

# Today

SEP 19, 2004

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## TALK

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STAFF PHOTOS | JASON GETZ

The exhibit "Cartoonists Take Up Smoking" is featured at the University of Alabama's Smith Hall Friday afternoon in Tuscaloosa. The exhibit features decades of editorial cartoons on smoking.

# SMOKE SCREEN

## Exhibit takes a cartoonist's look at smoking

### IF YOU GO

The symposium "Cutting Edge Art: Inside the World of Political Cartoons" will be 5-7 tonight in Room 205 of Smith Hall on the UA campus. Admission is free, and refreshments will be served. The exhibit "Cartoonists Take Up Smoking" is on display through Oct. 31 on the ground floor of Smith Hall. Call the Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society at 348-2162.

By Mark Hughes Cobb  
Staff Writer

The cutting edge of laughter can be good medicine. Turned another way, that scalpel becomes a weapon.

Dr. Alan Blum has fought smoking and tobacco companies for the better part of three decades as founder of DOC (Doctors Ought to Care) and the director of the University of Alabama Center for the Study of Tobacco and Society.

Armed with a MAD Magazine-like comic sense, Blum satirized campaigns showing smokers as successful, sexy, healthy people by creating his own series of posters with smokers baring grotesquely yellowed teeth and by sponsoring the Emphysema Slims Tennis Tournament, the Dead Man Chew Softball Tournament and the U.S. Boomerang Team.

"There may be a method to this madness — or not," Blum said.

An amateur artist himself — Blum

has shown collections of his sketches of former patients worked in the margins of session notes — he's a big fan of cartoons and cartoonists.

"I'm sort of a groupie on this subject," Blum said, indicating the exhibit he curated, "Cartoonists Take Up Smoking," now on display in UA's Smith Hall.

With mostly original artwork from the 19th century forward, the exhibit turns the cartoonist's pen to the politics, the lawsuits and health issues of smoking.

"[This exhibit] summarizes the issues I've spent all my career on," Blum said.

It coincides with the 40th anniversary of the Surgeon General's warning on the dangers of smoking. U.S. Surgeon General Luther Terry's "Smoking and Health," following the unanimous findings of an advisory committee, was published Jan. 11, 1964.

"1964 was supposed to be the end of the controversy," Blum said.

SEE SMOKING | 3D



A cartoon by Randy Bush of the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review is one of many about smoking and lawsuits in the exhibit.



A cartoon by V. Cullum Rogers of the Independent Weekly in Durham, N.C., satirizes smoking and children.

### THEATER

## UA presents "Shadow of a Gunman"

## Couple sponsoring

# Sponsor flees 'He's a Lady'

Cox News Service

ATLANTA | Atlanta-based TBS will premiere "He's a Lady" tonight — without the reality TV show's principal sponsor.

S.C. Johnson, the Racine, Wis., maker of consumer products like Ziploc, Pledge and Windex, pulled out.

"We assessed the show, and we will not sponsor it," said S.C. Johnson spokeswoman Margie Mandli, who declined to elaborate.

The American Family Association, a conservative group in Tupelo, Miss., lobbied S.C. Johnson to withdraw. "Grown

men should be men and not women," said Randy Sharp, director of special projects at the association.

"It is disgusting." TBS recruited candidates to compete for the title of "All-American Man." In a twist, producers instead dressed contestants up like women.

The object of the real contest was to be feminine, including wearing high heels and getting waxed.

The sponsorship included both commercials and product placement. TBS spokesman Sal Petrucci dismissed concerns about the show's content.

"In the spirit of 'Tootsie,' 'He's a Lady' takes a lighthearted and comedic look at how gender roles in our society affect our everyday lives," he said.

"He's a Lady" is part of TBS' new strategy to appeal to young adults with comedy. The network, owned by Turner Broadcasting System, aired this summer romantic reality show "Outback Jack," which featured city girls dumped in the wilderness to win an outdoorsman's heart.

Another reality show based on sitcom "Gilligan's Island" will debut in November.

## MARRIAGE MENDERS

# Storms can strengthen a relat

Although marriage is a wonderful experience, it does have its tough times. We all will go through storms. Every relationship has its ups and downs, highs and lows, good and bad and its bright and even dark days.

Let's think for a moment about some of the storms that come for a married couple as they spend their lives together.

Storms can come after the first child is born. For many, tough times come after the first four or five years of marriage. Many marriages experience "disaffection" at certain points along the way. They don't feel the love they once felt for each other, and they have to hang in there through the dry times. Then tough times can come when your children become teenagers. Soon after that come the tough times of the children leaving home and the empty nest they leave behind where you and your mate are all alone again.

There are times of illness. It is not easy when one of you gets really sick. Sometimes, it's not the everyday cold or flu but a serious fight with cancer or some other awful disease. Then there are those tough times of disappointment. Times when you are not able to get what you want. There are those times when you are terribly disappointed in the way life is going. You don't like your job or your house.

Then there are times of financial hardship. Tough times bring a great deal of stress. When there's not enough money and the bills can't be paid, frustration builds and tempers can flare. Everyone's on edge.

Other storms come at the death of family members. It might be loss of a parent or a child. There may be the stress of caring for elderly parents or children who are sick.

We could mention other storms and difficult times that come in the lives of two married people. But our objective is not to emphasize the tough times but to encourage you to hang in there through those tough times. Tough times will come and go. We have been through almost all



JERRY & CAROLE WILKINS

the tough times listed above, yet our marriage has remained strong. Even when we might have given up, we decided to hang in there until things got better. Here are a few suggestions to help you hang in there through the tough times.

Just don't give up, no matter what. Remember your commitment to each other. That commitment was for better or worse, through sickness and health, for richer or poorer. In good times and bad times, this commitment can keep you together.

Learn from each other during the hard times. Each partner in the marriage has wisdom and knowledge that the other partner may not have. Lean on each other and draw strength from each other. When one of you is weak, depend on the strength of the other. Remember, you're both on the same team. Even in hard times, continue to stoke the fires of your love. Don't let tough times rob you of the most important thing — your relationship with each other. If it gets unbearable, seek outside help. You made a commitment to one another at some point in your relationship, so keep that commitment no matter what the world brings against you. Stay together through the tough times because the tough times will come to an end and things will be better.

Today we came home to the same house and the same mate once again. It's amazing to us that marriage is such a positive experience and that our relationship has endured the past 38 years. We actually look forward to just being together, fixing our meals, reading or watching some televi-

sion, and s bed each r what we wis ple would d gether. We tough times

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## SMOKING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1D

In 1977, realizing that tobacco companies had combated the devastating news from the Surgeon General by flooding the market with slick ads showing lively, healthy people playing tennis, riding horses, laughing and living the high life, Blum founded DOC.

"When I told people I wanted to fight tobacco, I was told, 'Maybe you should go into something more acceptable, like cocaine,'" he said.

For years, Blum and DOC released Barboro (using the Marlboro look) barf bags, packages of Camel Lumps and other posters that now decorate the walls of doctors' offices.

Then in the '90s, Big Tobacco came under the crosshairs.

"Lawyers were suddenly coming into the picture after ignoring the Surgeon General's warning for 30 years," Blum said.

Somewhat bitter and resigned after all his years fighting, he looked around and found the funny side.

"I started going back through the cartoon collection and I started laughing again," he said.

That led to the creation of "Cartoonists Take Up Smoking," which debuted in Lexington, Ky., earlier this year at the annual convention for the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists.

Circling a first-floor room in Smith Hall, the collection ranges over time and subject in a counter-clockwise fashion.

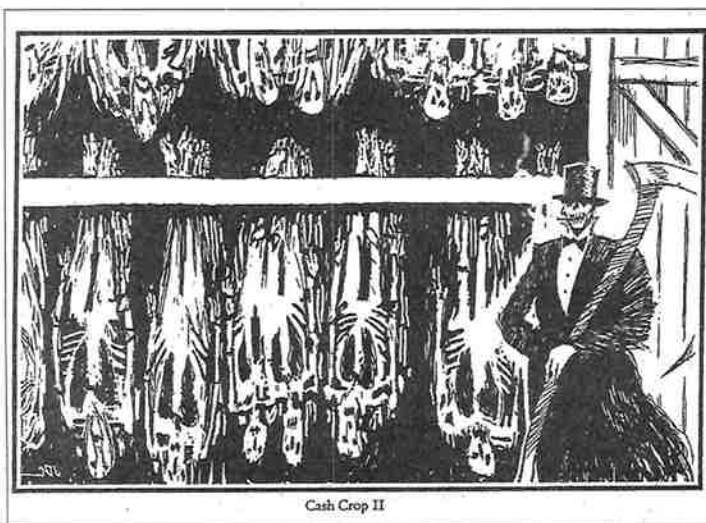
It begins with a little history, some newspaper articles on Red Level native Terry's seminal publication, then delves into cartoons on government, women, health, politicians and lawsuits.

Displays place the pre-warning time in context: Airlines offering giveaway packs of smokes that look like the kind sold to children as candy cigarettes. Another display case shows off some of DOC's best work.

But at heart are dozens of cartoons, starting in 1855 and running right up to the present. Most are originals, except for a few photocopies such as the Doonesbury piece given to Blum by the strip's creator, Garry Trudeau.

Some of these cartoonists sell their work for big money at major galleries. It cost Blum a little begging to get reduced prices. For others, Blum was the first person who'd called to express interest in a purchase.

The walls are a virtual who's who of cartooning, with names such as Pat Olliphant, Ted Rall,



J.D. Crowe's cartoon "Cash Crop II" is the second part of a pair of panels, the first panel depicting a proud farmer with his tobacco crop and the second, a skeleton with a crop of dying humans. Crowe works for the Mobile Press Register.

Steve Benson, Ben Sargent and Jim Lange, who's drawn seven cartoons a week since 1950.

"Interestingly, a number of the cartoonists were the sons of physicians," Blum said.

One especially nice piece, created by the son of farmers just for the exhibit, is Mobile Press Register cartoonist J.D. Crowe's "Cash Crop I and II," a side-by-side pair of panels.

In the first, hard-working farmers stand proudly next to a barn full of harvested tobacco hanging to dry. In the second, the Grim Reaper poses next to a barn of dying humanity.

Crowe grew up in Kentucky; his family raised tobacco, what he called "some of the hardest work anybody will ever do." For the farmers it's just a cash crop, a way to put clothes on the kids' backs.

"When you're working in the field, you don't think about the implications," Crowe said in a phone interview from the Press Register.

"In fact, if I'd been caught smoking, I'd have been in big trouble."

In juxtaposing the decent, down-to-earth farmers' faces with that of bony Death, Crowe does what editorial cartoonists at their best do: Stir up deep thoughts and feelings about complicated issues in pointed but quick-to-absorb images.

### 'Cutting Edge Art'

Crowe and others will be in Smith Hall today for a symposium titled "Cutting Edge Art: Inside the World of Political Cartoons."

He'll be joined by Blum; Janis Edwards, author of "Political Cartoons in the 1988 Presidential Campaign"; Charles Brooks, editor of the "Best Editorial Cartoons of the Year" books; Scott

Stantis, cartoonist for The Birmingham News; and Bob Blalock, editorial page editor of The Birmingham News.

E. Culpepper Clark, dean of the UA College of Communication and Information Sciences, will introduce guests and moderate discussion.

Crowe will give an informal talk.

"What I've done in the past is field several similar questions, so the basis for my talk is what people usually ask me anyway," he said.

Folks like to hear about how a cartoonist develops a career, gets ideas and executes the art.

"One thing I try to do in my style, the execution of the drawing is vital to the message," Crowe said. "There's as much in the light and dark areas as in the words."

Panelists also may discuss the state of cartooning today. Crowe noted that when he started out with the Fort Worth Star-Telegram about 20 years ago, there were 200 or more cartoonists working, but as afternoon and other papers began folding in the '80s and '90s, the numbers dropped.

Crowe himself had to work freelance for a while before landing a staff position again. Now the conventions are much smaller; there are only about 100 working editorial cartoonists in the country.

"I'm worried for the future of the art form," Blum said.

"Papers don't want the controversy, and it's too expensive to keep an artist on staff. And it's not as if readers don't have other outlets to turn to."

After its Tuscaloosa showing, "Cartoonists Take Up Smoking" will travel to several cities before concluding its run in Washington, D.C., in 2006 at the National Museum of Health and Medicine.

seen a lot of the things that are going on with the African-

black family an important issue. "If you look at the 1970s, 58

## MARRIAGE

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