

DTH is here for the good and bad



ERIN ZUREICK
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

I fell in love with UNC the moment I stepped on campus four years ago, and I'm not ready to say goodbye.

I've been in denial all semester that I'll really be leaving Chapel Hill, but sitting here faced with the task of writing this column, the fact is undeniable.

I wanted to serve as editor-in-chief of The Daily Tar Heel this year because I saw it as one of the best ways to give back to this University and the community.

The reason I love this school, this town and this job so much is because of how tightly connected our community is.

That was never more evident to me than March 6, the day we learned that Eve Carson had been killed. Walking into Polk Place and seeing the quad filled to the brim with people was one of the most powerful experiences of my life.

The reporter's notebook that I carried to collect quotes seemed completely inadequate to cover the emotions of the day. The amazing thing to me was how many of you opened up your hearts and let us in to share in your grief — and love — for Eve.

It's moments like these that test our collective strength. But I hope it's not just these moments that show us what powerful agents we can be for change.

The DTH is here for the good and the bad moments. We're also here to serve as a watchdog for the community and to collect and disseminate the information you might not otherwise be able to access.

One of this newspaper's primary goals is to spark dialogue. Sometimes that means turning over the rock to see the ugly parts of our surroundings.

Our love for the community and for UNC doesn't mean that we turn a blind eye to flaws; it means that we work actively to fix them.

So many of you share this passion. It's evident from the letters to the editor I receive every day and from the countless e-mails readers have sent me this year.

It's also evident just by walking around campus or Franklin Street on any given day. Students are constantly campaigning for causes they think are important. Residents speak out at government meetings trying to positively affect their neighborhoods.

It might seem like the pages of this newspaper always contain a lot of conflict.

But in the end, the thing I've come to believe more than anything is that we're all fighting for the same things. We're fighting to be heard, fighting for someone to care about what we think and fighting for what we believe will help our community the most.

None of us has done everything right. But don't be afraid to dive in and get involved and make mistakes. These are the experiences that will shape you as a person more than anything.

Don't be apathetic — show how much you care. As a collective force we can still effect change and make our voices heard.

These aims are more important than we can measure.

And for those of us who are about to leave Chapel Hill, we're not going to stop caring about this place.

Working at the DTH has taught me how to be a leader, and being a student at this University has made me a better person.

People say four years will go by quickly. They aren't kidding. I joked at a General Alumni Association event earlier this month that with my editorship expiring, I won't have many more chances to feel important.

The truth is, though, taking on this role was never about a title to me. It's always been about working with my best friends and trying to give back just a little bit of what I've been given here.

Four years later I'm still in love. I hope I never fall out.

TOP ISSUES OF 2007-08

Out with the old, in with the new

Come July 1, UNC will bid farewell to Chancellor James Moeser and welcome a new face to lead the University of the People.

We have scant clues as to whom that new face will be, as the chancellor search committee has conducted its work shrouded in secrecy, much to the chagrin of the University community and local media.

We've been left to opine about what we want in the new chancellor. It must be someone who can match Moeser's money-generating skills and devotion to public education.

Moeser wasn't perfect, however; we'd also like someone who is a friendly, familiar face on campus and attune to and involved with the student body.

Moeser announced his resignation Sept. 26, and UNC, wasting no time, started work by mid-October with its

search committee.

The committee hosted several forums to solicit public input in the fall. Students, faculty, employees and town residents weighed in, expressing desires such as a consideration of diverse candidates.

Student government established the student advisory board to the chancellor search committee to advise the student members involved in the search.

Moeser's successor is likely to have ties to UNC and could be a sitting provost or president at another top-tier institution. UNC likely will have to pay this person significantly more than Moeser's \$390,835 to lure a competitive candidate.

The enigmatic figure will have high expectations in Moeser's wake, who was known for his fundraising prowess with the success of the \$2.3 billion Carolina First



DTH FILE/ARMANDO ALTAMIRANO

campaign and for founding the Carolina Covenant, which allows low-income N.C. students to graduate debt-free.

Our hat's off to Moeser for his eight years here. So long, and see you back in a year.

We are objective in our biases



ADAM STORCK
OPINION EDITOR

Today is my last day as opinion editor, but my successor has yet to be chosen.

This is a cause of concern for me. It's hard to step away without knowing what is going to follow you, and though I have had my frustrations with The Daily Tar Heel during my time here, I can't bring myself to wish ill for the paper.

The opinion page is in many ways the redheaded stepchild of the newsroom, and admittedly we buy into that designation as much as the news side. But it means that the opinion side is not always understood by other staffers.

The perception is that opinion is relatively autonomous, in recent years controlled by people who are not journalism majors and gets to ignore the strict adherence to objectivity that news stories are held to.

This is not entirely accurate, however. While our writing is not objective — we have to take one side or the other for it to qualify as an editorial — that does not mean that the board is inherently biased.

Like everyone, we do all come in with our own backgrounds and ideologies. But we also take each issue individually, setting aside partisanship to come to a position that we believe is in the best interest of the student body.

It is, after all, the student perspective that we are bound to represent as the student newspaper of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

But we are not just a student newspaper; we are also the paper with the highest circulation in Orange County.

As the primary source of news about this University, from Carolina sports to Chapel Hill town affairs to University actions and issues, the DTH has a corner on the news market. And we at the opinion page have a corner on opining about it.

It is a charge that can't be taken lightly, and I wish I had devoted more energy to making the page realize its full potential this year.

That is not to say I think we have done a poor job. To the contrary, I truly believe that we upheld our side of the bargain as the opinion page by challenging people's beliefs and by supporting our opinions with facts, figures and sound logic.

Letters to the editor have not always been kind to our opinions, and I sincerely doubt that we have agreed with the majority opinion on campus on every issue. We certainly have not always agreed with the majority opinion within the newsroom.

But we would be doing a disservice to our readers and our colleagues if we abandoned our own evaluations and opinions on the issues in order to agree with the majority. For if that were the case, we wouldn't be forcing the majority to take a deeper look at what they believe and either strengthen their convictions or abandon them.

And at the end of the day, that is really what discourse is all about — being exposed to conflicting ideas and making sense of how they fit into your world-view.

And the most amazing part is that we actually make a difference in the community. The Daily Tar Heel is read every day by University, town and even state officials.

We have letters sent to us from state senators, the chancellor and other administrators and the heads of local influential organizations.

We got to sit down with the candidates in the municipal elections last fall, and our endorsements were widely discussed among the Chapel Hill and Carrboro politicians.

We even got a message from the public relations director of the National Transportation Safety Board alerting us to some misinformation that we had included in a headline.

It's been an incredible two years, and it is hard to be walking away. I hope for great things from the page next year, whoever ends up as editor. You should, too.

In the House, Wright was not right

Corruption revisited the N.C. General Assembly again this year, with Rep. Thomas Wright, D-New Hanover, being expelled from the House.

Wright was the first legislator to be

ejected from the General Assembly in 128 years, since Josiah Turner was forced out for "disorderly, contumacious and defiant conduct, violating the rules of this House in a willfully disrespectful manner."

We couldn't be happier that Wright has been removed from the legislature after mishandling \$340,000 in campaign funds and loans, a figure that was discovered after the revelation that Wright had misfiled, or in some cases failed to file, five and a half years' worth of quarterly finance reports.

In addition, Wright was sentenced to 70 to 95 months in prison for fraud.

We have to give the legislature credit for kicking him out. And though the strengthening of ethics laws in the wake of scandals involving former House Speaker and Wright's mentor Jim Black, D-Mecklenburg, came a little late to pre-

vent Wright's transgressions, at least they are being put in place.

In proceedings that became almost farcical, Wright asked to be able to use legislators' right to go back and fix some of the 22 quarterly finance reports that were incorrect or missing, claimed that some of the charges against him were out of the jurisdiction of the ethics committee, was likened by his lawyer to the main character in "The Fugitive" and invoked the race card, all in different attempts to avoid answering for his gross violations.

This is the type of behavior that we might expect from a middle school-age delinquent but certainly not from a legislator.

Wright was a destructive force, and the legislature is better off for having kicked him out.

Wright's path to history

- **1880:** Last time a representative was expelled from the House.
- **January 2008:** Wright pleads not guilty to all criminal charges; House ethics committee finds probable cause to charge him with eight counts of alleged misconduct.
- **March 20:** State legislators vote to expel Wright.
- **April:** Wright sentenced to 70 to 95 months in prison; replacement appointed.

New hope, same end in tuition talks

The Board of Trustees — surprise — increased tuition again this year.

Out-of-state students got a bit of a raw deal, having tuition increased by quadruple digits again: \$1,250.

Graduate students fared little better, with a \$400 increase for residents to swallow and an extra \$800 levied on nonresidents.

Escaping scot-free this year were resident undergraduates, spared because of generous state appropriations and a mandate from UNC-system President Erskine Bowles that UNC could not raise in-state tuition.

The one good thing that came out of the tuition was an agreement from the board, at least in theory, that it's important to implement a tuition expense report.

Championed incessantly by former Student Body President Eve Carson, the expense report ideally would explicitly

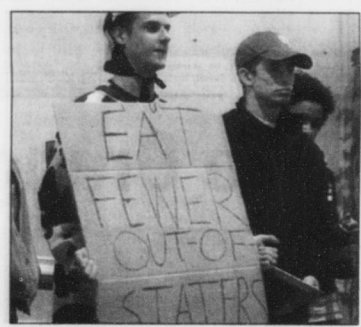
lay out what need each dollar of a tuition increase would pay for.

We still would have liked more conversation about the innovative tuition plan that was brought to the table by Carson and Graduate and Professional Student Federation President Lauren Anderson.

Their plan would have levied a larger increase for freshmen in order to allow subsequent tuition increases to be lower and more predictable, making long-term payment planning easier.

While this plan would have had some kinks to work out, it was dismissed by the tuition advisory task force as infeasible until the Enterprise Resource Planning project is finished. We don't buy that as a good enough reason for failing to give the plan any legitimate consideration.

We hope Student Body President J.J.



DTH FILE/ELYSSA SHARP

Raynor can convince the trustees to reign in its habit of arbitrary tuition increases. While it's unlikely that this year will be any different from years past, an expense report certainly would help achieve that goal.

More commercial flight from Franklin

Franklin Street is falling down, falling down, falling down ...

So maybe it's not literally falling down, but the plethora of business closings this year certainly has us worried.



DTH FILE PHOTO

Downtown development was a huge issue during the November municipal elections, and newcomer Matt Czajkowski, who ousted incumbent Cam Hill by a mere 60 votes, earned our endorsement based largely on his plans for Franklin Street.

Since then, Buffalo Wild Wings, Schoolkids Records and the ever-wonderful Rathskeller have all closed. Empty storefronts run rampant.

Cluck U and Sugarland are new arrivals, but at least one almost didn't make it.

Sugarland owner Katrina Ryan faced myriad problems and postponed her opening several times, struggling to get building permits and make extensive renovations to an antiquated building.

The Chapel Hill Town Council has been too slow to act for our liking.

The council has a somewhat vague plan for economic development, which is a nice start because at the very least it's implicit recognition of the problem, but there's no timeline for implementation.

A number of issues inhibit both the growth of business and consumer accessibility: lack of cheap parking, high rent, panhandlers, lack of business variety (too many bars and T-shirt shops), property owners who won't fill spaces and won't make repairs. We could go on.

What's worse, the 140 West (formerly Lot 5) development, a multiuse facility with retail and office space and expensive condominiums, isn't going to be a panacea.

There's no single solution to the problem, but it's clear that action needs to be taken soon before the deterioration proceeds any further.

Kvetching Board

kvetch:
v.1 (Yiddish) to complain

Walking across the Pit without being asked/harassed/pestered/badgered to vote early? A CHANGE I CAN BELIEVE IN!!!

Flower children: Leave South Building now! You're making it appear and smell like a real sweatshop.

Placing chicken bones in the drink machines of E-haus was yet another reason why you have no friends.

Dear Lenoir: As it turns out, I am not 5 years old, and I do not find bright blue cookies aesthetically pleasing.

A Tuesday e-mail: "Attention all students, faculty and staff: Tickets are still available for the Springfest concert featuring Boyz II Men and Nine Days." Is anyone really surprised by this?

Date had great big shades. I should have turned, walked away. But I didn't. Damn.

So we can't do Hold 'Em for Hunger, but a statewide "education lottery" is just fine. ... Oh, hypocrisy at its finest.

I swear if one more person tells me that my GPA is high because I'm an elementary education major I'm going to freak out. Just because my work isn't as boring as yours doesn't mean that it isn't as meaningful or stressful.

IM staff: If it's been raining then perhaps you should call off the games on Hooker Field; someone could fall and get seriously injured — oops, too late. It's comforting to know that you guys make such wise decisions.

To the guy who gets five tickets a day for parking in the S-12 lot without a permit: You are pathetic for leaving your headlights on (at night) in order to have a "dead battery" so that you have a reasonable excuse to appeal your parking tickets.

Smoking!?! ... Why not ban construction 100 feet from all campus buildings?

Send your one-to-two sentence entries to editdesk@unc.edu, subject line "kvetch."

The Daily Tar Heel

Established 1893,
115 years
of editorial freedom

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