

The Daily Tar Heel

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BOARD EDITORIALS

DTH Endorsements

Whether you agree with The Daily Tar Heel's endorsements or not, get out and vote.

Brad Morrison for SBP

Unlike the other contenders for student body president, Brad Morrison will stand with students, not administrators.

He has promised to force UNC officials to rethink the Carolina Computing Initiative and to bring Student Stores under greater scrutiny.

With Morrison at the helm, student government won't just submit quietly to administrators' whims. He has the experience to make it happen, having served as Speaker of Student Congress, on the Association of Student Governments and on several key committees.

The new year will bring challenges of all sorts, from the Master Plan to enrollment growth. Morrison has the pragmatic leadership and knowledge to make sure it all happens with students at the forefront.

Ledford/Alston for Senior Class President and Vice President

Danya Ledford and Will Alston have solid plans for giving the class of 2000 a healthy dose of excitement. They're running unopposed, but they've shown themselves competent and up to the job.

They pledge to ensure that students have a voice in the commencement speaker selection process and that the annual gift is fitting of the class of 2000.

Just as importantly, though, their senior card and Pit party ideas will inject some much-needed frivolity and enthusiasm into the senior year experience.

Tee Pruitt for CAA President

Tee Pruitt's experience in the Carolina Athletic Association make him the best choice for CAA president. He survived the 1998 Homecoming fiasco, and he learned how to prevent it from happening again.

By keeping this year's basketball ticket distribution system, he can act on other goals, such as playing the Blue-White game in Carmichael Auditorium.

Write In Candidate for RHA

Officials plan to add 1,000 beds to UNC by 2001 and at least 3,750 more by 2008, and the Master Plan calls for a radical demolition and reconstruction of South Campus. Unfortunately, Jermain Reeves, the only

official candidate for the post, has failed to show the foresight for such huge changes.

Fortunately, a write-in candidate has put his hat in the ring. Though the DTH does not endorse Reeves for RHA president, we recommend writing in a competent student.

Lee Conner for GPSF President

Already, Lee Conner has graduated from UNC, worked for a Wall Street investment firm and helped N.C. Senate President Pro Tem Marc Basnight, D-Dare, crunch the data behind the bill that OK'd graduate student tuition remissions.

In a way, Conner has experience. It's why the DTH has endorsed him, and it will serve him well as he lobbies for GPSF concerns.

Student Congress

- District 1 (two seats) - Douglas Hatch and Mark Kleinschmidt.
- District 6 (one seat) - David Rudell.
- District 9 (two seats) - Patrick Link.
- District 10 (one seat) - Cianti Stewart-Reid.

- District 11 (one seat) - Abi Sommer.
- District 13 (one seat) - Phil Mauck.
- District 15 (two seats) - Deidre Green.
- District 16 (three seats) - Bharath Parthasarathy and Erica Smiley.
- District 17 (two seats) - Elizabeth Gardner.

- District 19 (three seats) - Alexandra Bell, Emily Howell and Matthew Todd Jones.
- District 20 (one seat) - Dan Rearick.
- District 23 (one seat) - Rebecca Gumbiner.

For all open seats, the DTH recommends writing in a responsible candidate.

Majors on Diplomas: Vote Yes

Putting students' majors on their diplomas is the least University officials can do to recognize academic achievement.

Optional Cable: Vote No

Optional cable in residence halls would create more problems than it would solve. There's no way to keep roommates from stealing cable, and Student Congress hasn't done its homework on potential costs.

Student Fees Increase: Vote Yes

Demand for student fees has outstripped the supply. The proposed hike would go far in easing the crunch, but the UNC trustees shouldn't raise graduate students' fees until more of that money goes back to them.

Suffrage on the BOG: Vote Yes

Enfranchising the student member of the UNC-system Board of Governors would empower all students. A strong "yes" vote might help state lawmakers say the same.

GPSF Recognition: Vote No

Just putting the name of the GPSF in Title I of the Student Code doesn't do anything to mend student government and GPSF division. It's better to do something effective than mess around with the code.



Brad Morrison



Lee Conner



Danya Ledford



Will Alston



Tee Pruitt

Don't Vote, Don't Bitch

If the past is an accurate prediction, approximately 2,500 students out of more than 24,000 will actually cast a ballot in today's campuswide election.

Even if a record-breaking one-fifth of the campus turns out to vote at the polls, the winner can hardly claim to speak for all students.

So don't expect Chancellor Michael Hooker or the Board of Trustees to listen to a student who hasn't the support of his or her own residence hall, much less the entire student body.

Don't expect a clear student mandate for administrators on the Master Plan or Carolina Computing Initiative, in which students have a huge financial stake.

Don't expect effective lobbying of the N.C. General Assembly for low tuition.

Don't expect a fairer, better Homecoming. Don't expect officials to grant demands for more student tickets in the Smith Center.

Don't expect a greater amount of graduate students' fees to revert to the Graduate and Professional Student Federation.

Instead of knowing that the winning candidate's platform represents students' desires,

administrators will know that students don't care or they aren't willing to act if they do.

It isn't as if students don't have ample notice of the election. Candidates' posters have covered campus for a week. Forums have taken place, and student groups have endorsed their candidates. Today, it's impossible to walk through the Pit without being handed a flier or accosted by someone urging students to turn out and vote.

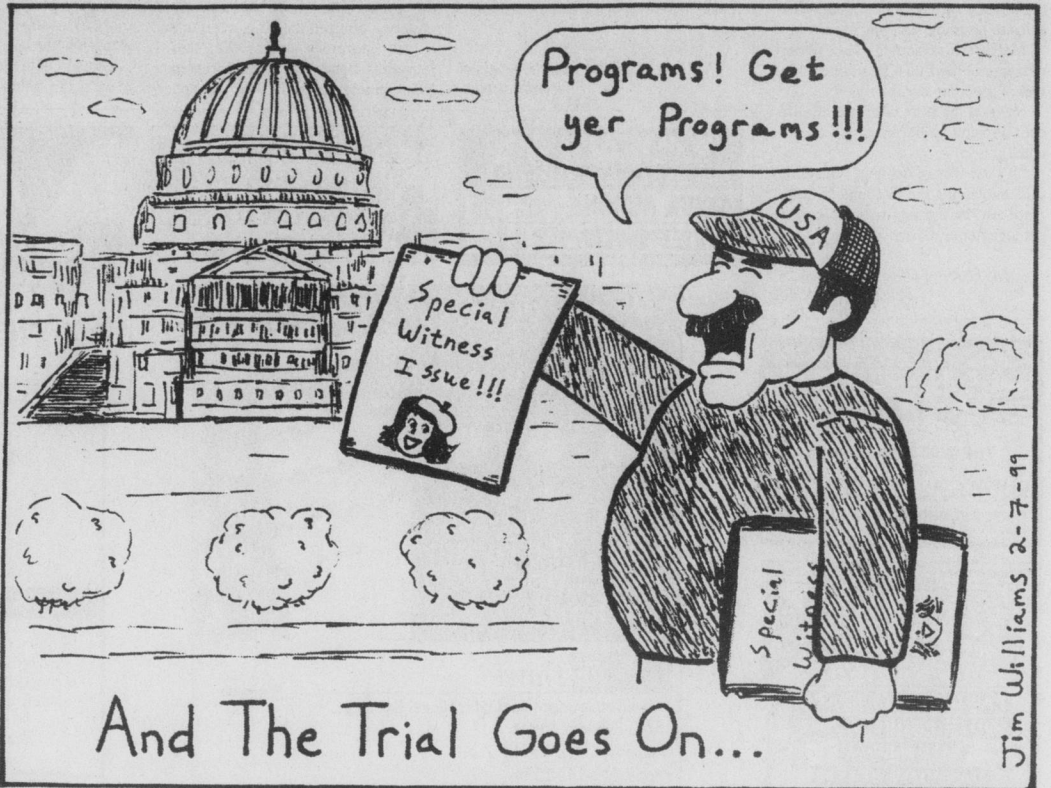
And unlike elections outside UNC, students don't have to register to vote for the presidents of the student body, the Carolina Athletic Association or the GPSF. Students just walk into a polling site and vote - in theory.

Many students say they can't be bothered, though, to walk into the Great Hall or Granville Towers' cafeteria or into any of the other campus polling sites.

Whether they haven't the time or haven't the concern, "apathy" is the official explanation.

Apathy, on one of the 10 most activist campuses in the country.

Isn't it ironic?



Only Students Can Improve Safety

One of the valuable things about campus elections is that once a year, mundane but important issues such as campus safety get brought to the forefront.

Most of the students running for student body president and some running for Student Congress devoted parts of their platforms to possible solutions for campus crime. As in past years, the candidates mostly focused on improving lighting on and around campus, although some had plans to expand the Rape Aggression Defense training program and set up an e-mail alert system.

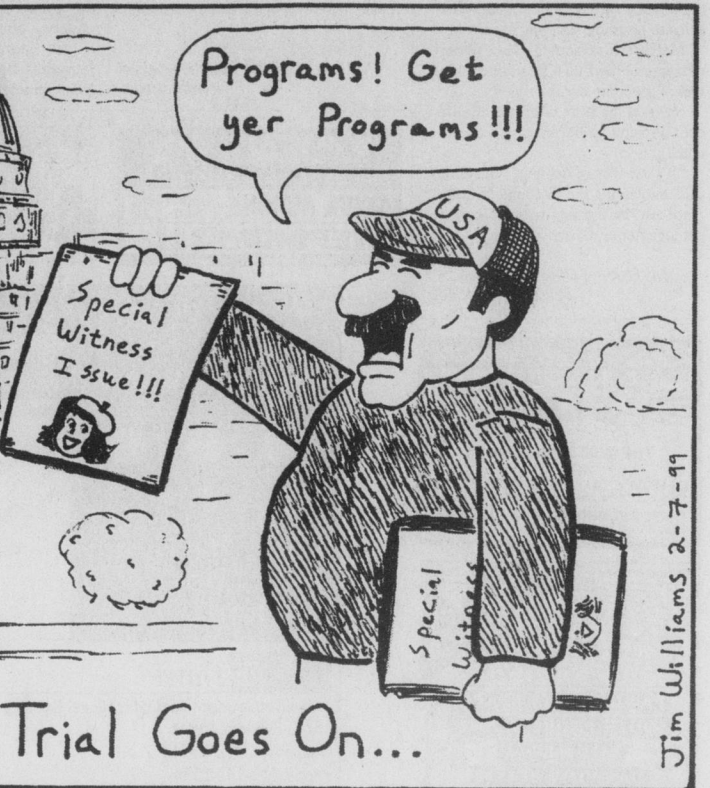
As good as some of these ideas are, they won't attack the root of the problem. The large majority of students on this campus are not just apathetic about their safety, but downright ignorant of how to protect themselves.

Chapel Hill may be the great cultural oasis of North Carolina, but contrary to popular belief, this town is not immune to the ravages of crime. Although we generally do not experience the same crime problems as urban areas, we still suffer from a significant number of incidents of vandalism, assault, theft, etc., every year. Yet many students refuse to take even the most basic safety precautions.

Please don't get me wrong. No one, no matter how careless they are, deserves to be the victim of crime. However, many of the crimes that occur here on campus are preventable if one uses a little common sense.

Last week, I had a student come to the front desk of Carmichael Residence Hall where I work and complain that a stranger was trying to sell magazine subscriptions door to door on the second floor. I was pleased as punch, not because I had the opportunity to go kick out an annoying salesman, but because one of our residents had actually bothered to report the incident.

The salesman presented a potentially serious security risk to the students living in the hall. He could have been a thief or a rapist or



simply a con artist. Either way, he didn't need to be in the residence hall and by identifying him and asking him to leave, a potential crime might have been averted.

Unfortunately, too few students bother to report suspicious persons. Out of Southern politeness or utter stupidity, we hold open doors for strangers to enter residence halls. We leave our car and room doors unlocked. We leave our backpacks and purses unattended in the library and the Student Recreation Center. We walk home alone after dark or while intoxicated. We turn the other way when we see someone vandalize a campus building. We are seldom willing to help when we see our fellow student in a potentially dangerous situation.

(By the way, guys, campus safety is not just a female issue. You too can be mugged, assaulted or even raped. The fact that you have a penis does not make you immune.)

Part of the responsibility for campus safety also lies with the administration. Too often, student safety is sacrificed for the lure of the Benjamins. I was appalled this summer when the crew of "Patch Adams" was allowed to remove lights and call boxes from Polk Place. Some crew members were allowed to set up trailers and sleep in the Sitterson parking lot. Add all this to the fact that services such as Point-2-Point and SAFE Escort are routinely not available in the summer. The arguably

mediocre movie may have brought great publicity to UNC, but its filming exposed summer school students and others to unjustified security risks.

As an employee, I can say with great honesty that the Department of University Housing desperately needs to devote more resources to ensuring the safety of our approximately 7,000 residents. We need to get over our current silly obsession with incense burning and instead focus our attentions on security improvements such as installing more alarm doors and reinforced screens on first-floor windows. We need to enforce our anti-solicitation policy aggressively and work to ensure that residents escort all their guests in the building.

It's true that safety measures can be costly, in terms of both time and money. Yet a little "inconvenience" can prevent many crimes from ever occurring.

Whoever gets elected today and in the run-offs next week, I sincerely hope you keep your promises. Don't let your vow to improve campus safety turn out to be just meaningless campaign talk calculated to win more female votes. Push for more lighting, increased hours for SAFE Escort and more police patrols. Encourage your constituents to educate themselves on date and acquaintance rape and to take self-defense classes. Sponsor and support safety awareness events on campus such as the "Take Back the Night" march. Work with the Chapel Hill Town Council and the Carrboro Board of Aldermen to pressure landlords to provide adequate security measures in off-campus housing.

It's a mad, mad world out there.

Melinda Manning is a second-year law student who enjoys belly dancing and wants to remind everyone to go vote! You can reach her with questions and comments at manning@email.unc.edu.



MELINDA MANNING
LOSING MY MANNERS

READERS' FORUM

Graduation Speaker Should Call Audience To Change World

TO THE EDITOR:

Is commencement supposed to be fun, "a day of celebration" as The Daily Tar Heel editorial board would have it ("Unpreachy Speeches," Jan. 29)? Or could it be a joyous yet solemn day to mark the transition from school to professional life?

If it's the former, then by all means usher Jay Leno up to the commencement microphone. If the latter, I'd rather hear from someone who can say something well-researched and articulate about how we can move on and work to change our world.

The DTH's conviction that Robin Williams, Oprah Winfrey and Michael Jordan would be better than Marian Wright Edelman implies that the ideal candidate isn't non-preachy. (Ever watched Oprah? The last half dozen Robin Williams films?)

No, they want a feel-good preacher, someone who won't tell them about the "depressing," problem-ridden world they're graduating into. Someone "who can give them hope."

A celebrity entertainer who did the ultimate, get famous. Hurray, I graduated! Don't wreck my party by mentioning poverty, war and injustice!

I didn't hear Edelman's speech, but I'm willing to bet the moral wasn't "life sucks, you're responsible," as the alleged "guilty and depressed" student responses might suggest.

And I have to wonder why a newspaper, of all organizations, would have an interest in advocating inspiration over realism. Journalists capable of promoting banal boosterism over substantive inquiry should have a bright future at People Magazine.

Marya DeVoto
Graduate Student
Department of English

Cartoon Illustrates Importance of Center For Black Culture

TO THE EDITOR:

Much respect to Rajeev Dassani for his editorial cartoon in the Feb. 3 Daily Tar Heel. His cartoon brings to light a sensitive issue on this campus; indeed, many students undoubtedly

feel that efforts to build a freestanding black cultural center are separatist and unnecessary. As a white male, I recognize how unconscious white male "objectivity" clouds the vision of many UNC students. It is difficult to understand how society is structured according to Eurocentric standards and how this plays out in education.

I applaud Dassani for bringing a much needed perspective to our collective table. All too often, black history month loses its value as we indulge in ritual icon celebration and sedate ourselves with feel good phrases and superficial promises of racial harmony. The cartoon represents the kind of genuine political awareness that must serve as the foundation for any meaningful dialogue aimed at collective societal improvement.

I hope Dassani's cartoon will spark dialogue between people of all races and political orientations. The black cultural center is a big deal worthy of our discussion. Whether you support the BCC or not, I challenge you to refine your perspective.

Dave Beal
Senior
African-American Studies



The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticism. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 400 words and must be typed, double-spaced, dated and signed by no more than two people. Students should include their year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff should include their title, department and phone number. The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity. Publication is not guaranteed. Bring letters to the DTH office at Suite 104, Carolina Union, mail them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail forum to: dth@unc.edu.