Monday, February 28, 2000

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Fair Move

Increasing voter turnout in student elections is a good thing – except when the loca-tions of certain poll sites make it easier for one group of students to vote and, as a result, possibly give one candidate an unfair advan-

tage over the rest of the field. Student Congress should make voting fair-er to all students by closing the polls at Chase Hall and Granville Towers.

Instead, Congress should continue to offer ballots in the Student Union but add more academic building poll sites. That way, no one's voice counts more than anyone else's

and more people might decide to speak up. The problem is that hosting poll sites in Granville Towers' cafeteria and Chase Hall gives undergraduate residents – especially those closest to those sites – a louder voice than the rest of campus. That's unfair to grad-uate students and to the 17,000 other students who live off campus.

The unfairness is especially striking at Granville, where its residents are primarily freshmen and sophomores, predominantly white and largely upper class – not fully rep-resentative of UNC's student body.

The Chase Hall site – which serves the roughly 3,000 residents of South Campus – isn't fair to most graduate students or offcampus residents, though at least it's indisputably more representative.

The numbers prove that the problem is

real. In Tuesday's runoff election, Student Body President-elect Brad Matthews narrowly edged Erica Smiley by only about a 4-3 margin at the Student Union and the campus' five academic building sites. At Chase, though, Matthews defeated Smiley 2-1.

Matthew B. Dees STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

T. Nolan Hayes

SPORTS EDITOR

But Matthews' margin of victory at Granville is the real kicker. There, he blew out his challenger by a whopping 7-1 margin.

Although Matthews won at all polling sites, the Granville bloc overwhelmingly tipped the scales in favor of him, proving that these voters can make or break a candidate in a way that no other group can. No one constituency should have such

political clout.

The solution is simple: Limit poll sites only to academic buildings and the centralized Student Union. Every student has to come to campus for class or lab, and students would be more likely to vote if there were a polling site on the way there.

According to the Student Code, it's Student Congress' job to set poll sites. Congress should forbid residential-based poll sites now to make sure next year's elections are fairer than in years past.

More centralized voting sites might incon-venience some students but would ultimately make for a fairer and balanced electoral

That's the best of both worlds.

Prior Conviction

UNC's administrators could learn a lot about justice from another Triangle university

On Tuesday, a grand jury recommended indicting five men, one of whom is Tyrone DeAngelo Hoy, a Shaw University student, on involuntary manslaughter charges in con-nection with the death of Antwan Merritt, an 18-year-old Shaw freshman.

Ón Wednesday, university officials said they would not suspend Hoy before his trial. University President Talbert Shaw told the News & Observer, "We will not be judge and jury before this case goes to court."

And innocent until proven guilty is the way it should be. Unfortunately, UNC officials don't feel

the same way.

The same weekend Merritt died, police arrested UNC junior Daniel Sarrell and charged him with first-degree arson in connection with at least one fire in Morrison Residence Hall.

Sarrell's suitemate and close friend Austin Hollar told The Daily Tar Heel on Sunday that before Sarrell was even indicted, the University suspended him. Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Sue Kitchen confirmed that Sarrell was no longer enrolled but would not comment on what precise actions the University had taken.

It is ridiculous for UNC to suspend someone for simply being accused of committing a crime regardless of what that crime might have been.

It's fine for the University to start building a case against Sarrell before he goes to trial. After all, that's how courts operate. But it's not fine for administrators to actually suspend him before a court has determined whether he is actually guilty. According to Orange County Clerk's Office records, Sarrell's trial has been set for March 7 in Superior Court in Hillsborough. The University's treatment of Sarrell sets a

dangerous precedent that could impact other students' futures. For example, a student could be suspended or expelled if someone didn't like him or her and falsely accused the student of cheating. That seems impossible, but it's no different from administrators expelling Sarrell without giving him a chance to defend himself.

Soon after police arrested Sarrell, Morrison residents received an e-mail about the arrest indicating that responsibility for the fires lay with Sarrell.

Hollar said students began walking by his suite shouting and throwing things into the suite. The situation escalated to the point that a security official had to stand outside the locked suite, only allowing the suite's residents to enter. It was wrong of University officials to assume an arrest meant a convic tion. Not only is it unfair to Sarrell; it will also make the University look pretty irresponsible if a jury finds him not guilty.

Or maybe it's all for the best. If Sarrell is found innocent, he should have a pretty lucrative lawsuit on his hands.

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ooking back on their college careers, most students will remember a handful of classes that stand out as being particularly intriguing and inspiring – the ones that made all the others worthwhile. For some it will be a challenging philosophy class, for oth-

At last, my life has

MEANING I'm Pinally appreciated for being

loyal, PAITHPul, and

dependable until

the end ?!

ers an eye-opening art class. For me, one of those college-defining class-es will be gymnastics, which I took under the false assumption that in a semester I could learn to perform a tumbling pass of handsprings and flips. Even now, not a day goes by that I don't thank my lucky stars that I didn't

break my neck.

Back-handsprings were particularly bad for me. There's a limited number of times you can land on your head before something important breaks. Indeed, hardheaded persistence took me dangerously close to that limit in a number of events before I realized that the parallel bars weren't going to break before my arms would.

It turns out, successful gymnasts start when they're about 3 years old and practice every day afterward. If only I had known. When I was 3, I took the oft-traveled baseball road, and that certainly has made all the difference,

at least in my gymnastics career. In fact, despite a heroic and patient effort by my instructor, about the only thing I could do with any success in the class was the warm up jogging and maybe bouncing off the vault springboard. But I did learn to value my intact neck and the skills of real gymnasts.

So it's with great joy and admiration that I join the Dialectic and Philanthropic Societies today in celebrating "Brooke Wilson Day" as declared by DiPhi. Wilson is the star of the UNC gymnastics team, which will try Friday to win its third consecutive home meet this

The societies, which rank as the oldest organizations on campus with their 1795 ori

gin, are debate and literary groups. Historically they're a prestigious lot around here, boasting alumni like President James

Readers' Forum

APPLES Fee Increase



NC Gymnasts Win With Class

BRANDON BRISCOE VOICE OF REASON

Polk, author Thomas Wolfe and a host of state and national leaders. Precursors of today's stu-dent government, honor court and library handled by DiPhi

were nanded by DiPhi. For Wilson's part, she has been nothing short of outstanding this year on the gymnas-tics floor. Her name is all over the UNC record books; and she has performed several rare tumbling passes, including one Friday that has been performed only twice before in NCAA competition.

After her performances she has to explain patiently to dumfounded reporters exactly what she did because they can't tell how many flips, spins and twists she does – it's incredible what these athletes can do. Wilson has easily been the team's top per-

former this year. Indeed, it helps the team's score when one gymnast finishes first in all four of a meet's events, as Wilson did Friday Unquestionably, she and the entire UNC gymnastics team deserve more credit than they have received.

You ought to swing by Carmichael Auditorium this Friday for the team's final home meet of the season.

You'll surely be impressed. If the promise of incredible acrobatics doesn't appeal to you, we're matched up against Yale University- it's always fun to beat up on a pompous Ivy Leaguer.

One enticement of a gymnastics meet is the audience's proximity to the action. In fact, the protective padding extends into the

Carmichael bleachers to save out-of-control gymnasts. Presumably, any stray gymnast caught by a spectator in the bleachers must be returned.

JULHARR

Interestingly enough, there is no men's gymnastics team. So if the Department of Athletics should decide it needs a new job for Coach Bill Guthridge or Coach Carl Torbush, there's one waiting to be created. Imagine the possibilities if the players on those teams learned gymnastics. If you think a behind-the-back dribble is

impressive, just wait until you see Joseph Forte's new front-handspring dribble or Brian Bersticker's back-tuck dunk. Defend that, Duke

Indeed it's a shame that thousands of peo-ple turned out to watch the basketball and football teams struggle this year while groups like the gymnastics team quietly meet with success. Maybe if they'd start allowing specta-.

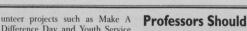
tors to keep run-away gymnasts ... But not only do the gymnasts and other athletes like them go about their business qui-etly, they also do it with class.

After Friday's victory, there was no rest for the weary. The gymnasts appeared at the UNC Dance Marathon to lend their support to a worthy cause

And when the James Madison University team visited for a gymnastics meet a few weeks ago, the "Fighting Presidents" cheered for their team as if they were 10-year-olds and they could score points for cheering. The Tar Heels performed with more dignity, offering appropriate congratulations when it was due without creating a silly spectacle.

So put an extra bounce in your step today, remembering that you're walking amid hun-dreds of people like Brooke Wilson who make this place so great. Just watch the landing

Brandon Briscoe is a junior journalism and mass communication major from New Orleans, La. You can send him tips and scores out of 10 at brandon briscoe@unc.edu.





The Daily Tar Heel



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Worth It to Continue Worthwhile Program

TO THE EDITOR:

On Feb. 15, The Daily Tar Heel told students to "Vote No" to APPLES funding. My stomach dropped. I could not believe the DTH would not support this group.

APPLES, Assisting People in Planning Learning Experiences in Service, is one of the best programs UNC has to offer. APPLES not only provides internships, alternative Spring Breaks and service-learning classes to students, but more impor tantly, it allows the University to give back to the community.

APPLES opens doors to the pub-lic sector and encourages students to volunteer actively in their community.

As the volunteer coordinator for Volunteer Orange!, the volunteer center of Orange County, I currentcenter of Orange County, I current-ly have three APPLES interns. I am the only staff person at this agency, working a mere 35-plus hours week. What would I do without this

chance to increase my staff and resources? Without these interns, we couldn't coordinate countywide vol-

Without these interns, we could-Day. n't hold office hours for students at the Campus Y.

Without APPLES, I wouldn't have this job. I interned at Volunteer Orange! as a UNC undergrad. When I graduated, I was offered this position. I enjoy my job and give thanks for APPLES. APPLES provides nonprofit agencies throughout the counan opportunity for motivated and professional student interns at a little cost to our tight budgets.

In addition, students gain realworld experience and have the ability to produce materials and programs for these agencies.

Please do not be bitter about the fee increase. APPLES deserves your support. APPLES extends beyond walls of McCorkle Place It the impacts community agencies, allowing us to expand programs, increase publicity and improve efficiency.

APPLES volunteers and interns help us effectively serve our target populations. And we owe the best to all citizens of our community

> Betsy Alley Volunteer Coordinator Volunteer Orange!

Praise, Not Belittle, **Students' Grades**

TO THE EDITOR:

Since when have students been punished for earning high grades? Most students, or at least the ones I know, are generally praised and rewarded for high grades.

UNC is, by national standards (whether you believe the magazine polls or not), an above-average university. We are an above-average university because the caliber of students and faculty are likewise above average. If only the top students are admit ted into the University, then should-n't they be capable of making top

grades on their own merit? Students at UNC work hard to

earn their grades

Teachers and professors should praise us for our commitments to our studies, rather than belittling our academic achievements.

Please Dr. Turchi, give us the credit that we deserve.

> Stacy Sinclair Sophomore Journalism and Mass Communication



comes reader comments and criticism. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 300 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 imber. 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.



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