



NATHAN NYANJOM
A DIFFERENT ANGLE
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Why I should have gone to Duke

Honestly, I have no idea why anyone wouldn't want to go to Duke — Happy (belated) April Fool's Day.

You have to admit I got your attention, though.

Before I spin this into a piece on enriching our lives with laughter and comedy, let's give our rival to the east credit where credit's due — they realized that there was no need to retaliate to the already pitiful "Say UNCLE" T-shirts that the gems working at Student Stores came up with, and when the senior class here at UNC was dealt the graduation speaker card of singer Jesse Norman, Duke once again had the last laugh, acquiring the services of novelist Barbara Kingsolver.

Wikipedia says she's big in Kentucky.

In 1582, the human race dropped the Julio-Roman calendar for a Gregorian one, which meant that New Year's Day would fall on January 1, instead of the first day of April. Life without cell phones and Internet in this 16th century meant that news traveled slower, and those who still thought that the new year commenced on April 1 were labeled "April Fools."

Just as Christmas means re-gifting and every other American holiday means eating, Tuesday's passing of April Fool's Day meant hoaxes and practical jokes performed both on campus and off.

Some jokes I witnessed were better than others. The one fraternity brother I saw not wearing Croakies was a smash hit while a friend's text message asking if I had heard about Tyler Hansbrough being seen on campus in crutches was a bigger flop than Ryan Leaf in the XFL.

Despite how many bad jokes you and I were exposed to Tuesday, April Fool's Day each and every year is a resounding success, for it encourages us to laugh both at our friends and their gullibility and at ourselves for pulling off such an amazing gag — if for only one day a year.

There are few things healthier in life than laughing, as sessions with the likes of Dave Chappelle and Pat Robertson give our bodies mini-workouts — muscles in our face and body are stretched, our blood pressure and pulse go up, and our heart rate gets a boost.

A group of scientists with nothing better to do even found out that laughing for 15 minutes burns 50 calories. Since it's hard enough to laugh for 60 seconds straight, let alone a quarter hour, I'd draw the line when it comes to laughing as a form of regular exercise — stick to proven simulation of power skiing away from the mirror behind you that is the Elliptical.

Laughing and humor enrich our lives. Finding humor in our shortcomings means that we're less likely to find them depressing, helping us to not live in a mental state of severity.

Best of all, laughter has no translation barrier — people of different races, genders and religions all over the world came together to watch the Patriots lose.

We need to laugh in life, because it helps us escape from its hardships and find solace in its sweetest moments. Eve Carson's celebration saw all of us laughing at the anecdotes that her friends told, and we left the Smith Center that Tuesday as better people because of it.

Now that April Fool's Day has come and gone, you can look at its passing in one of two ways.

On the one hand, you can take a sigh of relief and know that you have 364 more days until you have to suffer through a concentration of corny jokes again.

If you're up for something completely different, you can use Tuesday's passing as a challenge to in fact start a new year — one in which you strive to laugh both in life and at it and bring your friends and family along for the ride.

I certainly try to do that each and every Wednesday.

EDITOR PLATFORMS

For the full-length platforms, go to the opinion section at dailytarheel.com.

Maximizing our potential

At its best, The Daily Tar Heel is a spotlight on the UNC community: illuminating issues, showcasing accomplishments and lighting the way to better collaboration between the University and the world beyond its walls.

The DTH is a student-run, teaching newspaper at heart. Students are the soul of the paper, and as editor I will work with our news adviser to ensure that students maintain control of all editorial decisions. I will increase training opportunities to re-emphasize the newspaper's role in shaping effective journalists.

Just as the DTH must provide quality journalism to maintain its readers' loyalty, the paper must also provide a quality experience to maintain its staffers' enthusiasm. I will take steps to improve the newsroom atmosphere and to combat turnover and burnout by alleviating the strain on editors and increasing flexibility for staffers.

Focus on staff development

- In addition to learning to report accurately and write well, all editors should be able to take pictures, post content online and create simple pullouts and graphics.

- Desk editors will compile "how-to" guides before new staff orientation in the fall.

- Training sessions throughout the semester, held at a time compatible to editors' schedules, will develop and reinforce skills for all staffers.

- Editors from the news side will shadow editors of visual desks and vice versa.

Increase transparency

Utilize the public editor:

- The public editor will open the newsroom to readers by writing weekly columns explaining the editorial process and giving voice to reader concerns.

- Excerpts from commonly themed letters or online comments will run with brief responses from the public editor.

Focus on accountability:

- All levels of editors will check facts. I will compile and distribute monthly correction reports.



ELIZABETH DEORNELLAS
JUNIOR, ENGLISH, FAIRFAX, VA

- I will emphasize collaborative editing: Editors must thoroughly question writers to ensure accuracy and to make editing a learning process. Reporters should play a role in writing headlines.

Increase accessibility:

- I will hold office hours and spend time Pit-sitting.

- I will meet regularly with key sources and will participate in community forums to promote collaboration with campus and town groups.

- I will reassess distribution sites to provide better service and ensure the broadest possible readership.

Integrate the visual desks into the editorial process

Hire a visual editor to:

- Oversee the visual desks, acting as a liaison between the visual desks and the news side.

- Help plan orientation and training sessions.

- Attend enterprise and daily meetings to craft story packages and manage the visual elements of long-term projects.

- Put together multimedia pieces like slideshows to reduce the burden on the online and photo editors and to ensure quality.

- Study other newspapers to learn the best industry practices on graphics and multimedia.

Expand orientation:

- Photographers will attend a pre-orientation session to learn camera skills and will practice at orientation. Online and multimedia staffers will practice reporting skills at orientation.

Increase efficiency:

- Desk editors will promptly put in photo, graphic and multimedia requests for enterprise stories and for events whose schedule is determined several days in advance.

- All staffers will be encouraged to consider potential visual elements with their stories.

Ease the editors' workload

Turnover and burnout rob the paper of its most experienced staffers, ultimately weakening coverage. Easing the editor burden is a long-term investment in a better product.

Restructure prebudget:

- Prebudget will be a planning session for the three main news desks and photo.

- Attendance will be optional for all other desks, whose editors will speak with management before they leave, provide a written update and remain on-call.

- All editors will be welcome to attend for brainstorming purposes, especially on nights before long-term projects or planned packages are set to run.

Meet staff needs:

- Staff salaries will be re-evaluated to more effectively utilize our budget and to better reflect the amount of time and effort put into each position.

- Purchasing equipment will be a budget priority.

- I will emphasize flexibility during recruitment. Staffers will be encouraged to work two days a week but permitted to work one. I will continually offer interested students an opportunity to join staff.

- Each desk will keep updated staff lists and contacts in an accessible location. The server will be cleaned out and organized.

- Each night a member of management will update a central list of the writer, photographer and graphic designer, if applicable, for each story.

Amplify online resources

- Recruitment will focus on attracting staffers with multimedia experience.

- Information needed to understand each desk's coverage area will be put online as a resource.

- Ongoing coverage, in particular multipart series, will include links to previous articles.

- Online sports coverage will be increased to better showcase all sports and to provide a platform for in-depth multimedia features.

- Blogs will focus on providing fresh content.

WAYNE ELLINGTON, ON TYLER HANSBROUGH

QUOTE OF THE DAY:

"I call him Teezy. I've always called him Teezy because he calls me Weezy."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Feel strongly about something that has been printed? Post your own response to a letter, editorial or story online. VISIT www.dailytarheel.com/feedback

Students must be willing to put time into their pets

TO THE EDITOR:

Male students buy dogs to be "chick magnets." Females buy them as a cute "accessory." Students often underestimate the time-consuming and costly demands of owning a pet.

Our schedules are filled with classes, sports, parties, jobs and more. There is little time for walking, training and loving a dog. Most of us are on a limited budget and don't realize how expensive it is to raise a dog.

Many female students rush to buy a rhinestone dog collar and a Burberry dog scarf to accessorize their adorable "accessory." Instead, they should budget for veterinarian check-ups, medicines, vaccines and spaying/neutering.

Orange County Animal Services urges students to take the responsibility of owning a pet seriously. Make sure you have a sensible reason for buying or adopting a dog.

Animal Services provides students and residents with low-cost spay/neuter education, rabies vaccinations and adoption services. For more information, call 967-7383 or visit www.co.orange.nc.us/animalservices/index.asp.

Ally Baker
Senior
Journalism

Ben Aydt
Senior
Journalism

Description was reflection of statistics on criminals

TO THE EDITOR:

(In response to "False report makes a stir" (April 1), although (Brian) Sharpe's recent report might have gained credibility by mentioning race, I challenge those who think this demonstrates widespread racism in society.

Based on U.S. Census and Department of Justice data in 2005, a person who commits robbery is statistically eight times more likely to be black.

Why is this important? Because it shows that even if Sharpe's story was more credible to the general population because he stated a race, this isn't necessarily due to irrational racism in society, but rather because it's statically more probable.

Similarly, Sharpe's story was likely more credible because he labeled the attacker male.

Is this because our society is irrationally sexist? Or is it simply because men commit a higher percentage of crimes?

Also, in case someone tries to attack my comparison, realize that based on the size of the attacker, it could easily have been either sex, so physical differences do not explain why using male is more credible.

C.P. Helms
Junior
Business

Please continue to donate to the Senior Campaign

TO THE EDITOR:

Thank you for your March 20th editorial, "Time is running out," supporting participation in the 2008 Senior Campaign for Carolina. While time is running out, it isn't too late. Participation is so important, not just to reach our goal and to meet our challenge gifts, but also because of the incredible impact gifts from all individuals have across campus.

Many students don't realize that 24 percent of UNC-Chapel Hill's annual revenue is a result of private donations.

Last academic year, through the Carolina Annual Fund alone, gifts from 34,668 alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff and friends of Carolina added up to \$5,480,692.63 in additional support for academic endeavors at the University.

In a recent survey of Carolina students, 68.5 percent of respondents stated they philanthropically supported causes they cared about. I hope students will consider including UNC in their philanthropic giving so that the University may continue to open doors to unparalleled opportunities and experiences for future generations of students.

Making a gift is easy by credit card at annualfund.unc.edu/gift or One Card at annualfund.unc.edu/onecard. You can support any of over 7,000 funds across campus. Learn more in the "Students" section of annualfund.unc.edu.

Rebecca Bramlett
Associate Director, Annual Giving
Office of University Development

Setting a higher standard

The changes I propose will institutionalize measures that will better serve the DTH staff and, in turn, its readers. Each point helps accomplish my philosophy and vision for how The Daily Tar Heel can continue to excel next year and into the future.

Restructure for online age

- I will create the position of managing editor for online. The deputy managing editor job will be eliminated.

- The ME for online will: read and post stories that are finished before print deadlines, brief editors at daily budget meetings on the Web's most-read and most-commented stories of the day and focus the newsroom as a whole on innovating online.

- The Web site must be a resource for the community. Content will be logically organized for immediate accessibility. We will develop a more concrete style guide for the Web.

- I will hire someone to work during the summer to begin putting basic hyperlinks into past stories for the most important recurring things we cover. From then on, those links will be added when the paper is posted each night.

- Blogs will give readers details and anecdotes that don't fit into news stories, with an eye toward analysis and conversationality.

- I will update the editor's blog at least once a week to highlight the focus of our coverage and to initiate dialogue with readers.

- I will continue to support and encourage growth of the multimedia desk, with the ultimate goal that the desk will have enough staff to pursue original content ideas regularly. Multimedia presentations will be archived more accessibly.

The print product

- I will provide a varied front page to draw in readers and will give arts, features and nongame sports stories prominent places in the paper. I will increase creative alternate story forms.

- I will increase photo stories. The photo editor will be more concerned with long-term strategy to increase the functionality and creativity of the DTH's use of photos for both print and online.



ALLISON NICHOLS, JUNIOR
COMP. LIT., JOURNALISM, WEST CHESTER, PA

- I will increase graphic and photo illustrations. The visual and writing sides of the newsroom will engage in a creative process.

- I will continue the expansion and variety of arts desk coverage. The features desk will dedicate itself to covering the human-interest side of news and will return to a small core of experienced writers.

- Diversions will incorporate more features and photos and maintain an independent structure.

- City desk will focus on succinct, informed coverage of town news and not force a student angle. Writers will be encouraged to tap a variety of sources.

- The state and national desk will refocus on the UNC system and on analyzing the relationship between UNC and the state.

Reporting and writing

- The Investigative team will produce hard-hitting coverage with a focus. I-team members will be treated like professional beat reporters, expected to work on multiple projects at once.

- The I-team will not wait to request records until it needs one for a specific story, but will continually request a large number of them to provide a database of information.

- I will encourage writers to develop their own voice and discourage editors from editing it out.

- I will promote clarity and organization in writing that contextualizes the story in a broader sense to explain and analyze the news.

- I will stress that accuracy is a priority and emphasize fact-checking at all stages of editing. The ME for print will write a corrections report monthly.

Teaching and recruitment

- I will build time at editors' retreat for management and leadership training.

- I will work with the news adviser to create weekly enrich-

ments geared toward editors and senior staffers because learning shouldn't end with the acquisition of a title. The visual and digital desks will not be neglected. Staff will be encouraged to attend writing, visual and digital enrichments regardless of background.

- I will work with the news adviser and a recruitment editor to develop a recruitment strategy that will draw a diverse cross-section of the University to the newsroom for the purpose of increasing variety of coverage and better relating to our readership.

Management philosophy

- I will work with each desk editor to formulate with them a vision for their desk and then let them run with it because people learn when they have ownership. I will communicate trust and confidence in my editors to thrive in their areas of expertise.

- I will support the editors by giving them feedback monthly.

- I will re-examine the distribution of newsroom pay in light of the recent wage increases.

Opinion page

- I will assemble a diverse editorial board of people with very strong opinions and reporting backgrounds by advertising and recruiting in nontraditional areas.

- Board members must be vigilant consumers of local news, come to meetings with ideas prepared and do original reporting.

- Columnists will: do research; write columns that are current and pegged to something relevant; focus on building a readership during the semester; blog. I will proofread columns two days in advance of when they run.

- Viewpoints will return monthly to increase the diversity of opinions in the paper and to emphasize the issues most being talked about by readers.

Pulse of the community

- DTH will provide a public forum for debate to continue and be further informed when our coverage sparks considerable discussion online or in the community.

- The public editor will call and meet sources and readers each day; write a biweekly column; blog.

The best way to stay safe is to be a good neighbor

TO THE EDITOR:

The front-page articles by Sarah Frier and Keely Stockett ("Residents' safety concerns heightened" and "Police offer tips for housing break-ins," March 28) failed to recognize a key component of safer neighborhoods: knowing your neighbors.

While public officials certainly have some responsibility for keeping our communities safe, as residents we must also take initiative. Meeting and maintaining relationships with neighbors on your street or in your apartment complex not only fosters a friendly environment day-to-day, but also creates a safer neighborhood.

Neighbors can look after your house when you're away and can be alert to suspicious persons or situations in the area. Beyond these crisis-oriented needs, neighbors can also provide child care, add team members to a pick-up softball game, host community potlucks and other things that promote the overall security of the neighborhood.

When we focus solely on the fear that violent acts and robberies can evoke, we overlook the deeper human need to be part of a secure, welcoming community. I'd like to encourage you to get past some of the fear. Leave your blinds up and your doors open on warm days and be a good neighbor by smiling and introducing yourself to others.

Restoring the village atmosphere that so many of us value isn't just dependent on "people knowing how to protect themselves" as the articles suggest, but on people knowing and trusting each other.

Cara Wittekind
Junior
Public Policy

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
- **Send:** to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Columns, cartoons and letters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Daily Tar Heel or its staff. Editorials are the opinions solely of The Daily Tar Heel editorial board. The board consists of nine board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the editor. The 2007-08 editor decided not to vote on the board.

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,
115 years
of editorial freedom

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