



'It's for charity. It's not like a wet T-shirt contest.'

Brittany Howell, Alpha Delta Pi chapter president, on the chapter's fund-raiser for the Ronald McDonald House

The Gamecock

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'Smart Card' IDs needed at Carolina

Imagine this: With one swipe of your ID card, you could do your laundry, buy a late-night soft drink from your residence hall's vending machine, withdraw money from your checking account, make copies or even buy your books.

That scenario is becoming a reality at more and more schools across the nation that are implementing "Smart Cards."

These cards look and feel just like the ID card all USC students have right now, but with one difference: Smart Cards contain a computer chip that stores data about the student. USC is lagging behind other schools in the region (including Duke, Florida State, Tennessee and UNC) in getting this one-card technology in place.

Implementing such a system at USC would not only be a great convenience for students, but it could also help the university form some potential moneymaking ventures with outside vendors who could allow students to use their cards to make purchases.

While this system is exciting to think about and should be implemented as soon as possible, administrators should beware of problems other schools that have implemented Smart Card technology have faced. Some schools have had issues surrounding the accidental release of private information about students, which is protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Still, schools that have had such problems are finding solutions, and the clock is ticking for USC to jump on the Smart Card bandwagon.

Moolah for Music weekend successful

WUSC-FM enjoyed a successful Moolah for Music campaign this past weekend. The station earned about \$2,300 in pledges.

The event suspended the music policy of no Top 40 artists from the past 40 years beginning Friday at noon and ending at midnight Sunday, allowing DJs to play whatever they wanted and fill the requests of listeners.

The minimum bid that a listener could make for a request was \$5. The largest single donation of the Weekend was \$250. The donor was crowned "the Grand Moolah" at 11:50 p.m. Sunday and won a free pair of tickets to see every show at the Elbow Room and the New Brookland Tavern for the next year. The second highest donor gave \$240 and won a bike courtesy of Outspokin'.

The New Brookland Tavern will be host to WUSC benefit week this week. Bands will play there each night through Sunday in an effort to continue raising money for the station.

The donation total for the weekend was a big improvement from last semester's embarrassing '80s weekend total.

WUSC has improved greatly this semester thanks to a dedicated executive staff and plenty of talented, hard-working DJs.

COLLEGE PRESS EXCHANGE



NATIONAL ISSUES

Americans overly egotistical

America - the great melting pot of ethnicity, religions and ideals - has unfortunately spawned some self-righteous, pro-United States and anti-everyone-else individuals. These are people whose ideas, when rising to the surface, are quick to judge and embarrassing to the people whose pride in this country is wholehearted and stands against bigotry.



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Yes, we are a privileged society, when compared to Third World countries and the poorest sections of ancient, established societies in the Western world. Our president is called the leader of the free world for a reason; it's not an opinion that we are a great nation, that we are superior in the technical sense. We have the longest-standing established government in history, a current financial abundance and extremely low unemployment.

It's too bad that ignorance makes some people scream too loudly about our prominence, which is in poor taste and reflects badly upon our relatively new society, in the eyes of other countries.

Think about how the English must view us when we visit and boast about our freedom and top-notch accommodations here. To us, England is no longer our mother country, but it was not too long ago that we were England's children. They must see us as spoiled brats.

Other countries know us as self-consumed supremacists with a lack of understanding or care for the world around us, which offends me. It's the travelers who poorly represent America (does the term "ugly Americans" sound familiar?) and convey that image to other countries. Add that to what these countries see on the news about our sectional differences and internal problems, and they'd have no reason to believe otherwise - that we are instead an open-minded, well-structured and gracious community.

Our little Confederate flag issue has made the European news and has spread among other countries, too. These countries wonder why we're racist, and I'll bet we just say we're not, spout the words "heritage, not hate" and go on to the next question.

They ask about Columbine High School and the fact that we have pro-life advocates murdering legal abortion doctors, and I can only wonder what we tell them to defend our "perfect" image.

I'll bet that the fact that we have the highest mortality rate by handguns in the world isn't our No. 1 public relations line.

The most pathetic truth of all, however, is the fact that less than 50 percent of eligible voters cast their ballots in presidential elections. That's a number that bigots cannot stand by when spouting their ethnic slurs and waving the stars and stripes.

To truly honor our country, we must rid ourselves of the lie that we are a perfect land because we do, indeed, have flaws that need knowledgeable voters to fix them.

Perhaps we students are the victims of an overly confident nation that doesn't care to understand the complexities of its existence. Maybe that's why we think we can talk down to anyone from anywhere else in the world, silently gushing our self-righteousness for being born "American."

None of us were born "American" except the natives of our land, who were forced off without enough time to realize that immigrants were invading this beautiful country - those immigrants from whom we have descended.

I am a proud descendent of folks who traveled to Ellis Island to search for a better way, and I can only hope they were neither victims nor promoters of the deep-rooted hatred that exists today within sections and ethnic groups of our nation.

The Statue of Liberty holds her torch for all of us and was a gift from another country to honor our United States. Let's not give into egotism and too much comfort because our nation is in a time of great prosperity and strength. Degradation for people's differences is not what this country stands for - it stands for open arms and diversity.

"They say, 'We're looking for illegal immigrants - can we check your car?' I say, 'You know it's funny, I think we were on the same boat back in 1694.'" -Indigo Girls

STATE ISSUES

Hurricanes should be taken very seriously

Meteorologists have a rough job. For some odd reason, people, while always skeptical of meteorologists' ability to accurately predict the weather, prepare themselves for the conditions predicted by forecasters. So, guess who gets the bad rap for an unpredicted rain shower or thunderstorm?

Yet, in one aspect, people should remain doubtful of the current means of weather forecasting, despite the field's increasing ability to predict with new technology. Of course, tornadoes are the most unpredictable phenomena, while hurricanes, seemingly easy to predict, still pose a huge threat to residents along the Southeast and even the Northeast coast. South Carolina coastal residents, especially, should be wary of this coming hurricane season.

Dr. William Gray of Colorado State University, the premier forecaster on hurricanes, has predicted that this hurricane season will be quieter than the past few seasons. Gray attributes this to the dwindling effect of La Nina - a warming of Pacific Ocean waters that allows for conducive upper atmospheric conditions in the Atlantic during the summer. Gray has called for nine hurricanes to form in the Atlantic, three of these developing into major hurricanes (winds greater than 115 mph).

Despite this forecast from Gray, S.C. coastal residents must maintain a skeptical outlook on this prediction, just as most people disbelieve everyday weather forecasts. While Gray's predictions usually accurately foretell the season, every season since 1997 has seen more named storms than Gray has called for. Gray retools his predictions mid-season, and he always ups the number of storms because of unexpected tropical storms and hurricanes.

The problem with Gray's prediction this year is that it can instill a lackadaisical attitude among beach dwellers. With the claim of a quieter season and the near miss of Hurricane Floyd in September '99, these residents, especially those new to the Low-country since 1989 might be less willing to concern themselves with the threat of a killer storm. However, those who survived the awful wrath of Hurricane Hugo will forever stay on the lookout for a major hurricane.

Yet, in the past decade, with an unprecedented economic boom, more and more people, especially Northerners, have invested in the coastal regions of the South. And why not? Humanity has been seduced by the lures of the coast since time began. With its gorgeous landscape or tempting climate, the coast always draws us near. But with our obsession with beaches comes this annual phenomenon that always threatens to destroy our paradise.

People cannot afford to take this prediction lightly. When they do, a killer storm strikes with amazing vengeance - it seems to never fail. Hardly anybody truly believed Hugo would cause such widespread destruction.

The chances of a major hurricane nailing the S.C. coast this season are considered slim, but it is still possible. Contrary to the odds, the possibility of a strong Category 4 or 5 hurricane landfall still exists, especially for South Carolina.

Despite the improvements in building codes and forecasting technology, coastal property owners and residents must remain skeptical this season of these advancements. The lives of South Carolinians are too important and the risk too costly.



Corey Ford is a liberal arts sophomore. The Viewpoints editor can be reached at gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com

LETTERS

Housing should show respect for seniors

Once again, the USC Department of Housing has failed me. After living on campus for the past three years, I have become accustomed to the ease that is associated with living on campus. Unfortunately, I have also learned that the housing assignment process desperately needs to be changed.

After receiving my housing assignment for the fall semester, I am outraged. As a rising senior, I was assured that I would receive my first or second choice of housing. As is standard, I have been assigned to my SEVENTH choice, a somewhat freshman dorm. After spending the past three years of my college education here at USC, I thought that I would see some senior privileges, but I was mistaken.

My frustration led me to the Department of Housing. There, I learned that I was not alone in my distress. Countless other seniors had also experienced the same treatment. When I asked how this had happened to so many students, the response I received was that housing is determined by random assignment. Now, wait a minute. I have been told since I lived here that housing is determined by CREDIT HOURS, and now it's done by random assignment? It turns out that we have all been duped by the housing system. Every student with

60 or more credit hours is put into a group. Then by lottery, we are assigned a number. The number you receive determines your housing assignment, if you have one at all. How fair is that? After all, I have worked my tail off to get out of this place, and this is the thanks I get? And if housing is assigned randomly, it sure is a coincidence that the football players all manage to get assigned to South Quad. What is even more upsetting to me is the fact that because of the way the housing system works now, I have friends who are juniors with 60-65 hours who received assignment in East Quad. I currently reside in South Quad. Shouldn't I, as a rising senior, at least receive assignment in the same dorm that I currently live in?

Until USC changes the housing assignment process, I think that they will see many students finding cheaper and more suitable accommodations off-campus.

April Coker
Advertising Junior

Sexist ad degrading to women

Accolades to The Gamecock's ad team for their clever caricature of a sexist workplace! I'm referencing, of course, the advertisement for Secretaries' Day inviting bosses to submit ads to The Gamecock honoring their "secretar[ies], administrative specialist[s], etc." The ad's teaming of the already sexist "behind every great man is a (great?) woman" with "we believe behind every great boss is a great secretary" subtly reinforces the Cro-Magnon assumption that all bosses are male and all secretaries, naturally, female. The cartoon, too, is another witty lampoon of gender stereotypes. Here, the mustached, power-tie-wearing alpha-boss compliments the beta-boss on the quality of a report he turned in on a close deadline. The grinning beta-boss thinks to himself, "I've gotta show Wanda how much I appreciate her help." Wanda smiles indulgently from her overloaded desk that's decorated with a "Secretaries Rule!" bumper sticker (her gift from last Secretaries' Day?). Clearly, as our beta-boss is about to realize, an ad is the best way to thank the Wandas of the world. Giving them raises, paying them what they're worth, endowing them with benefits and giving them credit for their input are all inferior rewards - if they weren't, Wanda would have had her own thought balloon saying so, right? Again, thanks for your blast-from-the-past parody of the sexist working environment we've all left well behind us. I mean, we have left it, haven't we?

Martha Wright
Print Journalism Sophomore

ABOUT US

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Both must include name, phone number, professional title or year and major, if a student. Handwritten submissions must be personally delivered to Russell House room 333. E-mail submissions must include telephone number for confirmation.
The Gamecock reserves the right to edit for libel, style and space. Anonymous letters will not be published. Photos are required for guest columnist and can be provided by the submitter.
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