

# Silent administration

Why does a problem have to spill over the campus wall before our administration will come out and respond? This may be an all too simple generalization but it is based on all the evidence we have. The year has ended and up until now, only one article which appeared in our pages has coaxed administration reaction and that is because Mike Christie's feature, "Fire strikes Carolina dormitory," irked some of our neighboring politicians and firemen.

The *Pendulum* has received numerous responses to Christie's article. Although we appreciate the feedback, we question why other equally deserving articles and editorials have not drawn even a fraction of the response which the fire article received.

In our first edition, we encouraged support and suggestions for the paper so that it could serve the college as a forum for student and administrative concerns. Our first and rather optimistic editorial noted changes that had taken place in all areas of campus life, but we felt it was necessary to raise questions concerning the value of these changes -- are they for the welfare of Elon as a business institution or as a liberal arts college which promotes the student's interest? We received no direct answer to either question.

Our fourth issue dealt with another area which is important to students, faculty, and administration: the influence of Title IX on the Elon campus. Progress was noted in several cases, but we felt that certain areas needed to be explored further. Therefore we called for a report on precisely what has been done and is being done in affirmative action. We still have not received such a report.

Some hot questions emerged in the next issue: we asked if there is a connection between student success and administrative approval in the outcome of Board of Trustee meetings. This did not spark any response from the administration or the board, yet we were directly confronting them and they continue to maintain their silence and ignore the question.

Our sixth editorial demanded more consideration for the professors here. Although we are supposedly striving for academic excellence, there are no efforts made to provide teachers with incentive to use their special knowledge, and their conditions have not been improved. Again we haven't received a reply.

Another editorial dealt with the policy that canceled classes which did not enroll a minimum of 15 students. We condemned this rule as not appropriate for our small student population. We still have not received any reply.

Is it true that a campus problem must also involve the community before our administration acts? All of our suggestions were limited to the campus. Mike Christie's article merited administrative response because it shook Elon -- community relations.

Assuming that this proposition is valid -- and indeed the evidence suggests that it is -- the controversy over our coverage of the fire in Carolina dorm casts quite a bright light on the blemishes of our administration and reveals a frightening lack of concern on their part. Our editorial experience this year shows that the Elon administration is satisfied to let student interests rot within the brick walls of the campus while they pander for public approval.

The administration is mute to student concerns isolated on campus, and they remain silent except when Elon's public image and reputation are threatened. In short, they are silent unless confronted by forces which the administration considers more formidable than the student body.

It is unrealistic to assume that a college should be insensitive to its community relations, but there is no reason to neglect student needs which are centered on campus and do not affect the community.



# Letters

Dear Editors:

The article entitled "Fire Strikes Carolina Dormitory" in your April 15 issue was very disappointing. In addition to the false statement that the Elon College Volunteer Fire Department arrived "...at least 20 minutes after the call...", the inaccurate listing of the departments which responded, the misrepresentation about fire trucks being parked in the "old parking lot," the article showed an incredible lack of appreciation for the efforts of the volunteer firemen and unbelievably bad taste in referring to their being here as a "social gathering."

I regret that your reporter either does not know or does not appreciate the fact that the Alamance County firemen are all volunteers who give of their time and efforts to help to protect the lives and property of others. They spend much time in training programs in order to be prepared for emergencies. Many of them have worked long hours in fund-raising projects in order to be able to purchase good equipment to be used in fighting fires. They deserve our thanks.

As chairman of the Alamance County Fire Commission, I am very proud of the excellent response to the call from this campus. We needed their help and they came quickly, they worked diligently, and they prevented a major catastrophe on our campus. Because of their efforts what might have been a major fire was confined to a single room with only minimal damage to the building.

Humorous writing has its place in the *Pendulum* but an effort to be funny by being untruthful, insensitive, or ungrateful is not representative of your usually good work.

J. Earl Danieley  
Professor of Chemistry

The article was really for campus entertainment.

I am accused of an "inaccurate listing of the departments which responded" to the fire. I apologize for following the information in my morning newspaper, the *Greensboro Daily News*. I also supposedly wrote a "misrepresentation about fire trucks being parked in the 'old parking lot.'" That evening, I viewed four to five truck-like vehicles in the above-mentioned locality. Furthermore, these odd-looking vehicles were painted red, and for some reason had hoses, hatchets, and ladders on their sides. Finally, I must admit that when I described a 1½-hour coffee break that evening as a "social gathering," which implies coats and ties, I was incorrect, but not necessarily in "bad taste."

Not in one word or phrase did I show or state that I was "ungrateful" to our Elon College firemen (although I was a little puzzled by the slow fire trucks). I feel that the firemen deserve thanks for their bravery and expediency that evening. It is a rare man who, with hose in hand would come face to face with an almost unquenchable blaze.

As a member of the student body of Elon College, I was very proud of the excellent response to the call from this campus. I am not proud, however, of the charge of being "untruthful, insensitive, and ungrateful." I have already cleared up the untruthfulness and have shown that I was not "ungrateful." If I were insensitive, I would not have cared at all about the evening, but I did -- clearing up the third and final accusation. It is not just or morally right for anyone to judge a person's feelings, on the basis that just because I did not state exactly how I felt I'm accused of feeling the opposite of how I really felt.

The intent of my article was not to offend but to lighten our hearts and rediscover some lost smiles, which I never thought would be so offending on a Christian campus.

From this experience I have learned that I should have pursued a more serious and factual approach in my article. But I can say I never considered or made any personal

accusations that are untrue or of ungentlemanly cast toward any individual. Obviously, all do not follow me on this road either.

Michael Christie

Editor:

This letter is to thank publicly the Resident Counselors and other students who were of such great assistance on the night of April 8 when fire broke out in Carolina Dormitory. The maturity and responsibility that so many students assumed during this crisis contributed greatly to the prevention of a major disaster.

While I have had the opportunity to thank many of you personally, this note is to acknowledge the contributions of many others whom I have not had the opportunity to see or whose work I did not observe.

It is this sort of teamwork and mutual support that makes Elon such a great place to live, work, and study.

Fred Young  
President

Dear Editors:

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Elon administration for all their help and support for us, the residents of Third Carolina. As everyone knows, we lost our floor to a fire that was by no means the fault of the school. How could they be blamed for missing or empty fire extinguishers (on all three floors) and the lack of proper detection equipment? We all realize that our college is in poor financial condition and can't afford these precautions. No, we are thankful for the quick action the administration took for us.

Third Carolina is proud of the courage it took to declare to the news services that the students would be put up in motels and later that we of the "Burned Out" floor would be given off-campus housing. Jolly good publicity and at no cost. It had to take courage to state this and then not to do it. Ah, but our administration is resourceful. If we had been given hotels, we

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# The Pendulum

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Dear Editors:

My feature article in the April 15 issue headed "Fire Strikes Carolina Dormitory" was written with a light tone, tongue in cheek, with no intention of offending anyone. I felt all actively involved in a college atmosphere would have realized this fact which to me and many others was obvious.