

Debate heats up over public school smoking ban

By KATHRYNE TOVO
Staff Writer

A smoking ban that will prohibit all school employees from smoking on school grounds has produced mixed reactions among school officials.

The ban, which will take effect in September 1990, was approved Monday night at a meeting of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board of Education.

"One teacher told me the other day that although she does not smoke, she does not feel that there should be a law forbidding it," said Carol Ambrosio, assistant principal of Carrboro Elementary School.

"I think that the general consensus of the teachers in this school is that they are uncomfortable with the law, and even though there are only one or two teachers who smoke, there should be provisions made for the smokers," Ambrosio said.

School board chairman Theodore Parrish said health factors, including the danger of passive smoke, were the main reasons behind the new policy.

Also, results of several surveys sent to school districts by the National School Board Association indicated that smokers cost schools between \$500 and \$3,000 per year, Parrish said.

The studies showed 33 to 45

percent more absenteeism and 23 to 53 percent more sick leave among smokers, he said.

Francis Barry, principal of Glenwood Elementary School, said she has mixed feelings about the ban.

"My husband was a smoker, and it killed him," Barry said. "I feel that smoking should be discouraged, but I realize that it is difficult for smokers to stop."

Board of education member Mary Bushnell, who voted against the ban, said while she is a firm supporter of a smoke-free environment in the schools, she thinks there might have been alternatives to the ban.

"As a board, our highest priority is the educational program in the schools," Bushnell said. "I would hate to see the district lose valuable teachers who are willing to smoke in the designated areas, but just cannot go the whole day without smoking."

But school board member Fred Battle said, "I could not sit on the board, knowing all of the health facts I did, and vote against the ban."

"If there is the possibility of smoke affecting even one child, I would prefer to eliminate smoking in the schools altogether."

Parrish said the district will be supportive and will work with school employees to try and implement this new policy.

"We are not talking about punitive measures, we are just concerned with implementing the new policy in the most humane, realistic way," he said.

Larry Wakeford, co-president of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Association of Educators and a science teacher at Chapel Hill High School, said he is disturbed by the ban because the board did not consult district teachers or principals when making the decision.

"If teachers in North Carolina have any say about an issue, it is granted to them by the local school board," Wakeford said. "In this state, teachers have no legal right to control their working conditions through the collective bargaining process that is used in other parts of the country."

In the past, the board has been very cooperative with teachers in terms of asking for input about decisions which will affect them, Wakeford said.

"It is unlike the board to grant us no authority whatsoever in the decision-making process," he said.

But Parrish said the role of a school board is to set policies for the district based on the best information available.

"If we had included teachers and

administrators in the decision, their decision might have been to leave the policy as it is," Parrish said. "Based on our information, the board would still have been in favor of the ban."

The current policy in Chapel Hill and Carrboro schools prohibits students from smoking on school grounds, and restricts school employees to smoking only in designated areas.

Comic doctor prescribes laughter for life

By ANDREW LAWLER
Staff Writer

Imagine a doctor who doesn't charge for medical care. A doctor who believes carrying malpractice insurance is a tacit admission that the doctor is going to screw up.

Imagine a doctor who believes insurance is just a way for doctors to overcharge patients. Dress him up in a gorilla outfit as he tours the nation advocating humor in health care. Add him up and you have Dr. Patch Adams, founder of the Gesundheit Institute and a man referred to as the "Court Jester of Medicine." Adams will speak at Memorial Hall Friday night on "How to Be Nutty."

Adams is being brought to the

campus through the combined efforts of UNC medical students and the Carolina Health and Humor Association (HaHa's). The Carolina HaHa's are a locally founded organization dedicated to the use of humor in both medical and professional circles as an aid to combat depression, stress and burnout.

Jon Seskovich, who graduated from the UNC nursing program last year, said that the group's aims are "to emphasize the pain-relieving effects of laughter." Seskovich pointed to the growing awareness of the group on a national basis due to profiles in the Washington Times newspaper and Prevention magazine.

The group was founded two years ago by Ruth Hamilton, a Durham

kindergarten teacher, and David Kleinbaum, a UNC professor of epidemiology now on sabbatical, and it became an official non-profit organization last year. This is not their first appearance on campus, as the group has worked in UNC dorms before finals to combat stress and anxiety.

The biggest response they've gotten so far is from their work with cancer patients at Duke Medical Center. Hamilton runs a "laugh mobile," a cart that has been described as a rolling library of humor from which patients can check out funny books and tapes for use in their rooms.

"The most immediate help this is, is it allows the medicine to work better with the patients. We also stress

the use of humor as a way to communicate," Hamilton said.

Hamilton added that the lecture will focus on how people can use humor to discover happiness and will end with the speaker inviting the audience to dress up in Mardi Gras outfits and journey onto campus, similar to what Dr. Adams did at Harvard.

Proceeds from the lecture will go to help construct the Gesundheit Institute in Virginia, a hospital that will offer free medical care, and to the Carolina HaHa's.

Tickets for Patch Adams are available at the Skylight Exchange (933-5550). The lecture begins at 8 p.m. in Memorial Hall.

Departments join to commemorate author's birthday

By JENNIFER WING
Staff Writer

To commemorate the 100th birthday of American poet T.S. Eliot, UNC's English, classics, music and speech communication departments will host a celebration on Sept. 26.

The T.S. Eliot Centennial Celebration will include an open mike in Bingham Hall, an Eliot feast in the Old Well Room at the Carolina Inn, and a performance of Eliot's work in a voice and music concert in Person Hall.

"We hope that there will be an appreciation of T.S. Eliot's works, and that it still has the ability to inspire," Joseph Flora, English department chairman, said Thursday.

The celebration has been planned for months through the collaboration of the different departments, said Beverly Long, speech communication department chairwoman.

The major part of the concert program will include works by Eliot that were inspired by music, Long said.

During the performance, 13 faculty members of the various departments and the drama and history departments will read pieces from Eliot's works, she said.

"The core of the celebration is the dialogue between music and litera-

ture," she said.

The verse choir, a quartet, and a 25-member choral group will perform pieces ranging from young Eliot to the more seasoned Eliot writings, Long said.

Readings from the play "The Family Reunion" and the poem "Hollow Wind" are a part of the repertoire, she said. "We hope it will be a real celebration of the literature of T.S. Eliot on this 100th anniversary of his birthday."

Eliot's works and general information on his life and career are now on display at Davis Library, Flora said.

Eliot's works contain such famous pieces as "The Waste Land" and "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats," the basis for Andrew Lloyd Webber's Broadway hit "Cats."

Flora said Eliot was an intellectual writer who craved a popular audience.

"We recognize him as one of the great poets of the 20th century. He helped define culture and has been very symbolic and inspiring to other authors."

Anyone is welcome to attend the reading and to listen to Eliot's works, Flora said. All activities are free except the dinner, which costs \$20.

Rally

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Harry Bleattler, administrative director of UNC's SFA chapter, said he was pleased with the rally.

"We accomplished what we set out to do," he said. "We informed the students. A lot of uninformed people got the chance to get the information and make up their own minds."

Students observing the rally expressed a variety of opinions.

"If we're going through with SDI it will cost us \$8,500 per person," Dais said. "We can't just keep using our gold card," referring to the U.S. federal deficit.

Senior Peter Janes, who questioned Roberts and Uribe throughout both speeches, said he thought equal time should have been given to the anti-SDI point-of-view. "I wish we had a podium," he said. "We could have gotten our ideas across a lot better if we had equal time."

Junior Keith Lane said he favors SDI.

"SDI is a first step," he said. "SDI saves people; it doesn't kill them. We need to give it a chance. Sure, it may not work at first, but we just need to give it time. It took the space program 10 years to reach the moon. SDI is a whole new chance for hope."

Center

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funds in July 1989 from the legislature for the School of Social Work's new building, to be located next to Rosenau Hall.

Rutherford did not say that the performing arts center had been moved ahead of other projects, but he said the plan for the center was not proposed before the 1987 session of the General Assembly in which the planning money was appropriated.

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