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Talkback focuses on campus LGBTQIA visibility

Students, staff and faculty discuss how to increase visibility of LGBTQIA campus groups

Sophia Guevara

Living Davidson Editor

Sunday marked the first Talkback of 2014. Perspectives editors, Mary Click and Will Weisgerber '16, moderated the Talkback attended by members of the Committee on Campus and Religious Life (CCRL), the student body, faculty, staff and President Carol Quillen. Cohosted by the Gay-Straight Alliance and The Davidsonian, Forum for our Flags focused on increasing LGBTQIA visibility on campus.

The evening opened with a few words from Dean Jason Shaffer, Director of Residence Life and Associate Dean of Students. He listed the current Residence Life policy on flags: it is not permissible to hang flags (or other items) on the exterior of a residence building. Additionally, Shaffer shared the progression of events that have transpired over the past few months. "A written policy against flying flags" did not exist prior to September, according to Shaffer. He added, "Several peer institutions do not al-



Shuyu Cao '16 speaks at Sunday's Talkback, urging her fellow students to have a conversation with those not in attendance about LGBTQIA visibility. *Photo by Mark Sehnert*

low items to be flown outside of windows." Shaffer then shared a personal story from his 11 years at the University of Virginia during which time a student fell out of a window and suffered serious brain injuries.

In response to many flags being flown on Davidson's campus, Shaffer communicated to student staff members that residents must be asked to take down their flags for safety

reasons. Several students did not agree with this concern and met with Shaffer personally to discuss the matter.

In January, Shaffer communicated to student staff and residents flying flags that there was also "a concern for the flag representing the opinion or identity of the entire building rather than the expression of one or two residents occupying a single living

space." Shaffer expressed on Sunday that when this explanation did not satisfy residents, the CCRL convened to produce a ruling on the flag issue.

Shaffer closed his remarks by affirming RLO's commitment to supporting the LGBTQIA community. He cited RLO's history as being one of the first offices to create support groups for the LGBTQIA community. Furthermore, Dean Shaffer extended a personal apology to "students who were personally affected by the ways in which this policy was enforced."

Click and Weisgerber turned the evening over to the audience to lead the discussion. Max Feinstein '16 opened with a question for Shaffer. "If the CCRL repeals the policy, it potentially opens the avenue for all types of flags to be displayed. How do you plan to handle more controversial materials?" Shaffer responded by saying that he would be comfortable with the following regulations the CCRL returns.

Ben Wiley '15 stirred the crowd when he responded to the concern for safety expressed in the RLO policy. Wiley argued that we as students shy away from what is uncomfortable or controversial, and this

See **FLAGS**, page 4

Approved revisions to SGA bylaws reduce senate numbers

New plan eliminates individual representatives for Patterson Court Organizations

Michelle Wan

Co-News Editor

The Student Government Association (SGA) Senate will look slightly different after this spring's election cycle. The senate voted to approve a revision of the SGA bylaws, which included a swath of changes to the composition of the senate, at Thursday evening's meeting.

The approved revisions eliminate the current composition of 13 individual representatives for Patterson Court organizations (PCOs), including National Pan-Hellenic Council fraternities, and replace them with four senators to represent all PCOs. The proposal states: "a) One senator elected from all current members of eating houses," "b) One senator elected from all current members of sororities," "c) One senator elected from all current members

of International Fraternity Council fraternities" and "d) One senator elected from all current members of National Pan-Hellenic Council fraternities." The new composition also increases the number of Diversity Coordinating Board (DCB) representatives from four to five.

The language of the SGA's bylaw calls for closer examination. The "International Fraternity Council," does not appear to be an actual organization. The Charters and Bylaws Committee intends to include the fraternities (aside from the historically black fraternities) under this label. The fraternities rather appear to be affiliated with the North-American Interfraternity Conference (NIC). NIC organizations with charters on campus include Kappa Alpha Order, Phi Gamma Delta, Sigma Alpha Epsilon and Sigma Phi Epsilon. Kappa Sigma and Phi Delta Theta left the NIC in 2002.

The college's four National Pan-Hellenic Council organizations are Alpha Kappa Alpha, Alpha Phi Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta and Kappa Alpha Psi. As the approved pro-

See **SGA**, page 2

Six candidates announce bid for SGA presidential race



Pablo Zevallos '16



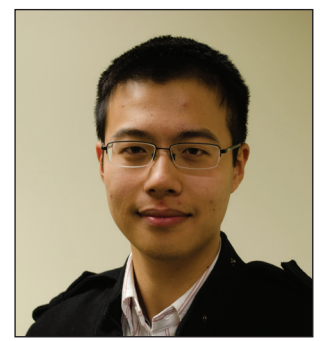
Parker Murphy '15



Richard Hendrix '15



Wade Leach '16

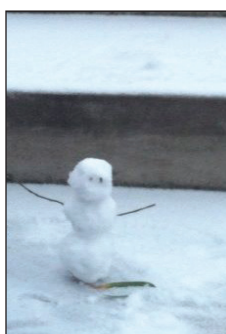


Zi Yang '16



If you were wondering why fireworks were going off on Chambers lawn this past Saturday, then check out staff writer Chris Mayes' coverage of Saturday's Chinese New Year celebrations.

See **LIVING DAVIDSON**, page 6



It's a winter wonderland outside! The Yowl editor, Jonathan Marchuk, has compiled a list of the best activities for a snow day — try them out and send us pictures!

See **The YOWL**, page 7



The men's basketball team beat Western Carolina and Georgia Southern, both SoCon opponents, last Saturday, bringing them to a 10-11 overall record and 6-1 in the SoCon.

See **SPORTS**, page 11