

OPINION

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

Lack of communication harmful to community

The university made an extremely poor decision in the past week when it chose not to notify students of an alleged rape that occurred on campus.

The reasons this was such a mistake are numerous. First, the student body deserves to know if a threat exists on campus.

Four alleged rapists, possible violent criminals, living on campus, with key card access to dorms is a threat.

Simply because the individuals were "known to the university" does not make them any less dangerous than those outside the walls of our community.

A rape is a rape, whether a student or a member of the outside community committed the crime.

To believe anything otherwise is naive and irresponsible, a dangerous combination when the safety of 4,000 students is at stake.

A double standard for what counts as newsworthy crime information for the campus community poses a significant threat.

Students are left wondering what made this crime different from those which occurred last spring, which were followed by campus-wide alerts distributed by the news service.

While the accused students are known to the university, they were not in custody of the police (or if they were that was not released to the public) and thus just as much a danger as the perpetrator or perpetrators from last spring.

To imply otherwise is an insult to the victim that sends the uni-

versity farther down a slippery slope.

If we continue to treat victims of violent crimes in a hierarchy of importance we run the risk of crimes going unreported.

What a slap in the face for this woman to be told that her alleged attackers were not a threat, and what a discouragement for others who would potentially report rapes or other sexual crimes that happen to them.

This reaction cannot be risked.

It is also important to notify students as a reminder to take care when on campus.

Rape is possible anywhere, even within the walls of our own community.

Students have a right to know how prominent or rare it is, and this is facilitated by the full disclosure of all violent crime on campus with prompt notification.

Finally, the university runs another risk in not reporting such crimes in a timely manner, the risk of being accused of attempting to cover-up the crime.

Whether this was the intention of the university or not, the media outside campus perceived it as such, and thus thousands of viewers and readers of local media outlets perceived it as such.

This again is not a chance that the university can afford to take.

Most importantly, all of these problems could be resolved with a single e-mail in the future.

We sincerely hope that the university will let students gauge the perceived threat for themselves through open communication of campus crime.

Project Pumpkin shows true community spirit

It's wonderful that as we slide into another November the campus community can again look back on October and a successful Project Pumpkin.

This is an event that embodies the university's motto "Pro Humanitate," and brings the entire community, from faculty and staff, to students and administrators, to outside members of the community, together.

The organizers of this year's event did a wonderful job with the planning and execution of a successful day.

To be able to give so many children a special holiday is a true gift to those at the university.

As we approach another holiday season, it's important that the university keep the momentum of this extremely generous fall semester going.

From hurricane relief to Project Pumpkin, this year has been exceptional for student participation and involvement in events that help those outside the university walls.

Let's keep this momentum going as the semester draws to a close, and be grateful for the many opportunities to serve that we are given by the motivated student organizations on campus. Truly, we should continue to live our motto to the fullest.

Positive events shine on campus

Recent favorable occurrences outweigh recent sexual assault.

There has been a great deal, both positive and negative, in the Winston-Salem news about the university in the past two weeks. After coming off a "Wake Forest high" from the

Alex Reyes

FROM THE BOARDROOM

beautiful installation ceremony of Dr. Nathan O. Hatch, the monumental inauguration ball, and another successful Project Pumpkin, I was disheartened by the Winston-Salem media's recent lack of coverage of these events and emphasis on the still-ongoing investigation of an alleged sexual assault.

I saw news reporters stopping students on the way to class and asking them to comment on the alleged assault, completely ignoring Project Pumpkin, which was taking place only steps away.

I would like to remind everyone to remember the positive that has happened on our campus over the last two weeks since other media sources chose to let so much of the negative outweigh the positive.

The inauguration week events began with a prayer breakfast held at Union Baptist Church, a predominantly African American church less than five minutes from campus.

I would like to commend the decision to hold the breakfast at this location.

The university has in the past been criticized for not sufficiently reaching out into the Winston-Salem community.

I think it is important for us to recognize the university's accomplishments in addition to identifying the areas that need improvement.

I know that Dr. and Mrs. Hatch were touched and honored by Dr. Maya Angelou's words and I am confident that the vast majority of the audience felt the same way.

In addition to the words shared by representatives of Christian, Jewish and Muslim groups in Winston-Salem, trustees, administrators, students, church and community members conversed over a breakfast graciously prepared by members of the church.

The professional, orchestra and choir performances and speeches that took place during the inauguration ceremony created a feeling in me that took everything I had to keep tears from coming to my eyes.

This was not only because of the beauty within themselves, but because of the reminder that the next time that I will see something

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similar to the inauguration will be at my commencement on May 15, marking my departure from this university.

The variety of universities and societies represented, as well as the words shared by Hatch, North Carolina First Lady Mary Easley, Chancellor Harold Martin of Winston-Salem State University and others again maintained this exemplification of the continued development of community relationships.

The turnout of almost 5,000 at the inauguration ball, higher than any of us on the planning committee had expected, could not have made me happier.

This was yet another event that successfully managed to cross gaps of generation, culture and level of affiliation with the university. I saw ARAMARK employees chatting with, students on the same dance floor as professors, as well as alumni, administrators

and friends.

More recently, another vibrant and extremely successful Project Pumpkin did not receive its due recognition in the news. I was saddened that this nationally-recognized community event was so overshadowed.

I saw first-hand when my best friend woke up at 5:30 a.m. for a scheduled meeting about Project Pumpkin to watch the morning news broadcast of a particular local news station, only to be told that they would not be able to interview them at that time because of "more pressing news at Wake Forest that needed coverage."

It is disappointing that an event which attracted more than 1,000 children from the community and close to 1,000 volunteers from the university was not seen as "pressing."

When I see active Pro Humanitate, I wish more people were there with me to see it, and I wish I could see more of its examples that go unrecognized.

While our university undeniably has its areas that need improvement, we should not let our achievements go unrecognized.

I thank everyone who participated in these events that help cultivate interconnectedness, and I encourage us to keep that spirit at all times.

Alex Reyes is a senior political science major and student trustee from Tempe, Ariz.

New mantra adopted by university

Bottom line, not well-being of community, is becoming more important at university.

Words and phrases tend to define our campus life. Words like "Pro Humanitate" and the "Wake Forest Community."

However, the recent events surrounding the University Mail Center have added a

Mitchell Currin

GUEST COLUMNIST

new slogan to define the university: "Put Business First."

Make no mistake about it, the university is, and has always been, a business. This is nothing new; this is the reality of all institutions of higher education.

However, so often we are misled to believe that this institution is also something else – a community dedicated to service "for humanity" – I believed this.

It is unfortunate that these events surface within weeks of Nathan O. Hatch's grand inauguration, filled with promises of student-focused community like the days of old when people greeted one another on the Quad.

However, the incident involving the livelihood of 11 Post Office employees proves that the university is far from being both student-

centered and a kind of community it claims in its marketing material.

The primary motivation for the UPS Store was the benefits and services that it would offer the students.

I'm curious to know if any students at this institution were consulted when this decision was made.

It is difficult to create a student-centered environment when the voice of the students is continually ignored.

I do know that the voice of the students was heard Tuesday night during the forum conducted by Student Government President Reggie Mathis.

The resounding voice that I heard in Carswell 208 was not filled with excitement about the move-in services provided by the UPS Store.

Contrarily, it was filled with concern for the futures of current Post Office employees who have provided both friendly and efficient service to multiple generations of Deacons.

It was clear that the members of the administration present at the forum did not recognize that the "Wake Forest Community" was found, if not idealized, within the Post Office.

This is where students not only received letters from home, but also found a new home in the motherly staff members who served them throughout the years. I hope that Hatch can recognize the voices.

The most important voices heard during the forum were those of the Post Office employees. They were not asking for much.

I heard a plea from people who wanted to continue to serve the university community in a position in which they had become very skilled.

The university has made some concessions to give these men and women an opportunity to continue to serve the university.

However, many of the positions would require these employees to take a pay-cut. A staff of 11 with a combined experience of 180 years at this institution should not have to take a pay cut.

After all, it was not their job performance that prompted this decision, but the expiration of a contract.

I have faith in the administration of Hatch, and I truly believe that this "sound fiscal move" started before his arrival.

During the forum, a student asked some of the administrators present to provide a guarantee that these employees would receive new jobs from the university with equal pay and equal benefits as their positions with the Post Office. This student was told that the administrators could not make such a guarantee.

I believe that that ability probably falls within the power of our newly-inaugurated president.

This crisis provides Hatch with an opportunity to define the future of his administration. Will he stand behind the "Pro Humanitate" motto? Will he support the "Wake Forest Community?"

Or will he confirm the suspicions of those who believe that the university has become a place where "business comes first?"

I believe in this institution, and because I believe in this university, I believe in Hatch.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Police should not shield administration

How disheartening for our community that university administrators who attended Tuesday night's "Conversations on Pro Humanitate" about the Mail Services staff controversy were accompanied by the university police.

When administrators conclude that they need police protection from staff, students and faculty, then spirit Pro Humanitate stalks our campus like Halloween ghosts.

David Weinstein
Associate professor of
Political Science

"Guarded" response to post office

I had the opportunity to attend Tuesday night's timely and well-organized Student Government forum entitled "Conversations

on 'Pro Humanitate.'" The forum had been designed to discuss issues related to the plan to discontinue the decades-long relationship the university has had with the United States Postal Service, replacing the services now performed by the USPS through an arrangement with Mail Box, Etc. (a franchise associated with the United Parcel Service).

There are several issues which make this change problematic with the most pressing (and ostensibly the main topic of the forum) being what to do with the eleven professional, loyal and long-serving (some for longer than twenty years) employees of the university who will lose their jobs owing to the change.

Indeed, the forum was designed primarily to address this issue and was rightly framed in the context of the communitarian principle which the Thomas K. Hearn administration and its lineal descendants chronically claim to guide the university – "pro humanitate."

The discussion was interesting, if somewhat one-sided – students and others posing questions which

were fielded with varying levels of evasion and dissimulation by university controller Maureen Carpenter and vice president of finance and administration John Anderson – situation normal.

But, one could not fail to note that there is a now a new wrinkle in the communitarian ethos of campus; the aforementioned administrators attended "Conversations on 'Pro Humanitate'" accompanied by an armed bodyguard – Detective James Rae.

Hank Kennedy
Professor of Political Science

Columnist shows he has wrong priorities

In a week when headlines included the milestone of 2000 American men and women had died in Iraq and the news that the oil companies had made historic spoils thanks to hurricane devastation, the *Old Gold & Black* gave space to an editorial ("Talking the talk means modesty first," Oct. 29)

by a porn-toy whose major concern is whether he is owed the proper prediction of how good his blowjob will be.

He is using the wrong head. I hope the editors have not lost theirs.

Sometimes discretion and taste can be abandoned in the outrage of reporting about untenable events, but an editorial on a trivial topic that insults many on this campus could be abandoned altogether.

This is not for censorship of the column, but for good sense and sensibilities.

Annie Lutin
Sophomore

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