

Nothing fair about the Dixie Classic

A grown-up perspective on the fair reveals the darker side of the Dixie Classic.

Hey everyone, it's that time of year again. Ring the bells. Bang the drums. Liquify all your assets to cash. The Dixie Classic Fair is in town and it's taking anything that isn't bolted down.

A few weeks ago I had a date planned with a lady friend of mine. She suggested we go

Ben Baldwin

GUEST COLUMNIST

to the Dixie Classic Fair. This seemed like a great idea. I thought of the times when I was a little kid and my father took me to the fair. What I didn't realize is that my father must have robbed a liquor store and taken horse tranquilizers to fund the venture and tolerate the whole debauchery.

So we get to the fair and admission is \$6 a person. Obviously I'm naive, because I thought you actually got something for your \$6. When you go to a football game you pay at the gate and watch the game. You don't have to pay to watch each individual play. It turns out that at the fair, the \$6 gets you the privilege of fisting out money for the rest of the evening. It's like paying someone to rob you.

Well we decided to go play some games. What a great idea that was. I'm a pretty pessimistic guy, but those games look so damned easy. How hard can it be to throw a ball and knock over three little bottles? I'll tell you how hard: it's freaking impossible. Those little bottles were meant to be there, and God doesn't want it any other way. Finally I tore myself away from the first stand, considerably lighter in the wallet, muttering obscenities at the carry as I went. I assured my date I would win her something somewhere else and made my way to something easier.

On the way, we saw a funnel cake stand and I remembered how much I loved them. What I didn't remember was the fact that the funnel cake was made by a toothless, tobacco-chewing fellow in a sleeveless t-shirt and then dropped in

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a vat of grease big enough to deep fry a buffalo. I can't even imagine the angioplasty that would have been necessary to rectify the damage that funnel cake would have done.

"Ah yes, a dart game, now this I can do," I said to myself as the next guy advertised the fact that all I had to do was pop a balloon and win a prize. When I finally did pop the balloon - I'll not give you the satisfaction of telling you how long it took - I whooped a little and pointed to the giant Spongebob Squarepants doll that my date had wanted. I was more than I little surprised when he leaned under the counter and pulled out a stuffed animal no bigger than my hand.

I inquired about how many times I actually had to win to get something that wouldn't fit in my pocket. The answer was 15.

Multiply that by the \$3 price and you have a \$45 Spongebob Squarepants doll that I could have bought at Wal-Mart for \$8. I would have been better off paying someone to light my hair on fire.

You can imagine the way I felt when I saw the Ferris wheel light up against the night sky. I thought it was just the romantic finish to the evening that I needed to save my date. I thought that right up until we had to share a cart with two drunken guys who looked like they had stumbled right out of the movie *Deliverance*. I would rather have shared a cart with Charles Manson and Hitler. At least then the conversation would have been interesting. "So Adolf, you know Charlie here killed some people, too?" It didn't take me long to start wondering if the fall from the top would kill me. I should have been so lucky.

On the whole I would say the evening turned out a little better than if we had been massaged with cheese-graters and thrown into a pool of piranhas. I can't figure out why she hasn't called me since, though. She must have lost my number. Either that or she went home with one of the guys from the Ferris wheel.

Ben Baldwin is a sophomore.

Scary holiday brings fun

Halloween wasted without a bit of fright.

Secretly, Halloween has always been my favorite holiday. However I've avoided sharing this for some time. Let's be honest, if you're the kid in elementary school who raises their hand



Sarah Crosland

OLD GOLD AND BLACK COLUMNIST

for Halloween winning over Christmas or July 4, you look somewhat strange.

I could try to justify my feelings by saying that I'm a huge fan of the abundance of candy involved (not completely untrue), but frankly I just love the idea of scaring the living daylight out of small children.

To get myself in the mood for Halloween this year I went to see the recent remake of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. I was not disappointed in that I did physically jump several times during the movie, but psychologically I was not nearly as frightened as I had hoped. This could have been because my fellow movie goers were a little rowdy as they yelled things such as, "Aw no! She ain't got no drawers on!" in reference to one of the victims.

Of course, even without their intellectual repartee with the screen, I probably would have been somewhat distracted from true fear by such scenes as when the killer has to pause in his chase just steps away from his victims to restart his faulty chainsaw. Ah yes, the drawbacks to using power

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tools as murder weapons.

I have not always taken something as simple as the "viewing a scary movie" approach for Halloween preparation. Growing up, my family went all out on Halloween as my dad, brother and I would make it our personal goal to save the majority of the candy my mom purchased for trick-or-treaters by scaring the children away before they even had the chance to demand treats.

Freshman year at Wake, I was a little disappointed to discover that Project Pumpkin didn't in any way involve scaring the children to the point of tears. Of course, I was unsure of how I would be able to fully express my love of Halloween without this.

I bought several pumpkins to decorate our room, went to Halloween fraternity parties in which suddenly all "angels," "cats" and "devils" actually looked much more like prostitutes and volunteered for Project Pumpkin where I spent an afternoon trying to convince one little girl that the guys in the Sigma Pi lounge were not really demons who wanted to kill her, but rather fraternity boys, who while they may be equally scary, had no real desire for her death.

Finally, on a rather boring night, just before Halloween, I decided that I had to scare someone and my unfortunate roommate became my target. She was out, so I decided to prepare a small surprise for

her return.

My brilliant plan involved me turning off the lights and taping down the switch, putting pillows under my bedspread so she would assume I had already gone to sleep, turning on the "Halloween Noises" I had ingeniously downloaded from Napster (yes, this was back in those golden days), and then hiding in her closet with a black cardigan over my head.

I considered it my best idea ever. However, my unsuspecting roommate merely walked in, ignored the strange howls coming from my computer, cursed the light switch as she ripped the tape off, turned off my speakers and began working at her computer.

Do you have any idea how awkward it is to be standing in someone's closet with their sweater wrapped around your head when they're casually sitting at their desk working? Probably not, huh?

I eventually emerged attempting to convince my roommate that I was relatively normal. I'm pretty confident that she never believed my lies about my normalcy, but seriously, if you can't be a little strange on Halloween, when can you? So my fellow Wake Foresters, enjoy your Halloweens and wear your tight black shirts that somehow make you look like a cat in your mind.

Also, please try to understand if your roommate perchance walks out of your closet with clothing on their head, that the true spirit of Halloween rests not in the cute pumpkins decorating doorsteps or in excessive candy intake, but in the hearts of those of us who feel there should be something scarier here at Wake than midterms and Alpha Sig parties.

Sarah Crosland is a senior political science major.

Halloween alternatives dilute the real thing

Halloween doesn't demand censorship, it should be appreciated for what it is.

Halloween is here to corrupt, beware! As college students, we must act now before it's too late and our children are lost to the dark depths of hellfire, sex, drugs, and the curses of a thousand demon prostitutes! Friends, the time is nigh to transform America into a society



John Toner

OLD GOLD AND BLACK COLUMNIST

that celebrates harmony and empathy and not the putrid rubber mold of a holiday for the dead.

Instead of tainting my children with fake blood, hair gel, synthetic warts and plastic swords on Halloween, purity of spirit will prevail over their innocent hearts and minds.

That's right, while all the carb-consuming candy fiends harass neighbors on Halloween, my little Kippy and Tippy will be competing to win prizes for the best biblical costume at church. Furthermore, I will pray for those who use Halloween to worship the darkness. Yeah, all 10 of them trapped in Narnia by the White Witch's box of Turkish Delight.

The Christian alternative to Halloween, however inevitable it may be in a free society, is one of the funniest things I've ever heard of. I mean who doesn't love hiding yourself behind a costume for a night, scaring yourself senseless by watching *Are you Afraid of the Dark*, and sprinting door to door in a frenzy of sugar collection? Granted it took me years to forget the sacrificing of the lamb, praying to Satan, and the candlelight vigil condemning world peace my family conducted as child, however I consider Halloween an innocent holiday.

What would goth kids and cult-film fans do if Christian Alternatives ruled the world? I would surmise a grand battle between black fishnet pantyhose and fundamentalist WWJD wristbands would ensue. Maybe the Ned Flanders of the world who seek the "Christian alternative," are scared of heavy mascara and sharp-metal accessorizing, but *Rocky Horror Picture Show*

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audiences across America rejoice at the freedom of being given a collective time to sing and dance in the aisles during a cult classic.

Why don't we create alternatives to every holiday? I think we should form a campaign to seek alternatives to give us more options. For example, how do I know Thanksgiving is the best way to celebrate the settlers' exploitation of Native Americans? Maybe there's some kind of cool holiday I don't even know about.

If there's an influx in Satan worship as a result of Halloween I'll be the first to ask them not to use catnip in their ceremonies. That's just rude; it smells like old people's bath water. Fortunately, Mike Myers lives only on the silver, blood-soaked screen and Lucifer's will has only seduced kids into toilet-papering trees. Oh wait, how 'bout that!?! We toilet paper our trees at Wake! Let's investigate an alternative. Maybe we should litter the Quad with empty O'Doul's beer cans.

If someone knocked at my door on Halloween and handed me a pamphlet outlining the downfalls of Satan worship and telling me to let Jesus fill the hollow in my life, I would immediately vomit violently, spin my head around and curse God. In your face, alternatives boy!

Religion is something to take seriously. But trying to take away a reason to dress up and wear one-size fits all plastic spider rings because you think society will be corrupted by Halloween is downright un-American. The religious right of this country should be applauded for its devotion to a supposed higher calling. However, it must be critiqued when it swerves off the road of righteousness and onto the gravel embankment leading to zero-fun land.

So as you dress-up yourself or children on Halloween consider what the Christian Alternative kids are doing at that moment, eat a couple of pieces of candy corn, and down a quick shot of your witches brew. Most importantly, however, always remember when you send out your little vampires, witches and ghouls to collect pillowcases full of candy that there's no trick. God's treat is Jesus.

John Toner is a sophomore.

College costs misquoted

Mistakes admitted, corrected, writer moves on.

Listen my children and you shall hear, the tale of John falling on his rear. On the twenty-third of October, in 2003, hardly a student, other than me, really cares to remember that famous



John Harman

OLD GOLD AND BLACK COLUMNIST

day and year. John said to his friend, "If the university raises tuition by a thousand or two, I'll post a column in the paper, oh it will be very new." So yeah, last week I made a few mistakes.

We all tend to make mistakes in life, yet I made more than enough to last the rest of my Wake Forest career. My article last week ("Rising costs prompt increasing questions," Oct. 23) dealt with the issue of the tuition hike in a fashion that was, um, well, less than good.

A number of the points that I tried to make didn't come across that well and, in many areas, I showed an incomplete understanding of the workings of the university. Some of my more competent friends pointed this out to me and I felt as though I should at least address them.

For starters, I used some dreadful examples to emphasize the differences and similarities between other universities and Wake Forest. For some reason, it never registered in my head that both the college of William & Mary

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and the University of Virginia are public institutions. In those cases, it makes perfect sense that overall expenses could be lower, and, in a number of cases, makes our tuition look better.

I probably would have done slightly better to list schools such as Vanderbilt or Georgetown, but the glaring fact is that I failed to do this and unfairly criticized our university in the process.

In addition, I may have stuck my foot a little too far in my mouth about the activities fee, although I hesitate slightly on retracting that.

Yes, I would say that the half of the fee that goes toward student development is probably a good idea in the long term, assuming the school follows through with it. It's great and good to complain about certain events not occurring because a lack of funds, but let's just wait and see if the money is put to good use.

The rest of the fee though, I'm sticking to my guns. You'll be lucky if your children ever see this hypothetical recreation center, so I hope you enjoy having to pay for it now.

Either way, I acknowledge that I jumped the gun - I tend to do that frequently. But, as one can probably understand, I was fairly aggravated with the increase in tuition, and when one enters that kind of state, one's emotions tend to take over and logic usually slips on

out the back door unnoticed.

It did bother me that I made such an apparent mistake, but my intentions should still be well read. When the price of a learning institution reaches this level, it becomes increasingly necessary to examine the reasons behind such an incident.

I'm not so naive as to think private institutions ignore the rules of business and care only about education, because the sad truth is, colleges are businesses. They attempt to maximize their profits in the best possible way without hurting themselves financially.

Yet, should it not be our job, under the banner of "Pro Humanitate" to question these practices, to want a higher education where the guarantee exists that the administration is sincere in its desire to better us, not their wallets?

My point is, and always has been, shouldn't we have a right to know what is going on with our money?

I recognize that it is possible to discover the truth, but it would appear that it should be more readily available for our viewing - it is at other institutions. Why should there be this veil of secrecy with activity fees and tuition payments?

Yes, I could potentially look this up, or have former Student Government members call me out when I missed something in a column, but shouldn't they be the ones telling us so we don't miss this? So an information gap doesn't exist between those with power and those without? So I don't look stupid anymore?

(Ok, ok, that's not going to change, I know); And that is why I will remain doing what I do.

John Harman is a senior political science major.