Homecoming changes needed more thought

In her College handbook, author Lisa Birnbach called Homecoming Week, particularly Cockfest, Carolina’s biggest tradition. It may not be the biggest, but Homecoming is a great tradition. Like anything else, though, it didn’t become a tradition by going through the wringer of modification every year. Last year some changes, some minor, some major, some dictated by outside forces, some made on the basis of willful choices by the Homecoming Commission. Some are good, some are bad.

One thing missing this year will be the Homecoming parade. Instead of floats, we have student-made signs on campus. This puts the only chance most people, students and alumni alike, had to see the work of student groups. Everyone must trek to McBryde Quad or Gibbes Green.

Reasons given for tying down the floats include the cost and trouble of making a float. The idea is that the cost and logistics of finding a truck and trailer to haul them is something only a few organizations are equipped for.

It’s good that we be wise, but planning the floats as stationary displays is no solution, especially when the primary location for the displays is McBryde Quad. The purpose of getting more groups involved, because by sequestering the displays among the fraternity housing area, they are away from more common areas, such as Greene Street, the Rose Thomas patio or the Horseshoe.

To be sure, the Quad is open to everyone and everyone is welcome to see the displays. And Greek organizations are probably the best at building homecoming displays (and floats). But putting displays in their midst, especially where they are surrounded by buildings, can’t really be expected to encourage participation from sororities, religious organizations, dorm governments, professional and honor societies and other student groups.

On the other hand, the plans for allowing beer at the Outdoor Concert this afternoon are to be commended. The idea of giving wristbands to concertgoers 19 or older is a sound solution to the dilemma of having a dry concert that no one would go to, or facing an open free-for-all rampant with underage drinkers.

It’s sad of course, that we must think that a dry concert would be a flop, but this is a fact of life at Carolina, and at most universities today.

It’s good to remember the comment made by Jerry Brewer, director of Student Activities: “We want students to be able to make their own choice about what they want to drink, and we don’t feel it should be the emphasis of the event. The main focus of this event is to listen to the bands, have a coke, beer or hot dogs on a Friday afternoon and celebrate Homecoming.”

That’s a good perspective. Have a great Homecoming weekend.

Opinion

Letters

Do not condemn journalists for doing work

To the Editor:

This is in response to Teoti Anderson’s letter in the September 28th issue of The Gamecock's coverage of the Bobbi Ross tragedy.

In ancient times, monarchs often killed messengers who brought bad tidings from the battlefield. The temptation is great even today to blame newspapers for the world’s ills. They make convenient targets for those with no other recourse.

To all concerned, as Anderson charges, journalists do commit abuses, cloaking themselves in the First Amendment as if those 45 words were a blank check authorizing any exploitation of human suffering.

The Gamecock's handling of the Ross case doesn’t fall into this category so far as I can see. Throughout the last two issues, we brought news of the investigation to many students who didn’t have access to other news media. Should the campus paper look the other way, or suppress the developments on page 5, because of their shocking and tragic nature? Hardly.

Yes, those front-page headlines were horrifying, but because of the facts themselves, not because of any attempt at sensationalism. Such needless deaths strike somewhere deep within the hearts of all of us. Pincering as the feeling is, it gives us the right to call ourselves human.”

Anderson writes, “Those who loved Bobbi Ross could only wonder if she was murdered, not how she died.” That’s certainly true. But in our grief, we must not unjustly look out at the messenger who brought us the terrible news. That would be like calling on a campus that should be of one mind on this issue above all others: Preventing something like this from ever happening again.

Andy Duncan
Journalism junior

Apartment deficiencies need to be corrected

To the Editor:

I would like the following letter printed as a letter to the editor. A letter outlining some of these problems recently appeared in The State newspaper headlined "U.S.C. Housing Needs Renovation." A: Mr. Allen Shealy, Director of Family Housing, Residential Life Services.

Dear Mr. Shealy:

My name is Emily Younginger. I live in Middle U T Apartments. I have lived here for almost a year and thank the Lord I will probably be out of here at the end of this year.

I didn’t complain to you when I moved into a filthy apartment that hadn’t been cleaned or painted (although I did complain about the following: hazardous railings, insufficient heat in the winter, insufficient cooling in the summer because of restricted air flow and of B.T.U.’s of air conditioners, parking, etc.). Some of these problems are not dangerous and some do indeed pose a real threat to the very lives of those who live here.

I think that is unresponsible of those in charge to let these dangers go unchecked.

Well, the purpose of this letter is not to cover “old ground,” but to point to another danger. When it comes to my daughter’s well-being I demand action.

This pitiful excuse for a playground which my child and others have to play in is bad enough without it posing a potential danger to their well-being. The big kids play in it and hit the balls hard enough to seriously injure a smaller child (and the playground is too small to separate the children). So, let’s do something about this before that happens!

Also, all the roots sticking out of the ground are a real hazard on the playground — not to mention swaying the fence in front of the apartment.

We’ve told Sandy (U T Resident Manager) about these problems for months.

Student Senate busy on parking problem

To the Editor:

In response to the letters regarding the parking problem at USC, published in Monday’s and Wednesday’s issues of The Gamecock, let it be said that both the student government and the university are currently addressing the issue.

As all concerned know, the problem was compounded by the city’s uncared ordinance and new meters. If there exists a way to undo the damage done in the neighborhood around Columbia and Capstone, you can be sure that Sen. Eddie Zahler and myself will work hard to find some resolution. Our goal is to provide a level of parking for students that is fair to all. We are currently assisting the Student Senate in working on parking problems.

Ed and I are also working with university officials to pave, light and just plain better utilize Pendleton Street and to do anything else possible to increase convenience.

If anybody else has a complaint or question about student government being worthless, they may seek us out at home or contact me through my senate mailbox, but please don’t show me your ignorance by writing accusatory letters without getting your facts first.

Furthermore, a meeting was called so that Sen. Zahler and I could solicit help in our undertaking. Notices were posted on all signs in Pendleton Street lots, but Mr. Ramsey was not in attendance. As for Jim Lamb’s great parking space, it is two miles away, at his house, the man walks to work.

Ken H. Evans
Student Senate A.G.O. Committee