

Opinions

# Critics: Walk a mile in our moccasins

Matt Tessnear  
matthewt1984@earthlink.net

My supervisor at my job this summer was the editor of the newspaper. He wrote a Sunday column, which usually incorporated three or four ideas he had come up with during the week. These ideas didn't always have anything to do with each other, but he always made sure that, by the end of the story, he tied them all together. Some columns hashed Wisconsin's finest cheeses with problems concerning county commissioners. Other weeks, he might weave together tales about pickles with water quality issues.

However, it was this straightforward, simple column that I have taken the most from.

He centered it around a quote from an anonymous source, which seems ironic, only if you think like a reporter.

"Doctors bury their mistakes, lawyers litigate their mistakes and journalists print their mistakes on the front page."

It's a funny notion, but he used it to seriously discuss how his staff produces the best quality journalism it can. Often, a newspaper will produce high-quality work that will make readers praise the staff. It's more likely, however, that readers will be quick to criticize what they see on the pages, whether it's a mistake or a content-based remark.

That's what I've found to be true about this newspaper's relationship with this campus. I haven't sat in on a board of trustees meeting, or eaten in the faculty room in the cafeteria to listen to what faculty and staff think about the paper, but students sure are quick to criticize.

Since my freshman year here at Gardner-Webb, I've seen the same general reading process of students. An individual enters the bottom of the DCC and picks up a copy of The Pilot. GASP! He or she makes an immediate comment about a story on the front page that he/she doesn't like. Inside, there's a misspelled headline at the top of page two. The student frantically

shakes his or her head. Disappointed, the student tosses the paper down onto the table and meets a friend to go eat in the caf.

The dialogue that follows usually goes something like, "Have you seen the latest Pilot? It sucks, as usual."

If I had a dollar for every negative comment I've heard about The Pilot, I'd have enough money to pay for the rest of my education here.

Yes, there are mistakes in every edition of The Pilot, but we work hard to catch as many as possible before they get into print. Think about your job.

Have any of you done 100 percent perfect work every day? Most of you haven't. Think about the last test you took on campus. What grade did you receive on it?

For example, say you took a test on World War II in Dr. Eastman's American Century class. The likelihood that you made no mistakes is very slim. If you had a 71 on the test, you might have made a C, but you also made plenty of mistakes. It's your job to be a student and be professional, just as much as it's the job of a Pilot reporter to write a story and produce a professional product.

The only difference is the quote I mentioned earlier. You could bury that test grade and no one else on campus would see it. The Pilot's purpose is to be inform, so we must allow our mistakes to be published and read by the entire university.

In all actuality, GWU students are just like the rest of Americans these days. One, they don't favor the old school form of getting information from a newspaper. Two, they don't understand what it takes to produce a newspaper, whether it's daily, or bi-weekly.

The Pilot is produced once every two weeks, but the process is much like that of a professional daily newspaper.

First is the task of gathering story

ideas and assigning them to reporters and photographers. After tracking down and interviewing sources, reporters must write the story and submit it to be edited. The story goes through an editing chain, until the advisor gives final approval. Next is the arduous task of laying out a newspaper, and trying to make it look good from visual and content-based points of view. After design, it must go to be printed, and then picked up for distribution.

Doesn't sound like much to many of you, but it is a daunting task with a small staff like the one here at GWU. With every step, there are opportunities for mistakes to be made. Maybe you don't follow me, but that sounds just like any other job. From the beginning to end of a workday, there are plenty of opportunities for mistakes. Many of them might get through and reach your audience, or customer.

Maybe there are mistakes in The Pilot. Maybe the content isn't tailored to everyone's interests. But I've got a simple solution for anyone who doesn't like the newspaper:

Join the staff and experience the newspaper business before you criticize it.

There are good writers in every department on this campus. Not to take a shot at anyone in Withrow Hall, but I'm sure there are math and science majors who could put together a fine news story.

Truthfully, I think that would be an opportunity for compiling an investigative story about why the university was able to garner support for football stadium renovations, but Withrow still could use some improvements.

I've read the writing of plenty of students on this campus who could create a very good story for The Pilot. It pains me to think of what kind of staff we could have if every talented writer at GWU placed a few bylines in the newspaper.

So, don't think of this as an advertisement, think of it as a way to stop burying your mistakes, and start helping us keep ours off the front page.



## The Pilot

Bob Carey and Nancy-Pat Dire  
Faculty Advisors

Matt Tessnear  
Editor and Chief

Stephanie Kay  
Designer

Rachel Lloyd and Katie Bryant  
Photo Editors

Ciara Lilly  
Sheyahshe Littledeave  
Copy Editors

Jacob Conley  
Sports Editor

Rebecca Clark  
Ali Cunningham  
Jack Naish  
Staff Writers

Haley Black  
Ashley Carter  
Joseph Fluty  
Kayley Potter  
Rachel Tucker  
Staff Photographers

Phone Number: 704-406-3533  
PO Box 5192  
pilot@gardner-webb.edu  
www.gwupilot.com



## Debate the Issues

### Giving Ray Ray a break is a no-no; sets bad precedent

By Jacob Conley

I'll be the first to admit that the NCAA has too many rules and regulations. But since this is the case, the organization needs to stick with its policies.

I am speaking, of course, of the NCAA's recent decision to forgo the rule concerning athletes who receive special privileges, so that Clemson University football player Ray Ray McElrathbey can take care of his younger brother, Fahmarr. The brothers' parents are battling drug and gambling addictions.

The NCAA tried to do the noble thing, but in doing so, the integrity of college sports has been put at risk.

For example, what if a top tier program wanted to recruit a high-profile athlete? That athlete has narrowed down his choice of colleges between two schools, one with a larger budget than the other.

The athlete has a legitimate concern that he needs to go pick up medicine for his sick grandmother after practice, but cannot afford a car. Since the NCAA has made this ruling, the big budget university would have an unfair advantage.

They might offer the prospect a car that looks like it rolled out of Xzibit's workshop, while the other might only be able to afford to pony up for a Pinto.

Which school do you think the prospect is going

to choose?

That is why I say this ruling has the potential to ruin the integrity of the game. It could, in the future, give big schools with large budgets an unfair advantage over smaller, less affluent schools.

I feel for McElrathbey and his brother, and I'm sure they would never take advantage of the break afforded them by the NCAA. But that won't stop someone from doing so in the future.

That is why the player in question and the NCAA should have worked together and come up with a solution that does not have the potential of harming the integrity of the game. For example, Fahmarr might have stayed with other relatives while Ray Ray finished his collegiate career.

If this scenario had taken place, instead of the NCAA bending the rules and, in doing so, setting a dangerous precedent, the integrity of college sports would not be threatened.

### Exceptional case calls for an exception

Jack Naish

There is now an intense investigation as NCAA officials attempt to determine if Reggie Bush's parents lived rent-free in their up-

scale San Diego home.

If the investigation uncovers any illegal benefit that violates a strictly enforced NCAA regulation, Bush could be stripped of the Heisman Trophy, among other penalties.

The case of Clemson University's Ray Ray McElrathbey, however, is entirely different. As McElrathbey juggles classes, homework and a spot on Clemson's football team, he also maintains custody of his 11-year-old brother, Fahmarr.

As both of their parents battle addictions, McElrathbey makes room in his life to care for his younger brother, working to keep him away from foster care.

However, as many people attempt to reach out and aid the brothers, they are denied that chance, due to the same NCAA regulations that placed Bush under fire.

This is a glaring inconsistency.

There should be more detailed guidelines, outlining specifics for aids and benefits, rather than a catchall regulation. There remains no solid reason why those who are close to McElrathbey cannot lend a helping hand.

As quoted on CNN.com, Tigers Defensive Coordinator Vic Koenning said, "I can take two boxes of toys out of my basement and give them to Goodwill, but I can't give them to Ray Ray?"

Well put, I'd say.

## WISDOM ON WHEELS:

### Inside look at sports fan's routine

By Jacob Conley

Unless you have been hiding under a rock lately, you should know that Gardner-Webb University plays Appalachian State University this weekend. Even though the game has lost some of its luster after the "Dogs loss at UT-Martin, this is still arguably the biggest game in GWU football history.

In other articles in this week's issue, I've covered the game from what I consider to be every conceivable angle. You have the facts about parking, alumni of both schools and the impact of 10,000 fans in Ernest Spangler Stadium. Now that its nearly game time, I thought I would give my faithful readers an idea of my game-day routine as we prepare to meet the Mountaineers.

6:30 a.m. Wake up. I have to get an early start if I want to be at my peak by game time. To help me get pumped and fully awake, I'll put my game-day mix in the CD player. This includes such favorites as Nickelback's cover of "Saturday Night's Alright" along with "Who Let the Dogs Out?" and P.O.D.'s "Boom," just to name a few.

7 a.m. Time for homework. I've got to do it sometime, and after we win, homework will be the farthest thing from my mind. Hopefully, my professors will read this and I won't have much to do. (Hint, hint)

9 a.m. Since I am slightly superstitious, my game day breakfast will be the same as it was two weeks ago when we beat Tennessee Tech University: grape Gatorade and cinnamon raisin biscuits from

### Broad River Review seeks submissions for 2007 edition

The Broad River Review, Gardner-Webb University's literary magazine, seeks original poetry, fiction and creative nonfiction works from members of the university community. Artists and photographers can submit works, because one will be selected to be on the magazine's cover.

Works can be turned in several ways. Hard copy should be sent to The Broad River Review, Campus Box 7224, GWU,

Hardee's. As a side note, the drive-thru is not designed for motorized wheelchairs. I know from experience.

10 a.m. Only eight hours until kickoff. It's time to get angry, to tap into that primal rage that causes a fight-or-flight reaction. I'm normally a peaceful person, so in order to accomplish this goal, I play one of the most violent video games I own, "God of War." As I send blood and body parts to the streets of ancient Greece, my adrenaline spikes and in my mind, enemies no longer wear togas, but black and gold football uniforms.

12 p.m. Now that I'm angry, it's time to bring another emotion to the surface. Frustration. And what better way to become frustrated than watch the Duke football game. They have only scored 13 points all season - not exactly an offensive juggernaut.

3 p.m. Break out the body paint. This is an exhaustive one- to two-hour process that requires me to stand the whole time. But it's worth it. A friend is bringing over some bright red hair dye for me, too. It's not permanent I hope.

5 p.m. Time to head to the stadium to see if I can get some hamburgers from the tailgaters. Another side note, paint flecks mixed with mustard and chili is not very pleasing to the taste buds.

6:04 p.m. Game time. For the next three hours, I will yell, scream and sweat the Bulldogs to victory.

10 p.m. Time for bed. After all, the Panthers play on Sunday and I've got an NFL game day routine, too. But that's another story for another time.

Boiling Springs, N.C., 28017. Works can also be submitted by e-mail (as a Word attachment) to BroadRiverReview@gardner-webb.edu.

Please include your name, local mailing address, e-mail address and telephone number. The submission deadline is Oct. 13.

For more information, contact Dr. Chris Davis at 3224 or cdavis@gardner-webb.edu.