

# Literary giants pass torch to newer talents

BY PHILIP MCFEE  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

In the halcyon days of 2002, I was a freshman poindexter — and I was jazzed.

Jeffrey Eugenides' "Middlesex" was new, and Ian McEwan's "Atonement," criminally shortlisted for the Booker Prize, was making waves. Richard Russo's titanic "Empire Falls" was riding off its Pulitzer notability.

Big names authors were putting out amazing books with astonishing frequency, and a much-hyped batch of new authors was generating buzz with works that actually deserved note.

Even that Jonathan Franzen essay collection was tolerable — I asked for it for Christmas.

Every day, I'd read "Everything is Illuminated" in Graham Memorial. Friends, those were the good days.

The other night, my friend said "They announced the Man Booker today." My response — "Oh yeah?"

An awkward silence ensued. I remember reputable authors. They used to publish good books.

When did "The 9/11 Commission Report" get nominated for the National Book Award? What's happened?

Books aren't on the decline, but the giants aren't bringing home the bacon anymore. Philip Roth's latest is a winner, but other than that, the fields are barren.

New Yorker darling T.C. Boyle's latest is negligible. Alice Walker, once soulful, should be stopped. Quiet successes like William Trevor's collection of stories and Ha Jin's prisoner-of-war narrative are of note, but going under the community radar.

The new secret with literature lies in the return of patronage. It's no longer the all-stars who are hot, it's who they're blurbing.

Take Margaret Atwood. Her last, "Oryx and Crake," was a dystopian muddle, well-meaning but ill-conceived. It was a departure in form for the award-winning Canuck.

This year, she's thrown her support behind long-underappreciated Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk.

Pamuk's latest, "Snow," is one of the finest novels of the year. His previous efforts have been worthy, but Times Notable doesn't equate to publicly noted. With the support of a literary mainstay, however lagging, he can finally achieve a higher degree of success.

But it's not a success story without obstacles. Sometimes, the megastars go on the offensive.

They've now gotten cooperative for new ventures, such as "Left Behind" author Tim LaHaye's woe-filled new series or the memoir "Truth & Beauty," teaming book club favorite Ann Patchett with chart-topper Lucy Grealy.

The tides, however, are turning. Barbara Kingsolver, who has stuck to publishing essays in the wake of her erotic moth tale "Prodigal Summer," threw her support behind Alaskan first-timer Seth Kantner.

As well she should. "Ordinary Wolves" is no "Bel Canto." It's good. The rise of this literary patronage is slowly becoming a bona fide trend, as critical reception and underground buzz switches from the prolific talents to the promising newcomers.

The public market, though, might not yet be ready for it. The climate is overly political, and the releases follow suit. Capitalizing on the polarized, high-interest sector, mightier-than-thou pundits flood the market with laughable efforts.

Name recognition is key, and a rushed or subpar effort by a famous talking head will inherently turn more heads than a meritorious work by an underappreciated writer. Ann Coulter mindlessly sparks ire, but on the page, Al Franken's watch-me rebuttals are just as big a waste of an intelligent reader's time.

For a good time, and a good indicator of where the dominant trend should go, just look at what Neil Gaiman's doing. His "1602" graphic novel series might have been questionable, but his most glowing blurb of the year went to Susannah Clarke.

Her "Jonathan Strange & Mr. Norell" isn't only a bestseller, it's fresh to boot. Chart-toppers and prize-winners aren't on the cutting edge anymore — it's the underlings' time to rise.

It's an epidemic: The buzz books nowadays aren't worth their salt, and stalwarts are falling short. So, rather than taking a chance on a testy new work by a household name, look for their stamp of approval on another dust jacket.

Ironic, yes, given the success of the worthless television show "The Apprentice," but literature's new class can thank their forerunners while surpassing them.

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# UNC looks to break slump

## Tar Heels aim to topple rival Ga. Tech

BY MARY DUBY  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

If it can be said the North Carolina volleyball team has an arch nemesis, Georgia Tech is probably it.

"You butt heads with Georgia Tech," said senior Molly Pyles. "That's just always the team that you go after."

The Yellow Jackets, who are in first place in the ACC and have an undefeated conference record, have ousted the Tar Heels in six of the last 10 meetings.

And after falling to Miami and Florida State last weekend, the Tar Heels (11-10, 6-3 in the ACC) enter their weekend matches against Clemson and Georgia Tech with their season potentially on the line.

"(It's) understanding that you're in a three-game slump," Pyles said. "Understanding what it takes to

get out of it and understanding that ACCs is on this weekend. (The NCAA Tournament) is going to be on this weekend.

"There are so many things that make this weekend so very crucial."

North Carolina looks to avenge Saturday's 3-0 road loss to the Yellow Jackets earlier this season by altering its offensive style.

"We want to be more successful on offense with our choices and do some different things with the outside hitters," said UNC coach Joe Sagula. "They're going to try a little faster tempo."

With the loss of Meg Eckert, who sprained her ankle against Florida State and will miss at least the next two weeks, Pyles and fellow outside hitter Dani Nyenhuis will be required to shoulder more weight than usual.

"Their consistency will mean

a lot for our team doing well this weekend," Sagula said. "It's not pressure; that's the reality of it. They need to carry the load."

In the Sept. 24 match, Georgia Tech outdug the Tar Heels 73-48, so the defensive effort led by defensive specialists Caroline deRoock and Taylor Rayfield could prove crucial to a UNC victory.

"We need to make sure we stay disciplined in our blocking," Sagula said. "We just kind of shied away. We need to be more relentless. We need to make better decisions when we're on the court."

Georgia Tech (14-5, 8-0) is led by senior outside hitter Lynnette Mosler, who was named ACC Volleyball Co-Player of the Week on Monday for the seventh time in her career.

"Georgia Tech has a very quick offense," Rayfield said. "They run a one-three-and-a-hot — three really fast sets that the blocker can get tripped up on. ... So, it's up to

us on defense to help them out and dig behind them."

In Friday's game, the Tar Heels will face the Tigers (13-8, 4-4), who have won five of their last six matches. Earlier this season, UNC defeated Clemson 3-2 on the road but aims for a decisive victory after dropping two of the first three games in the Sept. 25 match.

"3-0," Pyles said. "As simple as I can make it, that's what we're looking to do."

And if the Tar Heels hope to take down the conference leader the following night, they'll need a win against Clemson to pull them out of their current slump.

"We need to stay on track with what we've been doing all year," Sagula said. "If we're successful early in the match on Friday, that will add confidence to the team, and we'll be able to build momentum."

Contact the Sports Editor at [sports@unc.edu](mailto:sports@unc.edu).

# Dems strive to halt Burr's drive

## Conference call opens discussion

BY BROOKE ERICSON  
STAFF WRITER

The N.C. Democratic Party hosted a conference call Thursday in a last-minute effort to highlight what it says are the shortcomings of Republican senatorial candidate Richard Burr.

The party sought to highlight Burr's record on issues such as breast cancer, jobs, the tobacco buyout and health care in hopes of stalling the momentum he has built during the last few weeks against Democrat Erskine Bowles.

In a poll of 621 likely voters released Monday by Survey USA, 47 percent of respondents said they would vote for Burr as opposed to 45 percent for Bowles with a 4 percent margin of error.

The poll, shows a statistical tie. But less than a month ago, Burr was down 10 points, and Democrats are trying to whittle down his lead.

Mary Barker, a volunteer with the National Breast Cancer Coalition, discussed Burr's record on supporting disease-related programs.

Burr was a co-sponsor of the Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Act, which called for Medicaid coverage for low-income, uninsured and underinsured women battling breast or cervical cancer.

But Barker said Burr has voted against key bills that would aid research and study, "and yet he has the audacity to run an ad saying he supports women with breast cancer. He is trying to get votes totally and completely through emotion."

Delmas Parker, 5th District chairman for the N.C. Democratic Party, spoke on Burr's record of supporting his district.

He said Burr consistently votes with his party instead of keeping campaign promises, and he added that jobs have left Ashe County.

Pender Sharp, a tobacco farmer from Wilson County, criticized Burr for his role in the tobacco buyout.

He said the only thing Burr has ever done for the buyout is to tout the fact that he would vote for one.

"That's not leadership," he said. Sharp also accused Burr of standing up for large tobacco companies. Burr did not support Massachusetts Sen. Ted Kennedy's proposal to give the Food and Drug Administration authority over tobacco products with a buyout, he said, because it wouldn't provide advantages to corporations.

"I find it ironic that Senator Kennedy protected my interest more than Burr," Sharp said. Thelma Lennon of Raleigh, former president of the N.C. AARP, presented Burr's record on prescription drugs and drug imports.

She said that under Burr's leadership, the cost of prescription drugs has increased while insurance has decreased. "I know people who don't eat because they need to pay for prescription drugs," she said.

## "The only theme present during the conference call was that Democrats do not like Richard Burr."

DOUG HEYE, RICHARD BURR CAMPAIGN SPOKESMAN

Lennon said Bowles provides a huge contrast to Burr.

"There is no reason that Americans should have to pay up to 70 percent more than people in other countries," Lennon said. "Vote for Mr. Bowles, who has a plan and puts people first."

But Doug Heye, spokesman of the Richard Burr campaign, said most of the statements relayed during the conference call were false. "It says a lot that they couldn't come up with one cohesive theme," Heye said.

"The Bowles campaign are

going negative, and they are going negative because they don't have support of female voters."

And he denied that Burr has any relationship with RJ Reynolds.

"They will throw anything out regardless of factual relevance because they are trying to scare people into voting for Bowles," he said. "The only theme present during the conference call was that Democrats do not like Richard Burr."

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# Officials prepare to protect polls

BY HILARY HELLENS  
STAFF WRITER

Elections officials are taking every precaution to ensure that voters and precinct officials will be safe at the polls on Election Day.

Gary Bartlett, executive director of the N.C. Board of Elections, said he was told at a meeting in Raleigh last week that the FBI has not received any credible evidence that there will be a terrorist attack in North Carolina or the United States.

Even so, the board sent out guidelines for use in the event of a terrorist attack to the state's county elections offices. The guidelines were created by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

"My biggest concern is, because there are no known threats, some elections officials might not take this as serious as I would like them to take it," Bartlett said. "The most important thing is to ensure the safety of the voter and election official every step of the way."

He emphasized that each election official should know his or her duties and responsibilities and how to secure the polling place if need be. He also said it is important that counties have a backup polling place, if necessary.

Bartlett plans to send follow-up instructions to county elections boards this week, asking each one to pick an alternative polling site. He is concerned that security plans might not be emphasized because of the rush of early voting and everything else officials have to do before Election Day.

Mike Ashe, director of the Durham County Board of Elections, said he is not worried about any terrorist attacks affecting the voting process this year, but officials still are taking precautions to keep voters and precinct officials safe.

He mentioned that the Durham County BOE has several disaster plans in place and does a risk analysis every year. More than 9,000 people already have voted at the Durham

location without incident.

"In the history of Durham county there has never been a terrorist attack at a polling place," he said. "I see no reason why that is going to change. We have not been advised of a specific increased threat."

Maj. David Munday of the N.C. Highway Patrol said he wants citizens to know the patrol is ready and willing to respond if there is a credible threat.

The patrol has an "unusual-occurrence plan," which is a response to natural or man-made occurrences in the state. Included in the plans is what to do when faced with the threat of terrorism.

Munday said that if the state receives a credible threat, it will be passed through the Secretary of Crime Control and Public Safety, passed on to the public information officer and then distributed to the public.

The efforts might seem unnecessary to some, but Bartlett and others say it's better to be prepared.

"It is important that election officials practice what they are going to do in the event of a terrorist attack, so they don't have to think, because if they think, they will lose valuable seconds."

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# Student's fund-raising efforts hit ground running

BY ELANA JONES  
STAFF WRITER

When Wes Joines couldn't get a bid to the Marines Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C., he decided to run in a different direction.

Joines, a "nontraditional" senior public policy and business double major, will run 26.2 miles Saturday along the Connecticut coastline in the Mystic Places Marathon, taking him through the historic districts of East Lyme.

Joines has been running since his freshman year of high school. "I love running," he said. "It's relaxing to me."

But this particular race has a higher purpose.

Through a program at the Kenan-Flagler Business School, Joines interned this summer

at N.C. Prevention Partners, a Carrboro-based nonprofit agency that emphasizes preventative health care.

The organization focuses on poor nutrition, physical inactivity and tobacco — three factors that cause more than two-thirds of all preventable deaths in the state, said Executive Director Meg Molloy.

"There's a lot of training involved (in preparing for a marathon)," Joines said. "And I thought I would be more apt to be dedicated to it if I had a nonprofit to raise money for."

Joines chose N.C. Prevention Partners.

Last spring, Joines set a goal of raising \$1,000. To date, he has raised \$775 and said he expects to raise the balance by the end of the year.

"There was never any specific

deadline," he said. "Before the end of the year, I'll have \$1,000 one way or another."

The money Joines has raised will go to the Independence Campaign of N.C. Prevention Partners, a three-year effort to transition the organization to fully independent nonprofit status.

Joines said that because the organization receives money from taxpayers, it often faces difficulty advocating for controversial measures.

"They'll just have an easier mission if they're independent from financing from the (UNC) School of Public Health and tax money, and I want to support them in that," said Joines. "I think that their mission is great."

Molloy said the Independence Campaign's annual fund-raising

goal is \$100,000 and that so far this year, it has raised \$75,000.

"It's primarily from \$10 and \$20 donations," she said, adding that Joines' contribution represented a substantial amount. "Wes' marathon is a great example of people contributing at whatever level they can."

Joines' enthusiasm has extended to others at the organization.

"Wes inspired me," said Peg O'Connell, chairwoman of N.C. Prevention Partners, who normally walks three miles a day. "When Wes said he was going to do a marathon, I thought, 'I couldn't run, but I could walk 10 miles — that's more than my normal.'"

O'Connell raised \$1,252 from her own personal walk — an amount that was matched, to her surprise, by her husband.

"I think (Joines' marathon) demonstrates what N.C. Prevention Partners is all about — incorporating physical activity in your daily life. We like to say we don't just talk the talk, we walk the walk. In Wes' case, he runs the run," she said.

Joines admits that he has never run a marathon before.

"The longest run I've ever done is right at about 20 miles, but they say that if you can run 20 miles ... you can run a marathon," he said.

Joines said he is hoping to run the race in 3 1/2 hours, but added, "I'll be happy just to finish."

Contact the Features Editor at [features@unc.edu](mailto:features@unc.edu).

## THE Daily Crossword

By Janet R. Bender

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- ACROSS**
- 1 Doorway sides
  - 6 Kind of palm
  - 10 Funny Bombeck
  - 14 Like some gases
  - 15 Norway's patron saint
  - 16 \_\_\_ ex machina
  - 17 Clerk, at times
  - 18 Take it easy
  - 19 Longing
  - 20 2003 winners of 30A
  - 23 Craving
  - 24 \_\_\_ Beach, FL
  - 25 Detection device
  - 27 CSA soldier
  - 28 Lair
  - 29 Glob or mod ending
  - 30 Annual sports event
  - 35 Tease
  - 36 Garden bloom
  - 37 Guitarist Paul
  - 38 M. Descartes
  - 39 Part of a table or journey
  - 40 Another name for 30A
  - 44 Hot dog's problem?
  - 45 Sony rival
  - 46 Qty.
  - 47 Join with a molten alloy
  - 49 Up to the task
  - 51 Tiger's org.
  - 54 2003 losers of 30A
  - 57 Parasitic arachnid
- DOWN**
- 1 Snap
  - 2 Old-womanish
  - 3 Honeydew, e.g.
  - 4 Rabbit's title
  - 5 Struggled vigorously
  - 6 Energy type
  - 7 Dollar rival
  - 8 Huxley novel, "Eyeless in \_\_\_"
  - 9 Supervise
  - 10 \_\_\_ Arlington Robinson
  - 11 Acquires more coverage
  - 12 Benito the dictator

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**THE BROWN BUNNY** 9:30