Williams believes Idaho needs change

By Adam E-H Wilson
Senior Reporter of The Argonaut

Helen Chenowith, Helen Chenowith, Helen Chenowith.
That seemed to be all the race was about when Dan Williams ran on the
Democratic ticket in '96.
Williams lost to the out-spoken and sometimes outrageous incumbent Idaho
Representative by 6,000 votes.
This time around, he hopes to make the race about the issues,
and his stance on them.
The Boise lawyer was in
town last week, making the rounds and shaking the hands.
If he wins, he said, other moderate Idaho Democrats will come out of the woodwork in
what many consider a one-party state.
Just like gubernatorial candidate Dirk Kempthorne, education is topping Williams' list.
Williams strongly supports federal
block grants to help ease overcrowding in Idaho schools, and attract better teachers.
"If it were up to Helen Chenowith, the whole burden would be right back on local
property tax payers," he said.
A recent poll of Idahoans reported that 88 percent of Idaho residents are concerned about
state education deteriorating, but an almost equal number opposed to higher taxes.
Williams said what that means is the people are tired of
paying for school improve-
ments through local property taxes. He said he might support a hike in state sales tax,
although it is purely a state mat-
ter, and wouldn't be in his department.
He also denounced the bill
passed by the House of Representatives that abolishes the current federal tax code in
2002, provided there is a sim-
plified replacement by July of that year.
"It's a cop-out. It's posturing," said the Boise Idahoan.
"It doesn't take a brain surgeon to figure out that what they're really doing is
nothing."
He said the Republican spon-
sors of the bill were hedging by not coming up with an actual replacement for the code. He
suspects they will support a flat tax or federal sales tax that will
cost the average American
more.
Williams suggested a sim-
plified income tax, but did not
elaborate.
Another Republican bill in the Senate was killed by the same party last week, which would have
raised the tax on a box of cigarettes over a dollar and pro-
hibit tobacco companies from
targeting minors in their adver-
sisting.
Williams called the move "outrageous," particularly after the Republicans have been
accepting tobacco lobby money for years.
The bills author, Senator John McCaskill, R-Ariz., said the tobacco companies' multimillion-dollar advertising
campaign was responsible for swaying the constituents.
Williams said the bill offered the tobacco companies immuni-
ty from lawsuits, which is very valuable, and "we should
extract a high-price" for said immunity.
Currently, Idaho Republicans are considering endorsing English as Idaho's official state language.
Williams said such a measure would be a "step in the wrong direction."
"Those kind of things make us look intolerant," he said.
He stated that it would only hurt the state's image and discour-
age investment, and to mention
the moral issues.
Idahoans have a western her-
itage of "almost unlimited access" to federal lands, accord-
ing to Williams. He said bal-
cancing that with the current state growth is a challenge to all Idaho politicians.
He said that he was willing to "see what the science has to say," and not to do what
the science recommends, in
the effort to save endangered salmon runs.
But when asked if he would
beak the 125 miles of the Snake
river dam if that was recom-
pended by the panel investigat-
ing the matter, Williams seemed doubtful. He said, how-
ever, he wouldn't definitely rule it out.
Williams defended President Clinton's visit to China amidst criticism about China's cam-
paign contributions and military satellite sales.

Monkey man falls from tree, bananas suspected

By Adam E-H Wilson
Senior Reporter of The Argonaut

The stage is set (pun intended) for the
Idaho Repertory Theatre's 45th season.
This year, the University of Idaho will
play host to Englishmen running from
templards, Shakespeare in the Civil War, the
dTV show called Sylvia and, of course,
a woman is black.
"Both David and Chuck hired a really
good group this year. You can tell from the energy on stage," said director Tom
Whitaker, referring to Idaho theater guru David Lee Painter and Chuck Ney.
Whitaker was watching the first complete
run-through of Chaps in the
Hunting Theater. The comedy is set dur-
ing a BBC radio broadcast in 1944.
When the country-western singers hired
to put on a show dont, state employees
are put to task creating and singing the
Wild West. An inside hint: watch for the
"gunlinger" routine, hilarious in both
light and sound.
Chaps' cast of six is divided equally
between local actors and those from out
of the area, but the season company as
a whole was brought in from around the
country.
Whitaker, who directed The Complete
Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged
at BT three years ago, was pleased with
the progress the production was making.
In addition to Chaps, he is also directing
Sylvia, a story of a stressed marriage
torn around by Sylvia, a "wonderfully
sprightly" dog.
This year's Shakespeare under the stars
will be Much Ado About Nothing, a mad
ramp of a comedy set this time in the
Civil War. Whitaker will be put on the
next to the Old Armotum, on the lawn
in front of the PEB. Each performance
will be preceded by "The Green Show,"
featuring musicians and storytellers.
And what seasons would be complete
without a Shakespeare dark thriller? The
Woman in Black threatens to strike fear
into the hearts of theatergoers this sum-
mer, and open the season on June 30.
Performances continue through July,
starting at 7:30 p.m. except for two 2:00 p.m.
Sunday matinees. "The Green Show" begins at 6:30 p.m. before Much
Ado About Nothing performances.
Both season and single tickets are avail-
able from the Hunting box office, phone
885-7985.

UI Fast Fact

What did famous UI Professor, Malcolm
Renfrew, invent?

Beer to
Moab lately?

see page 2

Weekend Weather
FRIDAY showers, high in the
60s-70s
SATURDAY partly cloudy, temps in the low 70s, high 60s

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Well travel fans, I'm back. After a year of travel—yeah I wish, more like inner travel as I struggle to complete my program—I'm here to offer my little unique perspectives on the places I've been fortunate enough to experience. As I prepare for my next big trip to the British Islands and Ireland, I'm running some older material. Don't worry, it's nothing you all have ever seen, but the trips themselves from which I now have some distance. So hold onto your hats, we're off to Moab, Utah again, this time Backroads style! I met my guides, Colin and Jenna at the Best Western in central Moab. I'd arrived the day before and spent the evening soaking in the late October (1997) desert air. The town was hopping for the upcoming final fat tire races. We gathered the rest of the group at the local Bagel stop and ventured to our campsite at Dead Horse Point. The drive up and out of Moab valley at twilight was surreal. The pink and purples of my memory, ignited by the soft light of the high plains desert, made me long for my Colorado home. Terrified to meet the rest of the group, I busied myself up setting up my campsite. I talked some tech with Mike, our third leader and evening's cook, and he passed me a cereza while we paused to admire the gentle sunset. After a few rounds of wine and a great meal, we began to introduce ourselves. There were thirteen of us, ranging from 23-72, all a little soul sick like myself. Most were from the east coast, and I was the only one who’d been to Moab before.

The first 13 mile ride to the actual Dead Horse Point, a natural corral/palace with a narrow neck only ten feet wide at its widest and a 200 foot drop on either side to the canyon floor, included a sampling of most kinds of terrain offered in Zion National Park. I reveled in the clear blues sky, deep desert red, and crisp, cool salt scent in the air. I also got to know some of the other riders. As always in a group, there is the handful who need to be first. They spend their day rying for first place and forget to look around. I tend to take a few pictures, stop to admire the scenery, and perhaps to hesitate once or twice on the skidisher descents.

The second day was seemingly down hill 30 miles from Dead Horse Point to the Colorado River. One-third of the ride was on the pace of the rest descending into the river canyon, how hard could it be? How idiotic am I? The ride to Canyonslands national Park and then the Shafer Trail head was pleasant. Emily and I got to know each other better. I'd spent some time star-gazing the night before and was in an excellent state of mind for the task at hand. Two miles later we joined the White Rim Trail (a 133 mile trail following a geographical outcropping causing a rim over a lower canyon). There were a few tricky descents, and a few heavy climbs, but the ride—so far—had been pleasant, fun even. Then it dawned on me. We were entering the canyon in the heat of the day. I stocked up water and continued the trail with Emily and Rhonda.

After five miles of hot desert cruising, my hamstrings began to cramp, then my calves. I’d hop off my bike and walk it out for a while. I cooled down a bit and was able to get back on my bike. I snapped on some PowerBars and drank some Gatorade to get my fluids going again.

Turning into the Lathrop Canyon started it. I faced the steep downhill with confidence and self-assurance. Some of the group resting ahead of me commented on the racket I raised for myself. (I firmly believe in self-paise if you tend to hesitate.) Feeling refreshed, I pushed ahead, only to find wheel-sucking sand mile later. For the next four miles I manuavored in and out of a guilty wash. The sand was heavy to pedal and exhausting to walk through. Eventually we all made it, and by 3 p.m. boat ride out there.

The shallow-bottom jet boat whisked us along the Colorado where canyon walls loom up three hundred feet on either side. Although I've frequented the area often, I'd never seen this side of Moab. It was beautiful, refreshing and pristine.

That night a storm blew into town, and with it our campsite. As my supplied high-profile test tipped in the wind, I cursed the decision not to bring my own. Eventually I moved everything outside, threw the collapsing tent into the sag truck and settled into a pleasant night under the stars. Our next day covered territo-y I'd seen before. I was looking forward to the chance to see my improvement since I'd done that ride in 1996. Approaching Gemini Bridges, I noticed a storm moving fast across the plateau. Knowing my jacket was in the sag wagon, I took off for the 11 mile rocky downhill to Highway 191. Unfortunately Colin had locked the sag wagon in order to join the ride from the finish line. So four of us just jumped on what used to be the two lane Hwy 191 and motored along pace line into town. Yes for once I was running with the fast group. I have to admit, I kind of liked it.

We regrouped and moved camp to Big Bend which was lush, sandy and protected from the wind. The next day we were to do Slickrock and many were asking...
Continued from Page 2

me for advice. Granted I attempted Stlickrock on my second ride in Moab, I still felt daunted by it and somewhat concerned about what the desert did with the skin I left behind last time. Nonetheless, I checked my new V-brakes and went on out. Having more confidence, balance and flat-pedal SPD drive train certainly improves the ride! I got a few great teeth marks on my lower calf, but overall conquered the trail. We coated into Moab for a hot shower and a bit of beer at the local brewery, Eddie McStiff's.

The fifth day ride, a 26 miler, turned out to be my favorite of the trip. We began on the east side of the LaSal mountains (which donned its fresh dusting of snow as we mounted our bikes). I felt like we were riding in the Sangre de Cristo range by my hometown. The aspen were in full color, as were the scrub oak. The ride, an easy country mile, stretched out before us with hope and patience. We met up with the Kokopelli trail and joined it for a spell of bumpy downhill and giant granite boulders, culminating in a stream crossing, our first of thirty through Onion Creek. The mood around camp that night was somber. We'd all formed a cohesive supportive unit. We joked and mused like one big happy family, and it would come to an end after the next ride. The guides broke out fixings for Mexican Coffee and we all stayed around the campfire until the conversation died and the ambers flared. Energized from my first sound night's sleep, I watched to sun come down into the canyon before packing up my tent per Backroads specifications. Most of us attempted Hurrah Pass—a six mile gentle climb clim maxing in the rigorous five mile finale. Emily and I buzzed right up the switchbacks and maneuvered over, around and through the river-rocks, cattle guards and other assorted hazards. We even had time to snap photos with the fast group before their decent. We admired the beauty and took some photos, for it was a glorious first Impulse, so I left after Emily and on the last climb out, Emily and I had caught up with me, so we discussed favorite books as we pedaled to lunch and our transports home.

We all exchanged email and addresses which I’m ashamed to admit I haven’t followed up on to well. I got a few cards at Christmas with photos either I took, or someone else took of me. As for organized tour groups, Backroads is the way to go. They supply everything you could need and outfit any kind of adventure, from bare-bones camping to touring between bed and breakfasts in Europe. Their guides personable, tractable and knowledgeable. And the food far surpasses anything I’ve ever dreamt of making with a bed of coals and a few Dutch ovens.

The University of Idaho Argonaut
The Students' Voice

Editor in Chief, 885-7845
Andrew T. White
Managing Editor
Opinion Editor, 885-2219
Justin Oliver Ruen
News Editor, 885-7825
Jason Sandusky
Outdoors Editor, 885-7825
Shawn Vidmar
Layout and Design Online Editor, rider@udog.com Shawn Rider

Advertising Manager, 885-7794
Sam Aldrich

Ad Production Manager Sarah Wichlacz

Argonaut Staff

Adam E-H Wilson, senior reporter; Monica Lewis, visiting Western State College reporter; Laura LaRitchie, photographer; Blaine LaRitchie, reporter; Bennett Barr, reporter.

Advertising Sales Rebecca Coyle

The Summer Argonaut is published four times. Publication dates will be June 12, June 26, July 10, July 24. The Argonaut is available on the UI campus and in the Moscow Pollinova. Five single copies free, additional copies $1.99. Mail subscriptions are $16.00 or $24.50. The Argonaut is published by the students of the University of Idaho. The opinions expressed herein are the writers', and do not necessarily represent those of the students of the University of Idaho, the faculty, the university or its Board of Regents. The Argonaut is a member of the Associated College Press, the College Newspaper/Advertising Managers Association and subscribes to the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics. All advertising is subject to acceptance by the Argonaut, which reserves the right to reject ad copy. The Argonaut does not assume financial responsibility for typographical errors in advertising unless an error materially affects the ad as reviewed by the Student Media Board. The Argonaut's liability shall not exceed the cost of the advertisement in which the error occurred, and a refund or credit will be given for the first incorrect insertion only. Minimums must be called into the student Advertising Manager within seven working days. The Argonaut assumes no responsibility for damages caused by responding to fraudulent advertisements. Newspaper Identification Statement: The Argonaut, ISSN 0296-1479, is published twice weekly during the academic school year and is located at 301 Student Union, Moscow, ID 83844-2217.

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