

The Daily Tar Heel

98th year of editorial freedom

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Summer days bring sneaky tricks

As the semester winds down and students settle in for a long, hot summer of deserved (and sometimes not so deserved) rest and relaxation, legislators, campus administrators and student congress members are gearing up for a summer during which they'll make some important decisions about the future of this University. Though students will be here in neither body nor mind, it's vital they make their voices heard by the people in Raleigh and Chapel Hill during the coming summer months.

Students in 1989 came back to find that the N.C. General Assembly had raised tuition by 20 percent for in-state students and by 15 percent for out-of-state students. That amounted to a \$100 increase for in-state students that was approved with little or no student input. It's imperative that students voice their concerns to legislators now, as well as after exams are finished.

The University is facing one of its most difficult challenges in its nearly 200-year history — how we will fare depends in large part upon student input. Legislators are considering raising tuition, increasing the student/faculty ratio and allowing UNC more budget flexibility. A \$59.2 million budget cut will change the face of UNC for decades. If students care about what their school will look like when they come back in the fall, the time to start paying attention is in the summer.

But budget cuts aren't the only demon that will be battled this summer. University administrators will be charged with finding a replacement for at least one of their high-ranking colleagues. Gillian Cell has already announced she is resigning her position as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences to take a job at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania. Though some students did accuse her of being insensitive to the needs of minority students, as a woman she is a minority among the administration. It's important for the administrators to remember that it's not only crucial that they locate someone who can help alleviate some of the problems of racial discrimination on this campus, but that they make an effort to replace Cell with a minority.

The University of Pittsburgh has been eyeing Provost Dennis O'Connor for the position of university president. If they do manage to lure him away, UNC will lose

one of its most valued administrators and an important force in helping individual departments deal with their skeleton budgets. If O'Connor does decide to resign, administrators will likely appoint an acting provost before the summer is over. Students need to ensure that they appoint someone with their best interests, as well as the best interests of the University, in mind.

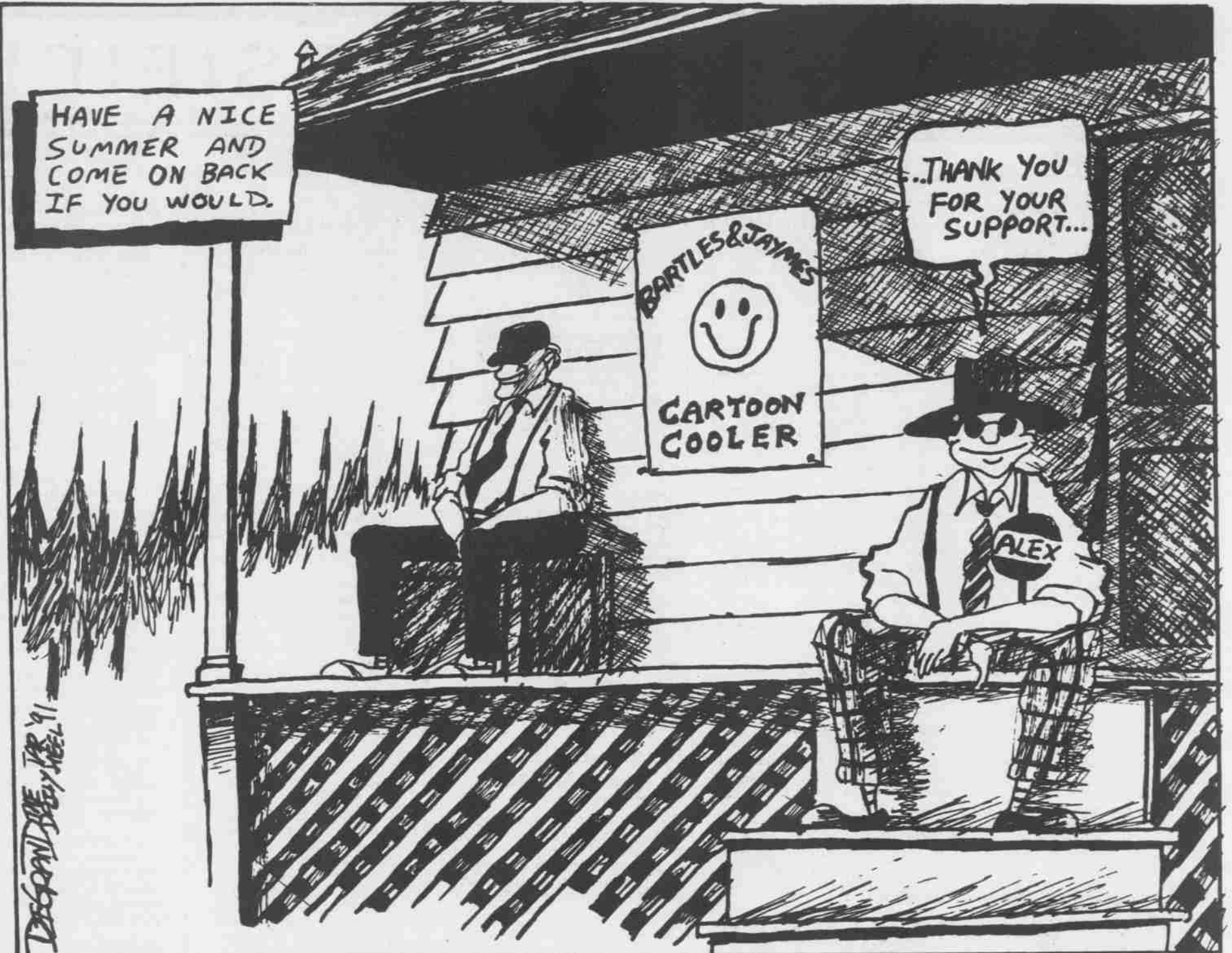
Students may also come back in the fall to find unfamiliar food in Lenoir or in Union Station. Marriott's food-service contract is coming up for renewal, and six different food services possibly are putting in bids this year. The deadline for bids is April 29, and a decision about who will be providing meals for cafeteria-frequenting UNC students could be made this summer.

Student Congress also will be in session this summer. Because only six members will be able to serve during the summer months, Speaker Tim Moore will be able to appoint as many as 24 members to serve in place of the members who won't be in Chapel Hill. Though any legislation they pass will have to be ratified by the full congress in the fall, the summer congress can pass anything it wants to in the meantime. If 24 of 30 members have been hand-picked by the speaker, it's possible that students will come back in the fall to find a flood of legislation passed by people they didn't elect.

Administrators could be making important decisions about student fees, the business school site, construction on campus and the land-use plan.

Students also would be well-advised to call Caroline periodically to make sure they have not been dropped from a class due to cancellations.

Students learned the hard way in 1989 that "while the cat's away, the mice will play." Unfortunately, many of those students have graduated, and those who haven't sometimes seem to have short memories. All students need to learn from the past and keep an eye on the newspaper for stories of tuition hikes or course cancellations. If they see something they don't like, they should write to their legislator, student government or The Daily Tar Heel. If they don't make their voice heard in the summer, they could come back to a University that's quite different from the one they left in the spring.



Big Bird should find new roost on cable television

Ganesh Gunasekaran
 Playing with Fire

They tell us PBS stands for "Public Broadcasting System." More often, it seems to represent "Paternalistic Bureaucratic Slothfulness." American taxpayers' interests and American television viewers' interests would be best served by phasing out taxpayer support for public television.

I can feel Big Bird's reproachful eye on me now. Many of the arguments I will be making have been made before, so my ideas are not original. But public television has clearly outlived the problem it sought to remedy. Moreover, in its present incarnation, PBS is hideously inefficient and takes a paternalistic attitude toward the people it claims to serve.

Few people seem to be bothered by what bothers me most about PBS — it is condescending in principle and in practice. Complaining about PBS, which gets less than \$200 million from taxpayers, solely on financial grounds would be goofy, at least given the present amount of waste in both civil and military spending.

Lyndon Johnson's administration created the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in 1968 to provide the American viewing public with an alternative to standard television fare. As might be expected from a Great Society program, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which became PBS in 1969, let intellectuals who were not typical American television viewers set its rather lofty goals. Well-intentioned idealists conceived of public television as a majestic journey that would intellectually and spiritually uplift the nation.

Very few people went along for the journey. At its peak in the late 1970s, PBS drew about 4.5 percent of the prime-time viewing audience. Over the course of the 1980s, its audience shrank to about 4 percent. The decline is not unique to public television and is not uniquely its fault. It represents the single most radical development in home entertainment since the invention of the television itself: widespread access to cable television.

If any entertainment option shows signs of achieving the heights once predicted for public television, it is cable television. You can find an entire cable channel devoted to each of public television's supposed missions. For example, I grew up watching "Masterpiece Theater" and

"American Playhouse." Now the Arts & Entertainment channel shows high quality theatrical performances several nights a week, and airs some type of fine arts performance 24 hours a day.

The PBS bureaucracy offers producers amazing levels of protection from the market. In the system's younger days, this meant the creative freedom to develop "Sesame Street," and "Electric Company." In the stultifying, bureaucratic modern PBS, this means a cozy arrangement for insiders and old-timers.

Also, public television has no incentive to air viewpoints it finds disagreeable, even when the public wants to see them. Recently, "NOVA" producers chose not to purchase American rights to a controversial documentary titled "The Greenhouse Conspiracy," which suggests that many predictions about global warming are based on scientifically unsound models. Although "The Greenhouse Conspiracy" had already generated substantial debate in scientific and environmental circles, PBS passed on it. It will air on the Discovery cable channel in June.

Cable does have one major flaw — it costs money. Defunding PBS may not be worth it if it would condemn poor people to watching the networks. This is a tempting position to take, and is, on its face, quite compelling. Upon closer scrutiny, though, it just does not hold up.

First, while many people cannot afford cable television, there is little evidence to support the notion that they are avid public television watchers. All available evidence suggests that public television is disproportionately utilized by people who could afford to purchase PBS as a cable channel. Corporations underwrite limited-appearance shows on PBS because they know that the viewers are wealthy, politically aware and influential.

Second, public television simply does not operate with any regard for the desires of viewers of any class. It makes no effort to give its alleged public what it wants. PBS seeks to

instruct the public, force-feeding it with programs upper-class liberals (mostly) think are appropriate. It paternalistically reminds us that we are not as "cultured" as we should be.

Even if I thought the government should instruct the public via PBS, I would still oppose subsidies. As long as "Wheel of Fortune" reruns are available on free commercial television, the government's didactic strategy is doomed. Short of entering homes, chaining people to their couches and forcing them to watch "Masterpiece Theater," there is no way to ensure that people will "benefit" from public television.

All this notwithstanding, defunding PBS, which might force it to become a paid subscription service, may deprive many people of access to "Sesame Street." Figures for daytime PBS viewership tell the opposite story from those for prime-time viewership. Many households that tune into daytime PBS children's programs may well be unable to afford cable services.

Two steps should be taken to deal with this problem. Cable prices are now artificially high. Government restrictions on who can and cannot offer service have granted many companies regional monopolies. Other companies should be permitted to enter the market.

A few households would, theoretically, be unable to afford even substantially cheaper cable services. Taking the money that goes to PBS and using it to buy low-income families the cable package of their choice would be an improvement over the present system. A more economical way to achieve the same result would be to grant licenses only to those cable carriers who agree to offer reduced rates to the needy.

My plan may not save any money; its advantages lie elsewhere. First, low-income individuals could choose their own entertainment. Second, PBS, in its non-subsidized form, would be made responsive to market forces. Ideally, it would become a cable channel. Finally, people who like PBS would be the only ones paying for it.

I just hope Cookie Monster will forgive me.

Ganesh Gunasekaran is a political science major from Los Angeles.

READERS' FORUM

Editorial shows courage in stance on marijuana

To the editor:
 First, I'd like to commend the DTH for its pro-legalization stance regarding the hemp/marijuana issue ("Time to legalize hemp," April 23). It's not often in today's climate of drug hysteria and "reefer madness" that very many publications have enough backbone to take a stand on the only moral side of this controversy.

I would, however, like to take issue with a statement made in your front-page story, "Voters in favor of legalizing marijuana" (April 23), in which it was insinuated that the high drop-out rate in Holland's schools could be attributed to marijuana use. The story did not mention that Holland is a welfare state in which its citizens are cared for from the cradle to the grave. This means that there is little incentive to do well in school, as the government is always there acting as a safety net. This I have learned in conversations with my great aunt, who is Dutch. As the initiative of those who work for Students for Individual Liberties and Friends of Hemp proves, marijuana use does not cause apathy.

Just thought I'd set the record straight for once in regard to marijuana, a much-maligned and little-understood substance.

JOHN B. STATON
 Junior
 Journalism

Speaker's record shows his awareness of campus

To the editor:
 In the article "Speaker: no per-

sonal agenda for Congress" (April 24), Representative Kristina Sung from the Granville Towers district was quoted as saying, "I think it's going to be a rough year for him (Mr. Moore) because he really doesn't know what's going on on campus."

Obviously, Moore knew enough about what was going on to get himself elected to the congress and to secure his votes for speaker over an incumbent. Evidently, a majority of the body believed Moore knew enough about campus happenings to support him as their speaker.

As far as the speaker's race went, maybe Mr. Moore was the one who really knew what was going on. Based on his early successes, Mr. Moore's present record doesn't look so "rough" to me.

KELLEY LANGLEY
 Junior
 Biology

Increased taxes won't provide answer to cuts

To the editor:
 I agree with Steve Martel and Lydia Worly when they tell students to write their state legislators to stop cutting the University's budget ("Students, take action; budget state legislators," April 19). In fact, I will send a copy of this letter to my legislator.

If this school can not pay the going rate for graduate students, the best students will simply go to school in another state. Leaving UNC with either no graduate students or second-rate graduate students to teach labs and recitations and grade tests and papers. Either way the students will lose, and the better students will also go to school

in some other state. The state is making UNC a second-rate school with second-rate students getting a second-rate education. We don't want that to happen, do we?

I would also say Martel is turning into a typical politician. He offers more and more taxes as the only solution to budget woes. If the government tries to tax "big business" too much, they will also move to another state, leaving North Carolina with even less revenue.

The government must choose which programs are the most important and fund those. The less important ones should be cut. I have never seen a copy of the state's budget to give an example of what I would cut, but then that's what we pay the politicians to do.

To sum up what I'm saying: Don't tax us any more! Just please cut the University, the students and the future a larger piece of the pie, or we are going to leave.

JIM GARDNER
 Graduate
 Chemistry

Local place of worship welcomes all people

To the editor:
 The article entitled "Raleigh church opens doors to all people," (April 15) caused me to analyze my own attitudes toward people who classify themselves as gay or lesbian. I recently became a Christian and chose to live by what I read in the Bible. More often than not, what I read there is different from what I learned from 32 years of living by my own wits! So, after reading the article by the MCC members, I checked my attitudes with the Bible.

That UNC graduate student who

visited MCC in Raleigh is right to expect any group of people who call themselves a church that worships God to welcome him with love. From all I read in my study inspired by the article, the bottom line was that we are all sinners and that one of the functions of the church is to help us overcome sin. I don't think any help can be offered without love and acceptance of people as they come.

I have found a group of Christians who meet together in Chapel Hill to encourage and love each other, and to worship God in spirit and in truth. This group has shown me the meaning of God's love, and I'm convinced that they can help anyone find the peace that God's love offers.

We meet in Suite 214 of Carr Mill Mall on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. and on Sundays at 1:00 p.m.; as well as in each others' homes at various other times. The phone number is 933-3070. We welcome "women, people of color, lesbians, gay men, seniors, and anyone else" who wants to worship God. To the young UNC graduate, and to anyone who wishes "to be included in the family of God," I say, call us and please come worship with us.

MARI CARLEY
 Graduate
 Physical Therapy

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■ Sign and date letters. No more than two signatures, please.
 ■ Letters should be no longer than 400 words.
 ■ Include year in school, major, phone number and hometown.
 ■ The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity.



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