

**NATHAN NYANJOM**

ALL WISDOM, NOTHING BUT THE TOOTH  
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## Save the elevators from being awkward

Perhaps the worst part about attending a university in a different state is having to travel back home for breaks. Don't get me wrong — I love UNC. When I graduate in May, I'll leave not only with a degree and life memories but several new additions to my vocabulary, not the least of which include, "Man!" They're out of biscuits, and "He lost his contact again?"

Maybe it's who I hang out with.

As a car-less Marylander, I have come to frequent Southwest Airlines. On my plane ride back for Fall Break, my C-class ticket found

### AT-LARGE COLUMBIAN

me sitting in between two respectable looking students, and I was excited to get to know what could be future Facebook friends. This was not to happen, however, as the response to my question "Is anyone sitting there?" was a quick, "An Oriole fan? You can sit here, but you watch your mouth, boy."

Awkward, needless to say. I got home fine — thanks for asking. But what about these awkward moments? Sure they're inevitable, but with a little bit of quick thinking and courage, they can not only be solved but converted into highlights of the day.

We all know about the classic elevator ride. Getting on at Davis Library's first floor to go two levels up to the accessible-by-stairs third floor is awkward enough, but looking at your watch when you already know what time it is? Sure we can glance around — and I often do. In times like these, it's OK to be 'that guy' — a simple "How 'bout 'Grey's Anatomy' last night? Who saw that coming?" ought to do the trick.

What's the worst that could happen? People laugh, and you get off at the third floor that you could have walked to. It would be the same as having the last name Peacock or Dick.

Laughable?  
Yes.  
End of the world?  
Hardly.

Although deafening, periods of silence are also awkward just in themselves, and man are there a lot of those situations: finding yourself alone for a few moments with your roommate's significant other, having to interact with a person several decades your senior or crossing paths with that guy you talk to every day but still don't know by name. The list is almost endless.

But you don't have to be afraid of awkward situations. After all, a bad slice of pizza is better than no pizza at all, and the same goes for trying to tackle awkward.

Not everyone is built the same. While some find it easy and effortless to break the ice, others need the assistance of sports scores and changes in the weather. If that's the case, there's a Monster Jam car rally at the RBC Center this Friday featuring Kill Devil Hill's own Grave Digger. I'll be there — will you?

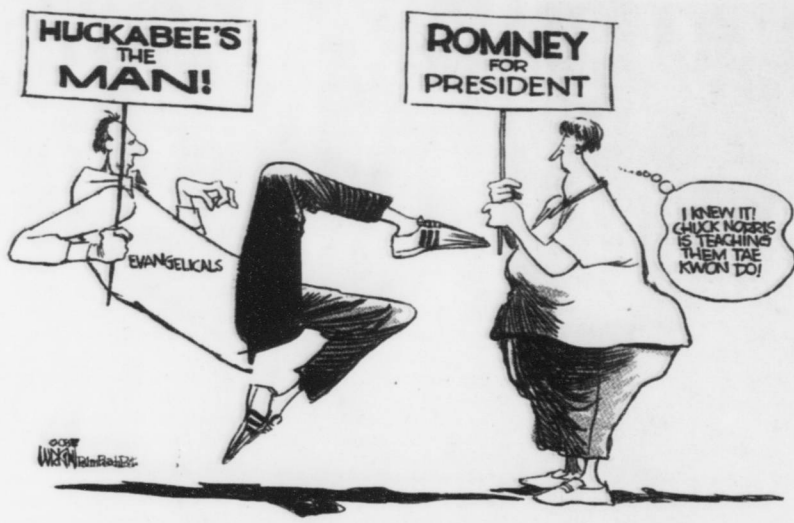
Advice columns are not the thing of The Daily Tar Heel, and this is nothing of the sort. Rather, all that is being asked is a personal question: Have you embraced the awkward today?

Awkward moments are just another piece to the puzzle called life, equal with working a job and eating dinner. And while they cannot be avoided, they can certainly be broken.

And who knows what could happen? You break the silence, and that person you sit next to on the P2P turns out to be a really interesting person — from the same one-stoplight hometown, the same dorm or the same sleep-inducing Friday Econ 101 class.

One thing leads to another, and you get home to find upon checking your e-mail that you have a new friend request. Man — that's awkward.

EDITORIAL CARTOON By Don Wright, Palm Beach Post



## Just check the news feed

Facebook-stalking software isn't necessary for athletes

Last week, a software program called YOUdiligence was released to allow coaches to scope out the content on college athletes' social networking sites.

The idea behind the program, to catch incriminating information before it gains negative publicity, isn't a bad one. But paying for automatic Facebook-stalking would cause more harm with the inevitable controversy it would bring than it would help by eradicating taboo material.

Fortunately UNC doesn't see the software as a necessary addition to the athletics program; many coaches already monitor the pages themselves and some even have their own profiles.

With Facebook and MySpace searches designed to find more

than 500 distasteful words and phrases, YOUdiligence isn't just keeping an eye out for potentially convicting information; it's digging for it. If any of the trigger words or phrases are found, an e-mail is sent to the coach, alerting him to the offending page.

Proponents of YOUdiligence argue that coaches are hired to coach, not monitor their team members' Web sites. Sure, Roy has better things to do than keep an eye on Marcus Ginyard's Facebook all the time, but coaches are charged with making sure their players make good decisions.

It doesn't take long to check Facebook, so coaches certainly can monitor their players' profiles from time to time without infringing on other duties.

And while YOUdiligence probably isn't unconstitutional, paying to find provocative pictures is too invasive for even the most well-known athletes.

Coaches in any large college athletics program should make it clear to their athletes what is expected of them, both in public and private — something many UNC coaches have done.

They should warn their team members of potentially incriminating situations online and, if necessary, supervise their players' sites.

If embarrassing or dangerous photos and conversations on an athlete's Facebook aren't easily accessible or bringing negative attention to a school, it is unnecessary to invade their privacy with a probing search.

## The business of research

Bio-Defense facility would be a boon for Butner

The Research Triangle area is looking to take a page from Atlanta's play-book — and no, it's not making chrome rims mandatory on all motor vehicles.

The Triangle is one of five finalists for the new National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility, courting the Department of Homeland Security to place the research facility in nearby Butner, in Granville County.

This facility would be a Biosafety Level-4 research facility, much like the pathogen research center located in Atlanta, specializing in exotic and rare pathogens that threaten agriculture and livestock.

The possible placement of a facility containing biohazards has been met with some contention by local residents who think the lab has no home here.

But before you head to the bookstore to grab a copy of "The Hot Zone" to help comprehend what the RTP is getting itself into, we're here to remind you that this lab is not the latest sign of the apocalypse, but an asset to the Triangle community.

First, let us restate the obvious. This is called the Research Triangle for a reason. We do science. This kind of development makes RTP community members salivate like Pavlov's pup.

Continuing the RTP's goal of being a world premier research nexus, this unique chance for area research firms and universities to participate in joint research with the center offers an invaluable opportunity to the community.

It is also expected that \$1.7 billion will be pumped into the local economy over the next 20 years and that 300 new jobs will be created because of the lab. Not too shabby.

Local groups and residents, however, have voiced safety as a major concern. Residents are afraid that the government is opening a bioweapons lab in their backyard and that it's just a ticking time bomb for disaster, citing past incompetencies by Homeland Security.

But while their concerns are certainly legitimate, a closer look at the lab can ease a few of those fears. Level-4 labs are

designed to house the deadliest and most infamous of pathogens safely, and with a brand new building being erected to house the facility, all the advancements in safeguarding technology can be built in during construction of the lab.

Level-4 labs also have much higher security standards than the preceding levels; while the pathogens are more dangerous, they're also less likely to get out. Plus, North Carolina already has several level-3 facilities and has had no apparent problems.

In addition, the proposed sites (two are being considered) are both on the 4,000-acre government Umstead Research Farm. There are no private landowners near the sites, so the actual building and running of the facility shouldn't interrupt daily life in Butner.

The National Bio- and Agro-Defense Facility is a great opportunity for RTP to continue its growth as a research emporium. Let's hope that the state makes the best of this investment opportunity and brings this one home.

Keath Castelleo Low  
Chapel Hill

### Eubanks Road should not host waste-transfer site

TO THE EDITOR:

Congratulations (Orange County Board of Commissioners) for reversing your earlier decision to unilaterally select the Eubanks Road area as the site for the new waste-transfer station. That change of heart was a step in the right direction.

By reopening the siting process, you have shown the courage to admit that the original selection of Eubanks Road last March was flawed. For this I am grateful and proud of you.

It would be a very big mistake not to explicitly exclude the Eubanks Road area from the new search. You need look no further than your recently tendered notice from the EPA regarding the U.S. Department of Justice complaint of environmental racism to achieve a full understanding of this fact.

So I urge you to continue your demonstration of fair and just actions regarding the new waste-handling site. Follow the wise and righteous actions of the city of Greensboro and remove the current landfill area from further consideration. A process that uses selection criteria to steer your choice toward Eubanks will not go unchallenged.

I am hopeful that you will do the right thing this time. A lot of people are watching you and are counting on it. I wish you the best.

John M. Kramer  
Chapel Hill

### SPEAK OUT

#### WRITING GUIDELINES:

- ▶ **Please type:** Handwritten letters will not be accepted.
- ▶ **Sign and date:** No more than two people should sign letters.
- ▶ **Students:** Include your year, major and phone number.
- ▶ **Faculty/staff:** Include your department and phone number.
- ▶ **Edit:** The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Limit letters to 250 words.
- ▶ **SUBMISSION:**
  - ▶ Drop-off: at our office at Suite 2409 in the Student Union.
  - ▶ E-mail: to [editdesk@unc.edu](mailto:editdesk@unc.edu)
  - ▶ Send: to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515.

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### QUOTE OF THE DAY:

*"There's always going to be friction, and there should be."*

LINDA CONVISSOR, UNC DIRECTOR OF LOCAL RELATIONS,  
ON TOWN-GOWN RELATIONS

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To read the full-length versions  
VISIT <http://dailytarheelpublic.wordpress.com>  
Post your own response to a letter, editorial or story online.  
VISIT [www.dailytarheel.com/feedback](http://www.dailytarheel.com/feedback)

#### With the lawsuit resolved, soccer program moves on

TO THE EDITOR:

I am a proud University of North Carolina alumna. I played for the UNC women's soccer team from 1984 to 1987, and the experience was life-changing.

I came to UNC as a self-conscious and shy walk-on player and moved up to team co-captain my senior year.

Anson Dorrance is a tremendous teacher, motivator and friend. He taught me so many lessons that helped me develop feelings of strength and self-confidence.

The walk-on to starter story is actually a quite common one at the UNC soccer program. Anson has a wondrous ability to help us find the best in ourselves as players and people. The lessons he taught us transcend the soccer field. They are life lessons.

He taught me the importance of a positive outlook and attitude. He taught me how to set goals and work hard to reach them. He encouraged us to care about our teammates and to play for each other. He taught me how to be competitive in a positive way.

I am so happy to see that the lawsuit that has hovered over Anson, the rest of the coaches, the players, past and present, and this program is finally resolved.

I have four children, three of whom are girls. I hope that they all are fortunate enough to have a mentor in their life as positive as Anson has been for me. I feel truly honored to know him and to be a part of the UNC women's soccer family.

#### Bringing Google to North Carolina was a good move

TO THE EDITOR:

In response to Charles Dahan's ("N.C. sold itself to Google for warehouses," Jan. 22), I'd like to offer a few corrections.

The Google data center will employ as many as 210 jobs in Caldwell County, which has been devastated by layoffs in textiles and manufacturing. In addition, Google is proactively working with local community colleges to develop programs in technology and computer science.

Google's initiative to help develop and inspire growth in the job market and post-secondary education is a critical benefit to conveniently overlook.

Since when did we at Carolina start undervaluing the value of education?

Development for technologies is not typically done at data centers. It's usually done at research facilities and corporate offices before (being) put into production at data centers.

A data center is exactly that, a warehouse of hundreds, if not thousands, of server farms that simply store data and run applications that provide services to consumers. It's not an engineering facility nor does it imply the need to hire local computer science students to ensure its capacity as such.

The vast majority of actual work computer science students or software engineers perform is all done remotely. Contrary to your misguided assumption, server maintenance is in fact technologically challenging.

To mention Geek Squad and Google data center in the same sentence is not only offensive to professionals in the industry but juvenile at best. Your Geek Card has officially henceforth been revoked.

Imagine that you would have known all of this information had you used Google as a verb instead of a noun.

Thomas Jones  
Senior  
Information Science

#### Anson Dorrance is a great role model for his players

TO THE EDITOR:

I fully support Anson (Dorrance), UNC and the soccer program.

The teams I was involved with were some of the most special I have ever been a part of at any time.

Anson treats his players with respect and only wants the best for them. I felt cared about, not only as a player but as a person.

I do think Anson is like a father figure — he is caring, supportive, nonjudgmental and honest. Players would approach him for help when needed.

Anson never used his position as a coach to threaten anyone nor did he seek players out to question them inappropriately.

Keri Sanchez  
UNC Women's Soccer 1991-94

## Long-distance voting

Online abroad voting system should be expanded

Thanks to the World Wide Web, this year marks the first time Democrats living outside the United States can vote in a presidential primary without jumping through the absentee ballot hoops.

Florida's voting problems in 2000 should remind us that taking part in an election should be simple and straightforward, no matter the location. Overseas voting should not be any different: Just say no to red tape.

The Democrats Abroad online voting program — as long as it's safe from fraud — should be adopted by the Republicans in their primary process.

Citizens of the United States are guaranteed suffrage, regardless of whether they live in this country or not.

Think about the 6 million U.S. citizens that live overseas, including soldiers and diplomats. A good number of them are working to promote the good nature

and name of our country.

Out of the American citizenry, why make these people work the hardest for one of the essential rights our country is built on?

With this new online system, Democrats no longer have to mail absentee ballot request forms to their most recent U.S. county of residence and endure an uncertain wait time as the mail delivers ballots that are or are not arriving in time to vote.

The results are then applied to 11 delegate votes that the Democratic Party has graciously allotted to the organization at the nominating convention.

According to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, there were 992,034 overseas ballots requested in 2006. Of those, only 330,000 were counted, and 70 percent of uncounted ballots were sent back to election officials as undeliverable. Those statistics alone scream for change.

The Republican Party should

follow suit and adopt a similar system. GOP votes from abroad could be even more influential, given their winner-take-all approach to the state primaries.

While the Democratic Party assures its online system is secure, if there ever was a target for corrupt politics at work, this would be it. Voters can still vote in their local primaries by the normal method, and if they voted online as well, they would illegally vote twice.

As such, it's absolutely essential that the online voting process be properly safeguarded.

Regardless it is ultimately the Democratic Party's decision to vote this way. Thus it should not be seen as unfair or undemocratic, considering it does not cross party lines.

In races like the 2008 primaries that are already tight, it's good to see someone recognize that overseas votes could make the difference in an election.