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The Daily Tar Heel

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Wednesday, August 23, 2000

Community in Mourning After Principal's Death

By MATT MANSFIELD
Staff Writer

The principal of Guy B. Phillips Middle School was found dead in his home by Chapel Hill police Tuesday morning.

Alton Cheek, 57, died of what authorities believe to be natural causes.

Phillips officials alerted police after becoming concerned when Cheek did not arrive for work.

Cheek had undergone bypass heart surgery in June, but returned to work in late July.

"Everyone is shocked with the news because he seemed to be doing fine," said Kim Hoke, director of public relations for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools. "In fact, he seemed vigorous."

Cheek came to Phillips in 1992 after serving as principal of A.L. Stanback Middle School in Hillsborough for six years.

"I hired Alton as principal in 1992," said Neil Pedersen, superintendent of Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools. "I saw Alton as an advocate for children, particularly minorities."

"He loved Phillips Middle School and was very concerned with its reputation. Through his eight years, he improved the school dramatically."

Counselors arrived from across the county Tuesday to help students and teachers deal with the shock of Cheek's

sudden death.

"It was a difficult day for everyone," Pedersen said. "We had a fairly large number of students who looked visibly upset."

Teachers also expressed their shock at Cheek's death.

"I was really surprised," said Heather Maisch, a sixth-grade teacher at Phillips Middle School. "Just the other day he and I were talking about mentoring another teacher."

Faculty fondly remember Cheek as a man who often stopped by classrooms to get to know his students and who emphasized student achievement.

"He was always upbeat when I came by in the morning," Maisch said.

Cheek's popularity earned him the Administrator of the Year Award in 1998 from the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Association of Educational Office Personnel.

Pedersen said he had not thought of

permanent replacement, but Assistant Principal Richard Pierce will be serving as interim principal.

"Richard has been there for many years and certainly did a good job today," Pedersen said.

Cheek is survived by two daughters. At press time, funeral arrangements had not been made.

The City Editor can be reached at citydesk@unc.edu

Male Halls Get Woman's Touch



Sophomore Whitney Greene walks to her room in Old West Residence Hall, which for the past 205 years was all male.

Old East Residents Ease Into Change

By JERMAINE CALDWELL
Features Editor

Lisa McKeithan wasn't just unlocking the door to the room in which she would sleep, study and live this semester when she moved into Old East Residence Hall last Wednesday.

She was entering a door not open to her or any other female for more than 200 years.

That entrance symbolizes the controversial end to the all-male tradition in Old East and Old West. And McKeithan said she is proud to be one of the first women to set her bags down, plop on the bed and call a room her own.

"I wish we could have had the chance to move in here earlier," the senior from Elizabethtown said.

Old East's cornerstone was laid October 12, 1793, making it the oldest structure of any public university in the country. It stood as the University's lone building for several years, serving as a classroom and residence hall.

McKeithan said she was ecstatic about "the

chance to make history."

But she said that before she had even settled into the place she called "paradise," she saw something that reminded her of the contentious circumstances that preceded her arrival.

On one of her first days in the hall, a man walked by sporting an Old East T-shirt with the phrase: "These bricks weren't laid for chicks."

Enter Brandon Herring, the T-shirt's owner and model.

Herring, a two-year veteran of life on Old East hardwood, was yanked from temporary housing his freshman year and dropped into one of the most historic buildings on campus.

And at the end of Herring's sophomore year — when a female presence in Old East was becoming a more likely proposition — Old East residents adopted the provocative slogan for their annual residence hall T-shirt.

"It insulted me," said McKeithan, who thinks both sexes deserve to enjoy the buildings. "I

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Historic Doors Open To University Coeds

By KAREY WUTKOWSKI
Assistant University Editor

The addition of women to UNC's two oldest residence halls this year breaks from the 200-year-old tradition of creating a strictly male community in Old East and Old West.

When junior Katie Ahrendt first heard rumors last year that Old East and Old West residence halls were becoming coed, she was concerned about preserving this tradition.

"At first I was against letting girls in," said the Columbia, S.C., native. "I felt there are so many girls on campus, there should be something left for the guys."

But after she had been assigned one of the spacious rooms in the oak-laden Old East, Ahrendt didn't put up a fight.

"I was really surprised I got in," she said. "You walk in, and it's so nice. It's like a hotel."

The second floor of Old East and the third floor of Old West have been converted into all-female floors beginning this semester.

Dean Bresciani, associate vice chancellor for student services, said a strong push to integrate the two residence halls started two years ago, when members of student government and the Residence Hall Association approached him.

A series of open forums followed, revealing mixed opinions.

"All the women thought it was a good idea," Bresciani said. "The only people who had a problem were some of the guys and the alumni who thought it was a good tradition to maintain."

But Bresciani said the move garnered overwhelming support and that the change was way overdue.

"It's somewhat artificial to place women and men in different buildings," he said. "The only other institution that does that is prison."

To ease the transition, Bresciani said housing officials personally talked to a lot of men living in the halls last year and assured them that no one would have to leave.

He said a large number of upper-class men moved out of the buildings last year, clearing up enough room for the women to move in.

Officials also tried to choose upper-class women to participate in the integration. "They're more mature and self-confident," Bresciani said. "We just didn't know guys' reaction, but as it turned out, they've been great."

Junior Eric Boggs from Dallas, N.C., who has lived in Old West since his freshman year, said most of the men in his hall were strongly opposed to the integration at first.

"But once we found out we couldn't do anything about it, we accepted it," Boggs said.

He said the men's largest concern was that the addition of women would disrupt the all-male community. "We were really afraid that there would be a lot of sexual tension," he said. "It's fine and dandy with all guys, but if a hot girl moves in upstairs, it can mess things up."

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

Mandate Forces Sorority Mixers Dry or Uptown

A national Panhellenic Council ruling requires sororities to hold social mixers with fraternities off campus.

By ROBERT ALBRIGHT
Staff Writer

UNC's Panhellenic sororities must adjust their social interactions with fraternities this fall following a new regulation requiring on-campus mixers to be dry or taken off campus.

The rule states that if alcohol is present at a fraternity social event, Panhellenic sororities cannot have 40 percent or more of their membership in attendance, and they cannot offer monetary support for the event.

UNC adopted the plan in accordance with a three-year-old national Panhellenic Council policy, which will force sororities to find social alternatives such as having mixers with fraternities at off-campus bars.

Ron Binder, director of UNC Greek affairs, said UNC's Panhellenic sororities agreed to adopt the ruling even though some Greeks expressed concern over renting out bars and looking elsewhere for mixers.

"Fraternities and sororities aren't thrilled about this new rule," he said. "They may not like it, but they've got to do it."

Binder said UNC's Panhellenic Council had to adopt the mixer policy because the national governing body enacted the ruling.

He said that if local chapters do not abide by the national Panhellenic rules, they run the risk of losing some of their insurance privileges.

As a result, UNC's Panhellenic Council, which consists of a representative from each of the 11 participating sororities, agreed unanimously to the ruling in April.

Jamie Harper, president of UNC's Panhellenic Council, said the council wanted to adopt the policy to uphold their ties with the national Panhellenic Council and to show their support for the six alcohol-free fraternities on campus.

Although the decision was unanimous, Harper said the transition to a new policy will not be easy.

And Interfraternity Council President John Gardner said many fraternity members reacted negatively to the mixer policy.

"We're not particularly happy about it, but we'll adjust," he said. "Most mixers will move to other locations (away from fraternities), making it more expensive."

While the price will likely go up for mixers, Binder said a number of bars on Franklin Street had agreed to allow partygoers under 21 to attend the mixers.

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Godwin: Rangers' Offer Unacceptable

By WILL KIMMEY
SportsSaturday Editor

Don't expect to see Tyrell Godwin wearing a Texas Rangers hat around campus today.

The outfielder, who was selected 35th overall in June's first-year player draft, turned down the Rangers' latest offer Tuesday. He said he will attend class today, thereby forgoing his rights to negotiate with the club.

"Right now, I'm just planning to go to class, and we'll know more later," Godwin said Tuesday afternoon.

"It's disheartening and frustrating because I was ready to sign. I'm down about the whole thing, but I'm not out."

Once he attends his first class, the Morehead Scholar will retain his amateur status and will not be able to strike a deal with any major league organization

until next June's first-year player draft.

Godwin's health was the major sticking point between the two sides. He tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his right knee while in high school but didn't realize it until a few years later. He has played in that condition ever since.

Godwin also suffered through several knee problems during his two seasons as a member of the UNC football team. He had arthroscopic knee surgery to repair a torn meniscus in 1998.

Those medical problems presented so much concern for the Rangers that they reduced their initial signing bonus offer of \$1.2 million after receiving reports from two independent physicians. That's when Godwin, who was willing to defer his bonus until he could prove he was healthy, cut off negotiations.

"They dropped on the bonus to a point that I couldn't accept," Godwin

said. "I was going to sign now for a small amount and put off my bonus for a year based on me being game-ready. That way, the Texas Rangers wouldn't put themselves out there."

"I don't want to take anybody's money unless I would be able to play ball for them."

Rangers General Manager Doug Melvin told Baseball America that none of the 30 major league organizations received an up-to-date physical on Godwin before the June draft.

"We did not have a hands-on physical," Melvin said. "We only had a report of the surgery that was done two years ago. If we had the information then that we've gotten through MRIs and X-rays, we probably wouldn't have drafted him."

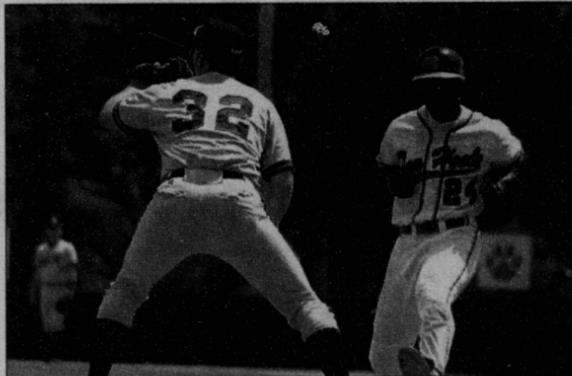
Godwin's knee never forced him to miss any baseball games in college, and surgery isn't a necessity — he can still

move without trouble. But it could have long-term effects for Godwin, whom Baseball America rated as the best collegiate athlete and fastest collegiate baserunner in the 2000 draft.

"I'm in a strange situation because it's not an issue of whether I can go out and run and play baseball today," Godwin said. "I'm an investment. Teams are looking 15 to 20 years down the road. If I'm the caliber player they are looking for, they aren't going to feel confident until I get that repaired."

If Godwin has reconstructive ACL surgery, he could miss an extended amount of game time. Doctors told him he was looking at a rehabilitation period of six to nine months. Melvin said the Rangers concluded that the surgery and rehab could possibly keep Godwin out of action for the entire 2001 season.

Godwin will consult his doctors for



DTH FILE PHOTO

Tyrell Godwin is considering reconstructive surgery on his right knee. He batted .363 with 11 homers, 67 RBI and 24 steals for UNC last year.

more opinions before deciding whether to have surgery. He said he is leaning toward doing so because he feels it would make him more attractive to teams in the 2001 draft.

"Hopefully, I'll put myself in a better situation for the next draft."

The Sports Editor can be reached at sports@unc.edu.

All things that a man owns hold him far more than he holds them.

Sigrid Undset