

Letters & Submissions



Letters to the editor are always welcome. Submissions must include your name, contact information and class standing. Letters from faculty and staff are also accepted. The Pendulum reserves the right to edit obscene or potentially libelous material. Lengthy letters or columns may have to be trimmed to fit. All submissions become the property of The Pendulum and will not be returned. Send submissions to opinions@elon.edu.

Ride, Rack and Relax bikes are not designed for the treatment brought on by the students

To the Editor:

Dear fellow students,

From now on, I think the signs on the community bikes and the bike racks should say "Ride? Rack? Relax?" because there just seems to be a lot of confusion surrounding the program and its various facets of operation. I hope this will serve to dispel some of those rumors and answer some questions that I have heard and also open up the lines of communication for any more questions, comments, or concerns that anyone may have about the community bike program here at Elon.

The first question seems to be spawned by the sight of bikes left on the side of roads or paths of our community. Many people are frustrated and want to know why people are destroying these community bikes and why they can't just ride, rack, and relax, as the program suggests. I am pleased to say that the majority of this is a misunderstanding. I would have to say that less than a quarter of reported bike problems are a result of malicious intent. The problem lies in the misuse and misconception of the bikes. Many people see the bikes as being more like mountain bikes and treat them as if they are of that caliber. However, these bikes are designed to be "cruisers" and are indicated as such. As a result, many students jump on these bikes

expecting them to be similar to the bikes that we had as kids. These bikes are simply for casual, easy riding back and forth from your dorm or class, not for racing the tram because you are late for class. Seeing that students are reacting this way and are expecting this from the bikes, those that work with the bike program are taking that into consideration.

Another issue that seems to be being discussed is the matter of funding for the program and that students do not want their student activity fees to go to buying bikes that they think are being used inappropriately. Let me first say that not one dollar of SGA funds has ever been used to fund the bike program. The bike program was created as a result of a student initiative and that student came to SGA for support in its implementation and management but no funds were allocated for it. SGA works with, supports, and helps to manage the bike program but it is solely as a result of an administrative budget and the program in no way effects the use of student funds from SGA. The project was a collaboration of efforts in the true spirit of a community based program.

Also, I have heard from many students that they have discussed the bike program in their classes and nothing makes me happier than to hear that students and all members of the Elon

University community are discussing issues on campus. Some of these discussions have also lead to some great ideas, that I have been fortunate enough to hear, and these ideas will surely benefit those that work with the bike program. Our Student Issues Committee has also taken it upon themselves to theme their current regular survey around this issue and the committee is currently tallying your responses. This has been a great help and we enjoy your feedback.

Based on your responses, I hope to create an ad hoc committee that will discuss different issues and concerns relating to the bike program and in turn use them to become more proactive and to insure its success in years to come. If you are interested in helping with this effort please contact me via email (cmorse@elon.edu) or contact SGA by calling our office at ext. 7254. Also, if you see a problem with a bike or one that needs to be picked up by one of our bike managers please contact the SGA office and we will be sure to let them know about it.

-Chris Morse,
SGA Executive President

Other options available outside Bush and Kerry, Ralph Nader

To the Editor:

With as many recent opinion columns there have been in The Pendulum regarding the presidential election that have focused on John Kerry and George W. Bush, it seems that it is only proper that some mention be given of Independent presidential candidate Ralph Nader. Nader, who has struggled to get his name on the ballot with his running mate, Peter Camejo, will be on the ballot in 33 states come Election Day. In addition, he is a write-in can-

didate in other states, including our very own North Carolina.

I would encourage many of the apathetic citizens of this nation and those who are already leaning towards one candidate to look beyond the two groups of power, which seem as different as Vanilla and French Vanilla, at third party and independent candidates running in this election. Don't let your voice be silenced by those who say these candidates will not win and therefore it is a waste to vote for them.

Don't let your voice be silenced by those who say that by voting for Nader or another third-party candidate you are "taking" a vote from one of the major candidates in this election. Democracy is supposed to be about voicing your opinion, not compromising what you believe for the sake of popular opinion. Such thinking only serves to move us further and further to the middle and to complete political paralyzation. Remember what other third parties and independent voices in government

have accomplished -- improving worker's rights, getting child labor laws passed, and advancing the women's suffrage movement, according to an article on <http://www.about.com>. If you think your thoughts don't matter, think again. Be different and base your vote on your conscience and not as a concession.

-Evan Webb, Class of 2008