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BOARD EDITORIALS

Delay the Decision

The Chancellor Search Committee could announce its decision next week. It should wait until students return from Spring Break.

Once again, the Chancellor Search Committee is pulling the wool over students' eyes.

A source close to the chancellor search process told The Daily Tar Heel on Thursday that the committee had picked its finalist for the position and planned to reveal its decision in time for the Board of Governors' March 17 meeting, which conveniently will occur during Spring Break.

It appears that U.S. Secretary for Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, who is the former chancellor of the University of Wisconsin, might be UNC's next leader.

While it is relieving to know that the committee will probably meet its Commencement deadline and the outlook is good that UNC will not end the academic year without a chancellor, the timing could not be worse.

Such a major announcement should not come at a time when students are not going to be on campus.

Even though students have had little voice in the actual search process, and indeed have been essentially shut out since it began, committee members must not deny them the opportunity to express their opinions about its choice.

After all, the decisions the new chancellor

will need to make soon after arriving at UNC will likely impact students more than any other group at the University.

This year has been marked by controversial issues with the potential to have a significant impact of students' lives, such as the proposed tuition increase and the debate over grade inflation. UNC's new leader will play a major role in directing campus discussion about such topics.

That is why it is so important that students be here when the committee formally announces its decision.

Students must have the chance to speak out about the choice immediately. Picketing, letters to the editor, petitions and other ways of expressing dissatisfaction will not be very effective the week after.

And even if students are happy with the committee's recommendation, they still should be able to say so before the recommendation is sent for final approval.

For the sake of fairness, committee members should wait on this one. After keeping them in the dark for so long, they owe the students at least that much.

Besides, the search has dragged on for months past the group's original, self-imposed December deadline.

What difference could one week make?

You Cruise, You Lose

Environmentally conscious UNC students can do their part to reduce cruise ship waste this Spring Break.

Coast Guard and Justice Department officials are concerned about the effect of the millions of gallons of wastewater that are legally discharged by cruise ships each year on sensitive marine life.

Ah, but don't start mourning the loss of those cute little seahorses just yet. With a little bit of sacrifice, UNC students can help combat the problem during Spring Break.

Here's how:

First, UNC students should avoid going on cruises. That's right. Call the travel agent and cancel the plans. Tell your friends to do the same. Advertise this idea extensively, using the slogan, "You cruise, seahorses lose."

There is, after all, plenty of fun to be had at home. Imagine a relaxing week with the family back in good ol' Hickory.

If you absolutely cannot endure the thought of missing out on the Caribbean or the Keys this Spring Break, you can still aid this noble cause. Simply swim from island to island.

Admittedly, it is not quite as efficient a mode of transportation as a Carnival Cruise ship, but think of all the seahorses that will thank you.

All the girls who discovered the weight room this past week should be in top physi-

cal condition anyway.

Swimming should be easy compared to fighting over the treadmill.

However, if staying home or doing the backstroke from port to port are not viable options, there are other ways you can help.

For example, you could avoid the use of water while on board your ship.

Don't drink it. Drink beer. Drink martinis. Sacrifice for the seahorses.

Don't brush your teeth. Get Tic-Tacs.

Don't shower. Use the coconut-scented suntan lotion.

Most importantly, do not use the toilets. Bring a cup or a pail. Sandwich bags work well, too.

If repulsed by this concept, please remember you're on a boat. Find a quiet spot behind the life raft, and relieve yourself over the side (ladies, it is suggested you put on your personal floatation device beforehand). This might not be the best strategy, as you would then be adding to the problem you're trying to alleviate.

But it's the thought that counts.

Certainly, this might not be the cruise you had envisioned. Sometimes, however, you need to sacrifice for those causes that are of monumental importance.

Remember, it's for the seahorses.

BAROMETER

Heartbreaker
As if losing to Dook's men's team Saturday wasn't bad enough, the women also fell to the Devils Monday. At least their loss came in the ACC Tournament final, a game the men won't likely see.

Cheesy Solution
Chiara D'Amore agreed last week to write a letter of apology to Kraft Inc. for her protest last fall. We hope she at least got free mac 'n' cheese out of the deal.

Got Jesus?
As proof that everything, and everyone, has its own week these days, students gathered in the Pit this week to celebrate "Jesus Awareness Week." Rumor has it that the honoree didn't even show up.

Outta Here
Goodbye midterms; hello sun, fun and, most importantly, plenty of sleep. Hope the weather is as good for Spring Break as it was this week.

TAR HEEL QUOTABLES

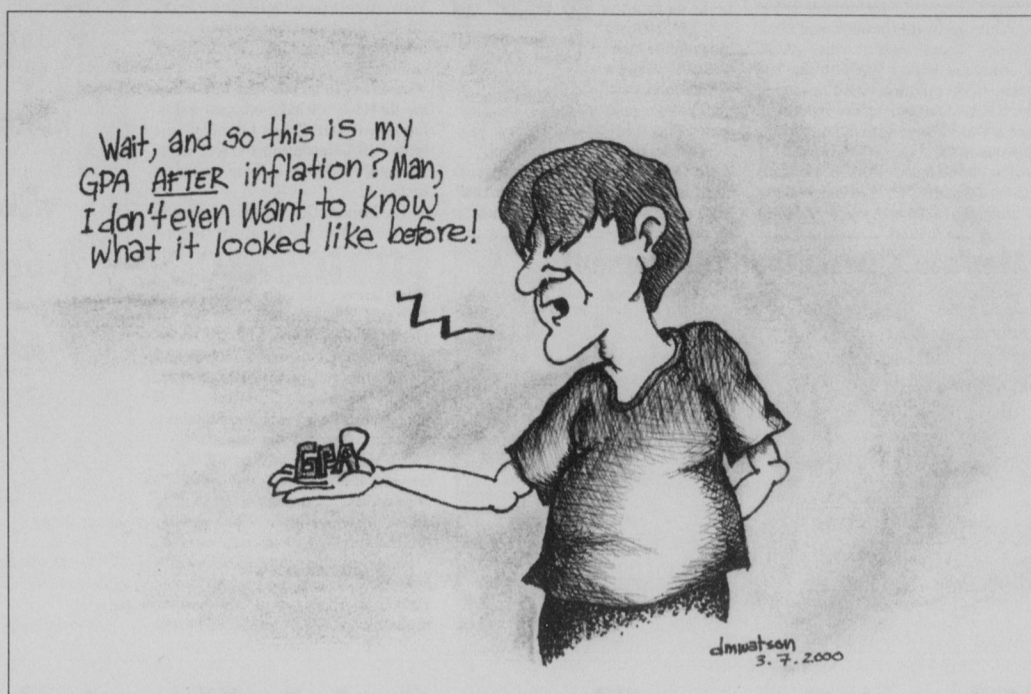
"The atmosphere is great - it's kind of sad you only get to play here once a year."
UNC POINT GUARD ED COTA
Discussing how he enjoys playing in Cameron Indoor Stadium. You know there's something wrong when our players look forward to their away games.

"A little flash of flesh adds to everyone's fun."
NEW ORLEANS BARTENDER ASHLEY KENNEDY
Discussing how she chose to celebrate Mardi Gras this year. Many UNC students undoubtedly will adhere to that philosophy next week.

"What you got is a group of arrogant schools that banned together to make a point."
YAHOO! INTERNET LIFE SENIOR EDITOR ROB BERNSTEIN

Commenting on the institutions that are boycotting the magazine's survey of the country's most wired campuses. It's not surprising that Duke is one of those arrogant 11.

"Every time I park illegally, I get a ticket."
JUNIOR BRANDI COBLE
Commenting on the Department of Public Safety's recent crackdown on parking violations. Maybe it's time to take the hint, Brandi.



Buying Beer an American Freedom

When I turned 21 last December, I thought I had finally obtained the right to kick back and enjoy a Miller High Life beer after a long day of school without the bitter aftertaste of others forcing their morals upon me.

Nearly three years after I signed my draft card, I was able to buy my first legal draft beer. I returned to Chapel Hill in January ready to take on a new semester and ready to enjoy my new freedom to purchase and consume alcohol. My hopes and dreams were shattered on Jan. 11, 2000, when Harris Teeter of Carrboro denied me my newfound freedom.

It was the Tuesday before classes began, and I was doing my grocery shopping for the week with my girlfriend. We were shopping independently, but we shared the same grocery cart. She was putting her items in the front of the cart, and I put mine towards the back to keep them separate.

Our cart was filled with the typical, mundane items most people buy at the grocery store: bananas, paper towels, soft drinks, snack foods, etc. In addition to these items, I picked up a 12-pack of Miller High Life bottles that I planned to enjoy in the privacy of my home throughout the week. I, like many college students, enjoy relaxing with a beer when I come home at night.

Once we arrived at the checkout counter, my girlfriend took her items out of the cart and paid for them separately. She waited patiently with her purchased groceries about 10 feet away from the checkout counter. When the clerk rang up my High Life, he asked for my identification. I was happy to be presenting my of-age driver's license for the

CHARLIE TODD
POINT OF VIEW

first time at a grocery store.

After entering my date of birth into the machine, the clerk said, "I'll have to see her ID, too." Not understanding what he meant, I asked, "Who?" He pointed to my girlfriend, who was still standing within earshot waiting for me to check out. "This isn't for her," I told him. "I'm buying it for myself." "It doesn't matter," he replied. "I need to see her ID."

To prevent my girlfriend from having to walk over and fish out her license, I informed the clerk that she was 20. "I'm sorry. I can't sell this to you." I asked to speak with a manager, and he called one over.

I explained my situation to the manager: "I'm 21 years old. I would like to buy these beers to drink in my apartment this week. They are for me, not her." The manager was cold as ice: "We have a policy to card every member of your party, sir. We can't sell this beer to you." I explained to her that my girlfriend had checked out separately and that my purchase was entirely my own. The manager offered me no sympathy, and informed me what she was doing to me was state law. I countered that it wasn't state law but Harris Teeter policy, and an absurd policy to boot.

She didn't budge. I began to lose my temper. "You can't tell me," I said as I pointed to the 30-year-old woman and her young children in line behind me, "that if this woman tried to buy alcohol that you would card these children." "We would if they brought the alcohol up to the counter," she replied. "But my

girlfriend didn't bring this beer up to the counter, I did!" I said, knowing that I had out-reasoned her.

She ignored my retort, confiscated the beer, and stormed off, refusing to speak with me further.

Regardless of whether it was store policy or state law that prevented my purchase, what happened to me was wrong. Our national and state governments continue to believe it is their job to tell us what we can put in our bodies and when it is an appropriate time to do so.

Why can 18-year-olds be drafted into military combat but not consume alcohol in the privacy of their home? Why must bars stop serving alcohol at 2 a.m.? Why can't an atheist buy alcohol before noon on Sundays?

The simple purchase and consumption of alcohol is a victimless crime, harming no one but the consumer. Our government should take a cue from European countries and realize that making alcohol a societal taboo is only going to lead to more minors abusing it. In Spain, where beer is sold out of vending machines in public places, there are very few problems with binge-drinking in teenagers. Even the Alcohol Law Enforcement Web site admits that prohibition led to rampant crime and corruption in the 1920s.

Why can't our government realize that prohibiting alcohol to its 18- to 20-year-old citizens is causing more problems than it is solving? I am ready to make my own decisions; please allow me the freedom to do so.

Charlie Todd is a junior dramatic arts major from Columbia, S.C. Reach him at ctodd@email.unc.edu.

READERS' FORUM

Columnist's Views About Prison, Crime Rates Unfounded

TO THE EDITOR:
Jonathan Chaney's Viewpoints column Monday contains two important factual errors in the first two paragraphs alone.

First, crime rates are falling, not, as Chaney claims, rising. Second, he states that "due punishment" (a phrase he presumably invented) has "fled the legal system," but in fact, criminal sentences are stricter now than they have been in decades.

Why did the editors allow such misstatements to appear in print? Chaney later writes that "the big house has become a vacation." I suppose he knows this because of all the time he has spent in American prisons.

No, Chaney probably just watches too much television and listens to Rush Limbaugh every day.

Prison is no vacation - trust me on this one. Physical abuse by prisoners and guards, at least 20 hours every day spent in an 8-by-10 cell, no sunlight, horrendous "food," humiliation, rape ... not a vacation I want to take.

Prison has four purposes: rehabilitation, protection of society, deterrence and revenge (often called "punishment"). Chaney writes as if only this last one is worth discussing. He should do better research next time.

Abraham Daniels
Chapel Hill

Behavior of Some Students During Lecture Embarrassing

TO THE EDITOR:
Tuesday night I attended a lecture by Nina Kruscheva on the current and future political situation in Russia. This lecture was presented by the Great Decisions program, which is a series of lectures about various foreign issues.

I was incredibly embarrassed by the rude and immature audience our students provided.

Many, but not all, of the students in attendance whispered throughout the entire lecture, creating an incredible level of noise over which it was difficult to hear the speaker.

This behavior is appalling. It shows a clear disrespect for the speaker, who traveled many states to address us last night, as well as disrespect for the students who are genuinely interested in the topic.

Additionally, this type of behavior is disrespectful to the course teaching assistants, who are also UNC students.

This pattern of behavior has occurred repeatedly in this lecture series.

It is time that students grow up, behave like college-age adults, and learn to act with politeness and maturity during public lectures. In the future, students who want to talk for an hour and a half with their friends should go to a coffee shop.

University needs to be embarrassed by a few impertinent students.

Karalyn Emrich
Senior
History and Political Science

Abu-Jamal, Hatcher Cases Show Need To End Death Penalty

TO THE EDITOR:
Mumia Abu-Jamal is still imprisoned after almost 20 years of incarceration and faces the possibility of being executed by the state of Pennsylvania for his political beliefs.

On Feb. 29, thousands of people gathered in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco to speak out against political prisoners unjustly held in the United States and to call for an end to the death penalty.

Among those joining the protest were a group of area residents, UNC students and high school students who traveled by bus to the steps of the Supreme Court. There, below the pillars of justice, a mass peaceful civil disobedience took place.

I urge you to get informed about the death penalty and cases of political prisoners such as Mumia Abu-Jamal and North Carolina's own Eddie Hatcher. The more you learn, the more you will find yourself asking why we kill people to show that killing people is wrong.

Gabriele Pelli
Chapel Hill



The Daily Tar Heel welcomes 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 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.