

The Daily Tar Heel

98th year of editorial freedom

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Give the gift of life

Many of us spent a fortune over the holidays, buying expensive little baubles for our special someones. We did this knowing that — sooner or later — the springs will rust, the paint will chip and the prized gifts will end up in the dusty boxes of a dark attic.

We often don't think about the gift most of us can give that lasts a lifetime. We don't think about the gift that costs little more than momentary discomfort, but that saves the recipient from immense pain or even from death.

Coursing through all of our veins right now is something we tend to take for granted. Blood is something most of us really don't like to see. We associate it with pain, with those little cuts we got from a tumble as a child or with the gory scenes in B-grade horror flicks.

But that same blood is a welcome sight in Red Cross centers and in hospitals. That same blood is considered priceless in operating rooms as it drips new life from suspended plastic bags into the outstretched arms of the sick and the dying.

That same blood is now in short supply. For a variety of reasons — a severe flu outbreak and the holiday season, to name two — blood supplies in this state and elsewhere in the nation are at dangerously low levels. Hospitals everywhere are being told that their demands for blood just cannot be met.

O negative and A negative blood are in especially short supply, but O positive, B positive and AB negative blood are at criti-

cal levels as well. Of course, donations of all blood types are needed and would be welcomed by the Red Cross.

Some of us — for health or religious reasons — cannot give blood. But that makes it even more vital for the rest of us to take the half hour to an hour necessary to give the gift of life.

Why? Because there's a chance that — sooner or later — you will be the one in need. You could be the one in the car accident or in need of major surgery. You could be the one whose life hinges on that precious liquid that sustains life.

It's not difficult to give blood. In the next month alone, there will be eight blood drives held in this area. (See the chart on the front page for locations and times.) In addition, if you're willing to take the short drive to Durham, you can give blood every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Hithings Center on University Drive or on Mondays and Wednesdays at Duke University Medical Center. (See the front page for times.)

There is no danger from giving blood — you can't catch the AIDS virus from donating. And it only takes a little time.

You will never know who receives your precious gift. But whether it's a child or an adult, a man or a woman, the gift will be cherished for the rest of the recipient's life. There will be no throwing it away or allowing it to go unused. It will flow through their veins for as long as their hearts continue to beat.

Hey, dude! Skaters need a home

They perform daring leaps and travel at death-defying speeds. They terrorize students and disturb classes with their whoops. They are the skaterats.

But no longer should these mostly high school and middle school skateboarders be seen on campus. The Board of Trustees decided last month to ban skateboarding from campus, citing danger to pedestrians and University property. Offenders will face a stiff \$20 fine if caught traveling on the four-wheel board.

Campus skateboarders have been blamed for damaging campus buildings such as the Morehead Building and Manning Hall. On Sunday and some weekday afternoons, skateboarders can be seen testing their skills beside the Greenlaw wall. Sure, they look pretty tame, but these boys can be a nuisance. In the afternoons, when some classes are still in session, skateboard wheels can be heard grating the bricks and skaters can be heard talking among themselves. Attempting to get into some of these buildings virtually guarded by skateboarders can truly be a challenge.

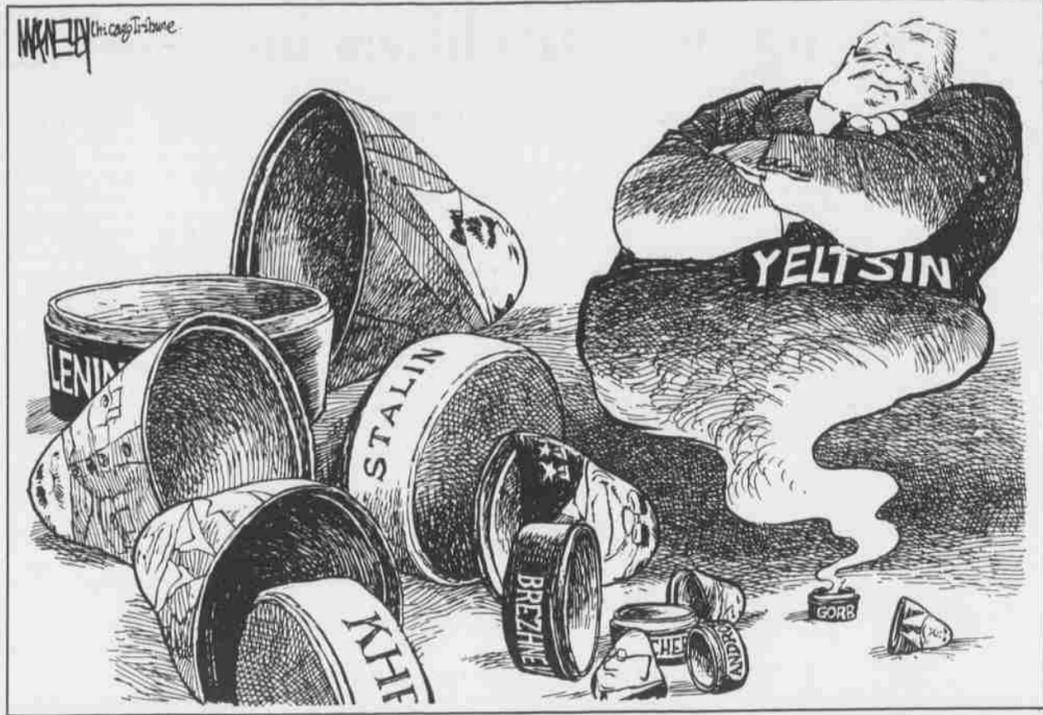
But banning skateboarding from campus leaves one nagging problem — the skateboarders. Chapel Hill is pitifully deficient in places for local youth to "hang out," and this latest restriction will only limit teenagers more. The University ath-

letic facilities are limited to students, faculty and staff, and there are few parks in Chapel Hill intended for teenagers.

With this latest blow to teenage social life in Chapel Hill, perhaps the town council should think seriously about finding a recreational site for the town's younger generation.

Such a facility should include an isolated skateboard ramp, a basketball court, a club house and a snack bar. Restaurants, bars and movies are pretty much the extent of night life in Chapel Hill, so this center should offer nighttime hours. Providing athletic facilities would attract a cross-section of kids who are looking for a way to spend their time.

Chapel Hill's crime problem sometimes is blamed on bored youth. Creating a teen center that would keep these kids busy would be a safe and smart solution. Since the University has banned skateboarders from campus, Chapel Hill should welcome them with their own home.



READERS' FORUM

Choice of Reading Day made with student input

To the editor:
 I am the chairman of the Academic Calendar Committee, and I'd like to respond to your Dec. 6 editorial ("Reading Hour may be next step"). Reading Day does not have to be a weekday. It was intended to be a one-day break between the last day of class and the beginning of exams. The following information provides a sample of days used as Reading Days over the past 40 years (the year in question is followed by the last day of classes for that year, the day on which Reading Day was held and the day exams began).

- 1955 - Wednesday - None - Thursday
- 1957 - Friday - Saturday - Monday
- 1968 - Saturday - Sunday - Monday
- 1977 - Tuesday - Wednesday - Thursday
- 1985 - Wednesday - Thursday - Friday
- 1990 - Tuesday - Wednesday - Thursday

In the fall of 1955 there was no Reading Day and classes ended on Wednesday and exams began on Thursday. The first documented Reading Day was in the fall of 1957. Classes ended Friday, Reading Day was Saturday and exams began Monday. Over time, Reading Day has occurred on just about every day of the week including Sunday. Reading Days have been routinely scheduled on weekends over the years. Fridays and Mondays have been used more recently for the convenience of the University Registrar to have an additional workday to distribute grade rolls.

When the Calendar Committee was working on the fall, 1991 calendar, we discussed the placement of Reading Day. The students on the Calendar Committee responded that students would prefer having one more vacation day between the end of exams and Christmas. They noted that students already had a two-day break between the end of class and the beginning of exams under this schedule. The students on the committee also thought that the three-day weekend before exams was counter-productive, with students leaving campus and going back home instead of staying and studying.

If the issue is having one more study day before exams, remember that we also have a policy that prohibits professors from giving preparation quizzes during the last week of class. The purpose of this policy is to allow students time to begin preparing for finals during the last week of the semester. Students should not wait for Reading Day to begin studying for exams. Also, exams are scheduled over eight calendar days. Students normally have days in the exam schedule that can be used as study days. Adding more reading days would mean lengthening the semester at a time when future calendars will have exams ending as late as Dec. 18 and Dec. 19.

DAVID C. LANIER
 University Registrar

Students deserve vote on allocation of fees

To the editor:
 It's unfortunate that Student Congress didn't approve a direct vote on the proposed \$2.50 increase in student fees for a Student Endowed Library Fund. A student vote would have set an important precedent. It would have been a small beginning toward a future in which students vote every semester on the allocation of fees.

This future system may be called FEE-LINE. One month after the beginning of each term, every registered student may telephone. A voice (with a faintly meowing ac-

cent) will answer: "You have reached FEE-LINE, the electronic voting system for the direct and democratic allocation of your student fees. Please enter your student ID. ID accepted. You will be allocating your fees in five categories: one, athletic program; two, recreational facilities; three, student groups and publications; four, the libraries; and five, new technologies. Votes must be given in increments of 5 percent with a minimum of 5 percent for each category. Please enter your percentage vote for the athletic program now. Thank you. Please enter ..."

Representative democracy is necessary when the electorate can't be trusted with complex issues or when the infrastructure doesn't support immediate communications. In my opinion, the allocation of student fees is not a complex issue. It's just been overly politicized. Students are direct consumers of these services, and they have every right to stipulate their degree of support for each one. The hardware is already in place. The software will not be that difficult to write. Now, who will trust the student body to do the right thing? I will. Anyone else?

STEVE HUTTON
 Doctoral Candidate
 School of Information &
 Library Science

Paternalistic attitudes alive and well at UNC

To the editor:
 I write this letter as a child of the '50s and consequently, for better or for worse, a college student of the late '60s. That was a tumultuous time, enervating to be sure but also traumatic, even to those of us who were, shall we say, something less than wild-eyed radicals. At least one of the things that emerged from that period after considerable unrest and dissension, was a solid refutation of the concept of "in loco parentis" as it was embraced and practiced at this nation's great colleges and universities. That concept held that it was a function of the university or college to serve as surrogate parents, setting limits on the social and political expression and behavior of students and punishing them appropriately when these limits were exceeded.

The students of the late '60s and early '70s found these limits to be intolerable, especially when it was all too clear on a daily basis that this "parental protection" did not extend to issues of life and death in a faraway place. Students vigorously challenged the concept of "in loco parentis" in a variety of ways, and it was effectively abandoned by most progressive colleges and universities. These schools recognized that students as a rule did have the intelligence, maturity and foresight to make decisions concerning their own futures, that maybe that's what a college education was all about.

Now I am experiencing a distinctly uncomfortable case of *deja vu*. In the spring of 1991, students on this campus, through appropriate political and institutional mechanisms (an open referendum), made a statement. They voted to increase their own student fees by less than \$1 per person in order to fund a full-time facilitator for a program called a.p.p.i.e.s., "allowing people to plan learning experiences in service." This program was initiated and nurtured on this campus by a dedicated group of student volunteers who believed community service could be a formal learning opportunity, could provide concrete meaning to abstract social and political concepts presented in University courses. They believed and advocated and succeeded in persuading their fellow students through newsletters, seminars, open meetings and a pi-

lot program that the concept could work and was worth paying extra for, as a student initiative.

And what now is the response of the University of North Carolina? My understanding of it is as follows: "You students clearly don't know what's in your best interest. You aren't smart enough to decide what you need for your education, even if you pay for it yourselves with extra money. You don't understand the economic conditions. We're freezing all fees at current levels and we don't want to talk about it anymore. You wouldn't understand anyway. There is no difference between fees WE decide to charge you and those you decide to charge yourselves. WE will decide what you can have and what you can't. We function 'IN LOCO PARENTIS.'"

Wake up, people! This is not money to fund more parties or another political organization or a club athletic team. This is your education. This is your opportunity to do something real, something of value to others as a part of that education, to make a contribution and to learn more about yourself and your community at the same time, FOR CREDIT.

You said you wanted that opportunity in spring 1991. The University says it won't pay for that opportunity with the money you already give it in taxes and tuition. You said you would pay extra. The University says "NO WAY!"

Is there sense in this? I think not. Sometime in this four-plus-year experience you're supposed to start thinking for yourselves. UNC is supposed to help you do it. When UNC can't or won't, you should hold it and its officials accountable and reclaim your rights.

In the '50s, my mom and dad tried to tell me how to think and what I could spend my own dollar on. I went along, but I couldn't wait to get to college. Then I was 18, I went to college and they told me there that they would be my mom and dad away from home, and that I could pay them for the privilege. I and a whole generation of college students said "No!" ... and times changed.

Well ... I thought they did.

RICK PALMER
 Center for Teaching
 and Learning

Basketball team helped dampen holiday season

To the editor:
 Well, the Boys ruined my weekend big time! What comes to mind on a Monday morning after an apparently lame Florida State team pummeled the Heels, 86-74? Let me think of a few words: embarrassment, shame, humiliation, disgrace ... should I continue?

Living in this state, the only hope we had was the fact that FSU would play the ACC first in basketball. At least we would show the people in Florida how to play basketball. And now this!

Sure, Dean Smith is the greatest coach in college basketball, and Carolina Tradition carries a ton of weight when other teams come to play us. But neither Dean nor Carolina Tradition can guarantee a win.

Forget poise. What about passion? I hate Duke like any other blue-blooded Tar Heel, but I have to give them credit for their passion going into every game as if it was their last. When will the Heels taste that passion?

DANNY RADCLIFF
 Class of '90

Election of DTH editor better than alternative

Editor's note: the author is a former co-editor of The Daily Tar Heel.

To the editor:
 I note that there will be a referendum regarding the election vs.

selection of the DTH editor.

While electing a newspaper editor doesn't make a whole lot of sense, the proposed alternative isn't an answer. Leaving the selection to a committee with the proposed structure risks putting the DTH in the hands of those few activists who can pull the chains of student government.

It's no fun to run for the office, as Hugh Stevens and I — among many others — will attest. But it's a better way than what has been proposed.

FRED SEELY
 Jacksonville, Fla.

Alternatives not given for U.S., Soviet systems

To the editor:
 I think it should be noted that communism and socialism also have their share of "myths," and so I am surprised that they have any credibility among graduate-level history students ("Hard realities gaining ground on myths of capitalism," Jan. 7). Sure, true Marxism has "never been tried," but it is intrinsically doomed to fail.

Each time a government has espoused a worker's paradise, we've seen the same pattern. In the most blatant instances, intellectuals like Stalin, Pol Pot, Mao and Castro forced their "enlightened" lies and oppressive versions of equality on the so-called common folk, resulting in the deaths of literally tens of millions. Truth and dignity are the first casualties in their "revolution," and equal opportunity is only given to those who tiredly regurgitate an unchanging dogma before their comrades. Who needs to think, let alone debate, when you will be shot for doing so?

The fact is, people have no desire to be "equal," and only rare individuals will have the altruism to devote their lives to the good of the State — especially if the State doesn't work. While communism tells us to love the proletariat (a vague and antiquated term, at best) over the family or the individual, it is fundamentally in our nature to do the opposite.

Mr. Jones, you seem to reproach the Soviets as well as capitalism, but what alternative do you suggest? Other nations that tightly restrict private enterprise (as Eurosocijalism) halt growth and technological breakthroughs with high taxes, mountains of red tape, mediocre services and trade barriers. Unemployment and inflation remain embarrassingly high. The main difference between this and the more hard-line regimes is that Big Government is accountable to the people for its failures.

Naturally, the U.S. system isn't perfect and abuses do exist, as is made painfully obvious by our free press. We have 250 million citizens and a prevalent commercialized mentality of self-gratification that tells us that we are failures unless we maintain a certain lifestyle. But our pressing social problems aren't the result of some hazy corporate conspiracy; they are simply due to the terrifying speed of modern life in which the family is no longer a sacred refuge. We suffer from imperfect democracy because education and integrity and morality are placed below "feeling good."

JONATHAN CARSON
 Junior
 Biology

Letters policy

- Letters should be limited to 400 words.
- Sign and date letters. No more than two signatures.
- Include your 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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The Daily Tar Heel

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Office: Suite 104 Carolina Union
 Campus mail address: CB# 5210 box 48, Carolina Union
 U.S. Mail address: P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3257