

# Editorials

## Education needs improvement

### Candidates offer little

The six major North Carolina Democratic gubernatorial candidates are primarily waging safe, middle-of-the-road campaigns.

The candidates include former Attorney General Rufus L. Edmisten, former state Commerce Secretary D.M. "Lauch" Faircloth, former state Rep. Thomas O. Gilmore, Lt. Gov. James C. Green, insurance commissioner John R. Ingram and former Charlotte Mayor H. Edward Knox.

All claim to support improvement of public schools and creation of new jobs; however, the candidates are presenting few innovative ideas to accomplish these tasks.

Improving education is a major issue in North Carolina, and each of the six gubernatorial candidates claims he will raise teachers' salaries. The strength of these pledges wanes when the candidates are asked how they plan to accomplish the teacher wage increases. Five of the six candidates plan to rely on revenue generated by the state's sales tax and corporate income tax revenues. They say that they would not raise taxes to pay for educational improvements.

Only one of the candidates, Gilmore, is taking some risks in his campaign platform.

Gilmore is the only candidate willing to consider a tax increase to improve public education.

He says that the tax increase would be a last resort, but in a society where one does not win any popularity contests by suggesting tax increases, Gilmore is taking a large risk in advocating a possible tax hike. But by venturing to support a proposal that his opponents avoid, Gilmore emerges as a controversial candidate— one willing to risk his campaign by suggesting a way to fulfill his promise to improve North Carolina public education if economic recovery revenues are not realized.

If for no other reason, Gilmore deserves recognition for this willingness to venture away from the conservative middle-of-the-road campaigns.

This stance has won Gilmore the endorsement of the North Carolina Association of Educators. Published reports do not rate Gilmore as one of the top three contenders in the gubernatorial race, but the NCAE endorsement is very important.

Gilmore's willingness to consider tax increases to improve education may not be as controversial as it appears when contrasted with his opponents' hesitation to do the same.

North Carolina educators are among the lowest paid in the nation. It is no wonder that our school systems have trouble attracting outstanding teachers when we do not provide adequate teacher salaries, and according to a recent Carolina Poll, North Carolinians are willing to pay for better educators and for educational improvements.

The poll shows that a majority of North Carolina adults are willing to pay higher taxes if needed to finance improvements in the public schools. Seventy-seven percent of those polled said they were willing to pay more state taxes to improve public elementary and secondary schools. Nineteen percent opposed a tax increase for this purpose, and 4 percent had no opinion.

The same poll demonstrated that 88 percent of those participating in the random telephone survey supported a differential salary system which would pay a higher salary to teachers with more responsibility and higher skills.

Interestingly, whoever succeeds Gov. Jim Hunt will determine how the quality of North Carolina public education develops.

Hunt, chairman of the N.C. Commission on Education for Economic Growth, is suggesting salary increases for all teachers and merit system for teachers which would allow the best educators to assume more responsibility and be paid accordingly.

Hunt's plans will be laid by the end of his term in January, but whether they are carried out will depend on the next governor.

Assuming that the Carolina Poll is accurate, Gilmore supports a move favored by the majority of North Carolinians. He is willing to support a view which could cost him votes although the Carolina Poll seems to dispute this.

Gilmore appears to be the only candidate who will consider acting on what the people desire: improving education even at the risk of a tax hike.



## Storms provoke neighborly warmth

Any time that there is a newscast on the radio or television, either someone robbed a bank, started a war, or killed another human being. It is so tempting to believe that there is no kindness in the hearts of people in our society. To a certain extent, I do believe that there is very little good-heartedness and peace within the souls of mankind.

Somehow, I managed to see otherwise for a brief moment last week. When the rash of tornadoes swept through several counties in North Carolina, at least 43 people were killed and more than 800 injured, while damages were over \$100 million. During these troubled times for many homeless people, a sense of kindness and warmth was shown from the lucky ones who were not hit by the tornado.

A type of neighborly love was demonstrated during these times. People were helping one another clean their yards and farms, whether they knew one another or not. Several churches in North Carolina took collections of money to help the homeless start over again. Large bags of food and clothing were taken to the Salvation Army, Red Cross, and National Guard to donate to any of the needy people.

Most of the homes and farms that were damaged had years of hard work behind them. Beyond the material losses, loved ones were also lost. Gov. Jim Hunt declared a time of prayer for the living victims, as well as for those who did not survive.

Such signs of caring and togetherness creates a warm spot in my heart, because I

know that there is some good in the people of our state. Of course, there is always a desperate fight to end or at least decrease the amount of violence and crimes in our nation. But it is always encouraging to see so many people, especially strangers, helping one another.

Maybe one day in the future, neighbors, friends, and strangers will not wait for a disaster to occur before they attempt to help each other.

—by Vicky Jiggetts

### The Pendulum Staff

Editor-in-Chief	Jo Craven
Associate Editor	Loukia Louka
Head Photographer	Paul Harris
Editorial Editor	Carol Nix
Features Editor	Penny Thomas
Arts Editor	Felicia Fogleman
Sports Editor	Danny Hubbard
Advertising Mgr.	Mouche Maggio
Circulation Mgr.	Bobby Drakeford
Adviser	Robert Nowell

The Pendulum welcomes letters, limited to 250 words, from our readers. Longer material may be submitted as opinion articles. All letters submitted must be signed, and a phone number given so that the letters validity can be checked. Editors reserve the right to edit for length, libel, good taste and accuracy. Our office is located in 208 Long Student Center, phone 584-2331.

The paper is published by the Communications Media Board of Elon College. Founded on October 14, 1974, as the student newspaper serving the Elon College community. The Pendulum is published each Thursday during the regular terms except for examination and holiday periods. The Pendulum is printed by The Burlington Daily Times-News.

### Letters to the editor

## Watts questions parking complaints

### To the Editor

When I read the protests over lack of parking space at Elon I wonder where the protestors have looked. The lot behind the powerhouse, just off of Powerline Road, is rarely even half full, and I have never not been able to park there. It may not be as convenient as some other areas, but it is available. You can save time, rushing to exams, etc., if you don't cruise around looking for the optimum space, but proceed directly to this available parking lot.

Fred Watts  
Political Science