue of CGLA funding I intend to use influence, the influence of the title of student body president, to work toward defunding this controversial group. By presenting facts about the CGLA to Student Congress and sitting down with each

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representative individually, I believe the CGLA can be defunded. I will explain that the CGLA is the only group funded by student fees that has confidential membership lists. In addition, the valuable educational material the CGLA distributes is given to them free of charge, and 12.5 percent of its members do not even attend this University. However, the most important fact I will present is that the majority of the students on this campus do not want their student fees going to the CGLA. Hopefully, after being presented with these facts and talked to individually by the elected leader of the entire student body, Student Congress will do what

students want. If the other candidates do not feel they can influence Student Congress to act according to student opinion, how can they even conceive of the possibility of being able to have an effect on the administration? I am confident that I can successfully deal with both groups.

To the average, uninformed reader of The Daily Tar Heel, it would appear that my platform contains one issue: defunding the CGLA. However, to the open-minded individual who has followed my campaign (obviously the DTH does not fall into this category) I stand for far more than defunding the CGLA. Yes, I also want to see current student government projects completed, the expansion of SAFE Escort, improvements to campus lighting and security and a more efficient student government. In addition, I am striving for better food service on campus, higher buy-

back prices for used texts, improvements in town-campus relations, additional courtesy phones on campus and an improvement in race relations that would start with the building of a multicultural center.

Yes, the CGLA funding question is an issue in my campaign, but a minor one at that. It falls under my overall goal of seeing that the students are represented according to their beliefs and opinions. I am aware of the role of a student body president, and I have not deliberately misled any student. In closing I plead with the misguided, misinformed DTH editorial board to open their eyes, their ears and, most importantly, their minds, before opening their mouths.

Kevin Sisson is a junior business major from Deer Park, N.Y.

Don't blame an alcoholic for his illness

Around the table a group of men sat, talking, smoking cigarettes and listening to Joe talk about Doug. Doug had left the house sick, Joe said, still hung over, and then died the next day, alone and drunk. All the men knew Doug and were sorry to hear the story. A young man who had worked for Doug listened to the others talk.

Though I'm gone from there now, the halfway house remains an important place. Although the stories of my friends there often seem a lifetime apart from the classes, basketball games and research papers that are an undergraduate's life in Chapel Hill, the lessons learned and experiences shared at the halfway house keep me alive.

In the parlance of the health professional, the halfway house I lived in is called a residential facility. At any one time, 10 to 20 alcoholics live there. They work, pay rent, attend house meetings and participate in a self-help support group for alcoholics. The house was originally an old church education building that belonged to the Presbyterians; when

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the church moved out to the highway, they gave the building to a non-profit group interested in alcoholism treatment. That's how it became a home for those who wanted a chance at staying sober. Two more churches are still there, standing on either side of the halfway house. To the left are the Pentecostals, and to the right is a Church of Christ congregation. The first congregation calls on the Spirit, the second sings; the alcoholics in the middle just pray not to drink.

I lived two years at the house, finding out about the potentially lethal course of alcoholism. Knowing treatment for alcoholism is as important as knowing CPR or the Heimlich maneuver. No other killer — not heart attacks, choking, AIDS, car accidents, even cancer — outstrips alcoholism.

Unfortunately, many don't know how to stop alcoholism's deadly

progression, and that ignorance leads to sad, even absurd, conclusions. Who would accuse a heart attack victim of killing himself if he didn't keep a regimented diet and quit smoking? Few would blame the heart attack on moral weakness or call the victim a bum. Fewer still would say he got what he deserved. Contrast this to the way many people view a dying alcoholic. Doug died, and the men sitting around the table at the halfway house knew why: the disease alcoholism killed him.

But if alcoholism is simply a disease and not a moral issue, why isn't a practical treatment available, such as medication or surgery? Because no one yet has found a pill or surgery, short of lobotomy, to make an alcoholic not want a drink. Doctors call it a mental obsession for the euphoric effect of alcohol: the first drink sends the alcoholic reeling for another. Morbidity — again, the professional's parlance — occurs over a long time. Cirrhosis gets some, internal bleeding others, accidents many more; for those who survive years of anguish and despair from

uncontrollable drunkenness, suicide often provides a final out.

So prayer and the support of others trying to stay sober are left. Those steps work, too, and these are the only treatments for the disease. Although not strictly scientific like CPR or insulin injections, the treatments available for alcoholism are effective: millions of recovering victims prove the point.

Medical professionals from doctors to mental health counselors will tell you alcoholism is a disease. Geneticists will cite the hereditary evidence. Brain researchers will offer clear, if sophisticated, judgments about how an alcoholic becomes physically and psychologically addicted. The psychiatrists add to the knowledge by examining how alcoholism works to destroy mental and emotional health. The professionals, then — like the men around the table at the halfway house — don't blame Doug.

Chris Hood is a junior interdisciplinary studies major from Pinehurst.

Disregard for students hurts UNC's reputation

I recently returned from the final public forum addressing a parking proposal recently submitted to the chancellor. Although I could make a number of specific comments about some of its recommendations — such as the net loss of 850 student parking spaces next year and a \$2 fee to park on campus at night (only applied to students) — I won't. I believe that the student body's concerns have already been eloquently and adequately expressed. To me they seem obvious.

I would like to confront the larger issue. It became quite clear to me at the forum that students at UNC do not have a lot of clout in decisions such as parking allocation, because every single one of us will probably not remain in the University community for more than four or five years. Therefore, administrators can smile politely and nod their heads — "Yes, we hear your concerns" — and eventually the ones complaining literally go away.

This attitude infuriates me, because even though I will wave good-bye to Chapel Hill in May, students have been here for 200 years, and this University could not exist without them. The University of North Carolina was founded to bring educated citizens to this state. Students eventually pay the taxes and provide the leadership that fuel progress, yet they are consistently regarded as the lowest common denominator at the University —

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whether it's a question of basketball seats, parking spaces, or something as broad as the value of teaching vs. research.

Of course students can be ignored, brushed aside, or even pacified in the short term. In the long run, however, they can not. The quality of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill ultimately relies on the caliber of its student body. Students, who leave Chapel Hill feeling frustrated and cynical will not tell their talented and intelligent siblings and friends to apply to this school. Never underestimate the power of the grapevine.

Cheap tuition alone will not persuade a person to choose UNC over Harvard or Yale, and anyone who believes it will is sorely mistaken. I believe that in the past the crucial difference between UNC and "the Ivies" has been in the perceived higher quality of life here. If we continue to tamper with this factor, the lines at the admissions office will not be so long in the future.

Sandy Rierson is a senior history and political science major from Summerfield.

Parking proposals endanger students

I realize that parking is a problem on this campus. I've lived here for two years and have spent nights camping out with my brother in the dead of winter trying to get a parking space. The ad hoc committee has come up with some very interesting solutions for this problem, some of with which I do not agree.

I was very surprised to learn of the proposed parking idea which would require students to pay a "nighttime parking fee" as mentioned by Christopher Bannon ("Pay for parking luxury") in his Feb. 7 letter to the editor. What surprised and infuriated me even more was the fact that he actually supported the idea. He says that, "It is only fitting that those who use the libraries, computers, bookstore, theater, Cabaret and snackbar after normal business hours should pay a price for that luxury." First of all, I do not consider using the library a luxury. My parents invest money in my education, Mr. Bannon, and in doing so guarantee me the right to use the library. You are a student, Mr. Bannon. You should know that not everyone can sit in their room or apartment and study, especially at exam time. In addition, although I'm sure that some students might use the lots to park their cars when they go "uptown," many of us use the lots to park our cars so that we may study. And, if they do "wear out the asphalt while the rest of us sleep" it is not because they are partying, it is because they are studying.

As a result of this policy, many students might decide to walk to the

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library rather than pay the \$2 fee, thus increasing the number of assaults and rapes. Mr. Bannon says, "Make the students pay." We do pay. We pay for our education and our parking stickers. And, if this policy were to be passed, we would pay in other ways — with our safety and security. Your argument lacks in another area also. I agree that faculty should have spaces available to them when they stay late and come in on weekends to catch up on work. But, in reality, many of the faculty go home at 5 p.m. and do not return until the next business day. The parking lot behind Cobb and Joyner is usually empty as of 5:30 in the afternoon and remains that way until the next day. If this is true, why shouldn't students use the lot to go to the library which you mistakenly labeled a "luxury"?

You were an undergraduate student at one time. Surely, you must remember the hours and hours you put into studying for the next day of classes or an exam. If this policy is enacted, many students may reach the conclusion that it isn't worth it to pay to study every night and risk their safety by walking to campus to use the "luxury of the library."

Kelly Anderson is a sophomore history major from Wilmington.