

## Does tuition money need to be spent on landscaping?

As a student paying for a majority of my tuition, I enjoy seeing the fruits of my financial burden.

The education I am receiving is above exemplary.

Yet, the past week I have seen much of the school's effort going toward the re-beautification of our campus.

A question is raised; is the money our university spending on landscaping the campus well spent?

A tradition that has been well known and revered here at Elon is graduation under the oaks. It is a respected event, one many look forward to.

In a recent article in the Pendulum, students were happy to have new trees planted in court behind West. They would provide shade and comfort during commencement ceremonies.

They only problem that is foreseen is the health of these trees. An average oak tree can grow to a height of 100 ft. and its branches can span from its trunk in a radius of up to 40 feet.

The trees planted behind West are planted no more than 25 feet apart. So as these trees grow they will continue to grow into each other. This may make for a great canopy for graduation but the future of these trees may not be so great.

As these trees continue to grow into each other they will block sunlight not only from graduates and students but also from itself.

Without this sunlight these trees' growth will slowly stop and the trees will begin to kill themselves out. Hence, once again new trees will need to be brought in to replace the ones just dying.

Have you ever wondered how time and time again during the late fall season there is never a single leaf on the ground. When I first saw the leaf vacuum zamboni, which if you have not seen on campus is a sight to see, I was amazed.

Our school actually has a machine that gets rid of the leaves. It saves time from raking the leaves, and is a machine which really only needs a driver. Yet, a four-man crew is usually seen running the machine, three with leaf blowers blowing the leaves into the machine. Is it really necessary to have three people just funneling leaves into this massive vehicle? Is it necessary to pay three individuals just to blow leaves into a machine that already does a fantastic job?

- Greg Thockray

## Adoption should be open to all

An estimate states that there are 500,000 children in foster care, nationally and 100,000 who need to be adopted.

In 1996, there were only an estimated 20,000 adoptive parents that qualified for these children. Currently, the statistics are not much different, but there is a change; permitting adoption to homosexual couples.

By permitting homosexual couples to adopt, the critical need for adoptive and foster parents in the United States can be met. Research has also shown that children without permanent homes can actually suffer serious damage. By helping put them in the available homes, this problem is also being attended to.

Studies have shown that a child raised by homosexual parents can be just as physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy as if they were raised by heterosexual parents, therefore, homosexual couples should be allowed to adopt.

- Sherlethia D. Johnson

# Mailbox



## Reality shows force you to examine your life

Reality television has been around since the years of the "Gong Show," but has exploded since the early nineties.

Today reality television litters every American television set. It has branched out into every possible interest one can have, from dating shows to home improvement makeovers. It seems three or four new reality shows come out each season.

Does anyone ever stop and ask themselves, what do these shows say about my own real life?

Take the latest reality hit "Married By America," where contestants let their family and friends find the "perfect suitor," but the viewers get the ultimate choice.

The couple never meets until their engagement. What is this saying about America's values and the importance of marriage?

This show desanctifies the foundation of marriage and reflects poorly on American views of the union.

The show "Are you Hot" is a parade of male and female contestants who think they satisfy America's perception of "hot."

They end up being picked apart by a laser that points out their every flaw. The show objectifies the body and though the contestant opens themselves to the criticism freely, the rest of the world may not.

The contestant may escape unharmed, but it contributes to the

social construction of society and its perspectives of the human body.

Reality television is breaking down America's moral fiber. It is scary to think that real life is anything like we see on these shows. I'll admit that the initial shows like "Survivor" and "The Amazing Race" were entertaining and harmless, but we have now gone too far.

Instead of examining the lives of others on the TV set, people should step back and watch their own lives a little closer.

- Thomas M. Ross

## Elon scholarship donor dinner is degrading and humiliating; should not be scheduled

On April 2, Elon is hosting a dinner honoring generous scholarship donors, and has asked all the Elon students that have received a scholarship for the 2002-2003 school year to come and thank the people personally.

This dinner is degrading, humiliating and should not be held.

Money is the leading aspect in what determines where people are placed in our society, and for those who have to turn to others for financial aid is a very degrading experience.

It is hard enough to fill out all of the papers for loans, grants, and scholarships with the feeling that you are some poor person on a street corner begging for a hand-out because you are unable to take care of yourself financially.

I appreciate the donations, but I also have to remind people that before receiving any scholarship, the recipient must hand write a sincere, personable thank you letter to the donors.

Now Elon expects those students to attend the dinner and thank the people in person as if it was a time for the donors to meet the "needy" students who would not be at Elon if it weren't for them.

What is even worse is that the donors who are going to attend the dinner cannot accept the thank you letter as their only gratification for their good deed, and instead must be praised and have their feet kissed by the recipients.

I know this all must sound ungrateful and possibly snobbish, but before you reject this opinion, please put yourself in the shoes of the students who are going to have to attend this dinner and be looked at as if they are less of a person because they needed financial aid to continue their education experience and kiss up to the boasting donors.

- Steve Storch  
Sophomore