

BOARD EDITORIALS

# KEEPING IT CLEAN

Campus campaigns are entering the next phase — and it's up to them to avoid some of the wrong decisions that campaigns made last year.

The scandals that tainted last year's student body president election hopefully will be absent during this year's campaign season, which began in earnest Thursday after a mandatory meeting between candidates and the Board of Elections.

The 2004 race, wrought with allegations of negative campaigning and violations by campaign workers, saw a second runoff and spontaneous BOE hearings.

The board has taken measures to improve its regulation of campaign tactics this year. Now candidates must provide the BOE with Excel spreadsheets listing those students who have signed their petitions in an effort to prevent false and duplicate signatures.

Further changes include weekly campaign meetings with the BOE and new limits on how and when campaigns can go door-to-door. The board is doing well to increase its visibility during this election season.

The group has made the necessary strides to improve the election process by way of implementing new guidelines — but the greatest responsibility lies with the candidates themselves.

Candidates should make every effort to follow the

regulations set forth by the BOE and to take care to keep campaigning away from poll sites. Violation of this particular rule plagued last year's contest.

This year's officer hopefuls have a unique opportunity. Should they operate their campaigns in line with the rules, not only might they win the election, but they also undoubtedly will restore some integrity and honor to the election process.

Although the BOE can establish campaign rules and regulations to ensure fair and democratic elections, it cannot enforce student participation. Like last year, only one person is running for Residence Hall Association president. There is also only one candidate for Graduate and Professional Student Federation president. It's a shame that there is no real competition for these important posts.

It is imperative to the health and integrity of student government that students take an active role in the election process.

This means participating in student government, helping to ensure that campaign regulations are followed — and voting Feb. 8.

# RIGHTING A WRONG

Now that the Downtown Economic Development Corporation knows that it is a public body, it can serve residents in the best possible way.

It's okay to make mistakes — but when they are made, they should be corrected as soon as possible.

Thankfully, the Chapel Hill Downtown Economic Development Corporation has seen the error of its ways and has found a remedy.

The DEDC was created last year to consolidate and serve the goals of the University, the town and the local private business sector. Some of the issues that the group has discussed include lighting and potential free wireless Internet access downtown.

The body's mission is important, but its actions have not always been so pure.

In November of last year, the DEDC moved parts of a meeting into closed session — meaning that members of the public and the press weren't allowed to observe the proceedings.

But members were wrong to shroud their actions in secrecy — they didn't provide an acceptable reason to do so, and they were discussing potential uses for taxpayers' money.

In closing segments of its meeting without following proper procedure, the DEDC violated the state's

Open Meetings Law, which details the circumstances under which a public body can close a meeting. The group immediately caught flak from Chapel Hill officials such as Mayor Kevin Foy. DEDC Chairman Bob Epting, who had opposed the decision to go into closed session, resigned his post.

After having this controversy follow it into the new year and serve as a dark cloud over the group, the DEDC has made up for its mistake.

On Wednesday, the body corrected its violation of the Open Meetings Law by voting unanimously to follow it, along with the state's Public Records Law, in future meetings.

Also, the DEDC did well to answer the question of leadership by appointing Andrea Rohrbacher as chairwoman. With these two positive developments, the group is moving in the right direction.

Corporation members deserve praise for their good-faith effort to correct their mistake. Now that they have responded to criticism from town officials in a constructive manner, they can move forward with their important goal of making downtown Chapel Hill a better place to do business.

# SLOWING IT DOWN

Local law enforcement officials should regulate the level of speeding on Hillsborough Road, because that level is dangerous to pedestrians.

Town officials have recognized that speeding on Hillsborough Street is a significant problem. Unfortunately, the street's 25 mph speed limit isn't very effective — it's clear that drivers have to ride their brakes for almost the entire length of the street to be anywhere close to the posted speed limit.

In an effort to get the attention of people driving on the street, the town has posted large signs reminding them not to speed. Also, there is an electronic speed indicator, set to be activated soon, which will let drivers know how fast they are going.

Unfortunately, the signs likely are about as effective as an old lady shaking her finger at cars as they whiz past. And it's questionable how much good the indicator will do, seeing as how drivers can rely on their speedometers.

A speed limit of 35 mph would be more reasonable than the current limit, considering the downhill grade of the road.

It's simply too difficult to try to maintain a speed of 25 mph or less on such a steep hill. Not only that, but 35 mph is also a relatively standard speed limit for residential neighborhoods — it shouldn't pose a

particularly large threat to those residents who live near the road.

But speeding is a serious problem on Hillsborough Street, and some better solutions are needed. Increasing the speed limit likely wouldn't change the fact that people are speeding at the bottom of the hill — it just will change by how much they're exceeding the limit.

Perhaps larger speed bumps would do the trick. Instead of taking the risk of damaging their axles, people would slow down. Such a precaution would lead drivers to be more cautious or simply to find another route.

Also, a greater police presence on Hillsborough Street probably would do wonders in reducing the number of speed demons on the roadway. Making examples of some particularly reckless drivers could convince others that town and law enforcement officials are serious about the speed limit.

As it is, something needs to be done. Although the street hasn't been accident-prone, the potential for disaster is too great to ignore. Officials should go farther in their attempts to keep people safe.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The above editorials are the opinions of solely The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board, and were reached after open debate. The board consists of six board members, the editorial page associate editor, the editorial page editor and the DTH editor. The 2004-05 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials.

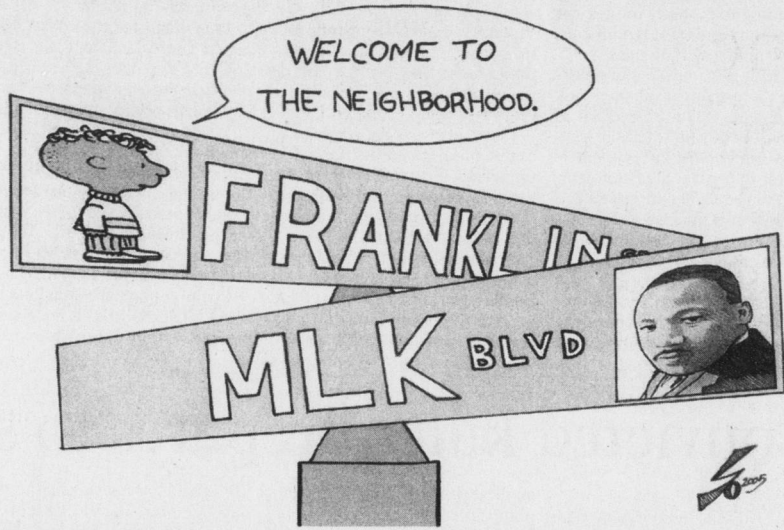
ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"Win or lose, do it fairly."

KNUTE ROCKNE, FORMER NOTRE DAME FOOTBALL COACH

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Steven Oklesh, elven@email.unc.edu



COMMENTARY

# We must commit ourselves to a true culture of learning

I've always had an interest in education, which isn't all that surprising, seeing as how I've been involved in the formal practice of it for seven hours a day, five days a week, nine months a year for about as long as I can remember.

Here at UNC, that experience has translated into academic interest, and I spent last summer in Cuba conducting research for my thesis on the equity and quality of the Cuban education system. In a country that has faced a great deal of economic and political pressure, the state of education was strikingly healthy. Education is free, accessible and of high quality for Cubans, no matter what level of education you seek, no matter how old you are, no matter where you live.

In Cuban primary schools, for every 20 students you will find one classroom, one teacher, one computer, one TV and one VCR. Amidst economic recession, all other state expenditures suffered budget cuts — all except education.

This high level of investment in education was spread to all members of the community. I met a 6-year-old girl who lives in the mountains of eastern Cuba. She is the only child for miles around. The government built a school for her and her alone, one equipped with a computer, TV, VCR, solar panels and her very own teacher.

The regime's stability has enabled a sustained investment in education, and subsequently a culture of learning has developed among the communities in Cuba. Teachers are well-paid and regularly visit with their students' families. Professionals are brought in to work in the classroom, and students spend several weeks every year outside the classroom, practicing the skills they develop in class. Learning spills out of the schools



AMON ANDERSON  
PARA SER CULTO, ES SER LIBRE

and involves all parts of the community. Education has become a point of national pride.

Cubans are proud that their schools are the best in Latin America, and they actively work to ensure that this will be the case in the future. Cuban education embarked on the road to success through a high level of investment, but it was truly able to make strides because of the development of a culture of learning.

I have spent the last 13 years of my life involved in the U.S. public education system, and our schools and communities lack this very culture. Our schools are underfunded, and our citizenry refuses to make adequate funding a priority. Voters have not highly prioritized a quality education — and until they do, we will never be able to progress toward a culture of learning.

The American education system also has failed to provide equal education for every child. Poor schools have fewer resources than rich schools — according to a report by the Education Trust, the disparity between the lowest 25 percent of high-poverty districts and the top 25 percent of low-poverty districts in 2002 was \$1,348 per student. A culture of learning involves an investment in the community and in the entirety of the next generation. Until our society sheds the mentality of self interest, we will never achieve a culture of learning.

Teachers are public intellectuals, propagating knowledge and

habits of learning. They are an integral part of the value formation of our society. But we refuse to recognize this contribution in marketplace compensation. Teachers are underpaid and underrespected. Those who still fight for intellectualism in schools are faced with the challenge of a community that no longer values intellectualism itself.

Finally, schools are becoming less and less integrated into their communities. Families aren't investing their energy in schools — and malls, rather than schools, are serving as hubs for community development. I'm not sure how to characterize the state of American culture, but it is certainly not one of learning.

If our society is to improve the way we educate our children and ourselves, we must invest in a truly quality education through the development of a culture of learning. The burden of this reform falls on all our shoulders. The government must find a way to provide for every child equally and to compensate teachers adequately. Families must engage in their schools in a positive way and make sure that learning doesn't stop when their kids get off the bus in the afternoon. Schools must be considered community resources for information, arts, athletics and discourse.

The effort to develop a culture of learning cannot spare any member of the community. Students, families, teachers and policy makers all must act. We must create change ourselves and demand it in those around us. Only through a true culture of learning will we ever be able to move our society forward.

Contact Amon Anderson, a senior international studies major, at amona@email.unc.edu.

The Daily Tar Heel

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READERS' FORUM

Mandatory meeting to deal with funding information

**TO THE EDITOR:**  
This year's annual Budget Orientation meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday in 100 Hamilton Hall.

This meeting is mandatory for all organizations planning to request funding for the 2005-2006 fiscal year.

Information will be given out about the requirements for funding as well as the details of the process.

Please send any representative of your organizations to this meeting — it does not have to be the treasurer.

Thank you. We look forward to working with you throughout this process.

Daneeen Furr  
Finance chairwoman  
Student Congress

Natalie Russell  
Student body treasurer

UNC must find other ways to honor women on campus

**TO THE EDITOR:**

The Campaign for Justice and the Bell Award asked University administrators to retire the Cornelia Phillips Spencer Bell Award, because Cornelia Spencer has been the only leader of a white supremacy movement to have an

award promoting present-day values named in her honor.

We asked them to replace it with "The Chancellor's Bicentennial Award for Women."

We also sought to establish an annual Cornelia Phillips Spencer Day to explore the contributions of women at UNC as well as the University's racist and sexist history.

And we called for a "commission on the commemorative landscape" that would scrutinize the ways in which the University remembers its history and make recommendations to create an honest and inclusive presentation.

The group discussed other awards named after white supremacists and how to have the history behind the names of Saunders Hall and other buildings described on site.

Some of us were involved in a campaign a couple of years ago to have a historically accurate plaque identifying former trustee William L. Saunders as a Ku Klux Klan leader placed somewhere on Saunders Hall.

The campaign is a diverse group, including feminist faculty members, undergraduate and graduate students, anti-racist leaders and the presidents of numerous campus and community organizations.

To use the controversy surrounding the Bell Award to cancel an award for women would be sexist,

sending the message that equality for women has been reached at UNC.

That is false, as is shown by the small percentage of female full professors on campus and the large percentage of women who are housekeepers.

Some of the names suggested for other awards for women — recognizing that we need more awards for women, not fewer — included activist women in the UNC community whose work goes unrecognized.

A good example is Barbara Prear, a housekeeper who began organizing the housekeepers in 1990 and continues to fight against job privatization and gender and racial discrimination today.

Natalia Deeb-Sossa  
Employee  
Department of Health Behavior and Health Education

**TO SUBMIT A LETTER:** The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments. 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 2409, Carolina Union, mail them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail them to editdesk@unc.edu.

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