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**WEATHER**

◆ **TODAY** ◆ **WED.**

High 73 Low 55    High 77 Low 49

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## DeMint visits Russell House

■ *Senate candidate doesn't address comment that gays shouldn't teach*

By TAYLOR SMITH  
THE GAMECOCK

About 60 USC students packed into a room of the Russell House to hear Republican U.S. Senate candidate Jim DeMint and former U.S. House Majority Leader Dick Army talk about social security.

DeMint spoke just one day after his debate with Democratic candidate Inez Tenenbaum, when he said gays should not be allowed to teach in public schools. DeMint did not speak about his controversial comment or take questions.

Student Government President Zachery Scott, who is gay, attended the news conference so he could ask DeMint to clarify his statement.

"I know in a debate you can say things

off the top of your head and it not come out right," Scott said. "He had the opportunity to retract that and he has not, so I don't think that is the case."

Scott said he felt DeMint's statement was like "trying to divide South Carolina like it was 1964 instead of 2004."

"I think that most South Carolinians will agree that being a dedicated teacher has nothing to do with being male or female, black or white, Democrat or Republican, gay or straight. And I think a man of his credentials should know better than to say something like that," Scott said.

DeMint did use the 20-minute news conference with the USC College Republicans to discuss the "ailing" Social Security system and DeMint's proposed plan for fixing it.

"It is very important right now," said Randy Dargan, co-chairman of the USC College Republicans. "Because it isn't the people who are about to get Social

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SARAH ZILINSKY/THE GAMECOCK

Jim DeMint speaks about Social Security during Monday's news conference, as former GOP House leader Dick Army looks on.

## Students question fire drills' necessity

By JON TURNER  
THE GAMECOCK

USC's fire marshal said complying with fire drills can be a problem at an institution that requires drills and is plagued by false alarms.

Todd Griffin, a Columbia fire marshal who is assigned to USC, said minor accidents and false alarms could contribute to the problem but, for the most part, alarms serve a crucial role acquainting USC students with emergency evacuation procedures.

Matthew Roberts, a first-year

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## HOMECOMING 2004



NICK ESARES/THE GAMECOCK

Amy Buchanan-Feinberg, a fourth-year Spanish student, works on her make-up backstage at the Koger Center before the Carolina Showcase.

## Behind the Showcase scenes

By LaDONNA BEEKER  
THE GAMECOCK

The curtain was about to rise in USC's Homecoming Showcase, and backstage the 10 finalists waited for their introduction. They could hear fans yelling names and cheering from the other side of the curtain.

The finalists wished each other luck while waiting their turn to be introduced by USC

alumnus Darci Strickland to the judges and show off their business attire. Most of the contestants never participated in an event like the showcase, so they found themselves deciding which outfit to wear.

But most importantly, they were hoping the judges liked the talents they displayed. The finalists chose talents that were extracurricular activities or speeches that were expected to encourage the audience.

"I have danced all of my life, but never in this context," said Ginni Campbell, a fourth-year business student. Many finalists agreed with Campbell when she said that although she performed in front of an audience plenty of times, this audience was different because it was full of their classmates, friends and family.

The cheering from the audience was uplifting for the contestants, they said.

"It was truly an unexpected boost of energy,"

said Cori Alston, second runner-up for King and a fourth-year criminal justice student. After each finalist completed the talent section of the Showcase, they asked each other nervously if anyone knew what the interview question would be.

Tyler Jeffrey, a third-year advertising student who was named Homecoming King, was the last

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## VICE PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

### Cheney, Edwards clash on Iraq

By TOM RAUM  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

**CLEVELAND** — Sen. John Edwards accused the Bush administration Tuesday night of bungling the war in Iraq and presiding over a historic loss of jobs. "Your facts are just wrong," Vice President Dick Cheney shot back in a crackling campaign debate.

In a clash at close quarters, Edwards accused Cheney of "not being straight" with the American people about the war. He said U.S. casualties are rising monthly and the United States is bearing 90 percent of the cost and suffering 90 percent of the dead and wounded.

Cheney promptly challenged those figures, saying the Iraqi security forces had taken nearly half of the casualties.

"For you to demean their sacrifice is beyond the pale," he said to Edwards, seated a few feet away.

"Oh, I'm not," Edwards protested before the vice president cut him off.

The debate format encouraged give-and-take, and neither the vice president nor Sen. John Kerry's running mate shrank from the task.

"Frankly, senator, you have a record that's not very distinguished," Cheney said to the North Carolina lawmaker after accusing him of a pattern of absences in the Senate during his one term.

Edwards summed up his points like the former trial lawyer he is.

In a jab at the Bush-Cheney campaign's claim on experience, he said, "Mr. Vice President, I don't think the country can take four more years of this type of experience."

He also said that as a member of Congress more than a decade ago, Cheney voted against Head Start and banning plastic guns that can escape detection in metal detectors.

Edwards was on the attack from the

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**"Frankly, senator, you have a record that's not very distinguished."**

DICK CHENEY  
VICE PRESIDENT

**"Mr. Vice President, I don't think the country can take four more years of his type of experience."**

JOHN EDWARDS  
VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

## Vice Presidential Facts

- ★ If the vice president has to fill in for the president, his salary is bumped to that of the president's for the days he served as president.
- ★ New York and Illinois have produced the most veeps.
- ★ Only 26 vice presidents have served out the role for which they were elected.
- ★ John Tyler became president in April 1841 after William Harrison died only a month into his term as president.
- ★ It was Tyler, who became president after Harrison died in office, who established a precedent of vice president replacing president in any needed event until the Constitution was ratified to deem it as such in 1967.
- ★ Constitutionally, the vice president has only two jobs: to cast the deciding vote in the U.S. Senate in the event of a tie and be sworn in as president should the president die or be removed from office. For most of American history, that is all the vice president has done.
- ★ Daniel D. Tompkins, vice president under James Monroe, was mentioned in "Miracle on 42nd Street."

Sources: Poynter.org, Voice of America, WordIQ.com