

News

From Chabotar, p. 1

and faculty who feel that an effort to preserve and strengthen Guilford's Quaker traditions weighs more heavily than anything else.

Chabotar considered it a precedented decision, though, noting that two-third of the nation's Quaker colleges are headed by non-Quakers.

Max Carter, head of campus ministries, explained that although there are plans to help Chabotar learn more about Quaker ideology – and Chabotar said it's one of his priorities – the problem is larger-scale, and has to do with the direction the college takes in the future.

"The worry with having a non-Quaker president is not the first non-Quaker," Carter said. "It's the second and third and fourth. The first non-Quaker may well pedal very hard to convince everyone that you can be a non-Quaker president and support the Quaker values, and may bend over backwards to assure folks that a Catholic as president of a Quaker school is not the fox in the henhouse.

"But once that has been established, it's easier for the next president not to be a Quaker. And bit by bit you wonder if subtly, and in ways almost not recognized, the college takes on a trajectory towards being just another fine secular liberal arts college."

Benji Hebner, a junior and Quaker, agreed and said that Quakerism still has a marked effect on the college.

"People do still come to Guilford and see something different," he said. "I think the people who are in charge of this school don't see how fragile that is. This is just the first tap in a long series of dominoes."

But students like Bryan Warf, a sophomore and Quaker, see no problem, so long as the president doesn't stray from the principles upon which the school was established.

"The Board of Trustees picked who they felt would do the best job," Warf said. "I've met many people who have never heard of Quakers or knew what we are about, but they still fit right into our way of doing things."

Chabotar said, "[Guilford's] got great values in terms of candor, complicity, and tolerance that I would embrace as a Quaker or a Catholic." He went on to say that while he can talk all day about how great those principles are, the most important thing is for him to actually practice them.

Chabotar said one thing he looks forward to most at Guilford is the community's "ability to confront each other openly by saying 'I think we made a mistake.' Students can expect lots of showing up at events to get to know people. They can expect me to be accessible. They can expect me to be brutally candid and honest, and I expect the same from everyone, from students and faculty."

Chabotar outlined his goals for at least the first six months of his presidency. He said he wants to first identify the key issues and determine the best processes for managing them, whether that involves fixing something or taking advantage of an opportunity.

"Until you know what the answers are, it's hard to raise money, because people give to something specific, they give for a vision, they give for a defined product," he said. "And I think Guilford's got lots of those attributes and I just want to revisit them to make sure it's the best possible definition before I start trying to raise money or start a budget process."

Beyond that, he said his focus will be three things: finances, strategic planning, and governance.

"Some people believe that Guilford's curriculum is fairly narrow," he said. "I don't think that's true, I think it's very broad. In fact, one of the issues is how broad it should be. We can still be a broad curriculum while still emphasizing certain things we think are particular points of light."

He also said that Guilford can expect him for seven to 10 years as a rough estimate. "At Bowdoin, I thought I'd last five years and I lasted 11," he said. "And frankly, I'm coming to a lot better weather, so that alone is going to be a big attraction for me."

Chabotar will be moving to Greensboro in mid-August but will be making campus visits April 18 and 19, and sometime in May and June.

He sounds excited about the transition and is looking optimistically to the future. He said, "The Trustees are setting high expectations for me and for the college, and I think high expectations bring out the best in us."

News briefs

Alison Buck
STAFF WRITER

Distinguished alumnus speaks on math and religion

University of Tennessee mathematics professor Conrad Plaut delivered the Sheridan A. Simon Distinguished Alumni lecture on the history of European mathematics April 8 in Bryan Auditorium.

The lecture, entitled "The Pythagorean Mistake," focused on how European mathematics had to free itself of entanglements with philosophy and religion. This confusion began in ancient Greece with Pythagoras and the Pythagoreanism, who extensively explored certain aspects of mathematics but considered others taboo.

"Their mixing of religious ideas and philosophical ideas and mathematical ideas may have done more to slow mathematics down than their theorems did to speed it up," Plaut said.

Plaut delivered a talk aimed at an interdisciplinary audience, rather than those with a background in mathematics. He focused on history as well as math.

"This is not serious scholarship," he said. "It's just a tale."

Guilford Mathematics Professor and Department Chair Rudy Gordh introduced Plaut.

"He was one of my favorite students in mathematics," Gordh said.

Plaut, a 1983 Guilford graduate, has taught at the University of Tennessee since 1992. He has also taught at Ohio University and the Max Planck Institute of Mathematics in Germany.

Guilford honors student employees

Student Employment Services held a reception April 2 to honor student employees, also marking National Student Employment Week.

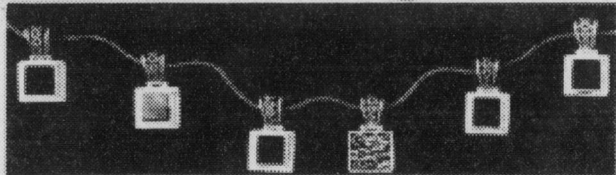
Sodexo Campus Services provided a cake and the bookstore donated door prizes which could be won by guessing the number of jellybeans in a jar.

"They do this every year, and I think it's really nice of them," IT&S worker and senior Merritt Johnson said.

President Don McNemar spoke briefly, thanking the students for their efforts.

"A lot that gets done in the community gets done by students," he said.

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Serendipity Schedule

See next week's issue for complete schedule
Times listed here are tentative*

Thursday, April 18

- 7 p.m. Larry Keel Experience, Snake Oil Medicine Show, Dirty Dozen Brass Band, Dana
- 12:30 Glowstick Capture The Flag, Sponsored by the Outdoors Club

Friday, April 19

- 2-3 p.m. Sprinklers in between Milner/Bryan
- Afternoon Milner Luau Sponsored by Milner Hall Council.
- 7:30 MF Doom, Atmosphere. Sternberger
- 12:00 Late night dance party w/ DJ Terry Mullan. Sternberger

Saturday, April 20

- 11:30-1:30 Picnic Lunch sponsored by Guilford Dining
- 12-6 p.m. Inflatable Games, Dana
- 8:30 Ween (doors open at 7:30)
- 10-1 Apartments Party

*All outdoor events subject to change due to weather