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EDITOR
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The Daily Tar Heel

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BOARD EDITORIALS

Burning for Action

In yet another fire alarm triggered by something other than an actual fire, police issued a citation to a student living in Old West Residence Hall for failing to evacuate the building after someone discharged a fire extinguisher and set off the fire alarm. Police said the student was too drunk to move.

But another resident there got out of a citation because he supposedly slept through it.

This exception is proof enough that UNC's policy of fining students who fail to evacuate during a fire alarm is ineffective for student safety and arbitrary in how it is levied. It should be discontinued now.

It is far from the catch-all solution for preventing fire-related deaths that officials like to think it is. After all, sleeping students burn the same as the drunken ones.

It is wholly understandable that UNC has to take a firm stand on enforcing evacuations during alarms. It's in students' best interests. But the burden of fire safety must not fall just on students' shoulders. Administrators must take a proactive stance on fire safety.

In the wake of deadly, devastating fires on campuses nationwide, as well as fires here, they should be working overtime to speed up improving UNC's fire systems.

UNC has been installing new fire safety equipment gradually since 1993. In 1997, the UNC-system Board of Governors approved

\$18 million to install sprinklers in 41 residence halls statewide, with three at UNC. Since 1996, the UNC system has spent \$26.8 million in fire safety improvements.

But seven years later, only six of the 29 residence halls at UNC have sprinklers. Slow and steady will not win this race.

But Sue Kitchen, vice chancellor of student affairs, is convinced, that "there is a responsible plan in place" already. She says she's "satisfied with the plan."

In other words, administrators don't seem to care about living up to their end of the bargain. Fining people who don't leave their rooms during an alarm is tolerable only if administrators are willing to work hard to make residence halls safer in the first place.

On Jan. 24, after the Seton Hall University fire, The Daily Tar Heel called on Kitchen and interim housing Director Dean Bresciani to get busy improving fire safety. To hear Kitchen talk, it seems little has changed.

Sue and Dean, how many letters have you written to state lawmakers to push this issue? How many fire experts have you contacted to get cost estimates for upgrading the residence halls now? How many parents have you organized to lobby their lawmakers?

In short, what have you actually done? Students would love to know. Sue and Dean, you owe us an explanation.

Hands-Off Senator

When in doubt, avoid getting involved. That appears to be the thinking of Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., who passed up a chance to help mediate a contentious dispute between local governments and Carolina Power & Light Co.

At issue is CP&L's plan to increase the amount of nuclear waste stored at the Shearon Harris plant in southern Wake County. Orange County wants public hearings in which local leaders, CP&L representatives and Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials would present scientific testimony.

Edwards seemed to agree with the idea of such hearings when he met with elected officials from Orange County, Chapel Hill and Carrboro in February. "I can't imagine that a full-blown evidentiary hearing is not the thing to do," Edwards said at that meeting.

Since then, however, Edwards has decided there is nothing to be gained by his involvement in the case, Edwards' press secretary told The Chapel Hill Herald last week. That's simply not true.

Edwards might be afraid of taking sides in what has been a hotly contested debate for some time now. But those fears are unfounded because he doesn't necessarily have to side with one faction or the other.

In fact, Edwards would be even more helpful if he were to act as a mediator between the county and CP&L.

As a senator, Edwards is required to represent all the state's interests, environmental, business and otherwise. Because of his position, neither side should have any problem accepting the senator as an informed, impartial third party to help negotiate a solution.

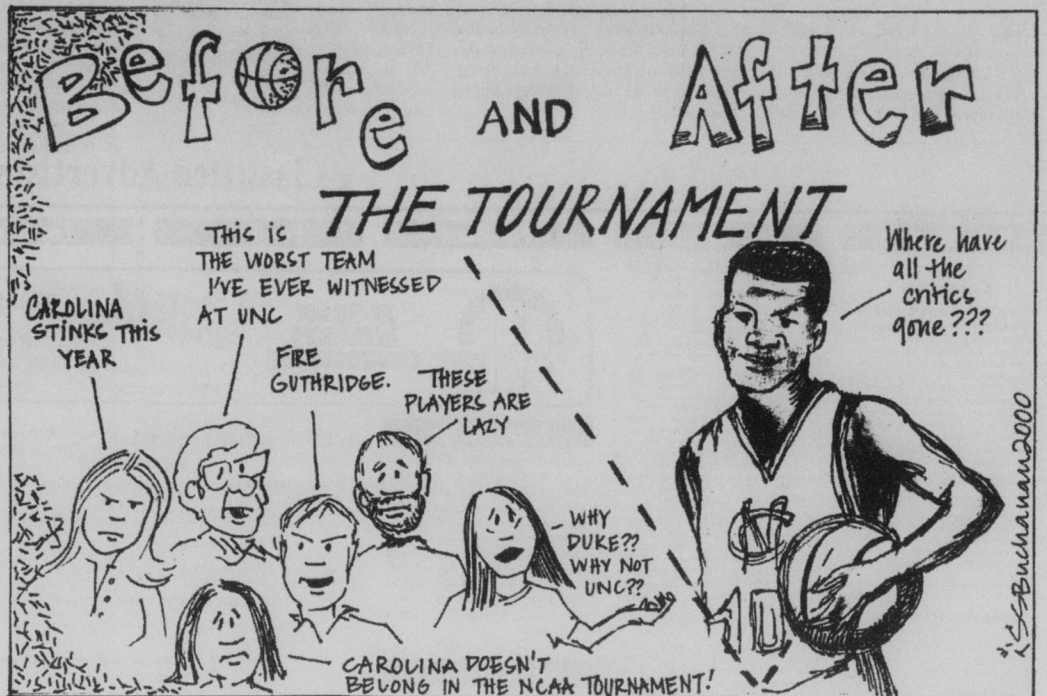
Furthermore, Edwards' prestige as a U.S. senator would afford larger publicity to a matter that seems merely local. The implications and realities of nuclear power reach far beyond a few counties. Whatever the outcome, Edwards' input would affect the state as a whole.

From Hurricane Floyd relief to increased funds for fire safety on college campuses, Edwards has done an admirable job of keeping North Carolinians' interests in mind.

There's no reason to stop now.

For the Record

The Monday editorial, "Complicating the Issue," should have stated that the Mason Farm Tract is 1,335 acres, not 144.9 acres. The 144.9 acre parcel is the only part of the land not in Chapel Hill town limits. The editorial should not have stated that annexation would bring "extra bureaucratic tape," as only Chapel Hill — not the town and Durham County — would have zoning jurisdiction over the land. Finally, the editorial should not have stated that Aaron Nelson said the University would provide fire protection services to the land. If annexed, the town would provide fire coverage. The Daily Tar Heel regrets the errors.



Hoops Wins Give UNC New Spirit

Every time I see one of those tour groups of high school kids on campus, it makes me nostalgic and honestly a little bit jealous. While I don't miss getting lost on my way to class and not having a car, I do wish everything seemed as optimistic as it did back then.

Remember when you thought everyone that graduated from Carolina got tons of high-paying job offers? Or when everybody you knew was planning on either pre-med, pre-law or going to business school?

How about when a deck of cards and a case of beer meant a party in your dorm room?

Basically, everything you did in those days was exciting just because you were in college.

As you get older though, sadly the excitement starts to fade away a little bit. Now that case of beer and deck of cards just equates to heartburn, a headache and a late-night run to Cosmic Cantina.

Simply put, what before was an event gradually just became the norm. All of a sudden you wake up one day and realize that it's time to register for classes for your senior year, or, as for the seniors now, have nothing to even register for.

Tomorrow has become today, and that student loan you have makes you want to break down and cry like a baby (or Chris Carrawell). Yup, the burdens of the real world really can weigh on you at times like that, but thankfully there are other times where you frankly just don't give a damn.

These are the times where you realize that while you came to college to get an education, the majority of this education is received outside of the classroom.

On this campus, one of these times was this weekend.

The craziest thing about the whole weekend was that nobody expected the



AMOL NAIK
FROM THE DANK CAVE

basketball team to make the Final Four this year. Yeah, I've heard some claim that they knew it all along, that they knew the team would step it up when it counted.

While these people might have existed, they certainly weren't the ones who yelled out "Hey, Dank Cave," (apparently Amol is too hard to pronounce), "next week write about how we need to hire Roy Williams."

In fact, except for some irate folks from South Carolina who didn't understand the spirit of the satire (By the way, I said to make it an island, not blow it up ... we certainly wouldn't want to destroy national treasures like Bob Jones University ... oops, that pesky satire again), the need to rail on the basketball team was the main feedback for this space.

I'll admit, I too was giving up hope. This is really because as Carolina fans, we think that 20 wins and a Sweet 16 appearance is our birthright. Thus when anything less is accomplished, we're quick to point fingers.

The thing we forget is how hard it is to achieve all these accolades, and that many schools would be ecstatic with just making the NCAA tournament. If you don't believe me, just ask the perennial NIT powers over at N.C. State.

Speaking of which, what do teams that win the NIT celebrate ... that they are the 65th best team in the country? To them, all our crit-

icism of the Tar Heels must have just sounded like nonsense. I for one have never been so happy to be so wrong.

I've also never been so happy to be a Carolina student. Where else in the world would you have rather been than in Chapel Hill on Friday night or Sunday afternoon?

This campus' fanaticism over basketball during times like those never ceases to amaze me.

While we are tough fans to please, I doubt that any other school in the country feels the joy or pain of their team as much as we do.

Seriously, just think about the whole scene this weekend. Everyone, and I mean everyone, stopped what they were doing to watch five men run around a wooden court and toss a ball into a basket.

Then the police, the same people who do everything possible to prevent fun on normal days, proceeded to block off the main street in town so kids could dance around a bonfire in the middle of the street.

While around this bonfire, people who normally wouldn't even give each other the time of day embraced like long lost friends.

This unifying force of basketball, at the risk of sounding corny, is to me the best part of it all.

Although I'm sure that the Heels will go on to crown Coach Guthridge mayor of Bracketville behind the "Cota Floata," regardless of whether we even win a game in Indianapolis, it's been an incredible season.

Thanks a lot fellas, because if only for a weekend, you allowed this campus to once again feel the excitement of those kids in the tour group.

Amol Naik is a junior history major from Lumberton, who will be at the Final Four this weekend. All those that are jealous can reach him at unc2001@hotmail.com.

READERS' FORUM

Native Yankee Offended By DTH Article Exploring North, South Divide

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing in response to Jermaine Caldwell's article "A Cultural Divide."

After reading the article, I feel that I must come to the defense of all Northerners at UNC.

I am a born and bred Yankee from Boston and took offense to the article. The writer was obviously biased when presenting the image of Northerners here at UNC and made statements that do not apply to everyone.

Sure, there are stereotypes that exist about Northern and Southern culture, but there is no need to perpetuate them! The article made it seem like Yankee students at UNC have egotistical attitudes about being from the North and are not willing to accept and understand the Southern culture in which they now find themselves.

That is simply not true. Being here three and a half years now I have come to understand and enjoy Southern culture. True, you don't regularly find grits and okra and commonplace hospitality in the North but who's to say that is a bad thing?

The article made some valid points in displaying the differences between the North and the South, (except in New England, we call soda soda, not pop) yet its biased nature took away from the overall acceptability of the article.

Living in the North is actually quite fun, and people up there are not as rude as some might think.

If you haven't experienced the fast paced excitement of a Northern city, then I suggest you give it a go.

Kiah Jones
Senior

Health Policy and Administration

Reader Takes Naik's Side In Criticism of Column, Calls Writer Racist

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing in defense of The Daily Tar Heel columnist Amol Naik. In her March 27 letter to the editor, Julie Mancuso improperly attempted to smear Amol Naik's journalistic credibility.

After all, Amol is the columnist who introduced us to the phrase, Steve Wojak-all-over-the-house-ski. Julie, I challenge you to say that that did not bring a smile to your face.

I cannot attest for every reader of the DTH, but I can say that some of us appreciate Mr. Naik's sense of humor, for he gives us a break from the monotonous — I wouldn't-know-funny-if-I-sat-on-it columnists that typically litter the back page.

Oh, and another thing, Julie, to stay with the DTH editorial page trend of making an issue out of every available non-issue, I am unfortunately forced to label you a racist.

You see, in your letter you tell Amol to "meditate a little longer." Just because Amol is Indian and probably Hindu does not mean that he spends his time self-reflecting.

Attacks like yours not only affect one person; they affect a whole minority group. So, Julie, I suggest you go visit Amol in his cave and apologize to him. Maybe he'll give you some of that "dank" stuff and you'll actually begin to laugh a little.

Rishi Kotiya
Sophomore
Women's Studies

Amol Naik is Indian and Hindu.

Wins Don't Compensate For Bad Regular Season, Playing Without Heart

TO THE EDITOR:

In response to Resa Coleman's letter on March 28:

Ms. Coleman is an idiot if she thinks the average Tar Heel fan can gain an understanding of "heart" from this year's team. Where was all this "heart" a month ago? I submit that it wasn't until the criticism of Coach Guthridge grew deafening that the team actually began to care about what was happening out on the court.

Fans, contrary to Ms. Coleman's advice, should avoid emulating this team — lest those of us who are students begin to feel

that it is OK to do a half-assed job in class as long as we intend to study for the final exam.

On a related note, Brendan Hayward and others should cease crowing about the "redemption" they have achieved until they are ready to play the full season and not just the postseason tournament. College and professional athletes do not play for themselves; they play for the fans.

So, Brendan, until the fans say that you've made up for wasting their time all season, you are not forgiven; nor will you be until you personally learn how to a) catch the ball and b) score over a player who is almost a foot shorter than you.

Go Heels!

Josh Fennell
Junior
Biology

Fan Solicits Carpoolers In Ride to Indianapolis For Tourney Appearance

TO THE EDITOR:

Attention Indianapolis-bound fans! We lucked out in having the opportunity to cheer our team on, the opportunity to do so in person.

What remains now is to be able to afford all that comes along with this noble effort. And if we, the fans, do it as a team, the Indy experience will be rewarding in more ways than one.

Here's the plan. Those of us who are planning on taking their wheels there, let's pack those vehicles to the roof, I mean five to six people per car. And once we are there, we can get a room for about each car and a half and save some serious cash that way.

Now, there are about 350 of us going. In order to coordinate all this we'll need to know who is willing to drive (and their vehicle capacity), who needs a ride and who needs a place to stay.

So as soon as you see this, e-mail me with the subject heading of "Tar wHeels" and include the above information at pyckuu@email.unc.edu.

During this Final Four, let's make our team feel the roaring support behind their backs, and in the meantime ... leave the "Mom, send money soon!" slogans at home!

Leo Orlov
Senior
Psychology

Clock's Ticking ...

... to submit to the upcoming Monday Viewpoints page. The deadline to be considered for publication in Monday's Daily Tar Heel is today by 6 p.m. Submitted columns should be 800 words and concern an issue relevant to DTH readers. Send submissions to editdesk@unc.edu. For more information, call Editorial Page Editor Scott Hicks at 962-0245.



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 vulgarities. 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.