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Personal account **PIRG convention awakens political rea**

by Joy Hamilton

Politics has always been boring to me-that is until last weekend when I began take charge of my to political life. Various groups founded by Ralph Nader were celebrating their tenth anniversary in Washington convention that D.C. in a started Friday and ended

late Saturday. For me, the excitement of the convention was magnetizing; it was like lightning had struck and I woke up from my deep slumber of political and national apathy and woke up to the anti-Reagan nightmare.

Reaganomics (Reagan economics) was discussed in detail from the budget cuts to the extreme conservatism displayed by the president in his televised speech last Thursday night. (Reagan was elected by only 25 percent of registered voters.)

Attending the convention from North Carolina were one student from Duke University, one student from UNC-G, one student from Elon College, and co-PIRG state coordinator Rebecca Margolese-Malin. The group trekked to Washington,

D.C., last Thursday night for a meeting of people from other Nader-oriented groups.

The above mentioned were attending people the convention because they were members of the Public Interest Research Group, known as PIRG. North Carolina has PIRGs at seven college campuses in the state. The PIRGs at these campuses study current issues in the hopes of shaping the democratic culture with an outlet for citizen involvement and responsibility. The PIRGs on the Elon

currently campus are currently studying voter registration, toxic waste in Alamance County, how the federal cuts will affect social services in the county, and various other issues.

Approximately 200 students from PIRGs in the nation attended the convention that had nearly 750 participants. Featured in the wo-day convention were Ralph Nader, Marlo Thomas and Phil Donahue, musical activist Pete Seeger, and former FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson.

The future of Ralph Nader-based groups and the controlling of insurance funds, pension funds, public airwayes and public lands were among the issues discussed during the convention. Also featured was a solar film produced by Robert Redford.

The new conservatism was openly discussed, and time was provided for spectators to address issues on the "open mike."

On Saturday, Phil Donahue, TV talk show host, moderated debates on media access and corporate power.

One thing I learned during the convention was that although a single person may have trouble changing aspects of political, economic, and social injustice, an organized group can be deadly, and its protests can activate change. And at Elon, a handful of these people can help save the world (or at least Alamance County).

This political awakening within me has inspired me to work to bring about social and political change. To see 200 students who are so

nonapathetic and politically alive made me realize the tremendous impact students

My only hope is that more people I come into contact with will strive to fight what some people call "City Hall." One chance for Elon students will be this Saturday when they will have an opportunity to register to vote in Alamance County from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at City Hall, in Elon College.

A handful of people can change the world. An ex-ample of this is activist Heather Booth, executive

director of the Citize Labor Energy Coalition. said in a speech on Sa day, "We must give sounding 'no' to abaneve ment of the struggle social justice. But we a win alone. We need to Twomen out of the kitch Women may have a play sit but can't affort to eat,

Booth added, Reagan cuts have not hit." But people are shift and there is an alterna for a new direction." I, Hamilton, add that this direction could readily of from the students of tody the leaders of tomorrow.

Elon College's blood drive will be held on Thursday, Oct. 8, in Jordan Gym from 10 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

Awards will be given to the campus organization, fraternity, sorority, and residence hall that donate the highest percentages of units. Donor sign-up began Wednesday, Sept. 30, at both McEwen and Harden dining halls. Everyone is urged to register early for this year's blood drive.

the Colonnades staff are invited to a picnic on Sunday, Oct. 4, from 3 to 6 p.m. at the home of Dr. Andrew Angyal.

Those coming should bring a side dish or refreshments. Casual attire will be suitable. For more infor-mation, call Dr. Angyal at 578-2387.

The Elon Gospel Choir will be holding a car wash on Saturday at 2402 South Church St. directly across from Wendy's.

The car wash will start at 10 a.m. and continue until 3 p.m. The price for an outside car wash will be \$2.50.

SKY

The North Caroli Virginia College Eng Association will sponso conference on Saturd Oct. 10, at N.C. University.

Covering many topic interest to English my and professors, the a ference will begin at 8 u and close at 12:45 p.m. 1 a luncheon. Call Dr. L Bland at 584-2263 or 1 Andrew Angyal at 5842 for further information.

Juniors and semi wishing to be considered Who's Who should press a list of activities at B and turn it in to Dr. O White in the Acade Dean's Office on or beh Oct. 2.

The faculty of the English Department and the ma bers of Sigma Tau Delta host an afternoon recept for all English and English Journalism majors, cluding prospective majo on Wednesday, Oct. 7, fro 3:30 to 5 p.m. at the ha of Dr. Robert Blake.

Dr. Blake lives at 4011 College Ave.

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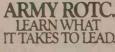
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