

WELCOME BACK ISSUE

The Daily Tar Heel

Saturday, August 14, 1999
Volume 107, Issue 54

News/Features/Arts/Sports 962-0245
Business/Advertising 962-1163
Chapel Hill, North Carolina
© 1999 DTH Publishing Corp.
All rights reserved.

Cancer Claims Life of Chancellor Hooker

Hooker took a medical leave of absence from UNC in April to better cope with his lymphatic cancer.

By ASHLEY STEPHENSON
Editor

JULY 1 - After a six-month battle with non-Hodgkins lymphoma Chancellor Michael Hooker, 53, died at 1 a.m. Tuesday at UNC Hospitals. Provost Dick Richardson said Hooker

led the University right up until the moment of his death.

Hooker had been conducting University business as usual Tuesday, he said. "He had been busy all day; he had spoken with his cabinet on the phone between 8 and 9:30 a.m.," Richardson said. "Later that night at about 8 p.m. he talked to (his secretary) Brenda Kirby and went to bed around 11 p.m."

Richardson said when Hooker's wife Carmen looked in on him shortly after 11 p.m., he was unresponsive. She called 911, and Hooker was taken to UNC Hospitals, where he died hours later.

"He was chancellor right up until the last minute. He was chancellor until the end."

Faculty Chairman Pete Andrews was the last person Hooker talked to that night. Hooker spoke with Andrews at about 9 p.m. Monday.



Chancellor Michael Hooker lost his battle with cancer June 29.

"We just had a brief conversation, and he said he was looking forward to our meeting on Tuesday. He sounded as vigorous as ever. I had no clue."

UNC-system President Molly Broad said she received a call in the middle of the night from Carmen and Hooker's physician Dr. Lee Berkowitz notifying her of Hooker's death. "It was shock because I had spoken with (Hooker and Berkowitz) late that afternoon, and (Berkowitz) said it looked like he had responded well to the latest round of therapy. We were all hoping Michael's valiant fight would be successful."

In a June 17 interview with The Daily Tar Heel, Hooker said his cancer was in remission. Richardson called Hooker's death shocking in light of his progress. "He was in a lot of pain, but there was the assurance the cancer was gone."

Hooker was diagnosed Jan. 16 with non-Hodgkins lymphoma and took a medical leave April 12. Broad appointed former UNC-system Vice President for Finance William McCoy as acting chancellor when Hooker took his leave.

But reports that Hooker's lymphoma had grown more aggressive prompted him to take his cancer fight to the

National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Md., on April 17. Calling the treatments in successful, Hooker assumed his duties as chancellor June 1. But only two weeks after returning to the post, Hooker told the DTH he had to use crutches to walk and had a physical therapist come to his home seven days a week. Hooker said his doctors told him he was fit enough to resume his duties as chancellor.

But the choice to return to the post after complications with his cancer was met with speculation that Hooker was

See HOOKER, Page 9A

Memorial Service Honors Chancellor's Life

Nearly 2,000 people packed Memorial Hall to reflect on the life and influence of the late chancellor.

By ASHLEY STEPHENSON
Summer Editor

JULY 8 - When Michael Hooker became chancellor of the University in 1995, he hung his UNC student ID card on his office wall.

It served as a testament to his memories as an undergraduate. It was proof of his love for UNC. And it was a sign he had returned home.

Hooker died June 29 due to complications stemming from non-Hodgkins lymphoma. He was 53. Provost Dick Richardson called him audacious. Gov. Jim Hunt said he possessed an enthusiasm that made every one around him younger. UNC-system President Molly Broad called him a visionary.

Although each person who spoke at the Memorial Hall service Friday for Hooker used different words to describe him, the message that resounded was the same. Nearly 2,000 people came to pay their respects to the legacy of a leader who challenged UNC and looked to take it beyond the horizon.

Student leaders, University administrators and state officials, as well as those that had worked with Hooker at the Universities of Maryland and Massachusetts, were invited to speak and share their memories of the late chancellor. Freeman Hrabowski, president of UMass of Baltimore County, said Hooker loved to talk to people about ideas. "When he talked about his work, he sounded like a kid in a candy shop," Hrabowski said. "He inspired us because he was such a passionate student of life."

Broad spoke more of the loss the UNC would sustain because of Hooker's death. North Carolina was diminished, she said. "Today we grieve not only for him, but we also grieve for our loss of this man whose talents and energies enriched our lives for

Students, Leaders React to Death of Michael Hooker
See Page 11A



DTH FILE PHOTO

Carmen Hooker placed flowers on the steps of South Building in June in honor of her late husband. Student leaders led the impromptu memorial service asking members of the University community to lay single flowers as a tribute to Chancellor Hooker.

such a short time," Broad said.

The UNC Gospel Choir sang "Amazing Grace" after the first four speakers. As the words filled the hall, one man pushed his glasses to his forehead, bowed his head and hastily wiped away a tear with one finger. A woman clutched bright flowers in her left hand and searched for her tissue as tears crept down her cheeks. Another man grabbed the armrests of his chair with both hands and stiffened, tightening his lips.

Student Body President Nic Heinke spoke for the four student body presidents who served during Hooker's tenure.

Aaron Nelson, student body president from '96 to '97, recalled strolls with Hooker through campus that were broken

with the ritual of Hooker stopping to pick up trash. When they reached a trash can, Hooker would empty his pockets.

Heinke choked back tears as he recounted their last talk together. "The last time I saw him we were sitting on the steps of South Building. He spent most of his time grinning. He looked just like a boy seeing the campus for the first time."

Hrabowski said Hooker gave him a tour of campus shortly after being named chancellor. "He showed me a special place in the library where he had sat in when he was an undergraduate, and it was so clear - he had come home."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.



DTH FILE PHOTO

Student Body Secretary Lerissa Rentas consoled Student Body Vice President Monika Moore at the flower-placing.

McCoy Takes Helm — Again

William McCoy will serve as chancellor until next summer when a permanent chancellor is selected.

By ASHLEY STEPHENSON
Editor

JULY 15 - A sense of permanence fortunately is not the most important thing in life to William McCoy.

McCoy, who was tapped last week to lead UNC for the next academic year as interim chancellor, has barely had a breather from his two-month run as acting chancellor - the post he held when Michael Hooker took a medical leave to battle cancer.

Hooker died June 29 due to complications with his non-Hodgkins lymphoma.

"I am pleased to step into this temporary role once again as I did when I became acting chancellor, but I am pleased and sad to do it, too," McCoy said.

McCoy previously served as president of finance for the UNC system.

UNC-system President Molly Broad announced Friday at a press conference that McCoy would take the helm.

"I'm personally very grateful to Bill McCoy to provide leadership at a very important time," Broad said.

Provost Dick Richardson, who was a

Leaders Call McCoy 'Natural' Choice for Post
See Page 11A

potential candidate for the interim chancellor tag, seemed happy and relieved that McCoy had returned.

"He is an experienced and seasoned executive and devoted alumnus," Richardson said.

"We know this year will be an exciting year."

Broad said the search to find a permanent chancellor to steer the flagship university of the UNC system would take priority.

"We gathered a week ago today to mourn the loss of Chancellor Michael Hooker," she said.

"And yet we must move forward, working with the Board of Trustees and expediting a search to find a permanent

See MCCOY, Page 9A

UNC Bond Package Defeated by House

By KATIE ABEL
Staff Writer

JULY 22 - Extensive renovation and construction projects on UNC-system campuses were put on hold Tuesday after the N.C. General Assembly could not reach a compromise on the proposed bond.

The House and Senate, pitted against each other in a largely partisan fight, will adjourn without resolving intense disagreements that had arisen during recent weeks. Although a last minute proposal emerged from legislative chambers Monday that would have given UNC-system campuses \$750 mil-

lion, the House still would not approve the package without a public vote.

During the last week, a negotiating committee consisting of 66 House and Senate members struggled to reach an agreement, but conceded Tuesday that one was virtually impossible.

UNC student leaders, who spent much of the summer lobbying for the bond package, said the problems would worsen without any action this session by the General Assembly. "The paint in Murphy Hall is going to continue to peel and the desks are going to continue to crack," said Lee Conner, graduate

See BOND, Page 9A

Hooker Era Defined by Change

The often controversial decisions by Hooker drew both criticism and praise from the UNC community.

By ROB NELSON
Editor

JULY 1 - Chancellor Michael Hooker played by his own rules.

"My style is to grab problems by the throat and shake the hell out of them," he told The Daily Tar Heel in 1996.

And, in four years at UNC, Hooker's hands were rarely empty.

From his earliest days at the University, he tackled its most pressing issues in a decisive, hard-nosed fashion that became his trademark.

Whether dealing with claims of discrimination by employees or pushing for technological advances for students, Hooker's brief time at UNC was defined by change and controversy.

A youthful administrator fresh from his presidency of the University of Massachusetts system, Hooker officially became UNC's eighth chancellor on July 1, 1995.

He wasted little time after that.

Hooker's tendency to react quickly to crisis drew both criticism and applause.

During his first summer, he moved to fire an English professor who slept with one of his students, gaining points with the N.C. General Assembly.

In August 1995, he negotiated a settlement to an eight-year racial discrimination suit against the University that had demoralized University Police.

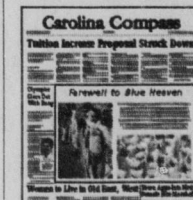
Keeping his promise to improve undergraduate education, Hooker decided that four new Kenan professor-

See CHANCELLOR, Page 9A

INSIDE

Saturday

Instant Replay



while you were away for the summer. Now that you are back in Blue Heaven, find out what's been going on. Section B.

Back to Work

The Daily Tar Heel will be back on the stands in all of its daily splendor Aug. 18. For students interested in joining the staff of the DTH, applications for reporters, copy editors, photographers and designers will be available Aug. 16 at the DTH office in Suite 104 of the Student Union.

A critic is a legless man who teaches running.

Channing Pollock