

# Daily Tar Heel editor's race—a look at the candidates

## SAM FULWOOD

The *Daily Tar Heel* is the student newspaper.

As with every newspaper, the *Daily Tar Heel* has an identifiable audience—the students enrolled at the University of North Carolina. The basic function of the *DTH* is to present news, features and sports which students at the University are interested in knowing or that have some important relationship on their lives.

To do this, the *DTH* must be a paper that is easy to find—in the lobby of your dorm, fraternity or sorority, for example.

It should come out six days a week all year—not just during football season.

Most of all, it should be a student-oriented newspaper. The *DTH* is unique among newspapers. Only the *DTH* can provide detailed information on such topics as campus organizations, academics, student housing, transportation and national news of particular interest to students.

If the *Daily Tar Heel* does not print such news, it won't get printed anywhere!

Of the candidates for editor, only I have pledged a paper which will serve the needs and wants of students. More importantly, only I have explained exactly how the paper will meet those needs.

Let's examine these issues. Since students pay for the paper, it only seems logical that the articles be written for students. I believe every article written for the *DTH* should have an identifiable student audience. To achieve greater student orientation in the news, an intensified system of beats or special areas is needed.

A student organizations beat should let students know exactly how their student fees are being spent by the various organizations by covering their major speakers, projects and lobbies.

A University administration beat should inform students of the decisions and plans in the housing, athletic and academic offices before it is too late for students to have an impact on those decisions.

For national news, extremely important stories and those with significant impact to students should be published—not those telling where Amy Carter is going to school.

Because all students are not alike, do

not have the same interests or have very much interaction with each other, a lifestyles beat should examine the trends and problems both light and serious of the diverse communities on campus.

By next fall, it can be economically feasible for the *Daily Tar Heel* to be distributed on campus every Saturday in a magazine-style issue. A sixth issue would provide an entertainment guide for the weekend, offer greater chances for feature, in-depth and review articles to be published and allow more students the opportunity to write for the *DTH*.

The editorial policy of the *DTH* should speak for students. A staff of editorial writers could supplement and research every editorial that is printed, so that when you read an editorial, you will be getting a better thought-out and informed opinion. All members of the University community should be invited and encouraged to write letters and columns.

In the sports section, students want to know more about all the teams and sports at the University, not just football and basketball. The *DTH* can report weekly on all major ACC games, intramural and club sports.

Just as a major metropolitan newspaper can offer capsulized scores and player recognitions of a wealth of high school sports, so too can the *DTH* let students know about the intramural sports and stars on this campus.

Finally, the *DTH* does no one any good if it is not read. If students pay for the *DTH*, they ought to have the opportunity to read it—in their dorms, fraternity or sorority houses. As editor, one of the first tasks I would undertake would be to talk with individual dorm and Greek officers to find the best way to guarantee that every student can pick up a paper where he or she lives—not in a possibly inconvenient place on the way to class.

Because the role of the *DTH* is so well defined, the choice of an editor is important. The rhetoric of campaign promises is often vague and quickly forgotten after the ballots have been counted. For that reason, it is necessary to pay close attention to the word of each of the candidates for editor.

I encourage every student to examine the issues, and compare the platforms. I believe you will find me the best candidate you can select next Wednesday.

## GREG PORTER

In Cobb dorm the other night, I talked with a fellow victim of this First State University's maze of red tape. This student's misunderstanding of the new drop policy caused her to slack off in a course she thought she had the right to drop. But, unknown to her, she no longer had that right—and she ended up with an F.

I have found over the last few weeks that many students are unaware of the more rigorous, exclusive drop criteria now in effect. And one of the major reasons is that the *Daily Tar Heel* did not cover or editorialize sufficiently on the change. The Faculty Council made the decision at the end of last spring semester when no one was looking. The *Tar Heel* dutifully reported the change. But, afterwards, "the student voice" never made the change a well-known issue—much less the controversy it should have been.

The next semester it was practically forgotten.

Watching the local news on Channel 11 the other night, I came upon another example of the *Tar Heel's* complacency. WTVD, the Durham station, had an interesting story on a UNC medical researcher who has developed a new drug to entirely cure penicillin-resistant gonorrhea. It seemed like good campus news, but I scanned the *Tar Heel* in vain trying to find the story. The campus newspaper had been scooped on its home ground by a TV station from a neighboring city.

I think these two examples are representative of the major problems with the *Daily Tar Heel*—insufficient, lackluster coverage of student interests and of the campus at large. The *Tar Heel* is a good newspaper. But complacency prevents it from being an excellent newspaper.

Because all of us enrolled here at the University must pay for the *Tar Heel* whether we like it or not, the editor has the duty to be more responsive to the student body. My platform is designed to keep the *Tar Heel* in closer touch with the student body and make it a stronger, more effective student voice.

Editorial assistants and an advisory board, for example, will improve the content and increase the input on the editorial page. *Opinion polls*, which professors are willing to conduct for the *Tar Heel* for free, will give the editor cold, hard numbers to back up strong

stands in behalf of the students. By the same professional polling mechanism, *reader evaluations* will give the editor an idea of how good a job he's doing.

A national news editor will rewrite dull wire stories, often adding the angle of local interest that is missing. The national news editor, in charge of major front page national stories as well as a national news summary on the inside of the paper, will bring back the popular news briefs to supplement the top national stories students want to read in full.

By increasing its contacts around the University, often through the simple use of the telephone, the *Tar Heel* will catch up on stories in dorms, fraternities, sororities, graduate schools and the medical-health complex that it's missing now.

An intramural and club sports column, an occasional front page sports interview or feature, varsity box scores as well as people-oriented features, album, book and movie reviews will make the *Tar Heel* more interesting and valuable to its audience.

The use of work/study subsidies can allow the *Tar Heel* to expand distribution without extra, exorbitant costs. Periodic spot-checking of distribution points will take wasted papers out of little-used boxes (where they remain the next morning) and put them in boxes where students can't find a paper after 8:30 A.M.

To help solve its financial problems, the *Tar Heel* should seek grants and donations from publishers and foundations. A *Tar Heel* endowment to replace the time-consuming monthly payroll expenditures with yearly scholarships to staffers would be a tremendous relief monetarily and administratively, according to Business Manager Verna Taylor.

These are all realistic proposals to correct the major problems I've seen at the *Tar Heel* in the two and one-half years I've worked there. My *Tar Heel* experience (Managing editor, associate editor, features editor, staff writer and Media Board representative) coupled with my work at professional news agencies (The News and Observer, the Washington bureau of several newspapers, etc.) has prepared me to deal with the myriad hassles of being editor and simultaneously bring about the necessary changes I have outlined.

## MIKE YORK

Through a comprehensive plan aimed at the chronic problems of journalistic (in)credibility and financial independence, the *Daily Tar Heel* can move up from its place as a fairly good 8-page paper to become an excellent and much larger publication.

The first step is to guarantee a *DTH* for every student, every day. Students pay for the paper through our student fees—the *DTH* is not free for university faculty and staff. We can demand that the administration reimburse the paper for copies taken by its employees, or at least we can supply South Building with subscription cards to be sent out with the university payroll.

Then, we can take a fresh look at how the paper reports what the University is doing. Many stories go uncovered—mainly because news editors lack the broad sense of information necessary to make the most effective use of their reporters' time. Those lines of communication can be opened by instituting a well developed and better organized system of beat reporting, with a staff member assigned to every University organization, club and academic department.

And to keep the staff on their feet, we can create a powerful new editorial position to handle students' complaints, corrections and story ideas. This person would provide every student with an open line into the paper and would write a weekly column assessing the *DTH's* performance—it is essential that each student has an opportunity to be heard.

Next, particular areas of reporting must be strengthened and improved. The sports page now lacks the vitality to reflect the active sports program of a major university. Each men's and women's varsity team should have a reporter assigned to cover its events. The sports page should also do "personal" stories on varsity players and their lives out of uniform. And intramural sports coverage deserves more than broken campaign promises—box scores might have been unrealistic, but line scores are not. Also, intramurals could be covered on a first-person basis by students actually playing on the teams.

Another candidate for wholesale change is the editorial page. Supported by mandatory student fees, the *DTH* should be a forum for everyone's opinion. The 25-line limit for letters

should be lengthened, perhaps doubled. And guest editorials should be solicited from throughout the university community.

Also under the heading of forgotten *DTH* promises during last year's campaign was the excellent idea of more consumer-oriented reporting. Although the idea never got off the ground, the paper could perform a valuable service to students by investigating some of the areas that the Student Consumer Action Union cannot cover. The *DTH* should also reinstitute an advice column similar to the Elephants and Butterflies column, but with a broader field ranging into students' problems with the university, their landlords and their health.

While the University may be a great place to get an education or watch a ball game, it's a pretty bad place to learn how to write for a newspaper. Not only is the University a state agency, it also operates largely outside the rules of an ordinary bureaucracy. Routes of decision making often lie cluttered by rows of secretaries and assistant deans whose functions are to obscure the entire process. For these reasons, the *Daily Tar Heel* needs to place a new emphasis on tough, investigative reporting. The only way to persuade University officials to take the *DTH* seriously is to convince them that the paper is determined to assert the students' right to know—why was a professor denied tenure? Why were no women among a list of dean hopefuls? And why are the Big Four tournament tickets virtually unavailable to students?

Even though a candidate for editor may make big promises for expansion and improvement, there is really little more that can be done within the existing *DTH* budget. To fulfill these plans for a larger and more credible paper, we must begin planning for a 12-page *Daily Tar Heel*. The current eight-page paper costs roughly \$1,500 a day to print while bringing in only about \$1,200 in revenue. But a 12-page *DTH* would cost just \$1,900 a day and would generate an equal or greater figure in ad sales. That type of budget would free resources from subscription sales and student fees for use in sending reporters to cover more away games, more out-of-town stories (such as the ERA and UNC budget hearings in Raleigh). And more important, a larger paper would enable us to print more news.

## comment

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### Politics and the press

"A journalist, not a politician." So claims the posters of one of the candidates for *Daily Tar Heel* editor. Certainly a candidate for editor should be a journalist, but it is also certain that if a candidate lacks the ability to run a political campaign, he will probably not win the election.

Thus the dilemma. Politics and journalism do not mix well. Editors of most newspapers with the circulation of the *Daily Tar Heel* find politics abhorrent to their profession. It would be scandalous for an editor of a large city daily paper to involve himself in local politics—questions about political deals and the objectivity of the paper would certainly arise. Journalists, especially today, are watchdogs on the political process, not practitioners. Why then should the student body turn to politics as the method of selecting an editor-in-chief?

There are undoubtedly better ways to judge a person's journalistic skills than by general student election. The paper's staff might well make this judgment, or the Media Board, or even an independent panel of students and professors. Why should prospective editors have to undergo the incomparable horror of a campus-wide election? No commercial newspaper would think of leaving such decisions to its readers.

The *Daily Tar Heel*, however, is in a distinctly different situation from all commercial newspapers. Students do not choose to subscribe to the paper; their student fees buy a non-refundable bulk subscription for them, whether they want it or not. They therefore deserve a voice in the paper's administration. The election process gives students that voice, and they in part determine the paper's direction by their choice for editor.

The fear underlying opposition to the process of electing an editor is that the students will choose a person who knows nothing about the newspaper or journalism. But such a fear shows incredibly little faith in the democratic process. Students have an abundance of information about the candidates, and at this point in their education they should also have sufficient wisdom to make reasonable judgments about who is and isn't qualified.

The validity of this election process is evident in the *Daily Tar Heel's* long history. The *DTH* continues to rank high among college newspapers, and the collective judgment of the student electorate is partially responsible.

Any other method of selecting the *DTH* editor could cause the paper to stagnate rapidly. The staff might merely perpetuate itself, and new people with fresh perspectives might find it extremely difficult to break through the old ranks.

We favor the election process, with all its faults. It has proven its validity in the past and will probably continue to do so in the future.

## The Daily Tar Heel

84th Year of Editorial Freedom

Joni Peters  
Managing Editor

Alan Murray  
Editor

Gregory Nye  
Associate Editor

## Letters to the editor

### Capitalists work, intellectuals rule the world

To the editor:  
Nothing could be sillier than G.N.'s recent editorial (*DTH*, Jan. 28) written in defense of Henry Ford II's attack on the Ford Foundation. The outrageous and ignorant fallacy in both Ford's thinking and the editor's is the view that institutions like the Ford Foundation owe their existence to capitalism. But the reverse is the truth: what is valuable in our present life owes its existence to scientists, scholars and intellectuals, and to institutions which support them. Capitalism itself owes its existence to intellectuals.

It is incredible that someone named "Henry Ford II" feels qualified to express opinions on how wealth is created. There was, I recall, a Henry Ford I who knew better. Ford I was, incidentally, a good friend of Thomas Edison, who was a notoriously inept businessman.

But without intellectuals studying and doing research in institutions like universities, farmers would not know what to plant or how to fertilize it, physicians would not know what to prescribe, and Henry Ford II would be riding a horse. Capitalism itself creates nothing. It is one system among many possible systems for operating an economy. It was particularly appropriate 100 years ago, but is much less so now, since no more growth is desirable.

Educational institutions existed long before capitalism was invented (by intellectuals), and they will continue to exist long after capitalism has been replaced by more advanced economic systems (which they will also invent). The function of workers, capitalists and taxpayers is to work and pay taxes, and to keep their mouths shut. The function of intellectuals is to rule the world.

R. K. Hsueh  
Fellow in Applied Logic  
Avondale Institute

Let it die

To the editor:  
If Patti Smith is the rebirth of rock, please let it die.

Jim Koppers  
Box 902

Let Carrboro vote

To the editor:  
Will Carrboro ever get bus service? The Student Government folks seem to think it will—but with the University paying for it, to the tune of \$40,000. This strikes me as somewhat unfair, to say the least, to those of us who pay our taxes in Chapel Hill.

We Chapel Hillians are subsidizing our

own bus system. We get a miniscule contribution to the bus service from the University—and that money generally goes to operate the U-bus, which serves students who live in dorms and therefore don't have to pay property tax. But we apartment dwellers do pay property tax and get town services (including the bus system) in return.

Now comes Student Government and suggests that the Carrboroites get bus service subsidized not by their taxes, but rather, by the University, or maybe by Chapel Hill (that is, Chapel Hill taxpayers). That just doesn't make much sense. If the University is going to give \$40,000 to a Carrboro bus service, it should certainly give a much greater amount to the Town of Chapel Hill for Chapel Hill's transit system.

The only fair solution that I can see is to let the people of Carrboro (many of whom are students) vote on whether they want to use their tax money for a bus system, just as we in Chapel Hill did. Of course, Carrboro has defeated a bus referendum three times before, but maybe it would pass this time. And if it doesn't pass, then Carrboro will have spoken: students and others in that town will have said they either oppose a bus system or don't care about it enough to get off their duffs and vote for it.

If Carrboro wants a bus system, and Carrboro residents are willing to pay for it, I think that would be great. But if they don't want one or don't care one way or the other, I would be strongly opposed to my tax money (or the University's money) being spent to

provide a bus system to people who don't want it in the first place.

Bruce Tindall  
H-9 Kingswood Apts.

'Quasi-financial' future?

To the editor:  
I am glad to see that the *DTH* has a chance for independence of a quasi-financial nature, which should be more desirable than mere financial independence. Unfortunately, the article (*DTH*, Jan. 27) did not sufficiently explain the implied non-financial aspects of this independence. I am certain Edwin Newman would agree.

Jon Mauney  
453 Morrison

ERA talk with legislators

To the editor:  
The Equal Rights Amendment and gubernatorial succession and veto are just two of the many important issues which will come before the North Carolina General Assembly this spring. Seeing this, and believing that effective efforts for good government can't end with election day, the UNC Young Republicans are organizing a trip to the General Assembly in Raleigh this Monday night (Feb. 7).

Plans are being made to observe a legislative session and to talk with Republican legislators at an informal reception. The trip will give individuals an opportunity to speak with legislators on issues of personal interest, such as the ERA. (The UNC Young Republican Club endorsed the ERA by an overwhelming vote at its last meeting.)

I'd like to encourage all students interested in learning about North Carolina government and political issues to come to tonight's Young Republican meeting, where the legislative trip (and ways to promote the ERA's passage) will be discussed. If you can't make the meeting (time and place in Campus Calendar), just call me at 929-4475 and leave a message.

Dan Besse  
4-E University Gardens

The *Daily Tar Heel* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must be typed, double spaced, on a 60-space line and are subject to editing for libelous content or bad taste.

Letters that run over 25 lines (150 words) are subject to condensation. Letters should be mailed to the editor, *Daily Tar Heel*, Carolina Union.

Unsigned or initialed columns on this page represent the opinion of the *Daily Tar Heel*. Signed columns or cartoons represent the opinion of the individual contributor only.

