

# OPINION

This column represents the views of the *Old Gold and Black* Editorial Board.

## New alcohol policy endangers students

Since the responsibility of party management recently switched from the Office of Student Development to the Office of Residence Life and Housing, the student alcohol policy has undergone major revamping that will significantly affect students and alter the social scene at the university.

Under the new policy, all fraternity parties must be "Bring Your Own Beer." Each student entering the party must present a picture identification, print and sign his name along with his birthdate in the guest log and, if he is 21 or older, wear a wristband signifying that he is of age to drink.

Each student wishing to drink must bring no more than six cans of beer to the party and check them in behind the bar. (Cans — not bottles — bottles are dangerous. Incidentally, it would seem,

according to this new policy anyway, that only beer bottles are dangerous. Bottles of wine cooler are safe. Rest assured, while bottles with beer in them pose a threat to our safety, bottles with wine cooler in them are in fact safe and allowed.)

Said student may then obtain one can at a time by presenting a numbered ticket and one empty can/cup/wine cooler bottle. Adherence to these rules will be monitored by a Compliance Adviser who is hired by the university to monitor Greek functions.

One factor at work here could be an increasingly obvious attempt by the administration to phase out the Greek system altogether by disabling a major aspect of Greek organizations. The new policy obviously targets the fraternities — one rule even stipulates that kegs are allowed at a non-Greek organization's party if they are registered, but that Greek organizations are prohibited from having kegs at all.

The new policy is in large part due to the fact that last year the state's Alcohol Law Enforcement officers made it a matter of public record that Greek organizations at this university were not following state alcohol laws at their functions.

The administration therefore took the responsibility of party management away from Director of Student Development Mike Ford, who is also the adviser of the Interfraternity Council, and instead made it the responsibility of RL&H.

While the policy action is understandable given the national push to reduce

alcohol abuse, the administration's concern for its reputation is endangering the lives of students.

As we've already seen during these last two weeks of men's dry fraternity rush, more parties crop up on Polo Road when alcohol is not served at on-campus fraternity parties.

Likewise, with the implementation of this new alcohol policy, which puts major restrictions on drinking on campus, Polo Road and other off-campus locations will be swarmed with students looking to party.

Especially in light of the tragedy on Polo Road last year, the administration should realize that in putting such stringent restrictions on drinking, they are causing students to leave the safety of campus where they can walk home after a night of partying, and to go off campus instead where they must risk

the dangers of drunk driving. The administration must be realistic by recognizing that if students want to drink, they are going to find a way. And the ways they will find are sure to be dangerous. As hard as it is to believe, underage students are not going to be enticed to on-campus parties by the "abundant

amount of food and non-alcoholic beverages" that, according to the new policy, must be provided.

The previous party system was unique and safe. Greek parties were not only controlled, but they were in safe and convenient locations as well. The new system is inconvenient and unrealistic.

The administration should stop worrying about its image, so disgracefully marred by the ALE's "matter of public record," and try to muster up some genuine concern for student safety. In general, there have been no major problems under the previous party system. Students were kept safe and happy.

Like the implementation of the recent gate system, this new alcohol policy is nothing more than a superficial facade to protect the administration's legal liability, not action backed by true concern for student welfare. Whether they realize it or not, the architects of this policy are actually putting that welfare at risk.

The previous party system, characterized by safety and by realistic attitudes toward college students' behavior, should stay in place.

"ARTICLE 102A: THE OFFICIAL WFU YOMIT SACK. ALL REGURGITATED MATTER MUST BE PLACED IN SACK WITHIN 24 HOUR PERIOD. ALL ITEMS PLACED IN SACK BECOME THE SOLE PROPERTY OF WAKE FOREST..."



## NNWI guarantees a kinder, gentler campus

Nature Writing Initiative is sure to enlighten the school.

It is my privilege and my pleasure to introduce to this university community an organization designed to vastly improve the quality of campus life — let us all welcome to our campus the newest chapter of the NNWI, or the Nationwide Nature Writing Initiative.

Legions of students and faculty from more cosmopolitan areas will indubitably recognize this organization and will rejoice at its continual expansion.

Ben Smith

OUTDOORS COLUMNIST

More than once have I heard a student or faculty member comment incredulously and somewhat wistfully at the ability of the majority of students here to live ostensibly "normal" lives in spite of being ignorant as to the very existence of the NNWI.

With what beautiful innocence and newfound pleasure will these uninitiated re-interpret the world, a world so repugnant if one is not sufficiently skilled in the domains of nature romanticization and of transcendental experience — indeed, with what powerful exultation will those students and faculty formerly conditioned to these delights return to them.

The NNWI has two official, interrelated nationwide policies: to acquiesce and to romanticize. Acquiescence is the NNWI's official environmental policy — the NNWI wishes to be identified with neither the economic forces driving the progressive pollution or destruction of our air, our water, our wildlife habitat and our oil, gas and other natural resources, nor with the reactionary efforts of environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society whose injurious intent is to impede the progress of these economic forces.

Commensurate with this policy, the NNWI equips its members with the

necessary skills to romanticize any and every environment, including those commonly called "artificial," "tainted" or "destroyed." With inevitable, impending ecological disaster it would be socially irresponsible for any writer or writing society to consciously perpetuate the contemporary standard of nature appreciation, namely, the idealization of "pristine" environments.

The notable nature writer no longer selfishly "marches to the beat of a different drummer," wantonly strewing adjectives along only wilderness paths, thereby idealizing in the popular mind a resource destined to extinction — for today's nature writer, there is but one drummer, there is but one step: to romanticize the "commonplace," the grass, the dandelions, "polluted" rivers and radioactive waste.

Given these comments, there ought to be no misgivings as to the need for a chapter of the NNWI at this university. With the continual replacement of areas of open grass with concrete walkways, with the savage scouring of the ground in order to construct new buildings and with the unrelenting conversion of diverse natural habitat into nearly homogenous wastelands of grass or magnolia, this university is a veritable microcosm of national environmental "problems."

With the powerful aid of the NNWI, no longer shall students lament tramping through and around huge pits of clay to attend class — nor shall students protest administrative plans to either raze tracts of forest or to replace widely-utilized fields of grass so that some new academic or administrative building may be constructed.

In short, the NNWI intends to do nothing less than to fundamentally alter the students' collective conception of what is "beautiful" and "ugly" so that it corresponds to the economic exigencies of the contemporary university: indefinite expansion without regard to either "quality of life" or nature "appreciation."

That this is a worthwhile endeavor, the radical alteration of the conceptions of "beautiful" and "ugly," is indubitable — to contend otherwise is to court

merited accusations of intellectual dishonesty. If one affirms supremely the value of mental health or quietude, then one must wholeheartedly support the NNWI.

Simple observation yields the acknowledgement of a sizeable undercurrent of collective angst at administrative efforts to expand the campus — this collective angst finds its most concrete expression in the movement satirically (and fatalistically) named *Pave the Quad*. One can feel only the most excruciating pity for the members of this movement as they watch powerlessly, ineffectually, as their beloved *Quad* becomes ever more riddled with concrete walkways and patios.

How much more joyous, more meaningful their lives would be if their narrow-minded conception of beauty, "beauty is land without pavement," would coincide with the "savage," "ecologically destructive" policies of the administration! To exacerbate this dissonance between the values of the *Pave the Quad* movement and the administration, to induce the members of *Pave the Quad* to clutch ever more violently to that last piece of grass, would not merely be worthy of censure, but would be tantamount to the disavowal of one's status as a human being.

Let us now envision a better university, a university where students do not bemoan the expansion of concrete and orange clay, where students trained in the techniques of nature romanticization and transcendental experience fall to their knees at the mere sight of wet concrete or orange-stained shoes.

Outdoor columnists shall no longer write about Hanging Rock State Park, Pisgah National Forest, waterfalls, mountains, bears, raccoons, eagles or wolves — a new parking lot, the new walkway, magnolias and grass, these are the things which will inspire this new, enlightened generation. A slip into wet clay will not be an occasion for a curse, but rather a pious commendation of the beauty of the world.

This is the vision of the NNWI-led university. This is the vision of better lives and a better place — let us relish this grand opportunity.



## Life at university comes full circle

The new school year provides renewal time.

From the day we arrive on this planet, and blinking step into the sun, there's more to see than can ever be seen, more to do than can ever be done ... It's the circle of life, and it moves us all. Through despair and hope, through faith and love, till we find our place, on the path unwinding, in the circle ... the circle of life. — from Disney's *The Lion King*

For some of us, the summer seems to be a magical or "re-generative" time

Joanna Iwata

GUEST COLUMNIST

as it allows us to step back from the normal busyness associated with the school year — just to be with our family and friends, to chill, to catch up on all the latest movies, to read, to play, to study, to travel, to party or to simply do nothing. And when all is said and done and a new school year begins, it is always great re-connecting with each other — catching up on the highs and lows of our summer.

For me, this summer was a poignant time spent with my six-year-old daughter Noelani. This was the first year cycle of our separation from each other. Last summer, following a grueling custody hearing, it was determined that Noelani should live in

Hawaii with her father and his family. I was wondering then how I would manage all of this, and the thought of maintaining a 6,000-mile relationship with my daughter was scary. Now that she is back in Hawaii for another ten month cycle, I can look back to where I was a year ago and appreciate how much things have changed for me and for her — in a positive way.

In reading through the recent "Back to School" issue of the *OG&B*, there was a section dedicated to 1996-97 in review, and I was again reminded of how quickly things do change in just a year!

Since last year, we find ourselves even more enmeshed in the new technological age at the university which continues to transform our lives both inside and outside of the classroom. For some of us, the entire face of this campus has changed since leaving the campus in May and returning in August, as new building and facilities are under construction.

From last year's festivities associated with the Year of the Arts, we now move into the Year of American Religion. This year, we also set a record high of admitting new students to the university, our class of 2001.

But beyond all of this (which is enough reason to celebrate), we are also tenderly reminded of the untimely deaths of various members of our campus community last fall and spring semesters — students, faculty and friends of the university — all of which brings us full circle to where we are now a year later.

I captioned the lyrics of "The Circle

of Life" (from the Disney movie, *The Lion King* — also one of my daughter's favorite movies) as it seemed to me to capture the importance of moving forward with our lives.

For instance, rather than lamenting my separation from my daughter a year ago, this summer I found myself celebrating my reunion with her. Rather than our being caught in a whirlwind of despair last year as we faced the deaths of the people we knew within our community, perhaps we are more "hopeful" and actively living and creating our own legacy now.

So as we move into this new academic year, I hope that we can: challenge each other to enjoy what we do have in our lives now which make our lives whole, full and otherwise, complete; take the time to rest, relax, play, sing, pray, meditate, dance, chill — outside of our studies and other commitments; keep in touch with the people we care about and let them know we love them (i.e., phone, write, or e-mail home every now and then).

If we can do these three simple things as a part of our everyday exercise of living then perhaps we can develop a reverence of life that keeps us strong when we feel ourselves weak or as we face the fears of the unknown. And for us as a community, I hope that this year will present us with more positive opportunities to work "through despair and hope, through faith and love," wherein we recognize that "there's more to see than can ever be seen, more to do than can ever be done" and that we will find our place "on the path unwinding, in the circle ... the circle of life."

## OLD GOLD AND BLACK

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