

The Daily Tar Heel

98th year of editorial freedom

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Fond farewell to Comar

Sergeant served students fully

One of UNC's most cherished family members retired from the daily routine of police work on Friday — Sgt. Ned Comar. After spending 15 years serving the University as protector and informer about campus crime, Sgt. Comar more than deserves a life of tranquility in which to enjoy himself. His dedication to students has been genuine and his efforts to increase safety awareness has been effective. Students and administrators will miss his "fatherly" advice and memoirs from his past, and all hope his retirement will compensate for his years of service.

Sgt. Comar came to UNC in 1974, and has worked in campus safety for the past 15 years. Although Sgt. Comar worked many other jobs before taking the UNC position, it was only at the University that he felt like a family member. He spent his childhood in an orphanage, and there shined in his hobbies of guitar playing and writing. The orphanage was just the beginning of precarious situations, as his life led him to the Korean War. The Army taught him the strictest form of structure, something which he has loosely continued to adhere to at UNC. Despite these years of order throughout his life, Sgt. Comar brought a relaxed atmosphere to University police while keeping his job within professional boundaries.

The period between the war and his position in Chapel Hill brought him an array of jobs ranging from print shops to pipe welding. But possibly the most awakening event of his life stemmed from heart trouble — convincing him of the importance of his life. Thankfully for UNC, Sgt. Comar made a dramatic turnaround, with the help of two heart operations, and has since appreciated the frailty of human life — which he displayed through his job at UNC.

The effect of Sgt. Comar may not be so noticeable to many students, simply because he often remained in the background of projects. Upon coming to UNC, Sgt. Comar developed campus security programs in a time when campus security was

a relatively new concept. He focused on safety precautions by showing films and passing out pamphlets on some of the most important issues for students. He constantly stressed the importance of escort services and ways to protect from campus theft. But Sgt. Comar was not merely doing his job; instead, he was fulfilling a higher moral duty to students. His wish for Christmas this year was for every student to return to school with a foot locker to keep their wallet in and to watch out for strange people lurking around the residence halls. Perhaps a simple wish, but one he truly wanted for the students.

The Daily Tar Heel has especially close ties with Sgt. Comar, as he was in charge of sending police reports to the press. This task let him get close to students firsthand, and consequently let students get to know him. Rather than just giving the weekly police reports, Sgt. Comar would chat about life, immediately allowing the reporter to feel comfortable. Reporters remember debating about the relevance of the Democratic party and discussing tomato plants, pictures of which hung on his office walls. Sgt. Comar rebuilt tractors in his spare time, a fact reporters picked up during their visits. Even interviews with Sgt. Comar about an issue on campus brought a flair of personality. One reporter, when asking Sgt. Comar about reasons behind assaults on campus, elicited the response: "Whether you're tipsy or you're sober, you've got to learn to keep your hands to yourself and take a lot of oral abuse."

Sgt. Comar wanted to protect students because of the love he felt for them. Instead of behaving harshly or coldly, he treated students with respect and care. Sgt. Comar, enjoy your retirement — UNC will miss you. — **Jennifer Wing**

Due to a production error, the editorial "Students, 1; Politics, 0," (March 30) incorrectly stated that this year would be the last year Student Congress would approve The Daily Tar Heel's budget. DTH regrets the error.

Letter 'L' for lousy

Wisconsin bill threatens fundamentals

It sounds like a mutant hybrid of "Benson" and "Wheel of Fortune."

But for voters in Wisconsin, the latest manifestation of the line-item controversy is not a matter for sitcoms. The "Vanna White veto" (no kidding, they really call it that) allows Wisconsin governors to veto specific letters, words, numerals and punctuation in bills approved by the state legislature. While the governors can not add anything to bills, they can drastically change their meanings. Voters can approve a constitutional amendment Tuesday that will restrict their governors' right to use the "Vanna veto." In the process, they will make a major decision about the balance between the legislative and executive branches of Wisconsin state government.

But how important is changing a couple of commas? As the track record of present Wisconsin Gov. Tommy Thompson shows, it can make a difference. Thompson, a first-term Republican, used the "Vanna veto" 290 times in Wisconsin's 1987-89 state budget alone. He also used the process to change a bill calling for an increase in welfare spending from one to six percent. His most famous case, however, came in 1988. Wisconsin's state legislature limited the time a juvenile could be held in detention to 48 hours, but Thompson changed that drastically. He vetoed the words "48 hours" and most of the next four lines of the bill, leaving only certain letters and the word "day." As a result, the bill read "t-e-n day-s."

As funny as the method is, the "Vanna veto" is obviously being used to tip the balance of government in favor of the executive's office. Surprisingly, the Wisconsin Supreme Court decided that the veto was protected by its state constitution in 1988, when the justices voted 4-3 in Thompson's favor on a lawsuit brought by state Democrats. They cited a 1930 provi-

sion giving the governor the right to veto any appropriation bill "in part."

The underlying issue, separation of the powers of government, is not so cut and dried, however. As any high school civics student can recite, the basic structure of American government was set up so the legislative branch made the laws and the executive branch enforced them. The veto was designed to be part of a system of checks and balances, not as a way for governors and presidents to change the contents of bills. Thompson's use of the "Vanna veto" is in direct conflict with that purpose.

But that was then and this is now. The emphasis of our forefathers was strongly on the legislative branch; considering the tyranny of the British monarch, that's a pretty understandable reaction. Today, however, the focus has shifted back in favor of the executive. Call it what you want — a need for hero worship, the inefficiencies of ruling by committee or just the struggle between Republican governors and Democratic-controlled legislatures — but the trend is definite. The debate over the line-item veto, as well as its cousin the "Vanna veto," proves that the support for stronger executives is widespread.

The constitutional amendment before Wisconsin voters will not completely solve the issue; while it would prohibit the governor from striking letters and words in order to change the meaning of a piece of legislation, Thompson could still veto numerals or entire sentences. For Wisconsin, this is a chance to decide whether the legislature or the governor will be making laws. For the nation, it is just one more weight on the balance between branches of government; one that is increasingly tipping in favor of the one over the many. — **Kelly Thompson**



Cooking seen as a religious experience

CARRBORO — I had a surprise visitor Saturday night — an old friend from 10 years ago who, like me, survived the ambiguities of Quaker education and is now in the newspaper business.

As alumni of Greensboro's New Garden Friends School, Tim Hampton and I share some unique battle scars. By age 14 we were both veterans of the 1970s New Age Movement, a cultural phenomenon that found fertile soil within the Society of Friends.

New Age means many things to many people, but to a bunch of kids growing up in the 1970s, New Age was generally defined as any action culminating in the consumption of Deaf Smith peanut butter and alfalfa sprouts on pita bread. Other popular food options included bulgar, tofu, lentils and anything organic produced by goats.

Not that traditional Quakerism is in any way New Age. Traditional Quakerism has nothing to do with Windham Hill albums, re-evaluation counselling or crystal therapy, but somehow or another it became a haven for a group of people far-out enough to make Shirley MacLaine look like Tipper Gore.

As kids at the Friends School, Tim and I witnessed many strange things, including the disintegration of numerous adult psyches — people whose lives fell apart soon after exposure to yoga, EST and macro-biotics. These people were disillusioned by their lives. We grew up disillusioned by their disillusionment.

I consider myself lucky to have grown up in the counter-culture. Had I grown up in the mainstream I might have rebelled by dropping out of society, growing my hair and existing off of Deaf Smith peanut butter and alfalfa sprout sandwiches. Having grown up in that setting, however, I rebelled by joining the U.S.



Daniel Conover

Conover's Kitchen

Army, becoming perhaps the first Quaker tank commander in military history.

The Army flat out didn't believe me when I told them I was a Quaker. A sergeant asked me my religious preference while I was in-processing Fort Knox — they inscribe it on your dog-tags — and when I said I was a Quaker he gave me one of those "Look what crawled out of the trash" looks.

"You're a what, boy?"
"Quaker, sergeant."
"Is that Protestant?"
"Sort of."

"You can't be sort-of Protestant," he said, turning to his assistant. "Just write down 'No religious preference,'" he told him.

A couple years later I met a guy with dogtags listing his religious preference as Pagan, and I saw on Geraldo a while back that satanists are pressuring the Army for their own chaplains. I guess the Army draws the line at letting avowed pacifists make big guns go boom, and I honestly can't say that I blame them.

But I was always a bad Quaker to begin with, and I'm even worse as a New Ager. I like football, for instance, smoked two packs of Marlboros a day for 10 years, and I've always had a strong suspicion that Nostradamus was nothing more than obscure.

But then again, I've never really been convinced that nuclear power is cheap and effec-

tive or that Better Living Through Chemistry is a fulfilling credo. People like Tim and me grew up on the horns of a dilemma: Is it better to have good karma or a good car (preferably with low mileage)?

Both of us are presently satisfied with the good car side of the equation; Tim drives a 1966 Caddy convertible, and the nearest I've been to heaven was blasting down the Autobahn in Germany in my big old nasty Audi 100 at 125 mph. We've latched on to the tactile truths of the material world, but it's a tenuous hold.

Our parents are perhaps the most ambiguous generation in history, and as I grow older, I gain more sympathy for them (My own generation is perhaps the most apathetic in history but, of course, who cares?). I pity them their therapy, their angst, their Robert Blye seminars, but I suppose I thank them for not just handing us the flawed values they inherited. They may have given us flawed values, but at least they were original about it.

Unfortunately, they also gave us Deaf Smith Hoagies, and I'm afraid I'll never forgive them for that.

NEW AGE DEAF SMITH HOAGIES
Deaf Smith organic peanut butter
bean sprouts
pita bread
raisins

Stir the peanut butter vigorously to mix the oil back in with the butter. Add the raisins. Split open the pita bread and spoon in the Deaf Smith. Fill with bean sprouts.

Then toss the crap in the garbage and take your kids out to a ball game, for chrissake.

Daniel Conover is a senior journalism major from Carrboro.

READERS' FORUM

Fraternity regrets newspaper swiping

To the editors:
On Tuesday morning, March 27, around 7 a.m., the Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity took a significant number of Daily Tar Heels from several campus boxes. The chapter believes that the reported amount of newspapers missing far surpasses the actual amount taken by the fraternity. However, the chapter does understand that the nature of this incident makes this difficult to substantiate.

The fraternity recognizes that it used poor judgment and sincerely regrets its action. The fact that the incident occurred on election day was only a coincidence and was not intended to influence the election in any manner. The chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon in no way intended for its actions to harm The Daily Tar Heel, its staff or any related agencies or constituencies.

Sigma Phi Epsilon apologizes for any inconvenience we may have caused.

SIGMA PHI EPSILON TV shows concerned with news, high ideals

To the editors:
I was personally offended by Alex DeGrand's cartoon in the March 30th DTH, wherein he belittled the two television shows "Small Wonder" and "The Bradys." I have watched the DTH editorial and cartoon staffs make ridiculous, unimportant statements all year long, but I can be silent no longer. There is no way this can be called journalism. In a world where momentous changes and occurrences are happening every day, every hour, the best idea DeGrand can come up with is a childish insult to two television shows. I think DeGrand should stop watching situation comedies and tune in to the news more often.

The attacks are unwarranted and

simply infantile. The Brady family represents one ideal for family life in America today, with a successful marriage, financial well-being, the learning experience of growing up and helping one another, and in general a stable, happy home environment. The public should emulate this fictitious family, not ridicule their seeming innocence. "Small Wonder," while granted is on a lower intellectual level, is not a silly show about a robot whom everyone thinks is a human child. Each episode presents a message or a moral we all should know and live by. The show reminds us, children and adults alike, what simple rules we should adhere to if we are to be kind and humane. These two shows carry a message seldom found in movies and television today, but DeGrand has obviously not learned it. I feel he should grow up and write about important issues if he wishes to call himself a journalist in any capacity of the word.

DANIEL W. JOLLEY
Sophomore
Economics and History

Student Union product of all students

To the editors:
"I don't think people realize what student government does for them. We wouldn't have a (Student) Union without government, and Chapel Hill wouldn't have a bus system." — Bill Hildebolt, as quoted in DTH 3/27.

The preceding quote surfaced in The Daily Tar Heel during the rush to elect this week. Hildebolt no doubt refers to the participation of the student body president in the formation of the Student Union and the bus service. I fear that his comments might be misinterpreted to indicate that the ongoing activities of the Union are coordinated by the office of the student body president. As a member of the Board of Directors of the Carolina Union for the last

three years, I've become aware of the inaccuracy of this. These years have taught me that:

1. The Carolina Union is an excellent example of cooperation among students, faculty and University staff in achieving a shared goal — in this case the provision of quality educational and entertainment programs for the University community.

2. These results are attained through the efforts of an enthusiastic group of students quite divorced from campus politics. Representatives of the student body president and of other campus political organizations serve, and contribute positively, on the Board of Directors — as do faculty representatives. However, the creative work, and the effort necessary to bring the creation to life, is due to the Carolina Union Activities Board with the assistance of Union staff. These are the people who make Union activities possible.

3. One of these enthusiastic students could easily be you. The Student Union really is a union — an association of students united in a common purpose. You already finance Union activities through your fees. You're welcome to relax there, and to attend any program. Even more important, you are always welcome on the committees of the Activities Board to help plan future events. In this sense, the Union is student government — by the students and for the students.

President-elect Hildebolt's quote carries the unfortunate connotation that the Student Union is a gift from "student government" to the University community. My observations suggest the opposite; the Union is a gift from the University community to itself. It's a wonderful gift, because it improves with use. If only we could say that for the bus system!

PATRICK CONWAY
Department of Economics

Religious groups fail to fulfill convictions

To the editors:
I write with a plea for response from minority groups on how to end segregation in campus ministries and other campus organizations.

I am involved with two ministries here at UNC as a member of one and a committee head of another. Both groups are sadly under-integrated, and it is not because we haven't tried. We have had innumerable planning sessions discussing minority promotion, but still, the minorities that attend from time to time rarely stay to become regular members. In effect, we hurt for the wholeness that only a racially and ideologically well-integrated group can have.

I decided to ask for a response from minority groups when I realized that a whole courtroom of us whites cannot just sit around and decide what blacks, Native Americans, Asians or any one else looks for in a ministry or social group.

Please tell us: What can we do that would attract you to our ministries? How could a new mixed ministry be started? What do you look for in a social group? On the other end of the scale, how could we fit in with your organizations? In what ways would any of these questions threaten the right to minority distinction? In what ways can we involve you in our groups without threatening your individuality?

Please respond to 227 Avery or to the DTH. Your responses will be taken seriously and will be implemented into our push for positive integration. We must put an end to subtle racism. I pray that we can begin by choosing not to segregate ourselves.

We are One in the Spirit!

DARREN HICKERSON
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Radiological Science