

OPINIONS

Letters to the Editor

'We all Have a Right to Our Opinions'

Dear Editor:

In response to Shaun Cashman's March 29th *Blue Banner* column and its' April 5th *Blue Banner* replies:

I don't understand what all the controversy behind Cashman had to say.

So, he doesn't particularly care for gay people.

That's his opinion, and he has a right to it.

I, personally, don't have much to do with the gay population.

But, that is my right as an individual to determine who I will or will not spend my time with.

You cannot force me, or shame me, into hanging out with gay people just because that's the politically correct thing to do.

We all have a right to our opinions, and mine happens to be that homosexuality is wrong.

It is my firm belief, and I am entitled to it even in this age of ultra, politically-correct censorship.

Stephen Aho
Freshman, Computer Science

Disturbed by Headwaters Decision

Dear Editor:

As a member of the Headwaters staff, I am disturbed by the decisions of the staff regarding pieces to be published in the upcoming edition.

The staff of Headwaters has determined that no prose works will appear in this year's magazine.

Headwaters is a "creative arts magazine" that serves the arts community at UNCA.

Its sole purpose is to provide representation for the creativity of all printable genres of both students and faculty.

Not every submission will be accepted for publication.

However, Headwaters is responsible for representing every medium from which worthwhile pieces are submitted.

When confronted with my disapproval, David Mahaffey, Headwaters' editor, stated, and I quote:

"Please understand that the opinions of Headwaters staff members are just that: opinions. We are a student organization...and what happened this year is simply that

the work submitted did not appeal to this staff."

This statement does not portray an atmosphere of objectivity within the staff.

Headwaters is a student organization that receives funding, no matter how small the amount, from the university, which obtains money from students' tuition and tax payers' dollars.

The activities and biases of the Headwaters staff clearly contradict the definition and purpose of a liberal arts institution, and any such publication that should arise out of the student population.

By refusing representation of all genres, and by judging submissions on whether the content appeals to the staff, regardless of technical and artistic merit, the staff is severing ties with a large portion of the student population, both those who submit prose and those who enjoy reading it.

I am thoroughly disappointed in the actions and agenda of the Headwaters staff this semester.

It is a pity that an organization with such good potential for representing the artistic community should be wasted on a selective group of subjective opinions.

Dearborn McHaley
Headwaters Reader
Junior, Creative Writing

Promotion of Diversity and Multiculturalism

Dear Editor:

The UNCA Minority Affairs Commission would like to call attention to its mission, which includes the promotion of diversity and multiculturalism.

We urge members of the UNCA community to exercise good judgment as we express different opinions, especially as we use printed media.

We all must understand that use of particularly provocative language or rash images has the potential of placing those at who these slurs are aimed in great emotional stress, if not in physical danger.

UNCA offers all of us the opportunity to choose our words and deeds wisely, in ways that convey the spirit of our meaning without necessarily promoting hatred or humiliation.

It is our sincere hope that we can continue healthy dialogue on these sometimes awkward topics associated with diversity in the spirit of scholarship and camaraderie.

UNCA Minority
Affairs Commission

Staff Made 'the Right Decisions'

Dear Editor:

Headwaters has no prejudice against fiction, essays or any other form of creative writing.

Prose works by students and faculty appeared in our last three editions.

I encourage any prose writer at this university to submit new works for next year's publication.

Each year, Headwaters and the UNCA Literature Club sponsor the Thomas Wolfe Award for fiction and the Wilma Dykeman Award for non-fiction.

We will announce this year's winning entries (and the accompanying \$100 each) at our reception in Laurel Forum April 26th at 6:30 p.m.

I have edited Headwaters for three years now.

In that time, I have, with the aid of

a highly capable staff, eliminated from our editorial process the very kind of prejudice Dearborn McHaley has accused our publication of endorsing.

If a particular work was not given a fair chance, I would have interceded.

The Headwaters evaluation system is democratic.

Writers' identities are not revealed to the staff until all editorial decisions have been finalized.

Each member of the staff independently critiques each submission in our first round of evaluation.

I tally their votes and eliminate any submission that is not supported by the majority of the staff. The staff then discusses each submission as a group in a second round and votes again.

The quality of prose submissions this year was not consistent with what we have received in the past.

We make every effort to ensure that the decisions made are fair and reflective of the opinions held by

the staff as a whole, while maintaining our high literary and artistic standards.

The staff, itself, is comprised of graduating literature and creative writing majors, adjunct faculty members and a mix of other students representing a considerable range of literary tastes.

I am satisfied that this staff made the right decisions.

David E. Mahaffey
Headwaters Editor
Senior, Creative Writing

Tuition Increase Questions

Dear Editor:

I have a few questions about the tuition increase:

1. What is the actual amount of the tuition increase?
2. Is that increase amount for just a semester or for an entire year?
3. What will be the final tuition

amount after the increase is over?

4. Is UNCA prepared to help students who won't be able to afford the increase?

5. Why is the Student Government Association so excited to raise the amount of tuition when the majority of students don't want to pay more for their college education, especially a UNCA education?

6. Is SGA supposed to be the representative of the students of this college?

7. If so, why is it being the representative of the administration, instead?

Both the administration and SGA should answer these questions through the *Banner*. Keep it simple and accurate. Don't be political.

Remember, the increase will affect both current and future students. They deserve to know exactly how much more they are going to have to pay.

Thomas Armstrong
Senior, History

Good Coverage Of Philosophy Conference

Dear Editor:

In response to an April 12th *Blue Banner* news article, "Students Present Philosophy Papers":

I would like to commend Thad Eckard for his coverage of the Fourth Annual Southern Appalachian Undergraduate Philosophy Conference at UNCA.

This conference, from its inception, has been initiated, organized and run by UNCA's student Philosophical Society, whose faculty moderator is Melissa Burchard, assistant professor of philosophy.

For the past four years, the conference has given students the opportunity to exchange their ideas in an academic setting and to make contact with professors from neighboring universities with Ph.D. programs.

As a result of this year's conference, Michael Sullivan of Emory University invited participants to "think of Emory when applying to graduate school."

Alan Perreiah of the University of Kentucky wrote: "The papers were really impressive and speak clearly for the benefits of dedicated undergraduate teaching programs."

UNCA's students excelled in the liberal arts.

This seems the kind of article most appropriate for a student newspaper at a liberal arts university.

The *Banner* was there and reported it. Kudos.

Gordon Wilson
Chair of Philosophy

Column has Wrong Definition Of Free Speech

Dear Editor:

This is a response to Melissa Burchard's April 5th *Blue Banner* column:

Actually, the right to free speech does mean you can say anything you want under the protection of the first amendment, which is why we have no anti-hate speech laws on the books.

Maybe you should actually know what you're talking about before you write about it and look like an idiot.

Just a thought.

Robert Johans
Junior, Recording Arts

Timber-Sale Teach-In Workshop

American Lands and the Southern Appalachian Biodiversity Project will hold a "Timber-Sale Teach-In" April 24 to educate members of Congress and the community about problems with the federal timber-sale program.

For more information, contact Lyndy Worsham at (828) 251-9500 or Marty Bergoffen at (828) 258-2667.

The Blue Banner Staff

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The Blue Banner is the student newspaper of the University of North Carolina at Asheville. We publish each Thursday except during summer sessions, final exam weeks and holiday breaks. Our offices are located in Karpen Hall, room 244.

Our telephone number is (828) 251-6586. Our campus e-mail address is banner@unca.edu. An online version of *The Blue Banner* is also available at <http://www.unca.edu/banner>.

Nothing in our editorial or opinions sections necessarily reflects the opinion of the entire *Blue Banner* staff, the faculty advisor, or the university faculty, administration or staff.

Unsigned editorials reflect the opinion of a majority of *The Blue Banner* editorial board. Letters, columns, cartoons and reviews represent only the opinions of their respective authors.

The Blue Banner reserves the right to reject any advertisement on the basis of content or space availability. Advertisements represent only the interests of the paying contributors.

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

Letters should be typed, single-spaced, and should not exceed 300 words. Letters for publication should also contain the author's signature, classification, major or other relationship with UNCA. The deadline for letters is noon on Tuesday. If you have a submission, you can send it to *The Blue Banner*, Karpen 244, One University Heights, Asheville N.C. 28804.

The deadline for display ads and the FYI calendar is Monday at 2 p.m. Classified ads are due at 5 p.m. on Monday.

Submissions for Blue Banner Letters to the Editor

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