

Plan for beer to be served at farm dinner denied

By Ellen Nicholas & Natalie Sutton
STAFF WRITERS

To beer, or not to beer: that is the question. Or at least it was the question on many minds Oct. 27, the day of the farm dinner.

Amidst the excitement to celebrate the farm and enjoy the company of friends while eating delicious local goods, there was a debate over whether or not to serve local beer to of-age attendees at the dinner. Meriwether Godsey had some kegs of Natty Greene's beer left over from a previous alumni event and offered them for the farm dinner. Organizers then requested to serve it at the dinner to those of-age.

"There was going to be a drink limit of two per person and you had to be 21 anyway," said senior Bennett Christian, one of the organizers of the event. "So it would have been done really responsibly."

Though the request was initially considered, in the end it was denied.

"I had said to (Farm Manager) Jim Dees, who was kind of putting this together, 'Let me think about it. ... I don't know if I have a problem with it really,'" said Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Aaron Fetrow.

After reviewing Guilford's policies on alcohol, Fetrow decided to pull the plug. In the Guilford student handbook it says, "Beer kegs and other common containers of alcohol (including beer 'bongs' and funnels) are not permitted on campus or at college-sponsored events off-campus."

"It sends a really inconsistent message to students to say, 'Okay, you can't have a keg in your apartment if you're 21, but now we can at this dinner,'" said Fetrow. "And as I thought about it more, I called (Dees) back and said, 'I don't want to send that message to students.'"

When first hearing about the farm dinner, Max Carter, director of the Friends Center and campus ministry coordinator, greatly supported the plan of having it during "Take Back Your Time" week, a week that emphasizes having fun without spending money or using substances. When Carter was approached on the morning of the event about the proposal to serve beer at the farm dinner, he was not enthusiastic about the idea.

"I registered my sense that I'd rather not see that happen during a week when we emphasize non-substance activities and fun that you don't have to get sauced to enjoy," Carter said.

On the day of the event, Carter sent out an email to people involved, expressing his own sentiments about the idea of serving alcohol at

the event.

One reason Carter was uncomfortable with the idea of beer being served at the event is because of the overall dangers of alcohol.

"Alcohol in a college setting is a vexed issue," Carter said. "There have been reports of a pretty steady stream of ambulances hauling students off for alcohol poisoning this year. I would hope that, just like when we identify a source of destructiveness for any of our students ... we say, 'No, no. That's not tolerated here.'"

Erin Fox, director of student leadership and engagement, values Carter's feelings on the matter and finds his perspective to be worth listening to.

"I can respect (Carter's) opinion," Fox said. "At the end of the day, it really comes back to, how does (serving beer at the farm dinner) match the values of our institution? (Carter) is usually a good temperature-taker on that matter."

Although disappointed, Christian understood the administration's decision to deny the request but hopes that there will be

a continuing discussion about the issue in the future.

"We're going to have this time to think about it (and) talk about it," said Christian. "But I expect us to be able to serve it in the future responsibly. Again, with the drink limit there just isn't a serious danger. If only to support local business, we should do it in moderation."

There is also support for continued dialogue about this issue from the administration.

"(I) hope this incident will evoke thoughtful, open conversation as I myself was left scratching my head about this," said Vice President for Administration Jonathan Varnell.

Fetrow also realizes the complicated nature of the issue, but through it all he came to a fairly clear conclusion.

"If we started serving alcohol at student events I think members of our community are going to say, 'Why are we promoting this behavior?'" said Fetrow. "I don't anticipate us having it at any student event anytime soon."

Carter agrees that, in the future, our campus should have a more in-depth conversation about alcohol use and how it affects us as a community.

"It's a complicated issue," said Carter. "If we're going to decide not to use alcohol in certain aspects of campus culture, I want it to be for the right reasons, not because some stodgy Quaker was standing in the way. ... I'd love to have this community think more intentionally about who we are, who we want to be, and why."

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Guilford College student handbook

GREEN BEAN

A protest on Elm Street: accusations of racial bias hit Green Bean owner

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Cornell described the initial interaction with Southard differently. Cornell said that he asked another customer who had bumped into one of his female friends to apologize, which he did. However, Southard then requested the men to leave because she considered them disruptive. Protests formed outside by the afternoon, with protesters saying Southard's actions were racially motivated.

In the following two days, news of the incident traveled informally through the Internet and word of mouth, usually resulting in contradicting ideas of what really happened.

Junior Peach McCarty stumbled upon a Facebook group dedicated to exposing the event.

"I read it and they kept giving updates," said McCarty. "There were definitely some racial vibes the way it was described. Granted, though, we only got one side of it."

As the community caught wind of the event, individuals and groups took the initiative to get involved. NC Rising, a local anarchist organization, was primarily responsible for organizing the protests and distributing fliers that called Southard a white supremacist.

"They witnessed half of it," said Southard. "They blew it way out of proportion. When it was between (Cornell) and me, it was more of a misunderstanding

of words."

Cone believes that the protests had little to do with what actually occurred.

"To say that a ... reaction to a group of people in your store is the same thing as Jim Crow or White Supremacy and to threaten a woman's business because of it ... now create(s) another problem," Cone told The Guilfordian. "You've changed the subject and you are asking for respect but you are not doing it in a

respectful or thoughtful way. That creates a whole new set of problems."

The protests ran their course as a hot topic. However, amid the focus on who was at fault, the civil mediation that ended the protests received little attention.

"They all sat down at a table together and said their pieces to one another and came to an agreement and (made) concessions with one another," said a Green Bean employee who requested to remain anonymous.

The mediation was led by Cornell's pastor, Reverend Nelson Johnson.

Southard believes that the two parties are emerging from the incident with concern for a greater well being; they are even attending a racial awareness seminar together.

"I told Jorge, 'It sucks that we spent two whole days basically hating each other,' but hopefully this will be a long lasting friendship in which we can do many positive things that will outweigh that," said Southard.

"You've changed the subject and you are asking for respect but you are not doing it in a respectful or thoughtful way. That creates a whole new set of problems."

Ed Cone, local blogger

Community Senate Update

Stuff we did

Got updates on SLRP II, gauged interest in Guilford Shares. Got really excited about accessibility.

So many things!
Lake! Safety!
Accessibility! Buses!
Social Honor Code!

Stuff we're doing

Insert pop culture reference here!

Stuff we're gonna do

Small-group discussions. Decisions on accessibility plan and bus proposal.

Silly rabbit, ideas should be sent to Senate! Contact the bunny: senate@guilford.edu
Full Senate meets at 7 p.m. in Boren on Wednesdays

Stuff you wanna see done

By Yahya Alazrak
COMMUNITY SENATE PRESIDENT/CLERK