

From the editor's desk...

Who's minding the store?

Recently, I had the displeasure of going before the SGA Finance Committee to discuss the budget process and the cut in funding that the *Capital Times* and other clubs are suffering this year. I say displeasure because the discussion was not much of a discussion at all. Instead of finding open minded people who understand the needs of students, for the most part, I found deaf ears.

The appeal process of the SGA Finance Committee is anything but that. Before I got my chance to to "appeal" to the committee on behalf of the students' newspaper, I had the opportunity to watch the Committee's arrogance work on the station manager of WPSH.

I found it disgusting the way some of the members of that committee talked down to a fellow student. I cannot ever remember talking to my children in such a manner.

Just as I had suspected I got no where in trying to explain to the members of the committee that I was not asking them to hand out money that does not exist; I merely want them to do the same thing that they expect the clubs to do - produce a budget based on anticipated revenues. But regardless of how many times I explained myself, some members insisted that I wanted them to hand out non-existent money.

The deaf ears of the committee managed to carry the charade over to the SGA forum, which I understood to be a chance to discuss problems with the entire student government. Not only did some members of that committee continue to misinterpret my words, despite numerous pleas to the contrary, they displayed the same arrogance they had displayed in the earlier meeting.

The sad part is that the rest of the student government members there allowed them to continue their games. One SGA member even admitted that she knew little of the details of individual clubs' budgets. Are we to assume that SGA votes on the Finance Committee's recommendations purely on blind faith? Or are we to assume that the Finance Committee's recommendations are rubber stamped?

Serving on SGA is not a right, but a privilege extended to members by the student body that elected them to office. This same student body has the right to know how SGA intends to spend money that it expects to receive. Some members of the Finance Committee act like they don't understand this basic principal of representative government. Either that or they choose to ignore it.

Such arrogance and pomposity should not be tolerated. The members of the Finance Committee are students just like the rest of us. Sure, they have a responsibility that many students would not want, but they chose it. And if any one of them feels that he or she can not come down to Earth with the rest of us, then maybe the time has come for replacements.

Nathan Lee Gadsden
Editor in Chief

A newspaper for the student body

Capital Times

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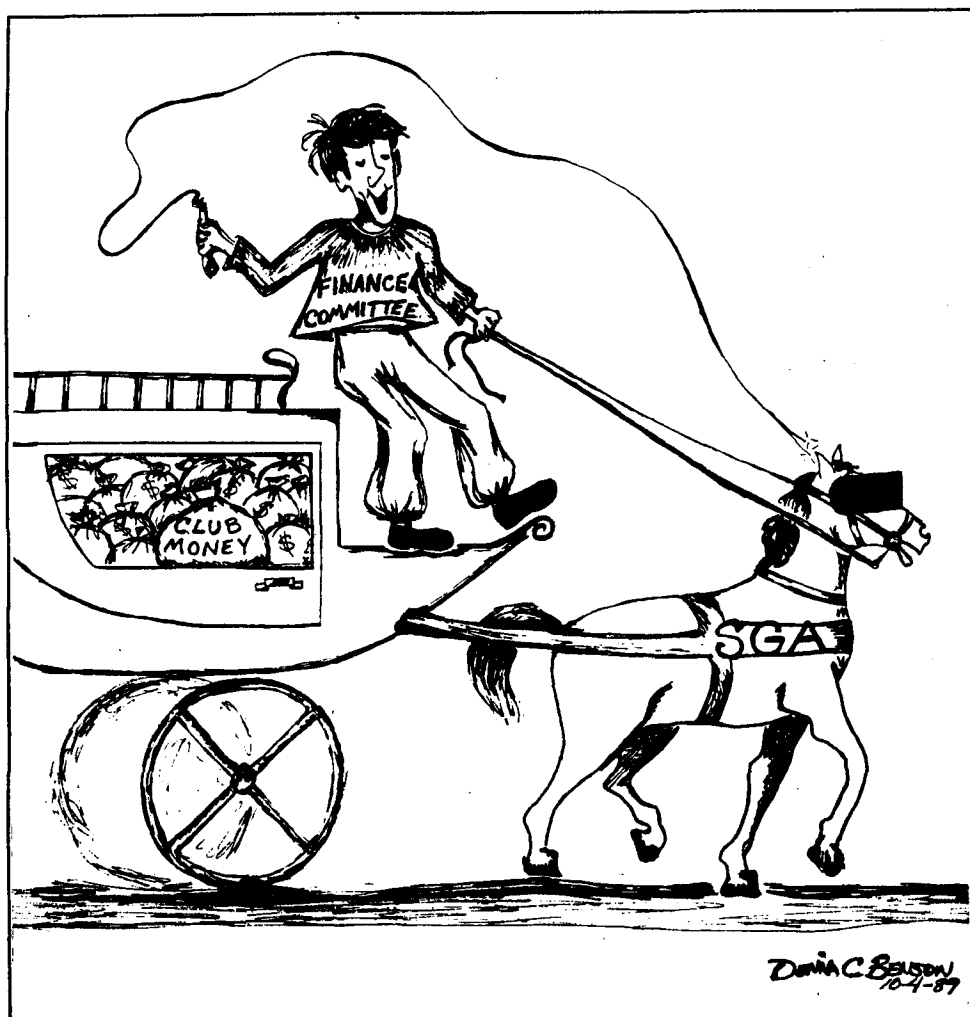
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Letters to the editor...

Flapping in the wind?

Dear Editor:

Editor Nathan Lee Gadsden recently expressed his regrets about the American people's apparent outrage regarding flag desecration and apparent lack of concern regarding what he termed "human desecration." I agree. Although it is not only our citizens who appear apathetic about the ills of America while readily running under cover of the flag to demonstrate their allegiance and conscientiousness. Americans have acquired this strategy under the skillful guidance and expertise of many of our political and religious leaders.

During the republican presidential campaign, Lee Atwater used the flag as a way to direct focus away from issues of heightening racism, union busting, homelessness, CIA drug smuggling and the Iran-Contra cover up. Instead of widespread media condemnation for President Bush's fascist apologists, anti-Semites and Nazi campaign connections, what seemed more newsworthy were rumors that his opponent's wife had burned the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Bush tried to amend the constitution to overturn the recent Supreme Court ruling regarding flag-burning. He and most of society find flag burning offensive, agreeing with the Texas law that the flag is a "venerated object in need of protection."

Yet what one chooses to venerate is a private affair, according to our U.S. Constitution. To some, idolizing any symbol is offensive. In our democracy, we citizens have the right to think or express ideas that may be offensive to others. It is ironic that the president places a higher value on the symbol than on the less tangible freedom of expression that the flag represents.

The hypocrisy further lies in what is

considered offense and abuse of the American symbol. During the McCarthy era, placing a flag decal on your car could be used as a way to "prove" you were not a communist. Jerry Falwell used flag decals and lapel pins to raise money for his ultra-conservative organization and to try to "prove" his moral and religious superiority. Oliver North has used the flag to raise funds to support his reactionary causes, to gain him sympathy and as "evidence" of his loyalty. George Bush has used the flag as a political tool for the past two years, this time diverting attention from civil rights abuses, the Savings and Loan debacle, ecological indifference, rising poverty and illiteracy, the ever-unfolding HUD scandal and increasing racial violence. What better way to prove his presidential effectiveness than to cloak himself in the banner which too many have used to confirm their false sense of patriotism? No wonder Americans can easily misplace their sense of loyalty and concern.

Be cautious, America. The Reverend Jesse Jackson once said, "They want you to keep looking up at flag poles while they cut your legs out from under you."

Carolyn Arcuri

They like it!!!

Dear Editor:

I want to help you stop running those "stupid question marks in the next issue" of the *Capital Times* by writing this letter (in 200 words or less) to congratulate you and the staff for the quality of this year's student newspaper.

A college newspaper is the voice of the campus community. When the paper is good, it brings news and information, helps students and faculty face important issues, adds humor to the sometimes humdrum routine of academic life,

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