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Bryan residents protest chalk ban

Andrew Kobayashi
STAFF WRITER

A concrete courtyard played host to a display of community as Bryan residents came together last Friday afternoon to turn a frustrated protest against perceived censorship into a sprawling piece of lyrical art.

Chalking on the walls outside of Bryan dorms was outlawed for the first time this year, and amidst confusion about the reasons for the new rule, many residents felt that their artistic voices were being smothered by bureaucracy.

Guilford students are notorious for their social consciousness, and they do not take lightly any perceived attack on their freedoms, especially the freedom of speech. But is this a case of freedoms deprived? Or have students, overzealously protecting their rights, failed to comprehend the full picture?

The latter is exactly the case, according to residential life director Patty Burgoon. "Last year the task of removing



The decorated Bryan quad.

the chalk went to maintenance, and since they were unable to remove some of it, the students were made to pay damages. We didn't want that to happen this year," she said. So the problem was addressed at what seemed to be the root, and the chalking was forbidden.

But this was not the logical conclusion for many students. First-year Tyson Buis said, "If the problem was removal, why not just let us accept financial responsibility and be done with it?"

"This is completely ridiculous," said sophomore Brynne Kirk, as she and fellow pro-chalk activist Alicia Frasca circulated a petition to all Bryan residents. The petition was intended to be a compromise. The wall-art could stay up, but all words and phrases would be promptly taken down. This would not be a bad idea by most standards of taste, as one such phrase reminded Bryanites to "act your age, not your [expletive deleted] size."

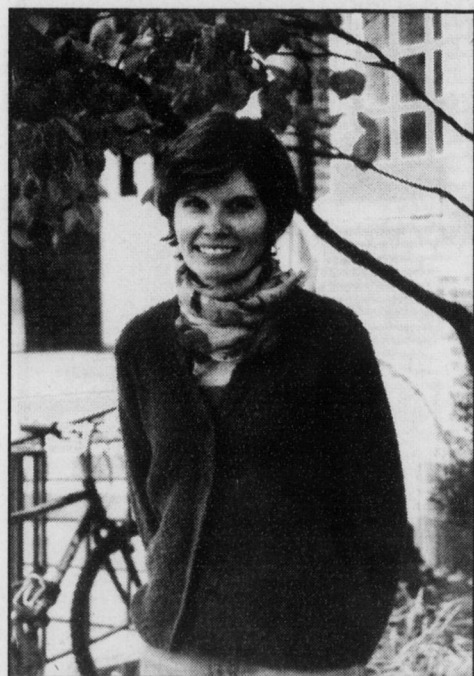
But a compromise was not to be had, and steps were taken

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Andrea Gerlak to leave Guilford

Casey Creel
STAFF WRITER

"It's a tremendous loss for the college," said Ken Gilmore,



This semester will be Gerlak's last.

head of the Political Science department.

"She is a great teacher, a good friend, and will certainly be missed at Guilford," said Dave Dobson, Geology and Earth Sciences professor.

"I could always go to her and she'd go out of her way to help me," said James Tatum, a junior Political Science major. "I'm certainly sorry to see her go."

Andrea Gerlak, a professor of Political Science since 1996 and the person chiefly responsible for the Environmental Studies major, will leave Guilford at the end of December.

"It caught me by surprise," said Tatum, who learned of Andrea's departure through an email to Political Science majors two weeks before the school year

began. "I don't see how she could possibly turn it down though."

What Gerlak could not turn down was a job offer to teach at Columbia University's Biosphere, a giant metal and glass dome built in the early 90's to host every ecosystem found on the planet. The facility is located 30 miles outside of Tucson, Arizona.

Columbia took over what was originally a privately funded operation after it closed in 1995.

The university bought it to offer students "interdisciplinary hands-on experience in environmental studies."

"There aren't too many rain forests in New York," Gerlak joked.

Her teaching at the Biosphere will deal directly with the topic of both her dissertation and the manuscript she is currently writing: water policy in the West.

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