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The Daily Tar Heel

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BOARD EDITORIALS

Lack of Communication

Note to communication studies majors: hope you don't have summer plans.

A shortage of professors in the Department of Communication Studies has led to nothing but frustrations as students struggle to squeeze into filled classes that are requirements for them to graduate.

And the students who cannot get into classes they need for the major have few options besides summer school.

That's unacceptable. "We regret it deeply. It's a huge inconvenience for students and faculty," said William Balthrop, chairman of the department.

Not only is it an inconvenience, Willy, but it is outrageous. Students should not have to cough up money for a summer class or yet another semester of school. They should not suffer because University officials twiddled their thumbs while a faculty shortage grew out of control.

University officials should do everything in their power to quickly corral some professors into the underfunded communications department for next semester.

It doesn't take a crystal ball to see that problems were on the horizon years ago. Since the communication department was created in 1993, the number of professors has steadily gone on a downslide while student enrollment has shot up.

Now the faculty-to-student ratio in 100-level communication studies classes is a staggering 55 to one.

Take a declining number of communication professors and add a major influx of students taking communication classes, and what do you get? It doesn't take a math major to figure out that giving the department more money is the only solution.

Students, especially seniors, cannot afford to wait around to take a class.

By their senior year, most students have jobs lined up for the summer - jobs that hinge on their anticipated diplomas.

The University has an obligation to do what is necessary to make the classes these seniors need available. To do that, they need to hire more professors for this burgeoning department.

It might be hitting the pocketbook a little hard to bring them in now, but the need is not going to magically disappear next year. The shortage is bound to get worse as more students enroll in communications classes.

The best thing for students, faculty and the University itself is to just bite the bullet and shell out the cash for new faculty so that seniors don't have to shell out cash for another semester of school.

Note to University officials: Do it and get it done before the start of next semester.

A Wise Move

Two months after Hurricane Floyd's floodwaters destroyed hundreds of homes in Princeville, the town has decided to rebuild rather than accept a government buyout that would have dismantled the community.

Unfortunately, the logical choice would have been to go for the buyout.

In the time since the Tar River washed over the local dike and rendered the town completely unlivable, many residents of the tiny town of 2,100 have said they want to return. Most town leaders are also determined to rebuild the community, which was founded by former slaves after the Civil War.

"We're not planning on giving up on Princeville," said Linda Worsley, a Princeville town commissioner. "Who would want to give up that kind of heritage?"

Obviously, nobody would. However, there comes a point where logic needs to take precedence over heritage and sentimentality. The 3-2 vote by town commissioners last Monday to ask the Army Corps of Engineers to repair the 30-year-old dike was driven more by the heart than by the mind, and that's where the problem lies.

To many residents, especially those who

are descendants of the town's forefathers, the town is a priceless piece of history, and leaving is not an option. Reviving the town has become a cause for black organizations throughout the state and country who don't want to see Princeville disappear.

This is certainly understandable. Because it was the first American town to be established by blacks, it is very tough to suggest that the residents simply pack up and leave.

However, the bottom line is that Princeville is located in a flood plain. The town has been flooded before. It's going to flood again.

Residents fail to understand that by leaving, they would not be erasing Princeville's chapter from the history books. They would instead be writing a new one.

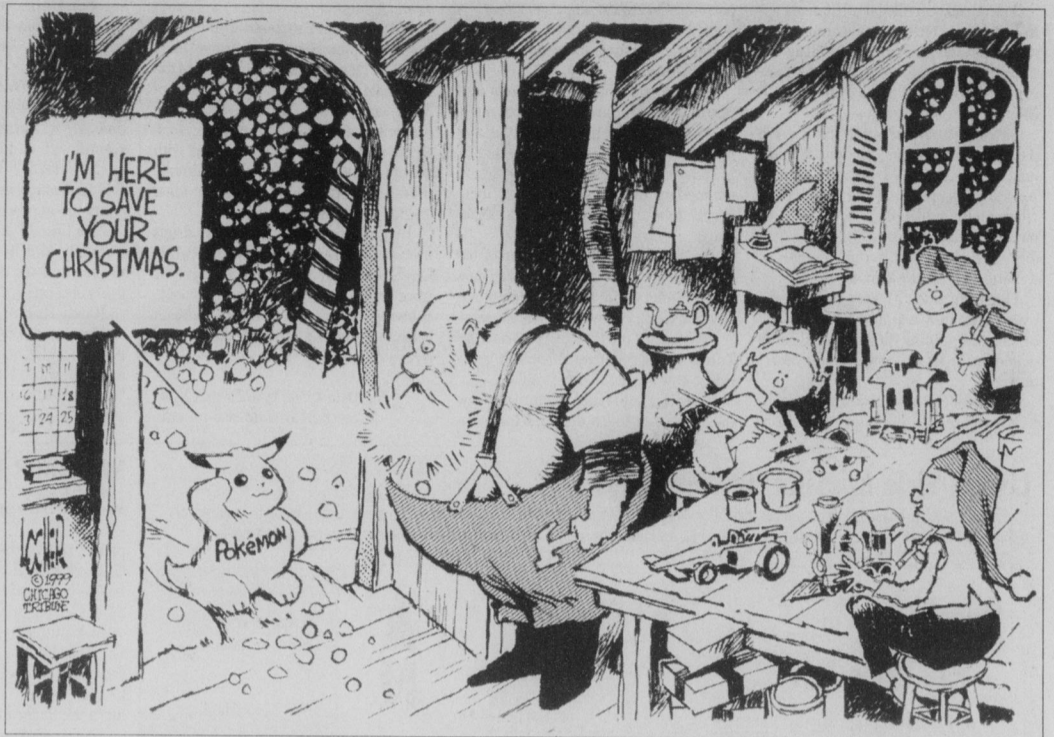
By relocating the town to higher, and safer, ground, residents would not be giving up on or failing in their obligation to a historic landmark.

The town will always be considered a symbol of black progress and determination in the face of years of white oppression.

Princeville's heritage lies in its people, not in its location.

Want to Blow Off Some Steam?

Write a guest column for The Daily Tar Heel. Guest columns typically appear every Monday on the Viewpoints page. Submissions should be about 800 words in length. Bring typed copies to the DTH office in Suite 104 of the Student Union or e-mail them to dth@unc.edu. Include your name, class, hometown and e-mail address at which you can be reached. For more information, call Editorial Page Editor Scott Hicks at 962-0245.



Recapturing the Holiday Magic

I hope that everyone had an enjoyable and fulfilling Thanksgiving.

There is nothing like going home to a gluttonous home-cooked meal when pasta and Ramen noodles have been your primary source of sustenance for the last few months.

But it seems that now that Thanksgiving has passed us by, Christmas and its whirlwind of gifts that will probably be returned and panic attacks in overcrowded malls is coming way too fast.

Personally, I'm dreading it. What happened to the magic that used to take us over when a round man in a red suit could make us squeal with such delight?

It was only a month ago that people were flocking to costume stores and thrift shops to find the right look for their evening of merry-making and pranks. But the eve of Halloween had yet to pass us by before stores had begun to remove the orange and black decorations and replace them with ones with a more festive red and green hue.

Christmas had come to town and there were still two more months to go!

Now Thanksgiving is no longer a day to give thanks for our blessings. It has simply become the day before the biggest shopping day of the year. After we have stuffed ourselves with turkey and seen a little bit too much football, it's time to try and catch the sales that begin at 6 a.m. the next morning. (You must get there early because there just aren't enough knitted chaise longue leg-warmers to go around.)

As Christmas gets closer and closer, it has begun to fill me with more dread than excitement.

Long lines, angry shoppers, picky friends that simply can't be satisfied with any gift under \$20 and a host of other joyous circumstances make the season what it is.

Not too long ago, there was a time when a chill in the air and the sight of amber and gold



LEIGHA BAUGHAM
ABSOLUTE CHOCOLATE

autumn leaves filled our hearts with a tingle. When we were younger, this time of year would have meant that the countdown had begun. We would drift off to sleep with dreams of sparkling lights on a tall tree standing above a bevy of gifts wrapped in colorful paper.

As children, the holidays seemed to mean so much. And even as our belief in Santa Claus gave way to an adolescent notion of materialism, time still seemed to go just a bit slower and the people around us seemed just a little bit nicer as the calendar turned to December.

That was before disillusionment hit us. That was before we had to play the role of Santa Claus - the same man who mystified us for all those years.

That was before we had to go out and search for a parking space in a parking lot full of deranged, homicidal parents in minivans and station wagons.

Now we have simply become jaded - only looking forward to Christmas because of the break from classes, the free food and the much-needed socks and underwear that our moms lovingly place in our stockings.

Something is missing from the season, and that is the magic that once filled our eyes with wonder at the possibilities.

As college students, we are just tired and ready for the hoopla and marketing gimmicks

to die down.

Alas, there is hope for our futures. We should all realize that the special fire the holiday season used to ignite is far removed from our present experience.

But that is only because this is the in-between time in our lives.

The feelings of anticipation that we once knew as we attempted the impossible - trying to fall asleep on Christmas Eve - will be returned to us once again. The magic that now lays dormant will be awakened when we look into the wide eyes of our own children someday.

As the pitter-patter of little feet echo up and down the hallway and cookies and milk are gingerly placed for good old Saint Nicholas, we will then relive the joy of the young in our adult hearts. That is a day that we should all look forward to with relish.

However, until that time comes, all that we can do is try and hold on to the ideals that the holiday season has come to represent for various cultures and countries. While commercialism tries to erode the warmth and charity that this time of the year brings, we can attempt to recapture the true meaning of the holidays.

So the next time a rude woman with a screaming child threatens to rob you of your senses, just try to think back to a time when Christmas meant a little bit more than sales at the mall and flaring tempers.

And remember that once again the magic will return.

That and a few prayers should get us through the holidays this year. Now, what to do about New Year's Eve?

Leigha Baugham is a junior communications major from Greensboro who wants to put the magic back in the holiday season. Reach her with questions and comments at lb1@email.unc.edu.

READERS' FORUM

Firefighters Take Job Seriously; Act to Protect Health and Safety

TO THE EDITOR:

On the editorial page of the Nov. 23 issue, The Daily Tar Heel published two editorial comment articles that criticized the Chapel Hill Fire Department for our response and handling of the Morrison Residence Hall fire on Thursday morning, Nov. 18. One article sought to make light of a potentially dangerous practice, that of students avoiding compliance with rules that are intended to protect their health and safety. I believe this amounts to irresponsible reporting and editing on your part.

Firefighters take their responsibilities very seriously, just as you would want them to. After all, your life may just depend on that some day. When firefighters respond onto the UNC campus, they feel a deep duty to protect each and every student, faculty and staff member from the tragedy of fire. After all, this fire department has experienced the ordeal of dealing with a campus fire that resulted in five deaths.

You bet we take our job seriously, and it is very frustrating when students choose to ignore or make sport of our warnings. Maybe the firefighters were a little to zealous in facilitating the evacuation, but that was the result of the lack of cooperation on the part of a few students. I want our fire-

fighters to be zealous when protecting others, and so will you when your life is at risk.

Chapel Hill firefighters are willing to risk their lives to protect yours. What level of respect are you willing to return for that effort? Someday I hope the DTH will become a partner with the fire department, University Police, the Department of University Housing and Residential Education, and the Division of Student Affairs in promoting fire safety on the Chapel Hill campus.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank and commend University Police for their extraordinary efforts to resolve this series of dangerous arson fires and restore Morrison Residence Hall to a place of safety for the residents.

Dan Jones
Fire Chief
Town of Chapel Hill Fire Department

CDS's Refusal to Host Dinner for Homeless Nothing But Excuses

TO THE EDITOR:

I take serious issue to Carolina Dining Service remarks concerning Stephanie Reid's plan to host a dinner for the homeless. For me, Christine Ziemak, marketing manager of CDS, is just making excuses.

I'm a second-year graduate student who

attended Santa Clara University. While at SCU, I ran a volunteer program that helped feed homeless individuals. One of my friends ran a program in which students served meals at a local soup kitchen. One day we had the bright idea to donate students' unused meal card dollars to pay for food to be given to our respective programs. We worked with our dining service, Aramark, and came up with a plan: Students would donate a certain amount of dollars from their dining plans, and we would use this money to buy meals or food staples from Aramark.

My fellow students were very generous, and we were able to provide meals to low-income individuals.

I cannot believe that Ziemak told Reid she could not help her. You can help, Ziemak; you just don't want to help. This instance only cements CDS's unwillingness to assist homeless individuals and specifically the Inter-Faith Council shelter. Granville Towers donates all of its leftovers to IFC. Lenoir and the other UNC dining halls donate nothing.

I am getting a master's degree in nutrition. If Ziemak needs assistance in planning meals for the homeless or help in food safety issues, I would be obliged to provide my services free of charge.

Simone Eppich
Graduate Student
Nutrition

Firefighters Justified In Intimidating Students To Make Them Leave

TO THE EDITOR:

This letter is in response to the two editorials on Tuesday, Nov. 23 about the firefighters. In one, you accused them of purposely harassing students by knocking on locked doors and keeping residents out in the cold; in the other, you made fun of their antics in the residence halls.

I beg to differ with both: If there had been a dangerous fire and 10 students were roasted in their rooms, you'd be blaming the firefighters for not making a point of it sooner.

I completely understand not wanting to leave my room and stand in the cold for several hours (the amount of time it can take to make sure the situation is completely safe) on a school night; however, what's necessary is necessary.

Cold students have a lopsided view of actual events; I'd be willing to bet the firefighters were not actually purposely "harassing and badgering" students who had not left the building. Even if they were, though, they were justified. If it takes intimidation to get students to learn to leave the building during a fire alarm, then they need to be intimidated.

You're also not going to find "moderately overweight, middle-aged men with

goofy hats and oxygen canisters" quite so funny when they're risking their lives to save the life of some kid who didn't leave the building when they should have. You're really not going to find it funny when someone gets hurt or killed due to the stubbornness of students who don't want to go out into the cold.

Lindsey Neef
Graduate Student
School of Law

Northside Residents Should Accept Students Or Get Out of Town

TO THE EDITOR:

The Northside community needs to wake up and realize that there is a University right next door.

Of course there are going to be parties and noise in the area! Why would somebody move two blocks from a university and then complain about that?

If anybody should leave, it should be the permanent residents of the Northside community.

This University was here first; you are secondary citizens in my eyes.

Chris Doerfler
Psychology
Junior



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: editdesk@unc.edu.