

Op/Ed

MIKE'S MIC

One last farewell speech

Mike Shade
Pilot sports editor

Much to my Mom's disappointment, I will not be making a speech at graduation next week. She always wanted me to do that. But for reasons still unknown, no one invited me to go on stage and deliver an oration in front of the graduates and their parents.

Yet, here I am, with one column left, and I can't think of much else to write on. So Mom, this is for you.

Fellow Graduates, Faculty, and Parents:

Hello there. Anyone else think this tassel is annoying? I keep seeing it out of the corner of my eye—everywhere I look, there it is. Don't you think they could come up with a better tradition? How about a feather? Yeah. That would be better. It would just come straight up out of the cap; we'd all look like Robin Hood.

And instead of just walking up onto the stage, why don't we attach a rope swing to the rafters and swing by the president and grab the diploma like that. That will add some excitement. We could even say if you grab the diploma on the first swing, you graduate with honors. That will sell some graduation pictures. Anyway...sorry, I'm off the point.

So, we're graduating, which means it's time to go make some decisions. Some choices. The world says we need to set some goals.

So, that's what I want to do. My goal is to be a third grader. Many come out of college and feel the experience has grown them into an adult. I contend that I grew into an 8 year old. I am nothing but a third grader, and the world is nothing but a playground.

Life is a lot like a playground. In a playground, you've got many choices of what to do, just like life. At recess, you'd run out and scan the field...there were the slides, the

swings, the monkey bars, the see-saw and whatever you call that thing that goes around in a circle until you get a headache. And from there you'd make your choice.

If you choose the monkey bars and keep falling on your head because you are uncoordinated, you'd move on to the slide and not think anything about it. You'd find something you like and do it. That's the goal when you're eight, to have some fun.

I don't think that goal should ever change. It seems to me that changes a lot for many adults. I see adults all the time do things that they dislike for long periods of time for stupid reasons. And I'm not just talking about day jobs; I'm talking about every little thing in life. They are still on the monkey bars, but too scared to or too prideful to try out the slide.

We all get afraid at some point of these choices we are supposed to make. We think with every decision, there's a point of no return. What would an 8 year old do? He'd order the double-fudge brownie chocolate, and if he didn't like it, he'd try something else next time.

There's going to be bad jobs, bills, health problems, jury duty, the Lifetime network—obstacles are going to come in the way, but why should I worry? I know they're coming. I'll put my third grader on them.

You see, an 8 year old doesn't take himself so seriously. He stains his jeans and doesn't know it. He's not afraid to fail. He spends his time doing things that he likes. He makes decisions the best that he can, and moves on. In many ways, he's got more figured out than a lot of adults.

Thank you all for listening—and Mom, I hope you liked it. I'm going to return to my seat now and continue drawing on the back of my program.

FAREWELL

Senior says goodbye

Erin Boyd
Pilot editor

Why do we enter this pseudo world called college? A world where your best friends live next door to you or may even sleep in the bed underneath you. The world where you stay up half the night and take naps in the middle of the day. The world where you complain about cafeteria-food but you can't get away from it because the cafeteria is the center of the social elites. The world where study time starts at midnight because the day was spent sunbathing at the river, swinging outside your dorm or playing Ultimate Frisbee on the intramural fields. It's a world where goofing off and intellectual stimulation can all happen within the same hour. A world where you question and sometimes get answers—and sometimes not. A world of discovering who are you and who you want to be.

I would never have wanted to leave this world a year ago, but now, it is time.

Despite my sentimental self, I'm ready to leave. And, in some ways, that makes it even harder.

I'm ready to leave the place where God gave me the best friends anyone could ever dream of having or deserve. I'm ready to say goodbye to the professors who stretched my brain and challenged

me to probe, question and dig deeper in order to increase my understanding of the world of yesterday, the world of today and the world of our futures. I'm ready to leave the DCC, LYCC and Quad. I'm ready to leave these side-walks, the coffee shop across the street, the rolling grass hills, the river and the lake. I'm ready to leave dancing to worship music blasting and makeshift sleds on football field slopes and snow ball fights and milkshakes at Uptown Café. I'm ready to say goodbye to random groups at Waffle House, pranks and funny nicknames and 3 a.m. visits to Wal-Mart. It's time to leave movie nights and road trips and the rocking chairs on the front porch of Royster. I'm ready to leave surprise birthday parties and crazy hair days and late-night talks over "papers" and "homework."

I'm ready...but I just wish I could take all these things with me. But, in some ways, I guess I will. All of us will. For these memories will travel the world wherever we go.

I came as an 18-year-old kid—wide-eyed and ready to take on the "world." I leave a 22-year-old woman—a bit more grown up, a bit more mature, *perhaps*. But I'm just as wide-eyed as ever and ready only to take the next step in front of me. Goodbye.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Words from the new SGA leader

To The Editor:

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the staff of the Gardner-Webb University school newspaper, *The Pilot*, for their excellent research and analysis in two of their recent articles.

I enjoyed the article on SGA in an earlier issue of *The Pilot*. The emphasis on the importance of SGA on campus is highly appreciated. And I will keep my promise to the student body that I made to them during my election speech; I will be their voice to the administration. The admin-

istration cares about the students, from the top down. Dr. Campbell has a desire to see the best interest of the students carried out in every facet of campus life. He and I will work together to ensure that your concerns are addressed.

I ask for your prayers for the coming school year, as many important decisions, most notably the search for a new president, will begin to be made. Next year promises to be one of the most intriguing in the school's history. I will see to it that the future president of this university will best represent the values and standards that YOU, the students, request and deserve.

If you have any questions,

comments or suggestions, please feel free to call me at ext. 4211, or call the SGA office at 4SGA (ext. 4742).

I also made another promise to the students in my speech. Tuition increase is a necessary evil of any university; it's the nature of the beast. I promised that if tuition increased next year, the administration would give the students a good reason for doing so. Well, even though this is not next year, I figure I can get good practice in for next year.

The Pilot's story on tuition increase in the most recent release of the paper was well researched and studied. I would just like to keep my promise to the student body

while providing support to the paper's story on tuition.

The most evident reasons for the rise in tuition on campus stem from problems off campus. Inflation and the increase in price-of-living nationwide affect tuition throughout the country. GWU has continually tried to combat this increase by making it gradual. The consequence of this is that the gradual increase comes every year. However, if the school waited a longer amount of time, say, a decade, before increasing tuition, the increase itself would be considerably larger (Try a \$10,000-\$15,000 increase IN ONE YEAR. It makes the \$1,100 increase for next year just a little easier to

swallow).

Also, the fact that our nation's economy has been struggling for a while hurts the school's ability to raise money. I'll be the first to say that the reasons for tuition going up do not make it any easier on students to pay for their education. Hopefully, though, they do give you a little more insight into the reasons why Gardner-Webb costs so many Washingtons, Lincolns, Hamiltons, and Jacksons (of course, with the tuition increase, we better throw in a bunch of Grants and Franklins).

— Chip Carter, SGA President, 2003-2004