

## Two recent events point to offensive behavior on campus

By Megan Feil  
STAFF WRITER

On the morning of Dec. 3, Amanda Mbuvi, part-time lecturer in religious studies, reported finding a swastika and "death to fags" written in pen on the safe zone sign on the office door of Eric Mortenson, assistant professor of religious studies, in Dana auditorium.

President Kent Chabotar called the Bias Incident Group to meet after receiving news of the defacement of Mortensen's door.

An incident must meet four characteristics in order for the Bias Incident Group to respond: it must be perpetrated by anonymous perpetrators, be widely known by the public, be viewed as threatening to a person or group, and be serious.

Few members of the group, which comprises faculty, staff, and students, knew about it before the meeting.

"It came close to not meeting the criteria," Chabotar said.

"Fifty percent of me said we shouldn't do anything at all because the person who did it would get the attention they wanted," said Mortensen. "However, the other 50 percent finds it so offensive that we need to express that that kind of intolerance is not acceptable."

The group sent out a statement reaffirming the core values of diversity, equality, and justice, which can be viewed on the Guilford Web site.

Later in December, housekeeping staff found the third-floor Milner bathroom in an unsanitary state. According to Lili Sharpless, Milner hall director, they had to deal with "cups of urine placed in urinals and feces wiped on the toilet seats as well as the stalls."

Sharpless woke the male residents on the third floor around 7 a.m.

"I figured since I had been woken up early to deal with their mess they should have to get up early too," Sharpless said.

She held a meeting to talk to them about the inappropriateness of their actions and to tell them about their shared fine.

Some residents repeated the offense a few days later and attached a note addressed to



Eric Mortenson  
Assistant Professor of  
Religious Studies

**"I'm not interested in knowing someone who did something fundamentally cowardly and pathetically uninventive."**

the housekeeping staff. The essence of the message had a "horrible tone that basically said, 'we're paying to study, you're paid to clean, do your job,'" Chabotar said.

The Bias Incident Group did not respond to the issue in Milner.

"It's good to have several tools for dealing with issues, you can choose the most appropriate one," Chabotar said. "We have students

to students, student to residential advisors, Campus Life, and the Bias Incident Group. With all these options, you don't over or under-react, you've got a choice to make."

Nobody has confessed to either incident. Chabotar said that the focus should be placed on making these issues "teachable moments" rather than finding the perpetrators.

"I'm not interested in knowing someone who did something fundamentally cowardly and pathetically uninventive," Mortensen

said.

"The fact that people could have walked by and see this or heard about it necessitates some sort of public thing," Mbuvi said. "These people who have seen it won't know if anyone cares if nothing is done."

She and other professors have created space in their classes to discuss it.

## Reselling of local paper raises alarm in community

By Jake Blumgart  
SENIOR WRITER

Landmark Communications, a media company based in Norfolk, Va., is considering the sale of all its assets, including the local Greensboro newspaper the News and Record.

Landmark's decision to go on the market reflects a powerful trend in America's media industry — the consolidation of independent, locally owned media companies into mammoth transnational corporations like Viacom and Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation.

The monopolizing of the media industry has led to decreased local control, an increased emphasis on quarterly profits, and reduced budgets. The News and Record has already begun to experience the cost cutting bedeviling the industry including layoffs last June, the first in the newspaper's history, and a reduced coverage of certain sections.

"The community concern (with a potential sale) is whether it will become an even more watered-down paper," said Richie Zweigenhaft, Dana professor of psychology and mass media expert. "It is (already) a shadow of its former self (and I would be surprised if it wound up being a better newspaper (after a sale)."

The prospect of an extra-regional interest buying the News and Record worries many members of the Greensboro community. Landmark, through the newspaper, has donated around \$300,000 annually to Greensboro area non-profits in recent years. A larger corporation might end such funding.

"Landmark is not one of the giants of newspaper ownership," Zweigenhaft said. "It is mostly a regional company. If the paper is purchased by a corporation outside the region, it would become just a source of income for them (with few local concerns)."

The sale comes at a particularly hard time for American newspapers as many young people turn to the Internet instead of print media, causing a decline in readership and decrease in profits.

According to Richard M. Barron, a staff

writer for the News and Record, newspaper profits that used to hover around 40 percent have recently dropped as low as 20 percent.

The News and Record has emphasized the connection between Landmark's decision and the troubled state of print journalism. Barron has written articles for the paper covering the potential sale and a related piece entitled "How long can newspapers last?"

"Dropping revenues have stimulated a lot of changing hands," Barron said in a phone interview. "A lot of companies don't like the dropping profits but that is the trend right now. Any business is happy with 20 percent profit but the companies worry that it will keep on dropping, to 15 percent, (then to) 10 percent, and eventually to zero."

The News and Record is attempting to expand onto the Internet in an effort to retain readers. The paper has hired two full-time editors and one full-time reporter solely for online coverage.

"The News and Record, like all newspapers, has to adapt to change," said Tracie Fellers, visiting writing instructor and former editorialist for the News and Record. "One of the strengths that the News and Record demonstrated is its work in being part of the blogosphere. (Moving onto the Internet) is among the ways that newspapers will have to adapt and change in order to remain relevant to their communities."

Most Guilford students are unfamiliar with The News and Record except through their extensive and in-depth online coverage of the Bryan Incident. Before the Internet, the paper was the best way for students to find movie times, but now most students turn to their laptop.

"For the most part, Guilford students are internationally, not locally minded," said Ben Lancaster '07, a former Guilfordian editor, life-long Greensboro resident, and News and Record subscriber. "You can't really expect out-of-town college students to read the local paper. The only thing that is going to happen is that the News and Record will be bought and no one on campus will notice."

DEAR 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR JANITORIAL STAFF,

IT HAS COME TO OUR ATTENTION THAT WE (THE 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR MEN) ARE BEING FINED DUE TO UNSANITARY CONDITIONS WITHIN OUR BATHROOM. WELL THIS MIGHT BE NEW- BUT BATHROOMS AREN'T SANITARY! WE UNDERSTAND THAT EXTREME UNCLEANLY IS UNACCEPTABLE AND WE ALL AGREE THAT ON OUR PART, THE BATHROOM IS RELATIVELY CLEAN, EXCEPT FOR FORGETTING TO FLUSH, OR LEAVING THE SINK ON, OUR BATHROOM ON OUR PART IS MOSTLY CLEAN.

WHAT WE ARE ARGUING ABOUT, IS HOW YOU ARE GETTING US FINED WHEN I DECIDED TO CLEAN BATHROOMS FOR A LIVING. YOU KNEW WHAT YOU WERE GETTING INTO, YET YOU STILL TOOK THE JOB. AND YOU STILL COMPLAIN. WHILE YOUR DEFINITION OF CLEANING IS SPRAYING THE SURFACE WITH ALCOHOL AND GOD KNOWS WHAT. SORRY TO INFORM YOU BUT THAT ALONE ISN'T CLEANING. LASTLY, WHAT ABOUT THE PROBLEM WITH ALL THE LITTLE BLACK FLIES ALL OVER THE SHOWERS AND EXPANDING INTO THE GENERAL BATHROOM? IS THAT OUR PROBLEM TOO? I DON'T THINK SO! HOW CAN YOU TELL US TO CLEAN OR PAY WHEN YOU'RE NOT EVEN DOING YOUR JOB? OR IS IT THAT YOU THINK WE ENJOY THE COMPANY IN THE SHOWERS?

ALSO, IT'S BEEN MENTIONED THAT A CERTAIN STAFF MEMBER IS CONSTANTLY FOUND COMPLAINING ABOUT MINISCULE PROBLEMS. IF THIS PERSON DOESN'T LIKE THEIR JOB THEN THEY SHOULD QUIT, WE DON'T NEED TO HEAR THE CONSTANT NAGGING, AND NEITHER DO THE RA'S. WHEN THIS PERSON ISN'T COMPLAINING THEY'RE EITHER SLEEPING IN THE LOBBY OR HARASSING THE YOUNG WOMEN ON VARIOUS FLOORS.

LASTLY, THE BATHROOM MAY BE MORE HYGIENIC IF THEY WERE ACTUALLY CLEANED MORE THAN TWICE A WEEK.

THANK YOU

CERTAIN PEOPLE  
THE 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR MEN AND THE REST OF MILNER

P.S. IT IS UNFAIR THAT EVERYONE IS PUNISHED FOR THE RARE AND EXTREME EVENTS. WE AS A WHOLE WILL NOT PAY BECAUSE OF YOUR COMPLAINTS. AFTER ALL YOU KNEW WHAT YOU WERE GETTING INTO WHEN YOU DECIDED TO BECOME A "COLLEGE BATHROOM CLEANER."

DAN MILLER/GUILFORDIAN

