

BOARD EDITORIALS

KEEP IT IN THE LIGHT

The community should know about every sexual assault that takes place on campus, because sometimes public safety isn't the only real concern.

Every 2 1/2 minutes, according to some rape crisis groups, someone in the United States is sexually assaulted.

And it's not just women. Children and, yes, men are also at risk of becoming victims; sexual assault is an issue that affects everyone and that needs to be at the forefront of everyone's mind.

It's a shame, then, that the Department of Public Safety doesn't publicly notify the campus about every rape that takes place on our grounds. The University might be right that not every sexual assault is a threat to public safety — but safety concerns are not the only reason to arm Tar Heels with knowledge.

Unless you're new to the University community, you probably know that DPS e-mails inform the campus about public safety issues such as instances of sexual assault, mugging or meningitis outbreaks. They can be a real service.

And just as importantly, they raise awareness about key issues. If students see a letter about a sexual assault on campus, they might give the issue more weight in their minds — and, perhaps, take steps to remedy the situation by raising awareness or keeping

themselves out of potentially harmful situations.

That's why it's so confusing to hear from Leslie Strohm, the University's legal counsel and chairwoman of the campus's Emergency Warning Committee, that DPS issues public warnings only when it perceives an ongoing threat to the campus community.

In other words, we're not likely to get told about sexual assaults if the victim knew the suspect — as was the case in an on-campus assault last week.

That just doesn't make any sense when simply acknowledging that a crime has taken place forces the entire campus to think about the risk of sexual assault in their own lives.

And there's also the hope that more open dialogue about sexual assault will make reporting a crime of that nature less intimidating — a major problem on a campus where a majority of rapes likely never get reported.

DPS' safety notifications are a necessary service to the campus when there is a public safety threat. But they are just as important as a way to keep people aware of a serious ongoing issue.

A TAXING PROBLEM

The Town Council did right by local business owners when it rolled back the tax hikes they would have had to pay to keep their doors open.

Many Chapel Hill residents appreciate the unique way in which we ask our local mom-and-pop shops to do business. We ask them to take care of their workers, for example, and we want them to make sure they're contributing to a thriving, multifaceted downtown.

Those aren't unreasonable concerns. They're shared by many municipalities looking to retain a small-town feel, and besides, they're responsible for a big chunk of this area's spunk.

Occasionally, however, Chapel Hill leaders can get carried away with their efforts to regulate business, no matter how well-intended.

That's what happened this year, when the town budget included major hikes in the "privilege license" tax — essentially, a levy local businesses pay to Chapel Hill to stay open. Under those proposals, a business taking in more than \$500,000 saw its payment jump to \$750 from \$75.

Now, journalists aren't quite math geniuses, but even we realize that's a big jump. And that's just a little bit silly — especially when many businesses that take in \$500,000 are still mom-and-pop affairs whose profit margins are slim.

Taking an extra \$675 from the owners of those businesses isn't extortion, but it's also not a good idea — or a fair one.

So the Town Council is to be commended for its Monday night decision to retroactively roll back a large chunk of those tax hikes, a decision that came after the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce justifiably raised Cain.

The money to repay the businesses — about \$53,000 — will have to come from the town's reserves, but it's a small pittance when you compare it to the world of good it could have for individual households.

It's also an important lesson in what can happen when local leaders get carried away in their zeal to regulate businesses. Particularly in the downtown sector, where everyone agrees that more practical, locally owned business would be a godsend, a few hundred dollars in extra taxes might have convinced some potential entrepreneurs to stay away.

We can't encourage local businesses to come downtown while approving policies that would keep them far away. And the council is to be commended for recognizing that; better late than never.

DOWN IN THE DUMPS

Local leaders should look into a potential trash swap with Alamance County — and at environmental concerns that could derail the idea.

Here's the situation: Our neighbors to the west need cash. And we need to get rid of our trash.

So Alamance County recently made Orange County an offer it can't — and probably shouldn't — refuse.

The News & Observer reported this week that Alamance's landfill, which isn't scheduled to close until about 2045, could use a little bit of money. Orange's landfill — which gets the trash from the University and Chapel Hill — is looking to close in five years, and it's not likely that the area will build another one before that happens.

So it seems like a good idea to at least consider Alamance's proposal, under which Orange County would pay for its neighbors to pick up its trash and put it in their landfill. It would provide cash for people who need it, and it also could be cheaper than building another landfill in Orange County if the two counties can reach a long-term agreement.

Put more succinctly: They want our money, we don't want our trash. Sounds good.

In addition, a deal would help keep those poplar trees around — future landfills, after all, would take

up space. That being said, it is imperative that local officials vet any possible trash swap for its environmental impacts. The Alamance landfill is rather close to the Haw River, and environmental groups in the area are concerned — correctly, we think — about the potential impact of hazardous runoff on the area.

To be sure, the Alamance landfill eventually will fill up regardless of whether Orange County agrees to this deal. In fact, it'll probably be cleaner if the swap goes through because Orange County has tough standards for its trash.

But that doesn't mean local leaders should throw caution to the wind. Still, assuming the greenbacks spent on hauling garbage are roughly comparable to using our own home-grown landfill, Chapel Hill and Orange County should take its neighbors up on their offer. It looks like a win-win situation.

And who knows? Maybe success in this project could spur other profitable ventures between Orange and Alamance counties.

It could even be the start of a beautiful friendship.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above editorials are the opinions solely of The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board and were reached after open debate. The board consists of four board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the DTH editor. The 2005-06 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials.

READERS' FORUM

Columnist was offensive, inaccurate, disrespectful

TO THE EDITOR:

The Muslim Students Association wanted to respond to Jillian Bandes' piece "It's sad, but racial profiling is necessary for our safety."

We find it extremely counterproductive as Muslims to attack Bandes' opinion about racial profiling because we recognize that sadly enough, this is a prevalent sentiment echoed even through the hallowed halls of the most liberal elite.

After all, you know you've hit a relatively widespread opinion when Bill Maher, the leftist man on television, admits to the necessity of racial profiling. It's a sad day when Ann Coulter and Bill Maher finally find a point of contention that doesn't make them want to hurl knives at each other's aorta.

Our main criticism of Bandes' article is not in what it argues but the way that she argues her point so disrespectfully. "I want all Arabs to be stripped naked and cavity-searched if they get within one hundred yards of an airport."

Although we appreciate the journalistic hook, it was an attention-grabber, sensationalistic and forced us to read the column; however, it offended us all within the same sen-

tence. The image of naked Arabs in a public airport is not only truly horrifying, but it is also reminiscent of the Abu Ghraib photos where Iraqis were also "stripped" down for information about terrorists.

Considering the negative reaction to those distant images, are we ready to see them every day at the airport?

Not only that, but there is an inherent contradiction within the article itself. Bandes writes that the United States can implement a large-scale profiling policy "without going down the slippery slope of pointless and disrespectful encroachment on the livelihood (of Arabs)."

However, one wonders, is "Arabs sexed up like nothing else" not "disrespectful encroachment?" How is this a "professionally conscientious manner" of discussing the issue?

If a mere Daily Tar Heel columnist can "encroach" upon the self-respect of Arabs within the span of a 750-word column, then what can be said about the entire bureaucratic infrastructure of the United States?

Our qualms with journalistic language aside, we take offense to the manipulation of the quotes from Arabs to support Bandes' limitedly researched article. After we spoke to both Muhammad Salameh and Professor Nasser

Isleem, we realized that they were outraged at having their views on racial profiling misrepresented.

For example, Salameh's response to the use of his statements was "Quote me as I say!"

His quote from Bandes' article that "I can accept it, even if I don't like it. I don't want to die" is an example of the journalist's cut-and-paste method. In actuality, Salameh said to Bandes, "I'm not comfortable with it, I'm not happy with it, but I can accept it."

The "I don't want to die" part of the statement was given much later in the conversation in reference to Salameh's Islamic stoicism in accepting his fate if he died in the World Trade Center — not Arab strip searches at airports. Salameh is, in fact, infuriated at the way he was misrepresented in the article, considering his involvement in diversity activities and clubs (such as Psi Sigma Phi, a multicultural fraternity).

Interestingly, a similar story emerged when the MSA contacted Sherief Khaki, who told us that he was misquoted and misled. Khaki said that he "felt as if he was used for 30 minutes just so (he) could say one line about racial profiling."

Similarly, Professor Isleem was approached by Bandes under the guise of writing about Arab reaction after Sept. 11. After speaking with Isleem personally, we discovered that

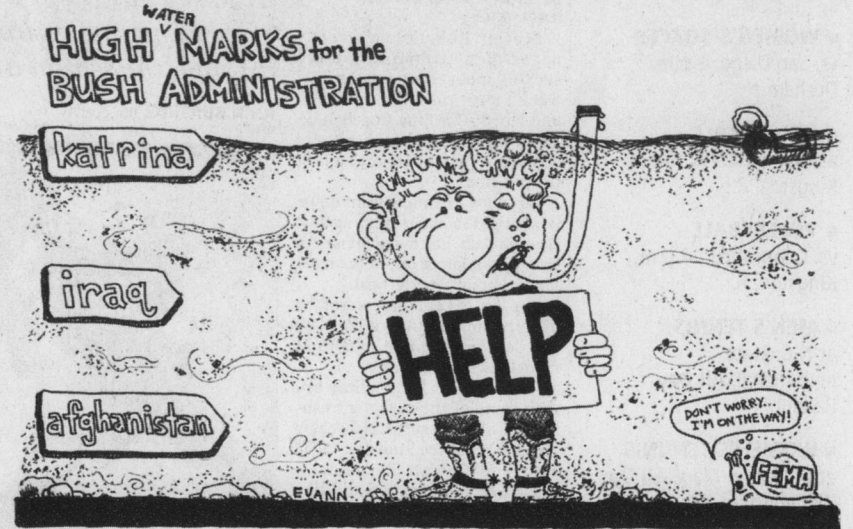
FROM THE DAY'S NEWS

"Being taxed on (gross receipts) when you're losing money is a real stinger."

AARON NELSON, DIRECTOR, CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Evann Strathern, evann@email.unc.edu



COMMENTARY

Better buses are no substitute for parking at Carolina North

Local transportation officials recently received the results of a study on upgrading the Chapel Hill area's mass transit system. The report released last week by John Bonsall, a former transportation planner from Ottawa, Canada, outlined several different options that included buses that run on tracks and light-rail cars.

Some of the ideas seem like effective ways to improve service and reliability. Ideas like designating a lane strictly for buses could help ensure that they run on time. But all of those ideas — and the parking battles that might be motivating them — should be explored with caution.

That's because transit officials have the potential to undermine an important part of the University's future. They should be especially careful about planning for mass transit to replace parking spots at Carolina North, the University's proposed research campus.

The satellite campus would help the University attract important scientific and technological talent — creating opportunities for students, the state and the community.

But Mayor Kevin Foy noted the potential for conflict when he spoke about a new transit system's impact on Carolina North. He seemed to suggest that if the town upgraded transit, it could present the new system as a reason to challenge the University's proposal to include a substantive number of parking spaces in its biggest development.

"This is an opportunity for us to say, 'If we don't want 17,000 parking spaces at Carolina North, how can we have a transit system in place that makes sense as an alternative to the single-occupancy vehicle?'" Foy said, according to The News & Observer.

The question is: How much of



JEFF KIM
NO LONGER A VILLAGE

an "alternative" are Foy and town officials seeking to force upon future Carolina North commuters?

It would be great to see local governments upgrade the transit system as a voluntary alternative to single-occupancy vehicles.

But transit officials shouldn't demand that new researchers give up their cars before going into work. Doing so would undermine Carolina North's ability to attract the talent it is capable of bringing in.

Candidates for this year's municipal elections are monitoring the Carolina North situation carefully, and several have cited transportation as the key issue in its development. Many of them know many local residents just don't like the idea of bigger roads, parking lots or more cars in general.

And there's merit to those concerns. Chapel Hill has a great environment to preserve, and improving the town's public transit system is a worthy goal. But transit officials should be careful about bogging down Carolina North's future.

We're not talking about transporting students from their apartments to their classes. We're talking about recruiting researchers and professionals — people who have already experienced life in the residence hall and don't need to be reminded of it. It's not unreasonable for them to get a parking spot.

Chapel Hill enjoys a high standard of living, but it's unlikely that prospective tenants will want

a long and cumbersome commute on a light rail system. Chapel Hill isn't New York, and it's not Washington, D.C.

To put it frankly: The best new transportation system can't make up for a shortage of parking at Carolina North. Regardless of any improvements to the current system, buses and trains will always require much more time than a car ride to get from point A to point B.

UNC already has enough trouble recruiting and retaining its faculty. The town shouldn't blunt Carolina North's competitive edge by wresting away its parking capabilities.

Bonsall's suggestions might make Chapel Hill's system faster and more reliable, and that's great.

When I lived on campus, getting a few snacks at the grocery store was often an undertaking that took several hours at a time. The safest bet that my roommate and I went with was to take the V bus to the Harris Teeter at Meadowmont and to get all of our shopping done in 10 minutes between its arrival and departure.

But I put up with the rushed grocery shopping because I knew the situation was temporary. If I were seeking a place to settle down with my business or my research, the lack of parking would be on my checklist of concerns about Carolina North.

Chapel Hill and its neighbors shouldn't jeopardize the potential for growth and innovation that Carolina North represents. Studying transit upgrades is a good idea, but town officials should avoid the temptation to overreach in its traffic control efforts.

Contact Jeff Kim, a senior economics major, at jongdae@email.unc.edu.

Speak Out

We welcome letters to the editor and aim to publish as many as possible. In writing, please follow these simple guidelines: Keep letters under 300 words. Type them. Date them. Sign them; make sure they're signed by no more than two people. If you're a student, include your year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff: Give us your department and phone number. The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Bring letters to our office at Suite 2409 in the Student Union, e-mail them to editdesk@unc.edu, or send them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515. All letters also will appear in our blogs section.

The Daily Tar Heel
www.dailytarheel.com

Established 1893
112 years of editorial freedom

RYAN C. TUCK
EDITOR, 962-4086
RCTUCK@EMAIL.UNC.EDU
OFFICE HOURS: TUESDAY, THURSDAY 1-2 P.M.
PIT SITE: FRIDAY, 12 TO 1 P.M.

JOSEPH R. SCHWARTZ
MANAGING EDITOR, 962-0750
JOSEPH_SCHWARTZ@UNC.EDU

REBECCA WILHELM
DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR, 962-0750
BECCA07@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

CHRIS COLETTA
OPINION EDITOR, 962-0750
EDITDESK@UNC.EDU

BRIAN HUDSON
UNIVERSITY EDITOR, 962-0372
UDESK@UNC.EDU

TED STRONG
CITY EDITOR, 962-4209
CITYDESK@UNC.EDU

KAVITA PILLAI
STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR, 962-4103
STNITDESK@UNC.EDU

DANIEL MALLOY
SPORTS EDITOR, 962-4710
SPORTS@UNC.EDU

TORRYE JONES
FEATURES EDITOR, 962-4214
FEATURES@UNC.EDU

JIM WALSH
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, 962-4214
ARTSDESK@UNC.EDU

SCOTT SPILLMAN
CO-COPY EDITOR, 962-4103

CATHERINE WILLIAMS
CO-COPY EDITOR, 962-4103

WHITNEY SHEFTE
PHOTO EDITOR, 962-0750

JEN ALLIET
CO-DESIGN EDITOR, 962-0750

DANIEL BEDEN
CO-DESIGN EDITOR, 962-0750

FEILDING CAGE
GRAPHICS AND MULTIMEDIA EDITOR, 962-0246

CHRIS JOHNSON
ONLINE EDITOR, 962-0750
ONLINE@UNC.EDU

KELLY OCHS
WRITER'S COACH, 962-0372

EMILY STEEL
WRITER'S COACH, 962-0372

ELLIOTT DUBE
PUBLIC EDITOR, 260-9084
DUBE@EMAIL.UNC.EDU

Usma Khan
Bushra Bhatti
Muslim Students Association
(Editor's note: The length rule was waived.)