Being the Demon Deacon: Inside the Suit

Learn about the handful of anonymous students who bring Wake Forest’s iconic, devilish mascot to life at every game.

BY HILARY BURNS
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Many athletes at Wake Forest gain a celebrity-like status during college. They are featured in the media and are easily recognizable around campus. But the athletes who bring the Demon Deacon himself to life remain anonymous.

The Old Gold & Black had the chance to sit down with a few of the actual Deacons on the grounds of anonymity. They had quite a story to tell. He (or she) dedicate hours to capturing the Wake Forest athletes and receive no recognition or scholarships for their work.

Wake Forest’s iconic mascot has a personality of its own, which means the faces behind the mask must be unknown. Wake Forest adopted this mascot in 1922 when the Old Gold & Black sports editor Mayson Parker coined the term Demon Deacon. According to the university’s website, Parker was aiming to describe the “devilish spirit” of Wake’s sports teams.

The name spread like wildfire and became synonymous with Wake Forest sports. Almost 20 years later in 1941, a fraternity member received a dare to dress up as the Demon Deacon to a football game. Jack Baldwin donned a top hat, tails and umbrellas for the football game and everyone thought it was hilarious. At this point, no one knew that Wake Forest would never play another game without the Demon Deacon.

The Deacon is the most popular guy on campus. He is a student, just like the rest of us and appears just when you aren’t expecting him to arrive. He is Wake’s biggest fan but he also can be a bit of a bully.

One time the Deacon was in the stands at BB&T Field during a Duke football game and he politely “asked” a Wake Forest fan for his bag of popcorn (or pointed to a Wake Forest fan’s bag of popcorn, back to himself and back to the bag of popcorn). The fan gave the Deacon the rest of his popcorn. The Deacon then proceeded to sit down in front of a misplaced Duke fan. After the next Wake Forest first down, the Deacon abruptly stood up and “accidentally” spilled his bag of popcorn all over the Duke fan. It’s all part of the show.

The students behind the Deacon all agreed that this is best part of being the Deacon. “As soon as you get the suit on, you adopt the Demon mentality,” one student said. “The Deacon is a gentleman first. The Demon is also proud. He hates to lose and he walks off the field with his head held high.”

Another student explains that once you put that suit on, you can act as crazy as you want (as long as it is tasteful), the more dancing and cheering, the better. So how does one become the Demon Deacon? Each semester there are auditions at the same time as the cheer and dance team tryouts. At the tryouts students are told to put on the head and boots at first to become acclimated to walking around with limited vision and clunky shoes.

Once students are somewhat comfortable in the suit, they are asked to do a mock Deacon.

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Safety concerns dampen Seize the Quad

Students have expressed frustration over the layout and alcohol policy at the annual event on Hearn Plaza.

BY AUSTIN COOK
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After months of planning by student government and weeks of anticipation among students, Seize the Quad finally returned to campus Oct. 26. But this year, the event has received some negative criticism from students as being too restricted and lacking a sense of inclusion for all students. “I didn’t get to see my underage friends because the beer garden was essentially a separate event completely roped off, so I wish it had been different,” said senior Megan Lavelle.

This year’s gathering differed from those in past years because only half of Hearn Plaza was used for the event. Another major change was the “bring your own beer” alcohol policy replaced as a result of previous health and safety problems.

At the 2012 event, seven people were taken to the hospital as a result of alcohol poisoning. This year’s intention was to bring the students closer together and make the crowd easier to manage. However, many students complained of the physical separation between those over and under the age of 21. Some felt that it took away from the event’s intention of gathering students together. Others expressed displeasure that the rigid new policy that made it much more difficult to access alcoholic beverages.

“I do wish we had not been so segregated from the underage students,” said senior Addison Sutton. “It was a great sense of inclusion for all students.”

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Deacon Profile: Keith Bonin

I actually counsel a lot of students to do that. We encourage them to get involved and our students take that to heart. We have, I think, over 70 percent of our majors participate in research at least one semester or more during their time at Wake Forest, which is a really good thing.

The reason why we try to get them involved in research is everybody: you can learn to struggle with a problem and how a professionally trained person goes about solving those issues. When they hit roadblocks, what do they do? You don't know the answer, you can't look it up in a book.

When you see professors in class, they're not usually stumped because they're teaching the material they've taught for a long time; they're well prepared.

So you see them get stuck (in a research setting), you see them in a different light. The advantage is that you get to see what they do when they stumped. Research really prepares you for the way life is lived. You don't know all the answers and this really helps you find ways to reach them.

How did you become interested in physics?

I was originally trained in optics, which is a branch of physics that is a small piece of electricity and magnetism. Optics suffuses many areas of physics and other areas of science, including engineering.

So I became very interested. I've always been interested in biophysics, but never took it formally in an undergraduate program. I was a graduate student. It was never accessible to me as an undergraduate because there was no one at my undergraduate institution that was working in biophysics. As a graduate student, there were people doing biophysics, but it was done by a very small group of people. It has since changed a lot and there are a lot of people doing biophysics now. I got interested in learning new things, understanding living systems. And so there were a lot of new and exciting phenomena I wanted to explore and these were covered in my graduate student.

I also do almost all of the upkeep in my house. I take a little bit of pride in having a really well-maintained house, which is something I really enjoy doing. I have to learn a whole new area that I hadn't delved into previously.

What do you do in your free time?

I try to stay off of ladders. Particularly this time of year I do a lot of yard-work. I also love to spend time with my family. My kids are all older, my youngest is now in college, so I do something it's generally with them. We take a lot bike rides around Salem Lake or any of the parks around town. I also read novels and love history.

Do you have a favorite class to teach?

I generally like teaching almost any class. Some classes have more intellectual appeal than others. I like teaching classical mechanics because it's a foundational class for physics majors. It really lays the fundamental groundwork — the tool kit, if you will — that they will need for all the subsequent classes they take at an advanced level.

I also really enjoy teaching electronics because it's a very different kind of class since you're not building up a lot of the theoretical foundation. It's about a quarter theoretical and the rest of it is trying to understand the folklore of how circuit works and how to apply that.

Why should someone study physics here over going to an engineering school?

You can go to an engineering school when you're done with your education. An engineering student when they're done with school will graduate and practice their technical skills for about six years. After that, if they want to advance in their career, they're going to have to start taking on more managerial responsibilities and interacting with clients.

So now you're working and oral skills are going to be very important — now, more and more of your work involves communication orally or through written word. In addition to that, a lot of business is going to be about the contacts you make. There are connections you can make and you build up trust that way. These little details now become important. A liberal arts education is incredibly useful.

By Chris Ford

Keith Bonin is a professor of physics and the department chair, having joined the university in 1991. He studies the optical properties of nanoparticles as well as using nanoparticles to study physical systems including acoustics. He also explores the modeling of the behavior of dopamine uptake in the brains of rats and mice under changing biochemical or external influences. He and his research team are specifically attempting to model the effects of cocaine on dopamine uptake.

How did you end up at Wake Forest?

I came to Wake Forest as an associate professor. I was a professor at Princeton for eight years, one year as a postdoctoral fellow and then seven on the faculty. At Princeton almost no one gets tenure, so you have to leave. So I was applying to different schools and this was one of them.

I noticed they had a graduate program in physics and I wanted to move to the South because I had heard it was a nice place to live in terms of low cost of living and the weather. My wife really liked Wake Forest.

So when I came, I really enjoyed my visit. The people, the faculty, the staff were all very warm and friendly. It seemed like they were happy with what they were doing.

Is there a research project you're currently working on?

I'm always working on a lot of projects. I've got two main projects I'm working on right now. The first one is looking at the physics of cancer. We're studying how cells change in their mechanical properties from normal cells to full-blown metastatic cancer cells.

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Adrian Martinez/Old Gold & Black

I also enjoy teaching basic chemistry of the environment because I think it's a topic that's important for all of us to understand.
STQ: Event doesn’t live up to former glory

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idea that we can build on.”

“I have heard people who were not pleased that it wasn’t the same free-for-all,” said senior Bill Bode, a student who helped organize the event. “But being reasonable, that wasn’t sustainable.”

“People were concerned with people getting hurt at events like this,” said junior Reid Nickel, who served as the planning committee co-chair. “So if we can make it to 10 o’clock without anybody injured or going to the hospital, that’s always good.”

Jacqueline Sutherland, student government president, recognized concerns over the division that the beer garden may have caused, but still believes the event was a success that brought students of all ages and organizations together. “I think there was very good turnout, probably evenly divided between under 21 and over 21,” Sutherland said. “In order to have a beer garden through Aramark, you have to have it fenced off. I think that was a division and a difficulty, but that kind of thing is unavoidable.”

Regarding the use of only half of the quad, Sutherland felt that holding the event in a smaller area would enhance a sense of unity among the students. “I heard a lot of feedback [in previous years] that it didn’t feel like it was an event for the entire study body,” she said. “So looking this year, we wanted to hold an event that would do away with all the internal divisions. So we thought using half the quad would be more of a fun atmosphere.”

Reporting contributed by Kevin Cline.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT
BY MORGAN SCHICK
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I. Committee Reports

The academics committee has continued planning another major and minors fair. They also plan to host a meeting to encourage freshmen to use AP credit to declare minors early. The Appropriations and Charter committee introduced a proposal to charter Wool Forest. The Buzzocracy committee reported that they are developing a new system for cataloguing buzzes, and that freshman Kyla Tucker will be joining the committee. The Campus Life committee announced that they will be meeting with Dean of Student Life Mary Gerardy next week to go forward with decorating Zick’s. They plan to start a student artwork competition to choose which works will decorate the new restaurant.

II. New Business

Bill 10 – Constitutional Amendment of Student Budget Advisory Committee: The Assembly passed a bill to expand the Student Budget Advisory Committee to accommodate the committee’s new operations.

The committee will now include an auditing system to confirm organizations’ spending. The committee, which previously only included the Student Government Treasurer, will now include two elected voting members, one elected budget representative from each class, three members appointed by the Student Government president, and one non-voting member.

Bill 11 – Appointments to the Student Budget Advisory Committee: A bill to appoint Nirali Vagadia, Philip Weinstein, Ryan Taylor, Bradford Peirce, Molly Zavurucha, Meredith Gay, Taylor Brown, Tom Hobby, Alex Gromer and Robby Ciarroc to the Student Budget Advisory Committee was passed.

Bill 12 – Appointment of Student Government Parliamentarian: Speaker Lydia Sandy proposed a bill to appoint Emily Kendall Norris as Parliamentarian for the 2013-2014 academic year. The bill was passed.

Bill 13 – Appointment of Student Government Speaker Pro Tempore: Speaker Lydia Sandy also introduced a bill to appoint Sarah Vansickle as Speaker Pro tempore for the 2013-2014 year. The bill was passed.

III. Announcements

President Jacqueline Sutherland expressed her gratitude towards all participants of Seize the Quad for making the event a success. Sutherland also announced that she and Dr. Penny Rue, Vice President for Campus Life, will begin hosting monthly joint office hours in the Pit. The president also reported that she plans to establish a monthly President’s Caucus to bring together presidents of all of the university’s student organizations.

In addition, Sutherland encourages students to participate in the Dignity and Respect Campaign by signing the pledge to treat everyone with dignity and respect and practicing the Campaign’s Tip of the Day. Finally, the president encourages students to bring forth their questions and concerns regarding campus life to her second Sit and Sip, which will be hosted in Campus Grounds on Thursday, November 7.

SG Executive Board
2012-13

Jacqueline Sutherland, President
Lydia Sandy, Speaker of the House
Will Readhead, Treasurer
Javier Jones, Secretary
Reid Nickle, Chief of Staff
Local elections to be held on Nov. 5

For Forsyth County, the progress of general elections on Nov. 5. The city of Winston-Salem will elect its mayor and eight city council members, one for each of the eight wards in the city. Incumbent mayor Allen Joines (D) will run against James Knox (R), who decided to keep his name on the ballot after a tumultuous campaign.

This summer, controversial comments from Knox’s Facebook page surfaced and he was accused of making a racially insensitive remark to an election worker. Knox then lost the support of the local Republican Party in August, making it difficult for a successful campaign to continue. Knox defended the comments and claimed that they were not meant to offend anyone.

He initially decided to withdraw from the race, but eventually decided to leave his name on the ballot and let the voters decide. Knox was elected as the Forsyth County Soil and Water Conservation District Supervisor. Challenges: Knox has stated that he would like to be the voice of the “blue collar” citizens of Winston-Salem. Like Joines, he would focus on expanding Winston’s economy and decreasing the amount of poverty in the area. Knox also believes that creating jobs in the area is a priority and that Winston-Salem must separate themselves from other nearby cities to make the city more attractive to employers and businesses. Knox would also like to restore a sense of civic pride in the area.

Focuses: Knox has stated that he would like to serve as the mayor of Winston-Salem since 2005 and 2009. Joines has worked in Winston-Salem since 1971, when he became an assistant to the city manager.

Focuses: Joines has served as the mayor of Winston-Salem since 2005. His term as mayor spans from 2001 to 2005 and 2005 and 2009. Joines has also increased the city’s tax base during his tenure as mayor. If re-elected, Joines will continue to focus on improving Winston’s economy.

Focuses: Since becoming mayor, Joines has focused on improving the economy in Winston. He created over 4,000 jobs in the area during his first term as mayor, and an additional 8,000 jobs in subsequent terms. Joines has also increased the city’s tax base during his tenure as mayor. If re-elected, Joines will continue to focus on improving Winston’s economy.

Focuses: Macintosh will focus on creating and sustaining job growth in the area. She would also like to restore a sense of civic pride in the area.

Focuses: Macintosh has also focused on numerous volunteer boards in the area, many of which focus on urban restoration. Macintosh is a member of the Mayor’s Select Capital Needs Committee and the Mayor’s Select Development Review-Related Advisory Committee.

Focuses: Allen Joines will continue to focus on areas of high poverty and will continue to decrease poverty in the area. He will focus on areas of high poverty and will continue to focus on decreasing poverty in the area.

Focuses: If elected to the city council, Macintosh will focus on making Winston-Salem a vibrant community that will attract small businesses, the arts and tourism. She will also focus on growing the city’s industrial and manufacturing companies. Joines would also like to increase the pay of public safety jobs so that Winston-Salem can attract experienced police officers and firemen to keep Winston-Salem citizens safe.

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