

# EDITORIAL

## Editorial

### Campus Butts a Bummer

By Amanda Ponzar  
Lion's Eye Staff Writer

Dirty butts scattered under the park benches, tossed carelessly from car windows, practically knee-deep around the building entrances, sometimes still smoking on the pavement. For smoker and non-smoker, the problem is the same: a crummy-looking campus.

Cigarette butts seem so small, so harmless, so innocent. Tobacco shavings wrapped in one tiny piece of burned paper. That can't hurt anyone, can it? "Squirrels and birds probably line their nests with butts, so actually, I am contributing to the environment." Right, buddy. And toxic nuclear pollution contributes to new breeds of plants and animals too, right?

There is a reason why we have ashtrays, cigarette waste receptacles and garbage cans. They are not there for decorative purposes (although PSU's do look like large flower pots); rather, trash is supposed to go in them. It seems simple enough, but some students just haven't mastered the two simple steps: Smoke cigarette; toss butt in can.

How many times have I been driving along route 1, humming to the radio, when the driver ahead of me flings a butt out the window? Whack! - it smacks against my windshield, smears its dirty hide down the glass, and plops unceremoniously onto the hard pavement, gathering to rot with all the other tossed butts, piles and piles of them scattered around the median strips and along the grass line.

As a gum addict, is it okay for me to toss Trident™ wrappers out the window as I drive, or spit gum under all the park benches? Maybe I should leave my gum wads on the park benches. Hey, it's my artistic right - freedom of trash expression. Is there a difference between me scattering gum wrappers, and a smoker dumping stumps of used cigarettes? It seems juvenile, but perhaps we need to enforce mandatory litter duty - a certain stretch of sidewalk that each student is responsible to keep clean. When you sit down on the nice, green grass, do you want to end up sitting on discarded butts?

Why do you think we call them "butts?" "Butt" is a word not commonly used in polite society, and for obvious reasons - it connotes dirty trash. No one wants to be the "butt of a joke" or use the butt of a gun to defend himself. Regarding decoration, last I heard Martha Stewart had decided against using cigarette butts for inspiration in her newest line of K-Mart™ patio furniture.

So, let's make a deal. Chuck your butts in the can and I'll keep my gum wads off the park benches and the bottom of your shoes.

For more information visit [www.getoutraged.com](http://www.getoutraged.com) (smoking), [www.clu-in.org](http://www.clu-in.org) (EPA website), [www.rachel.org](http://www.rachel.org) (environmental concerns).



Teaching at its finest: Dr. Jane Cooper discussing biology with her students.

## About Jane ... A Personal Appreciation

By Joe Biscontini

Jane Cooper would have made a splendid old lady.

Through genetics and practice, Jane honed many of those stereotypical "old people" traits celebrated in Shoebox greeting cards and New Yorker cartoons. She was impatient. She could be really cranky. She practiced an old-fashioned work ethic (exclusive of housekeeping). She already was a pretty bad driver. And she looked damned good in purple.

She had a wicked sense of humor, including an appreciation of the ribald story if it had a point, but she did not suffer fools easily - as any lazy student, ditzzy waitress or bubble-headed ticket-seller who ill-served her could attest.

Jane, or "Doctor Cooper" to all but her closest 2,000 friends, like most of us, was a collection of contradictions. She perhaps was at her worst when doing battle with closed minds and open mouths, especially if her opponents' arguments were allegedly void of logic and intellect. And, intellectual equal or no, your head would be handed to you verbally if you interrupted her before she finished making a point. Jane liked to win. And if she couldn't win, she at least needed to complete her arguments.

She was at her best when she could single-handedly solve a problem, streamline a process, find a compromise that worked for all parties, and, most of all, help somebody in need. She helped eager, intellectually curious students, former students, emerging artists, cancer victims, friends who locked themselves out of their cars with the engine running (that would be me), struggling theater companies, church choirs, new faculty grappling with academic anxieties and seasoned faculty grappling with burnout. Sometimes the help was financial—it seemed she gave most of her income away—but mostly it was physical, academic, emotional, and, for some, spiritual. Your life station didn't matter. All she asked of you was that you lived to your fullest potential, did

your best, and respected others.

Jane befriended me when I came to the campus 31 years ago not knowing anybody in Delaware County. Early on, it was clear that we were very different people. For most of the early years, my life centered around my kids. Jane didn't have kids, but she endured a lot of kid stories over lunches.

Jane loved cats. At one point, she had three of them I would rather live with two Chihuahuas and a serial killer than with three cats.

Jane was a scientist. I failed as her reader/editor of a genetics textbook she was writing because the practice problems in her manuscript made my head hurt.

Jane's church was central in her life. In spiritual matters, Jane found joy and comfort in the group. I don't.

I still listen to instrumental surfing music. Jane saw that as evidence of arrested development.

Jane devoured science fiction. I read something by Ray Bradbury once.

Somehow, we were friends. We could make each other laugh. (Even from her death bed, she had me roaring with a couple of really nasty, Dorothy Parker-like observations.) We shared a couple of adventures, including a car accident. She was one of the few women I knew who really liked the Star Wars movies. And beyond all that, we had scores of arguments, mostly, but not always, professional. That was understandable and unavoidable: neither of us was ever wrong.

Occasionally, the best of times was the worst of times. Many years ago, when Jane was recovering from her first mastectomy, I was one of her friends who helped a bit—I did some grocery shopping, ran errands, even fed those hairy, miserable cats. After her recovery, Jane had a small dinner party to thank us. The invitation was for 6:30, and when I arrived casually at 6:45, she battered me verbally because the roast was burned. In fact, she was snippy about it for the rest of the evening. (I still maintain the charred meat wasn't my fault, she was a lousy cook.)

(Continued on page 5)

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## Campus Mourns

(Continued from page 1)

She was totally devoted to her teaching and to her students, to the well being of the campus, for which she worked tirelessly, and to her friends. This campus was her family, and she treated it as such. It is rare to find individuals who have the level of sustained commitment and creative energy that characterized Jane. Jane was a devoted and caring friend. Here enthusiasm was contagious. I am a better teacher and a better person because of my association with her, as are many others."

Cooper served as advisor to more than 1,000 students overall, and to all students enrolled in premedical, allied health and biology related majors since 1967. Many of her former students include physicians, dentists, and other health-care professionals,

research scientists, and veterinarians now practicing all over the world.

"She was the heart and soul of campus," said Dr. George Franz, Director of Academic Affairs. "She had an impact on all areas of campus life."

A memorial service will be held on campus for Dr. Jane Cooper on the 22nd of September during Common Hour. All students, staff, and faculty are encouraged to attend. Anyone wishing to speak at the ceremony will be able to.

Many students this semester are new, and never had the pleasure of being in one of her classes. Nevertheless, she was a cornerstone of the campus, and those who have been taught by her or who have worked with her remember that we have lost a great teacher and friend.