

BOARD EDITORIALS

# SHOW SOME SPIRIT

It wouldn't hurt students to stand up and let out a roar after a big football play — nor would it hurt students to show up for the game.

UNC is a basketball school. We certainly won't deny that. But having a legendary basketball program is no excuse for being a lackluster football fan. Sadly, it seems that many fans — alumni and students alike — are exactly that.

If you had been watching the UNC-Boston College football game on Saturday, and changed the channel back and forth to another college game, you might have noticed that, when it comes to football games, we are a very quiet school. After a big play, Kenan Stadium hums with excitement. Most other schools roar. Players from other teams have commented on the relative silence of our fans, and it's not hard to see — or hear — why.

Then again, it's hard to be loud when you have trouble filling the stadium.

Last week, like so many before it, there were plenty of empty seats, despite the fact that tickets are free to students. There are a few reasons for poor student attendance. One is that we play a lot of noon games, and many students are too hung over to make it. Another is that students don't know how to get in.

We can't stop you from drinking too much on Friday night, but we can try to help people who want

to go but don't know how. It's easy: take your One Card to Gate 5 — preferably more than 10 minutes before kickoff, so you don't bottleneck at the gate — and walk in. That's it.

If that piece of information solves the problem, great. But there's a good chance it won't, since UNC football lacks the fan tradition that other schools — even Duke, with its 1-9 record — have.

With the construction of the Rams Head parking deck, there's nowhere to tailgate that doesn't involve a prohibitive amount of walking. The restaurants at Rams Head don't serve alcohol, and neither does the stadium itself.

Another problem is that the best seats tend to go to alumni that don't know seem to know how to cheer. This isn't limited to football — at last year's Duke-UNC basketball game, the only person standing up during one crucial moment was Erskine Bowles.

We'd like to solve these problems, but they'll take time. More importantly, we'd like to see more students at the Nov. 19 football game against Duke. It's free for students, and, well, they're Duke.

So get out there and let the players hear you.

# NOT VERY HELPFUL

While it might be a good idea to prepare for potential epidemics, the U.S. government needs to realize that states don't have trees that grow money.

The federal government is trying to pass the buck to the state governments and is being dangerously nonchalant in protecting Americans from potential biological threats. President Bush announced a plan last week that will force local governments to purchase 31 million flu treatment doses and require that the states cover 75 percent.

This is too large of a health care and security mandate to thrust upon the states.

President Bush and Congress should work together to come up with a new plan that does not place such a burden on the states.

The avian flu has been gaining attention in the news as it spreads westward, and in the post-Sept. 11, 2001 world, bioterrorism is a conceivable danger. These events re-emphasize the importance of preventative actions such as having necessary supplies of vaccines available for the public.

But these concerns need to be seen as more than health care-related — these are national security issues as well. And only one level of government can handle such a security responsibility — the federal government.

This is not to say the states do not have a role in

the process. North Carolinians probably know best about how to effectively distribute vaccines throughout their own state. But that does not mean we can or should have to afford the cost of purchasing said vaccines. In fact, arms of the state such as the National Guard are much better at distributing relief than purchasing or producing the actual supplies.

The current plan seems certain to guarantee that all 50 states will never have enough vaccines when they are arguably most needed, and it leads to another preventable national crisis. The federal government ought to step up to the plate.

A much better and more equitable plan would be to have the states cover the costs of storing and distributing the vaccines and the federal government purchase vaccines. If Washington thinks covering 25 percent of the population is necessary, then it can purchase the vaccines for the states.

Ensuring security from all threats, from micro- to macroscopic, is largely the task of the federal government.

Passing responsibility to local governments may be politically expedient with the ever burgeoning deficit, but it is not how you best protect the country.

# TEACH THE MASSES

A recent court ruling in California reinforces and highlights the need for schools to teach children essential facts about sexual education.

Recently, the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals proclaimed that parents do not have sole custody over their children's access to sex education. But while a mandatory — and thoroughly educational — program would be ideal, forcing it is unrealistic and could lead to a watered-down version.

According to the court's ruling handed down last week, parents have "no constitutional right to prevent the public schools from providing information on (the subject of sex) to their students in any forum or manner they select."

The case originates out of a lawsuit by California parents angry about a survey including questions on sex that were given to first-, third- and fifth-graders.

The survey has merit. Officials said they were aiming to measure the students' exposure to trauma so that they could tailor services to meet their needs.

And that's a good point. While many children grow up in healthy homes, others experience first-hand psychologically scarring events that require early intervention — and sex education probably wouldn't hurt a lot of students who may be making uninformed decisions.

Regardless of the survey, the ruling speaks to a larger issue — our nation's sex education program in public schools. Sex education — the basics, in addition to learning life-saving information — is essential for teenagers to navigate confusing issues.

Hiding it will not prevent teenagers from trying to figure it out for themselves. By educating them about all their sexual options they can make better and presumably safer decisions.

Still, not all parents are going to agree. And if that means letting a small minority of students opt out, then that's going to have to be the solution for now.

The schools have taken on the significant responsibility of giving students the information they need to develop into intelligent adults with healthy views on sex and to allow them the chance to make the most well-informed decisions.

Do it right or don't do it at all. So if schools are going to do that, when many parents — even responsible ones — don't even broach the subject, then it needs to be a thorough, accurate curriculum. If that means allowing some students to put their heads in the sand, so be it.

**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. Address concerns to Public Editor Elliott Dube at [dube@dailytarheel.com](mailto:dube@dailytarheel.com).

READERS' FORUM

## Boatright column dispels stigma of mental illness

TO THE EDITOR:

I want to thank Sara Boatright for addressing the issue of mental illness among college students in her column on Tuesday.

Diagnosed with both bipolar disorder and ADHD, I not only wrestle with myself, but also with the pressure to hide what most incorrectly view as a crazy person's disease.

Carrying the burden of mental disease does not change me as a person; however, it does seem to change how others view me. Most struggling with mental illness do not seek pity, only understanding, support and the freedom to embrace and openly deal with their "demons" while they learn more about them.

So become educated: [www.nlm.nih.gov/nimhhome/index.cfm](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/nimhhome/index.cfm). Or try Google.

You never know who's battling themselves while straining to hide from the stigma associated with the "chemically unavoidable." Instead of whispering about someone's prescriptions and therapy appointments, hug them and try to understand. A little education wouldn't hurt either.

I've come to terms with my demons, named them and am far

from blushing.

I can only hope the same for others, mentally ill or not. We all carry some with us.

Jenna Seagraves  
Junior  
English

## DTH opinion page is turned over to very capable hands

TO THE EDITOR:

When I resigned as opinion editor of The Daily Tar Heel, I thought about asking for space in the newspaper to pen a farewell column.

After thinking about it, though, I realized I'd be grandstanding.

And writing for the DTH, as much as its critics love to say otherwise, isn't about grandstanding — and if it is, then you're in it for the wrong reasons.

Serving as a member of the student press is not only an honor but also a serious responsibility; truth is no less important on campus than anywhere else.

So instead of getting into the specifics of why I left, which are best left private, I wanted to write this short, simple letter to wish the staff of the opinion page the best of luck in their endeavors. They, after all, will be the ones in charge of separating fact from fiction, of doing the sort of journalism that

newspapers must do if they are to survive in this wired world. Whether you agree with their opinions or not, their mission deserves our support.

I, for one, have faith. In fact, judging from their exemplary work of the last 2 1/2 months, I doubt the readers will notice my absence.

Chris Coletta  
Senior  
Journalism

## Relief Coalition mobilizing to help earthquake victims

TO THE EDITOR:

On Tuesday, the Carolina Earthquake Relief Coalition held a vigil to mark the one month anniversary of the devastating earthquake in South Asia.

The 7.6-magnitude quake killed more than 80,000 and left millions of people homeless in Pakistan and India.

To this day, only one quarter of the 550 million dollars requested by the United Nations has been donated.

If the full amount is not received within the next month, an estimated 100,000 more people will die as winter descends on the Kashmir region.

CERC is asking community members to come together and support this cause

by attending our upcoming events and donating.

PID sheets will be circulated through classes during the next two weeks. More information is at CERC's Web site: [www.unc.edu/~srathie/ceqrc/index.html](http://www.unc.edu/~srathie/ceqrc/index.html).

You can also contact us at [ssheth@email.unc.edu](mailto:ssheth@email.unc.edu).

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FROM THE DAY'S NEWS

"Thank heaven that we are tough enough to bear the shame of this, and strong enough to forgive ourselves."

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS, WRITER, ON AMERICAN INACTION IN THE SUDAN

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Doug Marlette



"THE DEMOCRATS SHUT DOWN THE SENATE - IT'S THE FIRST TIME SINCE 9/11 THAT THE HOMELAND'S FELT SECURE!"

COMMENTARY

# Chapel Hill should be more honest about housing costs

I love the old cliché about a "wolf in sheep's clothing" because, as anyone who worked at The Daily Tar Heel last year can tell you, I'm a pretty big N.C. State University athletics fan.

And like anyone else who harbors some sort of deep guilt, I can appreciate the need to tuck some things away when the time isn't right.

I have a few Carolina shirts in my closet, and I can keep up with the average UNC football fan in a conversation about Connor Barth's resurgence against Boston College. If you met me on the street, you'd probably never guess that I'm the type of guy who wears red in the Dean Dome. I understand the need to keep some secrets under wraps.

But there's basketball, there's football and then there are serious issues that deserve a comprehensive discussion.

Here's one: affordable housing. But it's disconcerting to see an incomplete debate about real issues such as affordable housing.

There isn't a politician in Chapel Hill who wants to discuss the whole range of options for providing substantial low-cost housing options. They don't want to talk about clearing out green spaces or setting up cookie-cutter manufactured houses.

And local politicians don't need to consider all of the options at the table because they've managed to tuck away the important issues under boring and sometimes progressive-sounding titles — titles such as "neighborhood conservation."

There certainly hasn't been anything as sexy as a "duplex ban" in a while.

Besides, seats in Town Hall meetings are about as full as the student section at the RBC Center will be in the next few weeks. So who's going to keep Chapel Hill Town Council members account-



JEFF KIM  
NO LONGER A VILLAGE

able to people who need affordable housing?

Short-answer: nobody. It's clear to anyone that's in the housing market that costs are tough in Chapel Hill, but instead of engaging in frank discussion on the issue, every council member and every candidate for council will talk about affordable housing and neighborhood conservation as if one helps the other.

That's simply not true. Neighborhood conservation is a form of land restriction — and when you restrict the supply of land, prices invariably will go up.

Town leaders pay just enough lip service to keep people in the town from realizing what the real trade off is between affordable housing and the quaint Chapel Hill style of life.

After all, the people that get the most benefit from neighborhood conservation are the people who are planning to live in those neighborhoods for the rest of their lives — the second biggest beneficiaries are the council members who get their votes.

Property restrictions tie up land that some residents might want to sell, land that otherwise might end up in the hands of students, developers and low-income employees.

Economics professor John Stewart argued in a guest column two years ago that it's Chapel Hill's attitude that's keeping anything from being done about affordable housing. He argued that problem was finding the resolve to make the political trade

off. The solution itself isn't that hard.

It's simple. Lower the cost of producing these relative to the cost of tract mansions. Let developers take a piece of land, clear-cut it, use manufactured/prefab instead of stick-built building methods, drop the open space requirement and let them build at very high density. Taking 20 acres and putting up 160 1,100-square-foot starter homes then might be more profitable than taking the same 20 acres and putting up 30 "executive homes." If it was, it would happen.

It seems pretty clear that voters want to build shelter for the poor, but they want to do it without cutting down trees. And local officials are willing to let people think that it's possible.

By making sweet talk to liberals, local officials have discovered that they can go ahead with their own agenda items — issues such as keeping students off of their own property — by pretending that they're doing something about affordable housing.

They sing lullabies about developer requirements — tacking on "affordable housing" units onto expensive development deals.

It's great help for the lucky few who get into those units, but it's not going to do much to solve the aggregate problem. These requirements drive costs up even further for everyone else.

It's unfortunate that none of the candidates in this year's election were willing to take a stand for real decision-making on affordable housing.

Unless there's a culture change, townspeople can expect elected officials to keep talking about affordable housing — but they won't see any substantive action.

Contact Jeff Kim  
a senior economics major,  
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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; 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](mailto: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.

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