

News

Skipping the Inauguration? Local Politician Leans in

Morgan Whithaus, OP-ED Editor

Jan. 20, 2017 was a decisive day for most of our country. For some, it was a day of rejoicing and welcoming their beloved president-elect into office. For others, it was a day of mourning and fear, as they questioned how someone with so opposite their beliefs and values ended up in the nation's highest office. And for others still, they just did not know what to think regarding the new man stepping into the role of the President of the United States.

On Inauguration Day, some members of Congress chose to opt out of attending the inauguration for various reasons, while other Congress members decided to attend. Democratic Congressman G.K. Butterfield, who represents areas such as Vance, Warren, Pitt, and Durham counties, decided not to attend. When Republican representatives were contacted, U.S. Senator Thom

Tillis' office was unavailable for an interview and U.S. Senator Richard Burr's office failed to respond.

"I have watched Donald Trump over the past 12 months and watched his demeanor and behavior. I find his style to be unacceptable," Butterfield said. "I don't like the manner in which he conducted his presidential campaign—it was divisive. I just could not be a hypocrite. I could not sit [at the inauguration] and cheer."

Despite skipping out on the 55th inauguration, Butterfield expects to attend Trump's State of the Union address.

While watching the inauguration from home, Butterfield observed the stark differences in Trump's acceptance speech compared to so many previous presidential acceptance speeches.

"His speech was so self-serving and it had a political overtone

to it. Most presidents at their inauguration are visionaries and bring people together—to give hope to the American people," Butterfield said. "That was not the speech I heard on Jan. 20." In addition to feeling that Democrats now will be faced with large setbacks and oppositions to their plans to support policies that will benefit average Americans, Butterfield believes that Democrats will have to be more defensive during Trump's time as president.

"We, [as Democrats], are relegated to a defensive mode. Instead of legislating, we have to block the legislation that Donald Trump will be putting forward—legislation that will greatly damage the middle and lower classes of our country," Butterfield said.

For example, Butterfield points to women's issues as a possible area where the new administration may cut rights.

He points to how women's issues had been front and center during former U.S. President Barack Obama's time in office. As Butterfield reflects on the intense and ever-changing political environment that Americans are facing today, he encourages students at Meredith College to become politically active and maximize their influence.

"I would like to say that our college students and young adults need to pay attention to what is happening in Raleigh and Washington D.C.," Butterfield said.

At the end of the day, Butterfield sees that because Trump is now the president of the United States, his office must be respected.

"I have great honor and respect for the office of the president," Butterfield said. "[Trump] is indeed the president, and he will be for the next four years."

Campus Elections are Coming Up

Sarah Kiser, Associate Editor

It is almost time for campus elections. Candidates can file as late as Feb. 1 at 5 pm. for all positions including SGA officers, Elections Board Chair, Residence Housing Association (RHA) Chair, and Association of Meredith Commuters (AMC) President. Each class will also be electing their class officers as well as Cornhuskin' Co-Chair, Class Stunt Co-Chair, Honor Council Reps, Elections Board Reps, Senators and Student Life Reps.

To run for a position, students must have attended an information session, then

they may file until Feb. 1, then campaigning will begin on Feb. 6 at 8 am. This is where most students will be concerned. Campaigning will last until voting ends on Feb. 14 at 5 pm. Students can find out about candidates by reading the campaign cards, which will be hanging on the maroon boards on the wall in the first floor of the Cate Center. Campus-wide and class ballots will be sent out via email. Each candidate prepares a video that can be viewed by clicking the names on the ballot. Feb. 13 at 8 am. ballots will be sent out and the

voting period will be until Feb. 14 at 5 pm. If any positions are still open after elections end, then that class or organization will be responsible to interview or take applications for that position.

Emily Kelleher, '17, is the current Elections Board Chair. For the past three years she has been one of class of 2016's Elections Board Representative. Kelleher said "[Campus elections] are important because they give our students the opportunity to run for leadership positions and it shows that our students are excited

and willing to run for different things. I think voter turnout with the elections is also really important because it shows that our students on campus care about who is running for a position and they care about who they vote into the elected positions." Kelleher explained the election process. "We make it as easy as possible for people because the ballot is emailed to them. The campus wide election ballot gets sent out in a student all email, so seniors, you're even allowed to vote in the student-wide elections."

Microbe Exhibit

Katrina Thomas, Staff Writer

The North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences is full of detailed exhibits, and "Microbes: The Secret World Inside You" is among the most recently opened. This exhibit is full of signs, videos, and hands-on activities simple enough for elementary schoolers but still interesting for biology and chemistry majors. As one walks through the exhibit (s)he learns

about the role of bacteria in human and animal health and behavior, and topics range from *Bacterioides fragilis* and autism to how moving to a new house does (or doesn't change) one's microclimate. Visual learners will enjoy all the models and bright colors, while tactile learners will be drawn to the "choose-your-own-adventure" style games about diet and an-

tibiotics and verbal learners will benefit from the detailed paragraphs and the film depicting one lady's battle with an unusual infection. There is even a section where visitors can see the bacterial profiles of local celebrities. All of this is especially relevant since, as the museum's webpage points out, microbial DNA is 100 times more prevalent than human DNA in

a given person! This exhibit is found on the second floor of the museum and will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. through March 12. Tickets, which can be purchased online in advance or at the box office upon arrival, cost \$8 for students, seniors, and veterans, \$10 for adults, and \$7 for children.