

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am writing this letter in hopes of expressing a few thoughts and opinions on the college's new smoking policy. Please don't mistake this letter for another mindless attempt to complain by another angry smoker. My intentions are to simply present what I feel to be flaws in the current policy and present some possible solutions. I am in no way trying to dissolve or eradicate the college's policy. I just feel that the thought and planning that went into the policy was primarily geared toward satisfying the needs and wants of non-smokers with minimum regards to the policy's practicality for the smoking population. Yes, I realize that the smokers had their chance to voice their opinions and failed to do so. However, let's try not to turn this into a pissing contest, and try to move past all the bickering. The school tends to pull this card too often and tends to hide behind it.

Alright, here are a handful of my concerns. What are us smokers suppose to do when it rains? Did the SGA take that into consideration? I think not. This leads me to doubt the intelligence and troubleshooting skills of our

student government. After all, we do live in a temperate rainforest. You'd think this would have at least crossed their minds, and if it did they clearly failed to address the issue. Just the other day I asked a residential advisor what she'd propose I do in case of rain? Very sarcastically she told me to get an umbrella and walked off laughing. If the school requires us to smoke in the rain, then we require the school to buy us all umbrellas. We don't need umbrellas. What we need is shelter. I live in the village and as you may or may not know, the designated smoking area there is at the fire pit in the center of the quad. As I write this I am staring out my window watching the rain form a fairly decent size moat encircling the fire pit. The quad holds a lot of water and even after the rain it yields puddles. I don't know about you but I don't enjoy standing in them and I don't like having to walk through a field of them to get to an island to smoke on. Our shoes and pants legs are the true victims here. The placement of these smoking areas is ridiculous. They are, for the most part, all placed in wide-open areas that leave us fully exposed to the elements. Other than rain, the wind around here can be pretty brutal. The school is placing us in Mother Nature's firing line.

So, here's an idea that can remedy all of these concerns. I transferred in from Brunswick Community College and the school invoked a similar

policy to ours, yet they planned it right. In place of smoking areas they bought 6 wood-crafted gazebos that could easily seat 10-12 people comfortably. Then they strategically placed the gazebos close to the buildings for wind protection, paved a side-walk out to each one, and slapped a cigarette butt receptacle in the middle of it. I think the gazebos really added character to the campus and showed a little class. I strongly believe that this strategy would work out nicely on the grounds of Brevard College. Yes, this endeavor would be costly, but if my community college can afford it I would like to think that my private college could too. So, if you're going to do it, do it right. Smokers unite.

Stepping up to the plate,
Jonathan Powell (a.k.a. JP)

Why you should sign the petition

by Jim Reynolds
Special to *The Clarion*

With what was probably poor timing on my part, I sent everyone on campus and several alumni an email last Thursday, during Spring Break, urging them to sign a petition I am circulating via the Internet. It is entitled the *President's Climate Commitment at Brevard College*. The email stated:

Colleagues, students, alumni, and friends,

To insure President Van Horn that he has college-wide support for signing the American College & University President's Climate Commitment, I organized a petition, which can be viewed at <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/takeaction/746271648>. I encourage you to read the petition and to sign it.

This initiative was begun in January 2007. The goal is to have 1,000 signatories by June 1st. To date, 116 [133 as of 3/14] college and university presidents have signed but only two are from North Carolina: UNC-Chapel Hill and Warren Wilson College. Your action will help assure that Brevard College has a place in this

Just a note,

To make sure your opinions are published in a timely manner, please send them to clarion@brevard.edu

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■ Letters Policy

The Clarion welcomes letters to the editor. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and content. All letters intended for publication must be signed.

All correspondence should be sent to:

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