



'It's like giving birth to a baby. Is it a lawyer, a doctor, or is it gonna end up in prison?'

Lou Holtz, USC head football coach, on National Signing Day

The Gamecock

Serving the Carolina Community since 1908

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Board of trustees needs to pass BGLA resolution

Student Government did something Wednesday they shouldn't have had to do — they passed a resolution supporting the Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Alliance's drive to add sexual orientation to the university's anti-discrimination policy.

We applaud SG for the move, but we're sorry they had to pass such a resolution, because it should have been done long ago. There shouldn't be a debate about the issue of discrimination based on sexual preference; even if you don't agree with BGLA, it's hard to say you don't support equality.

On the other hand, some of the comments at the meeting concerned us, particularly remarks by Sen. Tyson Nettles, who felt it necessary to express his belief that homosexuality was a choice, not something you're born with. But that wasn't the issue. The issue was if there should be a policy banning a type of discrimination. Nettles' excuse for opposing the resolution doesn't cut it.

Overall, the student senate should be commended for its actions. Now, the board of trustees must follow SG's lead and pass a policy banning such discrimination from our campus. Let's hope they won't have to debate it.

USCPD right to hand out handicapped parking fines

It goes without saying that parking on campus is a problem. There are hardly enough spaces for students who drive to class or to the library or to the Russell House. But students have been parking their cars where they don't belong — in handicapped parking spaces.

It's a dismal task circling around campus looking for parking, but that's not an excuse to park in a restricted parking space, even if it's "just for a minute." The handicapped parking spaces are there for a reason — it gives a disabled driver or someone with a disabled passenger the easiest route to their destination, whether it's through the use of ramps or simply being closer to a door.

People take the use of their legs for granted and complain when they have to use them. But it's a lot easier to park far away and walk across campus than it is to navigate the broken sidewalks and uneven bricks in a wheelchair.

We commend the USC police for enforcing the fines on illegally parked cars and encourage them to start towing. Maybe then people will learn not to park where others belong.

ABOUT US

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ADDRESS
The Gamecock
1400 Greene Street
Columbia, SC 29208
Offices on third floor of the Russell House.

STUDENT MEDIA Area code 803
Advertising 777-3888
Classified 777-1184
Fax 777-6482
Office 777-3888

GAMECOCK Area code 803-777-7726
Editor in Chief gamecockeditor@hotmail.com
University Desk gamecockudesk@hotmail.com
City/State Desk gamecockcitydesk@hotmail.com
Viewpoints gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com
Spotlight gamecockspotlight@hotmail.com
Sports gamecocksports@hotmail.com
Online www.dailycgamecock.com

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Letters to the editor or guest columns are welcome from all members of the Carolina community. Letters should be 250-300 words. Guest columns should be an opinion piece of about 600 words.

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 and should be e-mailed to gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com.

The Gamecock reserves the right to edit for libel, style and space. Anonymous letters will not be published. Photos are required for guest columns and can be provided by the submitter.

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I THOUGHT YOU SAID CONSUMER CONFIDENCE WAS DOWN ...



STAR TRIBUNE

LAVATORY ART

Look at the writing on the wall

It's life's little intricacies that bring me the most joy. The subtleties that might go unnoticed or passed over by our senses that truly make life worth living. A newborn baby's first gasp of air, a solitary bluebird flitting across a cloud-speckled sky and ... bathroom graffiti. Often, it takes a conscious effort to notice these common, everyday blessings.



William Snyder is a third-year finance major. Reach him at gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com.

Few things have the power to brighten a gloomy day like reading "Sarah sucks good d***" above a urinal or "your mom gives good head" scratched into a mirror. Sadly, these devoted "spreaders of happiness" are often ridiculed for their deeds or scorned for their fifth-grade-level spelling.

So it's only fair that I dedicate this column to their labors and give thanks to those selfless poets who brighten the day of bathroom users everywhere.

How boring and depressing is a plain, unsullied bathroom wall? But even a simple expression like, "this place smells like s***," can breathe life into an otherwise mundane partition. These minstrels of the washroom pencil a touch of happiness into our lives.

'Few things have the power to brighten a gloomy day like reading "Sarah sucks good d***" above a urinal or "your mom gives good head" scratched into a mirror.'

I died laughing yesterday when I read "I f*** your momas" on one of the stall doors in LeConte. This permanent insult, directed at every innocent bathroom attendee, made my day. I even laughed out loud in class thinking about the author's use of the plural form of "mama," as it implies that he intended for four people to read the message simultaneously and to question his alleged fornication with their mothers.

Even better was the response: "Go home, Dad." The writer's plea to his supposed father to leave him alone and stop bragging about his sexual achievements had me laughing the rest of the day. Tell me bathroom vandalism has no place in our lives. These authors wrote joy into my heart.

Do these devoted bards confine their talents to bathroom walls and stall doors?

No. You can't fence in a passion to spread joy or put a leash on kindness. I was in the library the other day with book open and highlighter in hand. I was just about to give up, when I saw "SAE SUCKS" carved into the cubicle wall in front of me.

All of a sudden, my day got just a little brighter.

Two days ago, or maybe even months or years before, some guy had been sitting in that exact seat and been overcome with an intense hatred for SAE. I could almost see him. He hadn't thought to bring a pen, so he struggled to get his keys before this brief moment of inspiration passed him by. Steadying his nervous hand, he carved the words into the cubicle, meticulously going over each one to make sure his message would endure forever. Filled with an overwhelming sense of satisfaction with his work, he laid down his head and went to sleep.

"SAE SUCKS" guy, I'd like to thank you for brightening my day. Your kind is a dying breed.

Too few carry the torch and give unselfishly for the enjoyment of others. I hope this generosity and selfless devotion continues to appear on furniture and walls for years to come, bringing joy and happiness to all who read it. May you courageously fight for others in the war against monotony.

LETTERS

Students speak out about discrimination

To the editor:

In response to the letter written by David Richardson in the Wednesday, Feb. 7 issue of *The Gamecock*, I have never been so upset with a comment made by another individual. I can't decide what upsets me more: that the university let in such an ignorant person or that *The Gamecock* would even publish such an ignorant letter.

Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but Mr. Richardson's comment comparing the BGLA with the KKK or Nazis is just wrong. The BGLA is not a hate group, and fighting for an anti-discrimination policy is a cause we should all support. Being gay is not a disease or a sickness, and it doesn't make you a pervert or a criminal.

Unfortunately, Mr. Richardson probably doesn't realize how many people he knows or has class with who are gay and he offended. Unfortunately, it's ignorant people and comments like saying "gay people could ruin organizations" that keep a lot of gay people in the closet.

For those people who support the BGLA and their fight for the anti-discrimination policy, I applaud you. For people like Mr. Richardson who can't look past their stereotypes and biases, I feel sorry for you.

Karen Palmigiano
Third-year marine science student

To the Editor:

David Richardson's letter that appeared in the Feb. 7 issue of *The Gamecock*

only served to prove that ignorance is still rampant at our university. I was highly offended by Mr. Richardson's letter, which drew parallels between the BGLA and hate organizations like the Nazi Party and the Ku Klux Klan, and I am neither gay nor in the BGLA.

The BGLA is an organization that seeks to create a university environment in which every student's rights are protected. The amendment they propose serves this function and this function only. In introducing this amendment, they are not seeking to convert Mr. Richardson or other heterosexuals to homosexuality or to "disrupt or destroy other organizations," but instead to create equality for every member of this institution.

A basic tenet of democracy is that no individual has the right to legislate morality upon any other individual. Even if Mr. Richardson believes that homosexuality is immoral, neither he nor anyone else has the right to infringe upon the rights of another. In fact, if Mr. Richardson truly accepts the principles of democracy, he should laud the efforts of the BGLA for standing up and crying out against the injustices that discrimination carries with it.

I find it ludicrous and reprehensible that anyone could protest an amendment to our university's constitution that seeks only to prevent discrimination and promote equality among students. I may only hope that Mr. Richardson and those who agree with him realize the immorality of their views and support this amendment.

Jim MacBride
Third-year political science/history student

Columnist suffers from 'Clintonholism'

To the editor:

After reading Hamp Nettles' Feb. 7 column ("It's Clinton's legacy, stupid"), I feel it's my duty to alert Mr. Nettles and all others of the conservative mindset to a growing problem within their community: Clintonholism. Those who are Clintonholics have spent nine years bashing Bill Clinton at every possible opportunity since he declared his candidacy for the 1992 election. They are the ones who attempted, or supported the attempts, to oust Clinton from office, resulting in a \$40 million tab for the taxpayers, with no results. They are the ones who continually talked about the "fresh start" that the Bush administration would provide. And though Bush is now in the White House, they can't let go of their obsession with Clinton. We see it on MSNBC's *Hardball*, on Fox News, in the Rev. Sun Yung Moon's *The Washington Times*, on the Web-based News-Max.com; and of course, on the syndicated talk radio programs such as Rush Limbaugh and G. Gordon Liddy. A casual observer would believe we are still in the days leading up to the Clinton impeachment. What's the problem? Are they just unable to let go? Are they simply trying to divert attention from the flaws and fumbles of their own Chosen One? I suggest that President Bush's faith-based charities use their federal funds to sponsor Clintonholics Anonymous — a 12-step program to help conservatives fight their addiction to Bill Clinton. Perhaps then they'll be able to look to the present with a clear eye.

John Vincent
Spanish graduate student

Allow us smokers to croak in peace

It would appear that the intelligence of the United States has gone straight to hell. I could point to numerous occurrences that would prove my point, but I choose instead to focus on something a little closer to home — cigarettes.



Michelle Pittman is a second-year journalism major. Reach him at gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com.

Tobacco is a right of passage in American society. Who doesn't remember their first drag of a filthy, nasty cigarette? Lungs filling up with smoke, immediately shriveling up in protest as your throat mourns the loss of cilia and a headache comes on quickly. Yet somehow, smokers have persevered, moving past all of this to fully enjoy their addiction.

Blame it on peer pressure — on the undeniable urge to be "cool" — but don't dare say smokers are so stupid they were influenced by a lovable camel or the rugged Marlboro Man. I've yet to see a smoker wearing spurs and a cowboy hat just because the product was marketed to them in that format.

To counteract the evils of big tobacco in my life, my television has started to reprimand me. The Super Bowl ads were the worst.

I'm sitting around watching the game with friends, enjoying a fine blend of Turkish and American tobaccos, when all of a sudden, 14-year-old karate masters are telling me cigarettes will ruin my dreams, rip my family apart and basically cause me to be a total failure. All that for \$3 a pack? We should be taking care of this.

But hold on a minute — people have been smoking for a couple thousand years now. Somehow, this nasty habit has lasted. I've come to a simple realization — people like to try and kill themselves in any way possible. What else can explain drunk driving rates, illicit drug use, people who don't stop and look both ways before crossing the street? It's a secret death wish!

Really, cigs present an image. James Dean never looked better than he did with a butt dangling from his mouth or loosely held in his hands. Cigarettes say "rebel" in a way that a Nicotrol inhaler never will. The sad truth is that we smokers have bought into it, and meanwhile, got caught up in the addiction.

But it's even more than that. If it were just a matter of habit or co-dependence, I could just be chomping on some nicotine gum instead of chain smoking. What else am I supposed to do when I'm bored or hungry or anxious — other than smoke? And really, it's not like it's heroin.

No amount of nagging or begging will get a smoker to give up his identity, because that's what a cigarette becomes. All of the friends I made freshman year were met on "Smoker's Row" outside of Bates House. Parents left, and everyone lit up. It's what college kids do.

One of these days, I'll be in an iron lung and looking back on my "indestructible" years, wishing I had thought differently. But for now, there's not much that can be done to stop a smoker.

So please, all non-smokers, let's make a pact. If you stop nagging and complaining about how bad the smoke smells, we'll stop blowing it in your face. We've already been exiled outdoors, and I get dirty looks for smoking in bars. I don't really see much of a difference between emphysema and liver failure. They're both horrible.

I just want to destroy myself in peace. I don't want to see any more commercials telling me what to do, and I don't want random strangers coming up and telling me "That's bad for you, ya know." Really? I thought the sore throat and hacking cough were signs of good health. Small wonder.

Just let us smoke, and when we've all died at the ripe old age of 35, every single non-smoker can dance on our graves and say, "I told you so."