

the tobacco farmer

BRANDON BATTEN

Out where the soil becomes the sandy mix of the coastal plain. Out where they call it 'Down East.'

Out *there*, it's tobacco country.

Money may not grow on trees, but the broad green leaves were certainly the next best thing. Long the mainstay of North Carolina's economy, tobacco practically built the state. With the fortunes of the tobacco companies, so went the state.

But now, tobacco companies are going elsewhere.

With an onslaught of imported tobacco sold at cut-throat prices, tobacco companies are increasingly buying not from North Carolinians, but from farmers abroad, leaving the state's primary crop reeling.

For Brandon Batten, a freshman planning to get a masters in bio-engineering, his family and tobacco farmers across the state are at a crossroads. Looming over their heads, farmers will soon decide if they will take the money from the tobacco buyout and quit, or continue growing the crop in a tenuous future.

"We've definitely got a decision to make," Brandon said on his family farm.

And its not going to be a simple decision to make.

Their small farm in Johnston county, 45-minutes south-east of Raleigh, is not just a minor investment. The Battens have a stake in some 300 acres, hundreds of thousands of dollars, countless hours and something more important to them: a way of life. Three generations have tilled those soils — for Brandon, his father Doug and his grandfather Charlie, spanning nearly 70 years, this is no simple matter. The Battens and farmers across the nation's largest tobacco-producing state stand to take the largest chunk, \$3.8 billion, of a \$10.1 billion bailout of the tobacco quota buyout spread over 10 years.

Part of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal policy, tobacco quotas artificially propped up prices for the crop; keeping supply low via managing the amount farmers could grow. Some called it agrarian-socialism, but the effects of the quotas can't be denied. Top-quality tobacco brings profits, multiple that of soybeans, over a similar acreage, another crop the Battens grow.

Is the crop the most lucrative farmers can grow in North Carolina? "Legally, yes sir," Brandon said. "It's by far the most profitable, we just don't have the means to compete with the bread basket."

But facing increasing competition from tobacco produced abroad, local farmers have seen their quotas wither away. This year's tobacco allotment allowed the Battens to grow the crop in 39 of 100 acres that their equipment could handle. Running at a severely reduced rate, the family doesn't like to think that they are producing at a reduced capacity. "I like to think we're running at



100 percent efficiency, just with less crop," Brandon said.

Dressed in snug jeans, a comfortable plaid flannel shirt and N.C. State cap, Brandon repeatedly took an optimistic position about the future of tobacco farming, but his father, Doug, was a bit more cautious. Standing alongside his son in an expansive shed containing a small fortune

in farm equipment, the elder Batten said that while quotas give back a good return on tobacco grown, it also has essentially kept one hand tied behind his back.

"We as farmers have no control over the quota cuts," Doug Batten said.

That all changed earlier that day.

"The President signed the bill at lunch time," Brandon said. On Oct. 22, after working its way through the House and Senate, attached to a \$136 billion corporate tax bill, the tobacco quota buyout after years of discussion finally became a reality.

Paying \$7 per quota, the buyout will lift the planting restrictions but will also pull the safety net from farmers. Though farmers will be free to grow as much tobacco as they wish, prices will be dictated by market forces and are likely to go down.

"It'll be similar to, say, chickens — if you can find a buyer, you can sell it," Brandon said.

The Battens will take a wait-and-see attitude toward their future. "How much [tobacco companies] are willing to pay will help us make our decision whether or not this is justifiable for us to continue growing," Doug Batten said.

With the sweet smelling tobacco waiving in the air, held in one of the 10 nearby trailer-sized silos, part of large investment the Battens have made, quitting seems like an unlikely option.

All of this, though, could not have happened outside of an election year. Gunning for the Senate, candidates Richard Burr and Erskine Bowles have played heavy rolls in the bill's passage.

With three major seats on the ballot this year, Brandon, less than two weeks before the election, has yet to make a decision regarding for whom he will vote.

"We've never been really political — you don't see a lot of signs in our yard," he says. An undecided 18-year-old and first-time voter, he is a prime target by all campaigns.

"As far as what candidates I like, I can't say either way. I don't know who I will be voting for, but I will be taking advantage of my privilege," Brandon said.

And that vote could be the largest input he has on the future of the tobacco industry and his way of life.

"I hope that I still have a future in tobacco farming," he said. "Right now I don't know. That's what I've grown up doing, that's what I enjoy doing."

BY T.S. AMARASIRIWARDENA

TECHNICIAN | RED | 10.28.2004 | 17

profile
Examining a
national news
story by connecting
to a local subject.



Aeronautics professor Fred DeJarnette displays the Mars Airplane, with the Mars Tumbleweed behind him. Both were designed by N.C. State engineering students in partnership with NASA.

GIANT LEAP

MANKIND'S NEXT GIANT LEAP WILL TAKE ITS FIRST FOOTSTEPS AT N.C. STATE.

STORY BY THUSHAN AMARASIRIWARDENA | PHOTOS BY TIM LYTVINENKO

As most students were making their plans for the weekend last Friday afternoon, a small group of aerospace engineering students gathered in Riddick Hall to make their plans for, well, a little more ambitious goal: Mars.

With President George W. Bush's recent directive to "take the next steps of space exploration: human missions to Mars and to worlds beyond," aeronautics professor, Fred DeJarnette said that N.C. State will become an increasingly important player in that effort.

And with that, NCSU students themselves will have a major role in the mission.

THE TUMBLEWEED

The six students gathered in Riddick Hall will continue work on a novel type of exploration vehicle with NASA's Langley Research Center that may eventually land on the red soils of Mars.

William Engler, a senior in aeronautics, and part of the team, snapped at the "chance to be a pioneer."



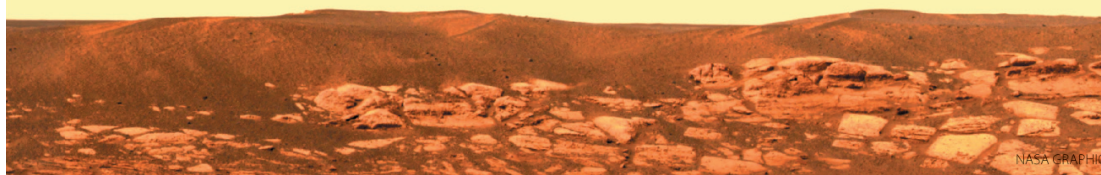
P.J. Aspesi, a senior in biological sciences, works with Arabidopsis plants, for micro-gravity experiments from a grant funded by NASA.

Engler and fellow classmates will take off where last year's class left off, further developing the Mars Tumbleweed rover, built on a seemingly obvious concept; why power a rover with wheels and motors when one can harness the winds of Mars to blow a vehicle across

the surface?

The Mars Tumbleweed, designed on a similar premise as the plant of its namesake, is a spherical lattice with large internal sails that capture the wind to propel it and its payload

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feature news
Localizing a
national news by
writing a in-depth
feature news story.

MARS

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along the terrain of Mars.

DeJarnette, along with Nham Lam, a former NCSU student and current research associate, will lead the class in designing a deployment system and solar panels to power instruments on the tumbleweed this semester.

Lam, who worked on earlier development of the Mars Tumbleweed, described last year's two-semester project. Designed from scratch, the nine-member team spent its first two weeks whittling away four major concepts to one that could efficiently harness Mars' winds.

"Believe it or not - we took a couple ideas from a sixth grade class," Lam said. "Their imaginations are crazy," he said with a laugh.

DeJarnette said that the sixth graders helped come up with concepts that, well, adults might not think of. "They're very inquisitive and ask questions that we would not think of looking into," he said.

Upending classroom tables on their sides in a row, with a fan at its end, the class constructed a wind tunnel where they would test concept ideas.

Within weeks the team had centered in on a design, much like a box kite, and began to work on the finer details in the aerospace department's own wind tunnel.

By the end of the year the team had constructed a model, nicknamed TED (Tumbleweed Earth Demonstrator).

Because Earth's atmosphere is denser than Mars', the group developed a smaller scale model that would react to winds here. TED, designed out of a Kevlar frame and Nylon sails, stands two meters tall, little more than your average person.

A Mars Tumbleweed, Lam said, would have to be about three

times larger, at about two stories tall. While TED was a rigid, fully formed tumbleweed, a Mars version would be compressed and inflated on Mars according to design specs.

There on the surface, it would move across the surface at 10-35 miles an hour depending on wind speeds.

At the core of the tumbleweed DeJarnette said, would be a payload containing devices such as a video camera, GPS system (which would require the construction of such a system over the planet) and atmospheric measurement instruments.

"[The engineers at Langley] were impressed at how far we were with construction," because the team had constructed and tested TED in the span of two semesters, Lam said.

While the tumbleweed would not be able to analyze rocks and would have to follow the wind's whim, DeJarnette and Lam harked on the cost effectiveness of the project.

"NASA will spend millions on simple things like wind tunnel models, we spent thousands — on everything. Students with low resources are a bit more prudent with them," Lam said with a grin discussing the development costs of the project.

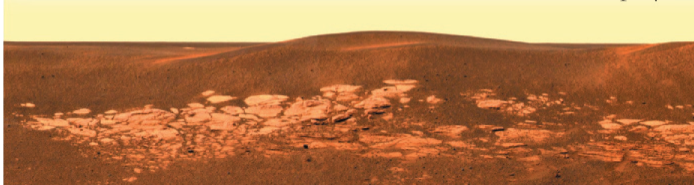
DeJarnette expounded on estimates that by piggy-backing on a major mission, Mars Tumbleweed, because of its low space and weight requirements, would cost only around \$50 million, far lower than the twin Spirit and Opportunity missions that are currently underway on the red planet.

Complementing robotic missions, a dozen or so tumbleweeds could be deployed across the planet to roam, covering great distances and gathering a lot of science at a very low cost.

But will it fly?

"It better," Lam said.

DeJarnette said that deploy-





TIM LYTVINENKO/TECHNICIAN

Nham Lam, a research associate, and Fred DeJarnette plan out part of their design class which will refine the design of the Mars Tumbleweed rover.

ment talks are 5-10 years down the road.

Until that time, freshmen such as Katya Casper will be able to work on the project, and as she said, "get a chance to do something that's related to my course work [and gets used]."

Lam's work at NCSU opened doors for him to co-op at NASA.

Others such as Jordan Schwarz, a senior in aerospace engineering, joined the project for altruistic reasons, the opportunity "to work on a project that benefits mankind and the community," was too good to pass up.

MARS MISSION RESEARCH CENTER

In a large three-story bay on Centennial Campus, TED hangs from the ceiling. There, other projects from N.C. State's long-standing partnership with NASA are kept. The bay is part of the Mars Mission Research Center (MMRC), created in 1989 to lead efforts to land on Mars.

With a pilot grant of \$5 million, the center stretched it out over

seven years. As national "priorities for going to Mars started dropping [in the '90s] so did the funding," DeJarnette said. Since then, funding has continued through smaller grants.

"We're very anxious to make proposals to NASA [for further funding] for the center," DeJarnette said in reference to the president's new directive where an additional \$1 billion will be infused into NASA.

At its peak, 40 graduate students and 15 faculty members were under the project, working on projects such as the Mars airplane.

As NASA revs up for the return to the Moon as early as 2015 and from there, leapfrog to Mars, the agency has been directed to build a new crew exploration vehicle to replace the aging space shuttle by the end of the decade. DeJarnette said that NCSU will most likely participate in the development of such craft.

Such projects are "going to add to the quality of students and the

visibility of the university as a whole," DeJarnette said.

With his hands in the currents of America's newest crop of aerospace engineers, DeJarnette said that students are already excited about the country's new direction in space, "A lot of them are ready to go."

AGRONAUTS

Going to Mars isn't your average day trip.

Not only will astronauts making the trip need to carry enough fuel to get there and back, they'll need enough water, food and supplies for the six-month trip, and enough to live on the planet.

With each pound costing upward of \$10,000 to launch into space, missions will grow costly.

Thus the idea of space farming, growing food in space, has been introduced, and farming on Mars becomes an increasingly viable idea.

Those heading to Mars will have to play a dual role as astronaut and agronaut.

N.C. State's botany labs are

"looking into how plants respond to environmental stresses in particular gravities," said Ch Brown, director of the NASA Specialized Center for Research and Training in Gravitational Biology (NSCORT).

The study of gravitropism, the biological drive by gravity that makes shoots grow up and roots to grow down, is of particular interest for space biologists because in space, gravity is not a factor.

Using devices such as a clinostat and others like those gyroscopic rides found at amusement parks, scientists are able to simulate micro-gravity here on Earth without disorienting plants.

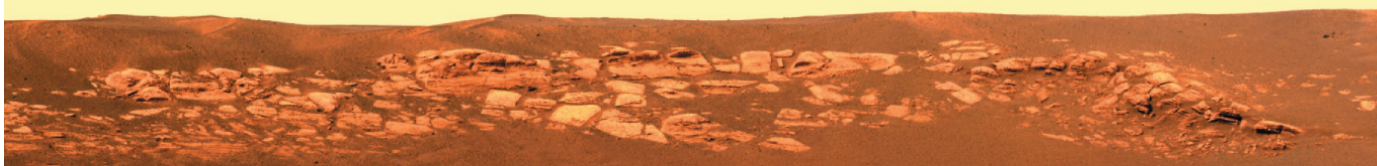
Brown said plants will be able to remove CO₂ from the air, clean water and produce food.

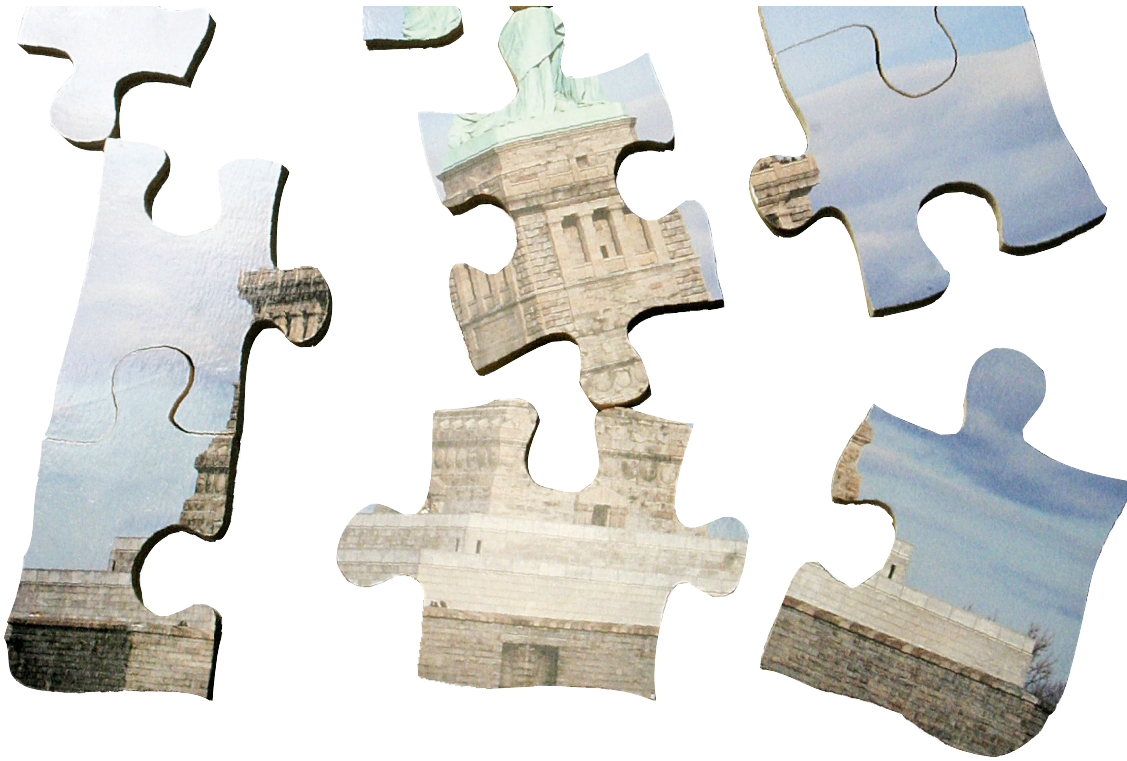
On a NASA grant, P.J. Aspesi, a senior in biological sciences, is working with the fully genetically sequenced Arabidopsis plant, using it as a control plant for micro-gravity experiments.

Aspesi is conducting his experiments in the Phytotron, an extensive series of computer-controlled greenhouses. "If humans ever want to leave Earth, we will need to know what the parameters will be [to grow a sustainable life]," he said. Experiments such as his will answer those questions.

His advisor, senior research scientist Imara Perara, said that changes in the Arabidopsis genome have been measured as early as 10 minutes after being subjected to micro-gravity.

NCSU's strong engineering and botany programs will make it a strong candidate for continued research in this new space initiative, Brown said. "With our long track record with mechanical aerospace engineering coupled with our research in basic biology, genomics and how it relates to space, N.C. State has a lot to offer in the human exploration initiative."





ONE NATION UNDER GOD DIVISIBLE

A WEEK AFTER THE ELECTIONS, PUNDITS ARE CALLING THE NATION SEVERELY DIVIDED. BUT IS IT REALLY?

STORY BY **T.S. AMARASIRIWARDENA**

It isn't just a mere division of color.

A quick glance at the Electoral College map gives a severely fractured take on the nation. Pooled in the Northeast, the Great Lakes region and Pacific coast, is blue. From the South, through the nation's heartland to the West, is red.

Red staters have long called their blue kin, the city-dwelling progressives, as out of touch with the core values of the rest of the nation. With "value voters" giving President George W. Bush the pivotal edge to win the election, that notion may have grown credence.

From the North Carolina GOP's headquarters vandalism last weekend and messages like "Osama, sorry your guy didn't win," spray painted on campus, acts like this are occurring nationwide, the division is seemingly carrying over after the election.

But when it comes down to it, the division may not be all that it is purported to be.

"Any vote divides us," political science professor Michael Cobb said. "But we're not divided in the sense that red states are any different than blue states."



CHRIS DAPPERT/TECHNICIAN

Surveying the damaged sign of the North Carolina Republican Headquarters, Dale Jones of Prosign Display and Graphics, looks at the damage to the inside of the sign he will be replacing. The damage was the result of vandalism caused by a mob that Jones said he felt was an attempt to instill fear, making a connection between the incident and terrorism.

VALUE VOTERS

For Matt Walton, a freshman in technology education, religion has always played a role in American society regardless of the present day talk of value voters.

"I feel as if the tone of this country has looked away from religions. Religion needs to be more apparent in society today," he said.

It's sentiments like these that

analysts and partisans say gave Bush his victory over Sen John Kerry.

"People of faith got out and voted. Four million [religious conservative] voters did not show up in 2000 - they did this time," North Carolina Congressman Walter Jones told College Republicans

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DIVIDE

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last week. "President Bush is a man of faith and people responded to that."

Rooted in America's puritan past, religion has always played a major, though oft-forgotten role in the nation's collective psyche. But with talk over same-sex marriage, stem-cell research and abortion swelling along the campaign trail, that once-quiet behemoth arose from dormancy.

"Religion is a big part of the nation's cultural identity and it caught a lot of people off guard — it blindsided them," sociology professor Eric Woodrum said. "Academics, intellectuals and Democratic Party leaders tended not to give priority to what is seen as moral issues by the public."

With Bush's commitments for a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage, restrictive views on abortion and stem cell research, "there was a perception that Bush was more unambiguously articulate in tradition and religious priorities. From what I hear from major commentators, the Kerry/Edwards ticket was not successful in distinguishing themselves enough," he said.

Instead, Kerry's hawing over same-sex marriages; against a constitutional amendment but also against same-sex marriages, while not showing outwardness of faith left value voters questioning if Kerry was one of them.

"On a raft of issues he was perceived by members of the public as ambiguous [over religious issues]," Woodrum said.

Ambiguity on Kerry's part played well into Republican hands, according to Cobb.

"The Republicans worked hard to help Bush with the religious right using messages that Democrats were going to force gay marriage and ban the Bible. Basically by scaring them — and it worked," he said.

"There's no monopoly on morality," Cobb said. "It's arrogant to say that there is some proper morality."

Though issues over religious morality are headlining post-election banter, Democrats are saying that their morality has a different thrust.

"People are talking about their values now. Let me tell you about my values," College Democrat president Matt Spence said. "Sending kids to school without breakfast and making them learn without eating — that's immoral. Forcing kids to come home to an empty house is immoral. Making someone wait until their cold becomes so bad that they have to go to the emergency room is immoral."



TAYLOR TEMPLETON/TECHNICIAN

From the Free Expression tunnel to the North Carolina GOP headquarters, division over the election is apparent.



Democrats have morals, but what Democrats failed to do was to get their version of morals across, according to Cobb and Spence.

"On most issues of morality, there is little disagreement among Americans. What it really comes down to is how it's being framed. Democrats

generally don't know how to talk about these issues on the campaign trail," Cobb said.

Republicans, on the other hand, played well to the heart strings. "Republicans succeeded in making [religious values] emotional issues. People act on rational thought, but they act quicker and with more pas-

FIRESTARTER

Heating up the box office and the headlines over the summer, Michael Moore's controversial polemic "Fahrenheit 9/11," became a symbol, some calling it a wedge in the disparate electorate.

Drawing long lines, the film played well to a crowd feeling disenfranchised with the Bush administration and the war in Iraq. Others were spurned by the film, calling Moore a magician of facts. But the effect of the film on the campaign, regardless of Bush's re-election, was real.

"We can't measure it in terms of cause and effect, but I would certainly say what became evident in the campaign was that "Fahrenheit 9/11" became a conversation piece," communications professor Sarah Stein said.

At the Republican National Convention in August, Sen. John McCain and others made biting comments about Moore and his movie, a sign that politicians could neither ignore its presence, nor brush it off during the election season.

"Obviously if it was just a movie that they couldn't say has nothing to do with them, otherwise they could have simply ignored it," Stein who has edited two Academy Award winning films said.

But the film was no wedge. It did not so much as start the nation's divide but play into it, she said.

"There was certainly a profound divide, some people responded positively to "Fahrenheit 9/11," others were violently opposed to it. The film was reflective of the division — it certainly didn't create it," Stein said.

With a bumper crop of documentaries released this year, be it "OutFoxed," to "Stolen Honor," the art form will likely grow as a player in politics.

"There's going to be more of it. What we're seeing is that there is a political niche to fill and people will pay attention — but they are obviously not going to determine elections," Stein said.

sion when it's an issue from the heart," Spence, a senior in political science said.

A MANDATE?

In his first post-election press conference, having handily won the election by 3.5 million votes — not the mere electoral college victory from 2000, Bush hawked the voter's support in him.

"I earned capital in the campaign, political capital, and now I intend to spend it. It is my style," Bush said.

"He obviously has much more of a mandate [this term] with a surplus of votes" Hal Lusk, president of College Republicans said.

Saying he will pickup a second-term agenda with major changes to Social Security, the tax-code and medical malpractice law reform, Bush is claiming

that people are behind him.

"When you win, there is a feeling that the people have spoken and embraced your point of view, and that's what I intend to tell Congress," he said.

But with an endorsement for another four years stemming from moral issues and little talk of his outlined docket on the campaign trail, this mandate is being questioned.

Does he have a mandate? "Nope — not says I," according to Cobb.

"Even by their own admission, if it's the morality issue that got him over the top, then that's where his mandate is," he said.

On those issues, with 11 states jumping on the same-sex marriage ban, stem cell research legislation in place and faith based initiatives on the books,

there is little additional movement that Bush could do for that voting block, short of an abortion ban.

"There's nothing that he can do that he hasn't done," Cobb said. "People didn't vote for him to reform Social Security."

Within the party, there is question over Bush's extent of authority. At a press conference after the election, Pennsylvania Sen. Arlen Specter, member of the judiciary committee and possibly its next chair, questioned a "litmus test" for judicial nominees over abortion if he doesn't have an explicit mandate to do so.

"If you have a race that is won by a percent or two, you have a narrowly divided country, and that's not a traditional mandate," Specter said. "President Bush will have that very much in mind."

The biggest fight will probably come in the Supreme Court nominations which tends to be on the forefront of deciding moral issues, according to political science professor Vincent Munoz.

"If he wants to push a traditional moral agenda, it will probably come through his nominations," he said.

And it's not only moral issues where Bush may be kept in check.

Congressman Jones, while talking to College Republicans, said that he will be pushing for a return to the party's fiscal conservative roots.

With the new Department of Homeland Security and war in Iraq putting a greater burden on the finances, and deficits going up the budget, the GOP doesn't look like the Republicans of yesteryear.

"We need to get back to the core principals of small government," he said.

HEALING

"Do you think Ann Coulter is going to change things?" Lusk asked fellow Republicans at a College Republicans meeting after Election Day.

Understanding that a gap lay between a sizable portion of the nation, Lusk suggested fellow partisans to extend to others thoughtful and founded debate. "You have to understand where they come from and make thoughtful reasoned arguments," he said.

Recovering from their worst political hangover, Democrats, though rattled are saying that division lays only within politics and not between the citizens.

"I'm not sure there's that much divide as people are claiming there is right now," Spence said. "Our country is not divided on the issues when it comes to specific issues when you take partisanship out. We are a partisan country — we're not divided."



T.S. AMARSIRIWARDENA/TECHNICIAN

THE HEAT IS RISING

STORY BY T.S. AMARSIRIWARDENA

Disney probably wish they kept this one.

Michael Moore's headline-grabbing documentary, "Fahrenheit 9/11," which Disney declined to distribute, grossed more than \$80 million in its first three weeks of release, more than any Disney film this year and any documentary ever.

"It's held up fairly well," said Andy Spencer, a '96 N.C. State graduate who works at Raleigh's Rialto theater. "It was two weeks straight of either sellouts or virtual sellouts."

At a late Friday showing of the film, a line of varying ages and races waited to enter.

"It's a pretty mixed crowd -- except for political orientation. It's pretty much leftist," Spencer said.

Aaron Feeler a junior in English concurred; he came to see the film "because of my liberal leans."

Three weeks after its debut, the film draws long lines, suggesting that its more than the news item of the moment.

"I would call it more than a very popular documentary, I would call it unprecedented," Maria Pramaggiore, director of N.C. State's film program said.

The film out-grossed the entire run of



COURTESY MICHAELMOORE.COM

A secret service officer confronts Michael Moore across the street from the Saudi embassy in D.C. during the filming of "Fahrenheit 9/11."

Moore's earlier film, "Bowling for Columbine," in the first weekend, making it the highest grossing documentary ever, Pramaggiore said.

With Moore's recent Academy Award, he is seen as an important contemporary director, which in turn has translated into high box-office receipts, she said.

The box-office numbers themselves are a major contributing factor.

"Box office figures are such an important part of our popular film culture. People are going out to make sure that the film

maintains a presence in daily discussions [by keeping the box office numbers high]," Pramaggiore said.

The prevalence of reality television has made America comfortable with seeing more documentaries, Pramaggiore said, fueling the recent upswing in wide-release documentaries such as "Super Size Me," "Capturing the Freidmans" and the "Fog of War."

Outside the Rialto, Andrew Upshaw, a Virginia Military Institute student taking classes at NCSU for the summer, walked

by the crowd lining up for the film, jokingly saying aloud that the film is "just liberal propaganda."

With a copy of a June 25 USA Today story that breaks down some of Moore's points in hand, Upshaw said that he sees Michael Moore "trying to undermine a justified cause through implied truths."

Motioning to the article, which he says "outlines what [Moore] didn't put in there," he points to a noted segment in the movie. In that segment, Moore criticizes Bush for allowing members of the Bin Laden family residing in the states to return to Saudi Arabia in apparent secrecy.

What Moore doesn't tell his viewers, Upshaw said, is that the FBI and other government agencies knew about the order, according to the USA Today article.

"This [film] substitutes for truth," Upshaw said before adding he would rather have Moore "just state the facts," with no opinions.

Moore's editorial film has often been marked by its critics as breaking the documentary format.

Not true, says Pramaggiore. "There's great diversity in the documentary film style," she said. "Some turn on cameras and hope to capture reality as it unfolds

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without comment, and Michael Moore is certainly not working within that framework.”

Another camp of directors, which Moore is part of, inject themselves into their films and give an analysis of their material. Films in that form are still considered documentaries, Pramaggiore said.

Moore has not tried to pass opinion off as truth, she said.

“Michael Moore clearly states he has opinions on the administration, he does not set his film

up as an objective report of the last two years,” she said.

Matt Gross, a senior in psychology, said he agrees that Moore has a slant with his films.

“It’s a different view even though he puts his own spin on it, he uncovers a lot of facts I’d like to know,” Gross said.

Trying to explain his thoughts behind the film’s continued popularity, Gross points to issues with the Bush administration.

“People are finally getting fed up with the administration. They hide a lot of facts and go back on their word a lot,” Gross said.

“I think this film will give a lot of insight to what has been going

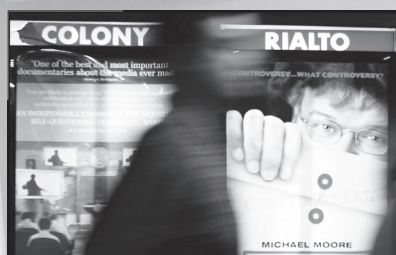
on in the last four years.”

Notions like Gross’ lead to moviegoers that aren’t going to see hear anything new, Upshaw said, adding: “It’s an audience that has made up its mind.”

“It scares me to see the country this divided, it’s unhealthy for the country,” he said

Mulling over watching the movie the next night, Upshaw said that he “really wants to see the movie, but I just can’t support him. I’m keeping my mind open – if the president lied to me – and if Michael Moore can prove that – then I’ll change my mind.”

focused



THE HEAT IS RISING

STORY BY T.S. AMARSHIRWADANA

Dinner probably won't keep this one.

Michael Moore's headline-grabbing documentary, *Fahrenheit 9/11*, which Moore declined to distribute, grossed more than \$40 million in its first three weeks of release, more than any Disney film this year and any documentary ever.

"It's held up fairly well," said Andy Spencer, a 36-year-old State graduate who works at Raleigh's Rialto theater. "It was two weeks straight of either adults or virtual adults."

As a late Friday evening of the film, a line of waiting cars and teens vied to enter.

"It's a pretty mixed crowd – except for political identification. It's pretty much left," Spencer said.

Arnon Foster, a junior in English, concurred he came to see the film "because of my liberal bias."

Three weeks after its debut, the film showed long lines, suggesting that it is more than the news that it is the most popular documentary, it would call it a very popular documentary, I would call it a very popular documentary," said Maria Pramaggiore, director of N.C. State film program said.

The film has grossed the entire cost of



A recent service officer confers with Michael Moore across the street from the Saudi embassy in D.C. during the filming of *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

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by the crowd lining up for the film, jokingly saying that the film is "just liberal propaganda."

With copies of a new 25 USA Today story that breaks down some of Moore's points in hand, Upshaw said that he sees Michael Moore "trying to undermine a justified cause through implied truths."

Misleading is the article, which he says "outlines what [Moore] didn't put in there," he points to a noted segment on the movie. In that segment, Moore criticizes Bush for allowing members of the Bin Laden family residing in the states to return to Saudi Arabia in apparent secret.

What Moore doesn't tell his viewers, Upshaw said, is that the FBI and other government agencies knew about the order, according to the USA Today article.

"This [film] substitutes for truth," Upshaw said better adding he would rather have Moore "just state the facts," with no opinions.

Moore's editorial film has often been marked by its critics as breaking the documentary format.

Not this, says Pramaggiore.

"There's great diversity in the documentary film style," she said. "Some turn on camera and hope to capture reality as it unfolds."

FILM on page 6

'Fahrenheit' will convince voters

Michelle DeCamp
Senior Staff Columnist

Less than a week ago, I was standing on the Corner of the Carolina, a familiar place for humanities majors such as myself, watching John Kerry and John Edwards were from a few hundred feet away. I am writing for these two men in November.

I don't need to be convinced further, because I've watched my faith in my government dwindle over the past few years, and I've absorbed the growing evidence that our President is not a capable commander-in-chief. For my students and those that may still be debating between electing President Bush or bringing in a new President with a hopefully clearer and more truthful vision for our country, I urge you to go see *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Because it is a realistic depiction of what is wrong with our current administration. And the film provides a visualization

of the greed and corruption taking hold in our executive branch.

Who would have guessed that a documentary could, according to movie.com, make over \$40 million in three weeks? The fact that Michael Moore's film has so much success is a testament to the fact that there are millions of people in this country who are, if anything, curious about what he has to say about our current administration.

That curiosity is rewarded with almost two hours of investigation, and I've absorbed the growing evidence that our President is not a capable commander-in-chief. For my students and those that may still be debating between electing President Bush or bringing in a new President with a hopefully clearer and more truthful vision for our country, I urge you to go see *Fahrenheit 9/11*. Because it is a realistic depiction of what is wrong with our current administration. And the film provides a visualization

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Don't treat Moore's word as gospel

Greg Behr
Staff Columnist

Throughout my life I have always been told by adults such as my parents, my eighth grade home economics teacher and even the internet to "discuss politics."

In fact, a Google search of "discuss politics" produced countless articles discussing the abuses of existing political beliefs with light or even heavy conviction. The practice can easily alternate you to the opposite of what you may believe. It is as easy as see *Fahrenheit 9/11*. The authors usually do.

reer Center has published an online brochure that informs its reader that taking a business client "Have you tasted the roses?" And then quickly enforcing this brilliant business lesson of an opening line with, "It's really great," a better than discussing politics. With the current abuse of Michael Moore's word as a documentary.

"Fahrenheit 9/11" There even faced the discussion of politics leading to arguments and even strained relationships amongst friends, family and myself. The two facts that I have concluded from the propaganda issued by both the Moore and Bush camps are extremely hated by a huge amount of opposing Americans.

It is easy to shut your eyes, ears, and even noses to the opposite of what you may believe. It is as easy as see *Fahrenheit 9/11*. The authors usually do.

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news
analysis
Analyzing a national news story with a number of sources. Designed and photographed the story as well.



Jordan Massey, Jordan Holms, Bryan Swierenga and Miah Wander, all N.C. State students, work on a deck staircase for Habitat for Humanity.

HAMMERS, NAILS AND A LITTLE HELP

STUDENTS FIND SATISFACTION IN BUILDING HOMES FOR HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
T.S. AMARASIRIWARDENA

It's 9 a.m. on a Saturday and they've already worked up quite a sweat.

In a late summer's searing sun, a couple of miles from campus where the roads intermittently turn into dirt, a band of students become weekend warriors, wielding hammers, saws and tape measures working on what they say they love best: giving a helping hand by working on homes for Habitat for Humanity.

Bending a roof's metal flashing with the adeptness of professional, Ben Godfrey, president of N.C. State Habitat for Humanity chapter, has devoted most of his Saturdays since he was a freshman to the group.

"I saw some fliers my freshman year and decided to go out. I've fell in love with it ever since," Godfrey, now a senior in pulp and paper science, said.

Sprawled in and outside of a house under construction on the aptly named Jimmy Carter Way, the 10 or so students working have similar stories as Godfrey's.

Two years ago, a friend told Miha Wander, a senior in computer engineering, to "just try it once and you'll be hooked."

Slyly drawing it out he said, "... and that's exactly what happened."

Drawing more than 100 students at its



Bryan Swierenga, a senior in psychology, watches Jordan Massey, in orange hat, hammer together part of a deck. The two work together to hammer a nail into the deck (below).



meeting last week, Godfrey said the chapter generally brings a group of 25 to 40 to the work site each Saturday.

The chapter regularly co-sponsors a house, which they work on from the foundation to completion, by raising \$10,000, with most of the funds raised at the annual Shack-a-thon, which will be held later this month, Godfrey said. Shack-a-thon is the group's fund raiser held on the Brickyard where campus organizations set up shacks

to help raise money, soliciting donations from the community.

The chapter is working on its fifth house in Wake County.

Wearing green and yellow suspenders, Wander jumps from project to project and begins helping Bryan Swierenga, a senior in psychology, and Jordan Massey, a junior in bioengineering, work on a deck staircase.

"This," Wander says, pointing to the stairs, "is a little bigger than this," pointing to a slot in the deck off mere eighths of an inch, "so it's going to take a little bit of wedging."

And just like that, out comes Swierenga's hammer, pounding it into place.

Bringing out the hammer is Swierenga's favorite thing to do. Recalling fondly, he remembers one project where he had to break an old foundation with a sledge hammer. He "went to town" with it.

But brute force is not what the chapter is

feature

Built a cohesive feature piece by writing, photographing and designing story about a campus group.

HABITAT

continued from page 1

known for.

Perfection is more like it.

Finding comfort in the shade of the house for lunch, members of the group eat peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches while sitting on pails and odd scraps. There, they survey accomplished work on the house done while students were not working there over the summer. Each person found a fault.

"Pretty much anyone who works here is anal as crap,"

Wander said.

Brad McHugh, a project coordinator with the Wake chapter, said "you feel like you can give these kids anything, knowing full well that they'll get it right. They've had some challenging projects that they've handled well."

The Rosalynn Place project that Habitat Wake is currently working on will have 42 houses upon completion, 24 of which literally sprung up over night when Habitat held a builder's blitz late last year, transferring them all to move-in condition in a week, McHugh said.

Having been gone for the summer, he said Habitat has missed having the students around.

Chantal Ndwanyi, future homeowner of the house where the students are working, agrees.

"We started the project together in March, it slowed down [for the summer]. It would be finished if they had been here," she said.

"They don't just leave," Ndwanyi said, "if it's not done properly, they make sure it gets fixed."

Gazing at the house she whispers, "It's beautiful."

Inevitably, with a number of boys talking to one another, someone mentions how "sexy



T.S. AMARASIRIWARDENA/TECHNICIAN

Kevin Sergott, a senior in electrical engineering snaps a final piece of roof soffit into place.

a girl looks in a tool belt." Or plays the guitar, offers another. Or how about "girls in general." Everyone agrees.

In the midst of it all, Jordan Massey, laughs off the comments of the boys around her. Rocking an orange straw hat and a "Wolfpack Construction" T-shirt, she did later say she was drawn in by the readily available power tools.

For Crystal Williams, a sophomore in mechanical engineering, even her broken foot, wrapped in a ski boot sized plastic cast, can't keep her off the site.

His first time at a site, Brandon Castor, a sophomore in biology, watches over Godfrey on a ladder.

Looking back at some metal flashing, he laughs, saying "now I just need to figure out what I'm doing." A couple of minutes later, he admitted he's got the hang of things.

And learning the tools of the trade and picking up skills is what it's all about, Godfrey said.

"There are some people that have come out that have never picked up a hammer before," he said.

November 3, 2003

Freezing Time Opens Doors, Says Zewali

By THUSHAN AMARASIRIWARDENA, North Carolina State U.
(U-WIRE) RALEIGH, N.C. -- "Freezing time" sounds like the stuff of science fiction, but not in Nobel Laureate Ahmed H. Zewali's world.

A North Carolina State University auditorium was packed Friday with faculty and students, many filling the aisles and leaning on the walls to hear California Institute of Technology professor Zewali, who holds a doctorate in chemistry, speak about the "Miracles and Mysteries of Time."

Zewali, awarded the 1999 Nobel Prize in chemistry, spoke of his research, effectively dissecting time to the 0.000000000000001 seconds, opening the door to science to further discoveries.

Dropping numerous humorous asides along his speech, Zewali, a native of Egypt, explained his work by looking at a phenomena that had scientists perplexed in the 1800s. How, they asked, did a cat, dropped upside down always land on it's feet? Eliciting laughs, he said that the phenomena, to them, was a gross "violation of Newtonian physics."

Eventually a French scientist figured out the question that had miffing scientists centuries prior. In 1894, Etienne-Jules Marey, devised a high-speed camera -- recording 60 distinct images a second and thus "freezing time."

With his camera, Marey dropped a cat upside down and saw how it wriggled and righted itself up before landing on the ground within a second.

science
Converted a highly technical subject into an approachable context. Article was picked up and featured by The New York Times Online college section.



From that point onwards, with the high-speed camera as a tool, scientists were able to dissect and break time into manageable periods where further analysis could be made. What was once missed by the eye was now within sight.

Zewali's research produced similar effects on contemporary science.

Previously, at the atomic and molecular level, one "might know the initial state and the final state, but nothing in between," Zewali said.

Through Zewali's laser system, he was able to bring the precision of science down to femtoseconds. If one could read one word per femtosecond, and the average book has some 50,000 words, it would take approximately 645 libraries to have enough books to read in one second.

Cutting time to such a small period is more than a novelty. "When I started out, you could just say [a particular discovery] was just 'interesting.' Now you need to solve the energy crisis and cure cancer or something."

By being able to slice time into periods as short as a femtosecond, chemists and physicists were able to answer questions that had previously eluded them in years past.

It opened so many doors that, at Caltech, of the 1,000 graduate students there, 100 are associated with Zewali's burgeoning field of femto-chemistry science.

Based on Zewali's work, scientists have learned that the DNA structure indeed is capable of transmitting a current, like a wire, along with systems for more precise electronic manufacturing.

With every advance in science and measurement of time, Zewali acknowledges that his work will become old. "Time is going to be shorter as science goes on," Zewali said.

STUDENT SENATE

Senate breezes through first meeting

The new Student Senate quickly ran through its agenda, atypical of years past.

T.S. Amarasiriwardena

News Editor

The matching sandstone-and-red suits that Student Body President Tony Caravano and Student Senate President Will Quick sported at Wednesday's Student Senate meeting were more than superficial signs that executive and legislative branches will attempt to cooperate in the upcoming year.

In years past, the senate has been noted for quickly finding itself embroiled in debate and butting heads with the president and administrators. Such actions culminated last year over student fees' debate, in which senators talked over and drowned out members from the administration that nearly left the students without input into the fee process.

Though not making any direct references to last year's senate situation, Quick reopened the 84th session of the Student Senate by reading opening statements that alluded to hopes for a new senate atmosphere.

Quick urged senators to "make knowledgeable points," and requested fellow senators to "think about what you are asking first," and that senators to be respectful to visitors at their sessions.

While talking to Jason Moody, a senator for CHASS, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Tom Stafford whispered during the meeting that he will be "watching [the senate] very carefully and see if anything has changed."

Later Stafford explained his comments, saying that he has indicated to the senate that

they have an "inefficient" operation.

"They need to really focus on what are the most important issues to the students and how to develop a more streamlined process that allows for full debate and final resolution," Stafford said.

"My major concern has to deal with how they deal with the fee process, it was very ineffective and very inefficient [last year] and as a result I didn't really give it much consideration," he said, adding that the senate will have to demonstrate the development of an effective process to produce those results.

President Caravano mirrored Quick's sentiments and said that he and the executive branch had faith in what this senate could do.

He further acknowledged last year's fee process by requesting that senators come up with an amicable and thought-out decision that is agreeable with the administration.

With the current chancellor search under way, Caravano told senators that they have an opportunity to "write history."

"It's not every year that you get to help choose your new chancellor," Caravano said, while urging senators to represent their constituents by attending today's open chancellor forum in the Talley Student Center ballroom at 3 p.m.

Caravano also said that the executive branch had organized buses to ferry students from campus to football games this season with the Wolfline.

Funding for the buses are coming out of executive branch funds he said.

Future senate meetings will be broadcasted on the campus television network, Lee Cobb, a senator for lifelong education, announced.

"Think of it as Student Government C-SPAN," he said.

Initially, the meetings will be taped but plans are in the works for it to be aired live in the future on campus channel 85.

Student Body Treasurer, Mital Patel relayed to the senators that a bid for Big Boi of the hip-hop group OutKast had been made to appear at this year's homecoming concert. The homecoming committee, a division of the Alumni Association, made the bid in a range of \$30,000-60,000 dollars, according to Patel.

"Chances are very good that he will come," Patel said.

Representatives from the campus committee in charge of student tickets said guest tickets for games against Richmond would be available for \$25 and \$27 for games against Wake Forest and Georgia Tech.

Block seating is open until Friday at noon for the Richmond game next week.

Senator President Pro Tempore Patrick Clearly said that chances are slim that proposed online student ticketing will be ready for the Ohio State game, as the system has yet to be tested.

Finishing in two hours, many senators left the chambers remarking how quickly the meeting went.

Quick said after the meeting that it felt good and items discussed had the appropriate amount of debate. He attributed the quick meeting to it being the first of the year where no major bills are discussed and for senators reading bills before debate.

Former senate president and a current senator Eric Fabricius said that meeting went pretty straightforward. Having not ran for reelection for his seat as senate president, he said that he was looking forward to working with smaller committees.