

Opinions

The Blue
Banner

Editorial

Bah Humbug!

For the final editorial of the semester, the members of the editorial board have decided to each address a few complaints, some particular to this time of year, others that apply year-round.

First of all, what in the hell do we have to do to get a decent radio station? Asheville has to have the only station in America whose format could only consist of music that wasn't played when it was new because it was bad then, too. There are reasons why bands like Asia and REO Speedwagon aren't popular anymore. Someone needs to pay attention to the reasons.

Secondly, why on God's green earth should someone as utterly repulsive and reprehensible as Michael Jackson be allowed to reproduce? The news of the woman carrying his seed was enough to relieve someone of his Thanksgiving meal. The government should force sterilization in some cases, and the case of Michael Jackson's love child begs for it.

And how about car trouble? Only seems to happen when you're out of money, out of time to sit around and wait for a mechanic to charge you hundreds of dollars, and out of patience completely. And it's Christmas, when you're trying to save money for people you actually care about, instead of a car and a transmission.

Speaking of cars, does anyone in this city know how to drive? There seems to be some lack of understanding about what the turn signals are for. You're supposed to use them before you turn! Does the DMV even have that in the driver's handbook any more? There are those things, called stop signs. They mean stop. There. Right there. Not ten yards past. Not ten yards from. Right there.

On an entirely different tangent, the actions of certain UNCA students must be addressed. Some students at this school need to learn a certain amount of courtesy and respect for those around them—namely certain Mountain Trace residents. Besides the weekly "get-togethers," these people need to completely eliminate their throw-down, exam-week parties. We should be able to expect a certain amount of maturity from the people who represent UNCA, and disturbing your neighbors on a daily basis is far from that.

And why must Christmas be the season for getting together with one's family? Not all families are a joy to be with. In fact, some families are simply so horrendous they inspire indigestion before the holiday feast has even been consumed. Screaming political matches, anyone? How about guilt trips from Grandma about who will attend midnight mass? Uncles and aunts had too much punch to drink and begin to rehash childhood arguments?

We'd rather spend Christmas with the Grinch.

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The Blue Banner welcomes submissions of letters and articles for publication. All submissions are subject to editing for clarity and content and are considered on the basis of interest, space, taste, and timeliness.

Letters must be typed, double-spaced, and must not exceed 300 words. Letters for publication must also contain the author's signature, classification, major or other relationship with UNCA. The deadline for letters and classifieds is noon on Tuesday. If you have a submission, you can send it to The Blue Banner, 208A Carmichael Hall, One University Heights, Asheville NC 28804

A merry X-Mas wish from the writing Wiccan

Kristi Howard
Columnist

Sing along with me, everybody. "There's nothing like home for the holidays."

OK, you can stop singing now. But really, there is nothing like going home for the holidays, is there? What else could cause such joy—and such terrible agony?

Picture the scene—my Grandmother's house on X-mas day. Fifty adults and umpteen children packed into a seven-room house, all trying to talk at once. The events you are about to read are real. The names have been changed to protect the innocent.

The entire Howard family is, as I said, all trying to out-talk one another, when all of a sudden, a collective "Shh!" fills the air. This can only mean one thing: my cousin David has pried the turkey drumstick out of his mouth long enough to deliver his usual fifteen-minute blessing. Heads drop all over the house.

Being the only one in the entire house without a bowed head, I am in the dubiously honorable position of seeing everybody doing stuff they don't want to be seen doing. My Uncle Pete, taking this opportunity to pick his nose; my Uncle Dan's girlfriend Rachael scratching herself in an indelicate area; my ten year old cousin Megan struggling violently to adjust the bra she has insisted on wearing since

she was eight.

At last, after many many minutes of "and we thank thee, oh Lord..." David finally caps his arduous sermon off with an "Ahhhh-men" and makes a beeline for the buffet. Everyone else follows. Much slurping and clanging of plates and silverware follows.

With the food comes spirited conversation, namely me trying to explain to Megan and Gwen, Rachael's 11-year-old daughter, why Wiccans don't celebrate Christmas, and why we can't fly around on broomsticks and change our eye color like those chicks in that movie "The Craft".

Usually when they realize that we are nowhere near as exciting as the media makes us out to be, they lose interest in that line of questioning and instead interrogate me as to whether or not my boyfriend and I kiss "with our tongues." When I reply in my usual candid fashion, they exclaim "EWWW GROSS!!" in unison, and leave me to my meatloaf, only occasionally asking me my opinion of their newest "Teen Beat" heartthrob, or whether I think women ought to shave their legs.

Then, with dinner out of the way, there comes dessert: chocolate pie, lemon pie, and red velvet cake. Usually, I am ashamed to say, I end up eating a piece of each. I figure, if I made it that far, I deserve a treat.

Then, finally, everyone's favorite part—presents! Usually

everyone gets money, and one pretty lame present from whoever pulled your name out of the pot. The worst gift I ever got was a pale baby-pink cardigan made out of genuine North American bath mat. Needless to say that little article of clothing didn't stay in my wardrobe very long.

Then, everyone winds down, and X-mas, The Ordeal, is over for another year.

Don't get me wrong, I'm no Scrooge. But the fact that X-mas in general is a holiday that I don't celebrate, coupled with the fact that I am constantly having to explain why to members of my family, makes me dread the coming of the usually joyful and present filled time.

However, X-mas break also gives everyone the opportunity to rest, relax and recuperate from the end of semester crunch. And there are parts of the whole that I really enjoy: Beautiful X-mas (Yule) trees, roaring fires, yummy food, and of course, presents. Hey, I'm only human, after all.

I hope everyone loves X-mas, or at least loves the break, and has a safe, happy holiday regardless of their faith. Happy Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas, everybody, and a warm and wonderful Yule.

Now that I've said that, I also wanted to say that this is my last column for The Blue Banner. Next semester I will be moving on to bigger and harder things in my Mass Communication major. I have enjoyed writing this column, and I hope all you happy

people out there have enjoyed reading it.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Gary Birdsong and the Forces of Ignorance, on and off campus (you know who you are). You make it so easy for smart-asses like myself to joke at your expense. Birdsong, may your eyesight not get any worse. Good luck with your campaign to make yourself a saint.

I have seen many things during my short semester as a columnist. High up among these is the completion of the new parking lot. Though many times it seemed like they, that group of what looked like three guys and a back hoe, were just moving the dirt around to make it look like they were working, they finally came through. Miracle of miracles, they managed to finish it up just in time for break.

So what if back home I've seen parking lots go up in three days. This new parking lot is especially nifty, with its cute little stone wall and adequate drainage. If I had a car, I would be proud to park there.

Sorry, couldn't resist that one last opportunity to complain in a crude and sarcastic fashion.

Anyway, I've said it once and I'll say it again: Have a great Holiday, and be safe. There is always time to designate a driver (I should know, since I'm usually it), so there is no excuse for killing yourself over the break.

Everybody remember to kiss up to Santa!!!

The difference between Tori Spelling and Einstein

Dave Barry
Columnist

Is your hairstyle important? To answer that question, let's consider the starkly different career paths of two individuals: Albert Einstein and Tori Spelling.

Tori Spelling is a top celebrity and highly successful television star, despite having the natural acting prowess of a Salad Shooter. Why? Because she always has a neat, modern hairstyle. Also her father produces every show on television except the test pattern. But her hair is surely a factor.

In contrast, Albert Einstein—despite being a brilliant genius who not only discovered the Theory of Relativity ("E equals H2O") but also prepared his own tax returns—never so much as appeared on "Hollywood Squares." He auditioned repeatedly but the talent coordinators always turned him down.

"What was that on his head?" they'd ask each other, after he left the studio. "A yak?"

So we see that hairstyle is very important. This is true even in the animal kingdom. Baboons, for example, spend countless hours grooming each other, applying conditioners, combing fur over the bald spots on their butts, and using all the other little styling tricks that make them the confident, successful and cosmopolitan

creatures that they are, equally at home on a rotting zebra carcass as on a rotting giraffe carcass.

It is not different with humans. If you have a lunch meeting with an important potential business client, you are definitely going to make a strong impression if you reach over and pick a live insect out of his or her hair. But it also helps if you have a nice hairstyle.

Unfortunately, a lot of people—and here I am thinking of women—hate their own hair.

In my experience, when a woman looks at herself in a mirror, even if her hairstyle is really nice, she sees Chewbacca.

Men, on the other hand, tend to feel positive about their hair. Even if a man has a grand total of only four hairs left, he will grow them to the length of extension cords and carefully arrange them so they are running exactly parallel, two inches apart, across his otherwise stark-naked skull, and he will look at himself and think, "Whoa, these four hairs are looking GOOD."

But whether you're a woman or a man, you should know the basics of hairstyle management, as presented here in the popular Q and A format:

Q. How can I have really nice hair?
A. If you look at the models in commercials for hair-care products, you'll notice that their hair is thick, glossy, lus-

trous, and manageable. What's their secret? It's simple: They were born with nice hair. That's why they are professional hair models, whereas you and the late Albert Einstein are not.

Q. Should balding white men shave their heads, the way many African-American men, such as Michael Jordan, do?

A. No. It's not fair, but the simple truth is that balding African-American men look cool when they shave their heads, whereas balding white men look like giant thumbs.

Q. Why is it that some older women, when their hair starts to turn gray, instead of dyeing it back to whatever natural-looking shade it originally was, decide to dye it roofing-tar black or traffic-cone orange, which are colors normally associated with Halloween?

A. Apparently it is some kind of sorority initiation.

Q. What is the best way to style my hair?

A. You are asking the wrong person. I've been trying for over 40 years, with absolutely no success, to get my hair to form a simple part. All I want is a basic straight line, such as can be found on Al Gore, the vice president, and Ken, the doll.

So every morning, right after my shower, I attempt to style my hair with a brush and a hair dryer. I cannot begin to tell you how hilarious my hair thinks this is.

You've heard of "free-range" chicken, right? Well, I have "free-range" hair. It laughs gaily

and dances in the blow-dryer breeze, humming "Born Free." When I'm done, it looks exactly the same as when I started. It is no closer to forming a part than Dom DeLuise is to winning the Olympic pole vault.

Q. When you were in New York on a book tour several years ago, did you briefly find yourself in the same television-studio makeup room as Barbara Walters?

A. Yes.
Q. What is her styling secret?
A. Enough hair spray to immobilize a buffalo.

Q. Speaking of famous celebrities, did Madonna discuss any hair-related issues in her diary published in the November issue of "Vanity Fair?"

A. Yes. On page 224, Madonna had this to say about acting in movies: "People sit around all day scrutinizing you, turning you from left to right, whispering behind the camera, cutting your nose hairs..."

Q. Madonna has NOSE HAIRS?

A. You wouldn't believe. Sometimes she requires a machete.

Q. What about Princess Diana?
A. She is known, around the beauty salon, as "Weasel Nostri-ils."

Q. That would be a good name for a rock band.

A. Yes.

Q. In conclusion, what is the one word that describes the key to a successful hairstyle?

A. "Hat."