

# Semester begins with bright omens

Campus events and an act by the state legislature bring good news for the spring semester and an indication that a revival of interest in black culture is occurring.

To a certain extent, the speaker on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, Dr. Durley, may have been the harbinger of many of these good tidings. For it was Durley who offered a living portrait of King the man as opposed to King the demi-god. The guest showed the connections between King and today's students and maintained that through preparation, we, too, can affect the world.

In addition, Durley's candor and his willingness to tell a story on himself won many friends in the chapel. It was no accident that an impassioned "We Shall Overcome" was sung at the service's conclusion and that people joined hands joyfully.

There's good news in our curriculum, too. A much needed and sorely missed course in Afro-American history has returned after a too lengthy absence. It

is being offered by Mrs. Linda Addo, a resourceful scholar and teacher.

This change answers one of the main student complaints during the last year and brings the college more in line with its mission. We welcome this turn of events and urge students to capitalize on the opportunity.

On another front, the college is celebrating Black History Month with substance and style. There will be a major presentation every two days. Our exceptional choir will be giving two performances, and our scholars, speakers and actresses will be highly visible. An array of splendid guests, including the popular Pin Points and the political trailblazer Shirley Chisholm, will be appearing.

The terrific news from Raleigh is that the state has committed itself to a memorial for Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown, a guiding light in black education and a woman with close ties to Bennett.

All of this news points to enlightenment, the proper business of our lives.

## Basketball needs college-wide commitment

If you woke tomorrow and found that the student center had disappeared, you'd probably be shocked, and you might inquire about the causes of its absence.

You might even get mad and want to do something about it.

An institution about as important as the student center has closed shop for the time being, and no one beyond the physical education department seems especially ruffled.

We're talking about the once-proud and flourishing basketball program which has shut down for the season due to student indifference and insufficient funds for athletic scholarships.

What's worse, the program may be gone for good. Bureaucratic credit lines do not wait for resurrections; the money flows in new directions.

What seems to have been forgotten is that sports are crucial to the identity of any college. They are a unifying force. Under their influence, sometimes disparate elements on a campus—students, teachers and administrators—come together and celebrate the life of the institution. People forget their special interests and merge in good cheer.

In short, sports add humanity to the academic existence.

These matters are well understood at other small colleges in this area. Guilford, Greensboro and High Point boast lively sports traditions that foster alumni interest in the alma mater and may do more for finances than every sip-and-chat and wine-and-cheese party ever given.

This is to say nothing of the change that took place at large, but poorly unified UNC-G when the soccer team won the national championship. Suddenly, people had something in common. Suddenly, the media were paying attention. Unity and attention equal money.

This college finds itself in the grim position of having but one varsity sport left. Subtract volleyball, and you've got a gym used exclusively for P.E. classes.

Only a few years ago, our basketball team was nationally ranked—a source of pride to the players and the community.

It is time for a college-wide commitment to the regeneration of the basketball program.

Students have got to make greater sacrifices of their time and energy. The administration has got to keep basketball in the budget and increase funds so that Bennett can recruit more competitively. The faculty and staff must support these measures as well as future teams.

It's for the good of the institution.

## Key to a child's school performance

Want to make sure that youngsters around you and the children in your future are successful at school?

No, the answer isn't a home computer.

Reading to children is the best thing you can do to create agile minds, according to author and educator William F. Russell.

This theory may not seem revolutionary to sisters and parents who have been following this practice for a long time. But Russell has added a new notion that makes great sense: it is important to keep reading to children long after they have learned to read.

Why? Because children like the attention and as a recent AP story claims: "The language and vocabulary a child can understand orally are far greater than what the child could read by him or herself. So even older children can profit . . . from parents who read adult-level classics aloud."

We feel another important factor is the presence of newspapers and magazines in the home. When children see family members reading the paper, they want to do likewise. Their introduction is gradual; sometimes the comics lead to the entertainment and sports pages which, in turn, lead back to the front section.

One thing's for sure. Any child who sees his family slouched perpetually in front of the television is going to have limited horizons. TV implants opinions; readers discover their own.

## Christmas visit creates comic adventures in Germany

a column  
by Pamela Gary

A simple visit to Germany during the holidays turned into a comedy of social gaffes.

There is an old cliché that says "there is no place like home." Most Americans don't appreciate their own cultures until they experience everyday life somewhere else. Europeans frequently say that Americans are the most arrogant people in the world. They base this statement on the way that we seem to think that wherever we go our language and customs are or should be dominant.

It all began when the plane arrived in Frankfurt. The airport was huge, the weather was freezing, the stewardesses spoke less than perfect English, and most of the people that got off of the plane seemed to know where they were going instinctively once they cleared customs.

By the time I found my way through customs to the passenger greeting area and met my party, the baggage

claiming area was almost empty. It really didn't make that much difference because my luggage was not there. After being on a plane for six hours and traveling all night, the worst thing that people can tell you is that your luggage didn't even get on your connecting flight and they think that it is still in New York. At this point you want to either swear or cry, especially after the baggage officials tell you to check back with them in a day or two, and if it isn't there, then it is lost.

After recovering from the minor shock of having none of your clothes with you, you would think that the worst is over with, right? Wrong! Unless you are a professional race car driver nothing prepares you for riding on the *autobahn*. The only way to describe it is legalized insanity.

The *autobahn* is Germany's major highway that appears to stretch from one side of the country to the other, connecting all of the towns and major cities. At first

glance, it seems innocent enough until you realize that everyone driving must have secret fantasies of breaking the sound barrier. There is no speed limit. It isn't unusual to see a car whizzing past you doing 110 mph. By the time we reached our destination, I was a candidate for a mental hospital.

There are several things that are taken for granted in this country as common amenities that are considered luxuries in Europe. For example, in order to get your driver's license you must pay \$300. Then you have to obtain permission from the government to buy a car. The phone system is commonly referred to as "Hitler's revenge" by Americans. It is a major accomplishment every time that you get the operator to answer the phone.

One of the hardest things to get used to if you are a black American is the open discrimination that is employed throughout the country. Not all Germans treat blacks as though the Civil War is still going on, but there is still enough blatant racism going on to make visiting blacks feel uncomfortable and angry.

Luckily, Germany has enough charm to more than make up for its negative aspects. The countryside is beautiful in the winter. Everything is covered in snow, there is little or no pollution and the architecture is very modern technology.

Despite some of the customs like never bringing roses to your hostess if you are a male because you are expressing your love for her, or not indulging in all of the alcoholic beverages that you are offered during the course of a meal, Germany is a place that is well worth the trip.

## Letters to the editor:

### NAACP refutes malicious images

To the Editor:

Through the years, the history of black society has been distorted. We have been told that we came from the trees of Africa. This theory has been assisted with proof from Tarzan movies. We swung from trees like apes.

According to a German newspaper, the black man's brain is the same as an ape's. It is strange that people with these so-called "ape brains" were the first humans to use tools, paint pictures, plant seeds and worship gods.

These people created such art pieces, wrote such stories and lived in such a way that archeologists, historians and contemporary writers find these ape-like beings fascinating.

To go back farther in time, black people played a significant role in the development of the Egyptian civilization. They founded great empires like Ghana, Mali and Songhay. Yes, these were our black ancestors that are not mentioned in our history books and are not shown on Tarzan movies.

No, we were not naked savages who sat under trees, filed their teeth and waited for fruit to drop into their hands. More than one scholar has paid tribute to the "legal genius of the African."

The Bennett College  
Chapter of the NAACP

### Safety is questioned

To the editor:

Campus safety is a big issue that needs to be brought out in the open. There are certain unnecessary risks right here on Bennett's campus.

Dormitories with insufficient lighting in the hallways, easy-to-open locks on the doors and unbarred basement windows are a few risks that Bennett students are subjected to. These risks should not be inflicted on the student after paying such a high

tuition.

Along with the unsatisfactory dormitory conditions, there is very little lighting on the campus itself. When I come from my 8 p.m. evening class over at A&T, I feel very frightened when I have to walk through a dark deserted-looking campus.

There are times when I am in the security of my own dorm and feel insecure. Many times I have stayed up late to wash a few clothes and was so scared that I came running up the stairs only to save myself from the man outside the basement window who stares in at me. The window has no lock at all and no shade to keep the Peeping Toms from looking in. A person never knows if he is going to break in on them or not.

Another risk which needs to be looked into is the failure of security guards to make sure the campus is secure. Many times I have walked to the student union after dark to get a snack or play a video game and have looked around and seen no security guard at all. Finally, when I get to the student union, I see all the security guards in one corner talking, playing cards, shooting pool or flirting with the girls.

This is not security that Bennett students are receiving. It is one risk after another to endanger the lives of students.

I know that no one can make any campus 100 percent safety-proof, but it doesn't have to be left wide open to strangers to come in and do as they please either.

Kim Liseanne Romeo

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Send letters to the editor to Box 2. All mail must be signed by hand.

**Black History Month:  
time to honor heritage;  
support upcoming slate**