

Miscellaneous

Time, once again, for *The Blue Banner* to transform

Everyone is afraid of change, especially if it has to do with a media outlet. When the *New York Times* promoted editorial page editor Howell Raines to executive editor in 2001, the public expressed a lack of confidence in the paper's leadership. Numerous authors published books criticizing Raines for giving the paper a biased, untrustworthy reputation. Raines quit after the Jayson Blair scandal in 2003, only to be temporarily replaced by Joe Lelyveld. All the commotion at the *New York Times* caused skepticism and controversy about the publication. Their stock went down by 25 percent. Circulation also dropped. Famous media outlets experience these leadership changes maybe once every few years. The *New York Times* has since redeemed itself with the help of highly paid professionals and thousands of readers who love the paper unconditionally.



Kristen Ruggeri
Editor-in-Chief

Life is a bit tougher for a college newspaper that changes hands at least once, usually twice per year. So, maybe *The Blue Banner* doesn't have to worry about stock rates, but it does worry about readership and circulation. When aspects of the paper change, there's always someone who disagrees with the new management. The *Banner* editors, in many cases, don't get a chance to redeem the paper's reputation during their term. The problems just get passed on to the next editor. In my opinion, a semester does not offer enough time for an editor to get comfortable in the position and accomplish all of his or her goals. A year did not even leave enough time for me. But, that's just the way it is when students are only here for an average of four years, and everyone wants a chance.

While I thoroughly enjoyed my 24-issue run as editor-in-chief, I also received a lot of criticism for some choices I made. For instance, I made a decision not to publish names of the accused in our campus crime briefs. Yes, we're allowed to publish them, but we actually did at the beginning of fall semester, but after numerous reports of RAs getting their tires slashed because they were portrayed as "snitches" in *The Blue Banner*, I decided it may not be the most ethical decision. Also, some of the people we named in the *Banner* were falsely accused and found not guilty in court, which puts us at a risk for libel. Since our paper is on the Internet, when these accused students try to begin a career, their potential employers can do a Google search and find out that police busted them for underage drinking or smoking pot in college. But, isn't that what college is all about? I don't think it's the *Banner's* place to ruin the futures of these students by publishing some insignificant, and possibly untrue, incidents. I also didn't see publishing their names as a service to the community. So, we stopped running names and then received complaints from people who point out, "Well, the *Daily Planet* runs the names..." Good, then. Go read the unethical *Daily Planet* if gossip is your thing. I just hope you never get accused of something, falsely or not, because your name will appear for the whole town to see.

It was also my final decision to run Chad Mohn's articles. I can already hear the gasps and moans. But, I believe that Mohn has just as much of a right as Anastasia Prendergast, Trevor Kiser Carr and Jonathon Czarny to voice his opinion in his campus newspaper. Even if it is unpopular to many, I'm sure some people enjoy reading his column.

So, now, I leave behind *The Blue Banner*, my life for the past five semesters. But, I know that I'm leaving it in the hands of people who will continue the tradition of dependable and accurate reporting and content that will meet the interest of the UNCA and Asheville communities.

Aspects will change, and some of the changes will be unpopular. Maybe the future editors will decide to publish names in the campus crime section. There are strong arguments to do so. And, maybe they will decide that Chad Mohn has no place in *The Blue Banner*. I've heard plenty of good arguments about that as well. But, remember, every good editor has good reasons for his or her decisions.

It's now up to the fall 2005 editorial staff to decide on the major issues. We always appreciate feedback and suggestions from our readers, so I encourage you all to keep it up. Criticism will only make us stronger.

Get the most out of college

With the end of the semester approaching, it only seems fitting to wrap up the madness that is my viewpoint with some advice for posterity. Lucky for all of you, I graduate in about two weeks and will be released into the unsuspecting world. Parting is such sweet sorrow, I know, but before I leave, I am compelled to share some of what I have learned during my tour of duty here at UNCA.

First things first, I highly recommend trying everything you come across. This time in your life has been set aside for you to "find yourself." As lame as it sounds, there is some truth to it. There are many things just waiting to be discovered, among them, your true self. This university is like society's candy store. There is a little bit of everything right here.

UNCA provides access to many opportunities that you won't see again for the rest of your life, and I don't mean the chance to hook up with a Division I athlete or break the record for most cans of South Paw ever consumed in Founder's Hall.

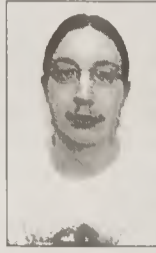
Keep your eyes open and an ear to the ground. I cannot stress the point enough. You will never get this kind of chance again. Your time here will only be as valuable as you make it. Recognize this time as your best chance to learn and grow.

The second obligation to yourself while you are here is to challenge your beliefs.

If you are lucky, you will come to realize that everything you think you "know" is merely what you have been taught. The concepts of "knowledge" and "belief" are

difficult to differentiate. Most of our personal beliefs amount to mere rationalizations to justify our own selfish behavior.

Jonathon Czarny
Columnist



You should be particularly leery of any belief that attempts to justify the murder of those less fortunate, the discrimination of those who seem different or the denial of access to basic human rights such as food, shelter, education and health care. You should reject all beliefs that devalue other people, limit their freedoms or justify leaving them behind.

I know what I am saying sounds like typical liberal bullshit, right? If you must label me to disassociate me from good advice, so be it.

Everything you think you know will change with the circumstances of your life and the ever-changing collection of your experiences. If you don't get it now, it's OK. Someday you will. Trust me—you do not want to look back on your life in 10 years and realize you wasted your time here.

The best way to find yourself is through your talents. While many of you may be here solely to get a piece of paper that says you are employable, others recognize the opportunity to hone your skills. You will never get a chance like this again or find a more nurturing environment dedicated to your personal growth.

Once you know where your talents lie and what you want to do, it is your responsibility to make it happen.

Do not blame your parents, teachers, friends or

life in general for your predicament or bother creating excuses for your lack of effort.

Perhaps the most important thing to realize is that life is not fair even in this country. In

our society, first chances are hard enough to come by, and second chances are extremely rare. No one is going to hold your hand and you must work hard to take care of yourself. Cleverly-crafted excuses may work a little longer, but you will soon realize that nobody is concerned why you didn't do your best. Consider yourself warned.

When viewing the world we are supposedly preparing for, we see the results of the **OPINION** If I have choices of the last hundred generations. Neurotic over-analysis of the last century has fragmented our world into infinite categories and subcategories.

It is the foremost responsibility of our generations to pick up the pieces, figuratively and literally. We must reassemble the bits of truth fragmented by the pursuit of specialized knowledge in order to progress our society.

We must integrate the wisdom spread before us, utilizing the true lessons of history and the fruits of our predecessors' efforts.

This is the very purpose of our lives. After thousands of conversations with teachers, friends, family and cohorts, the task before us often seems too big. The level of complexity of our collective situation can overwhelm, intimidate and wilt even

the strongest of convictions.

The seemingly inherent apathy that everyone observes in our respective generations results purely from the experience of growing up in the homes, schools, churches and society we have created.

The biggest threat to our progress is the feeling that we can't make a difference or that what we do in our lives doesn't matter. Don't believe it.

Don't ever forget that an individual's every action affects somebody else. But more importantly, every action is your choice to make. What's more important to recognize is that inaction contributes to the problems we encounter and further adds to the desperate situation our children and grandchildren will face.

If I have learned anything in my studies, it is this: Our society is built on a faulty foundation. The world's resources cannot support the American way of life as it currently stands. Furthermore, the patience of other world citizens and their tolerance for our over-privileged lifestyle is directly proportional to the desperation they face. Just like the world's resources, patience is running out.

Do not worry about trying to define your generation. History will provide the definition of our lives, and the future is ours to create. It is my firm belief that the greatest Americans haven't been born yet. Now, if you will excuse me, I have a path to find, minds to change and a New World Order to draft. Is there anyone out there who can lend a hand?

Freshmen cannot bring cars to campus, but now they can rent one

by Kristen Ruggeri
Editor-in-Chief

To facilitate the elimination of freshmen parking, UNCA hooked up with Enterprise Rent-A-Car Company to become one of the few universities in the nation to offer rental cars to students.

"As the first transportation planner for UNCA, I've been asked to plan for the first year of no freshmen parking," said Yuri Koslen. "Part of that is working to find solutions for students so that their experience at UNCA is not deterred by not being able to have a car on campus."

Working with the rental car company, Koslen got permission for students as young as 18 to rent cars.

"University students at 18 are more responsible than your general 18-year-olds," said Koslen.

Students that want to rent a car can do so by visiting www.unca.edu/transportation and clicking on "Rent-A-Car," according to Koslen.

Then, the Enterprise sends a car to pick up the student.

Students must make sure to have a valid credit card, a UNCA One Card and proof of full-coverage and liability insurance, according to Koslen.

On average, renting a compact car costs about \$40 per day. Full-sized vehicles cost approximately \$55 per day, and large Sport Utility Vehicles will cost about \$85 to \$90 per day.

"Those costs are a little bit more than what you would pay if you are above 25 years old, but that's only to cover their liability," said Koslen.

In addition to rental cars, Koslen also formulated a Guaranteed Ride Back to Campus program for freshmen.

"We still haven't figured out all the details, but (freshmen) will have between two and five vouchers per semester, where they get a free taxi ride back to campus," said Koslen. "So, if they're stuck off campus for some reason, they can use this for a guaranteed ride back to campus."

Yet, the voucher system raises some concern from one student. "My concern is for the students with jobs," said Erin Ludwick, senior literature student. "How are they going to get to work a few times a week with only two vouchers?"

The transportation forum will also offer rental bikes for \$3 per week. Freshmen can rent bikes in month-long intervals for \$8, according to Koslen.

"It will meet some of their independent needs without having to own a car," said Koslen.

Additionally, students can use an online carpooling service to find a ride, according to Koslen.

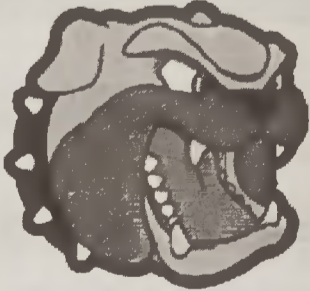
The Blue Banner would like to welcome the following fall 2005 staff members:

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Ad Manager: Lindsay LaClair
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Spring '05 Banner staff

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Editor-in-Chief

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