

BOARD EDITORIALS

UNITED BY TRAGEDY

The University community's remembrance of UNC alumnus Stephen Gates exemplifies its cohesion and shows sound values.

When a death as shocking as that of Stephen Gates strikes a community, it at first seems impossible that any positive outcome can emerge.

By setting up a scholarship in the UNC alumnus's name, though, the University community has shown that good can come from even the deepest of tragedies.

Gates graduated from UNC in 1998 after studying broadcast journalism. During his college career, he interned for the Tar Heel Sports Network and upon graduating took a full-time job.

In his short time there, he served as a sideline reporter for football and was the play-by-play voice for baseball and women's basketball.

Gates died in a tragic pedestrian accident Oct. 4 on Interstate 40.

On Tuesday, officials announced the Stephen Kennedy Gates Memorial Scholarship Fund for students in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Although they just have begun taking donations, officials have said the fund will become a permanent

endowment once \$10,000 is collected.

Officials also said the first recipient of the award could be named as early as next spring.

In setting up the fund in Gates' memory, UNC has illustrated precisely what values the University community upholds.

In good times and in bad, members of the University community must stick together and strive to make the best out of whatever situation comes its way.

Students, faculty, staff and alumni, as well as anyone who heard Gates' commentary on their favorite Tar Heel teams, can best remember him by contributing to the fund.

Tax-deductible donations can be sent to: The Stephen Kennedy Gates Memorial Scholarship Fund; School of Journalism and Mass Communication; UNC-Chapel Hill; Campus Box 3365, Chapel Hill, NC 27599.

While Gates no longer will be roaming the sidelines or calling the big game, the scholarship in his name ensures that his contribution to the Carolina community never will be forgotten.

STUDENTS FIRST

Student Congress' vote to increase scrutiny of student tickets' use at men's basketball games will go far in ensuring students aren't sidelined.

The Smith Center is sure to be filled with UNC-Chapel Hill students this coming basketball season, but it's not just because they all are hoping to catch a glimpse of new men's basketball coach Roy Williams in action.

A new ticket distribution policy, approved Tuesday by Student Congress, requires those with student tickets to show their UNC ONE Card upon entering the stadium.

This is an excellent policy that was long overdue, and the Carolina Athletic Association should be commended for starting off the season on the right track.

This new measure ensures that only UNC-CH students will be able to get into the games and cheer from the student seating section.

In recent years there has been an unfortunate trend of rival fans sitting in the student section and rooting against the Tar Heels.

Many of these interlopers got those tickets from

UNC-CH students who either sold their tickets or simply gave them away to friends from other schools.

The home basketball game against N.C. State University two years ago was an especially distressing display, with red being flaunted all over the stands while Carolina blue was hardly seen at all.

Incidents such as this won't happen again under the new policy.

Some students might criticize the plan because they no longer will be able to bring a friend or family member with them to the game.

These students need to realize that they never were allowed to give a student ticket to anyone who was not a UNC-CH student; the only difference now is that the rule actually is going to be enforced.

With so many students eagerly awaiting the start of what is sure to be a memorable season of UNC-CH basketball, the new ticket policy ensures that no rival fan will rob a Tar Heel of his or her spot in the stands.

SAFETY DILUTED

The Chapel Hill Town Council put bar patrons at risk by watering down a sprinkler code that would have increased safety during fires.

While the often-heated debate about the town's sprinkler ordinance has wrapped up, not much will change for downtown bargoers.

But in this case, maintaining the status quo might leave customers at risk.

The revised ordinance, approved Wednesday by the Chapel Hill Town Council, would require any new, alcohol-serving establishments with an occupancy exceeding 200 to install sprinklers. Bars with exits above or below street level must install sprinklers if their occupancy exceeds 150.

In response to highly publicized bar fires, including one in West Warwick, R.I., that left 100 patrons dead, the council considered an ordinance that would require bars to install sprinkler systems.

Bar owners and many patrons claimed that such a requirement would force many small bars to close due to the high cost of installation.

So the Town Council increased the threshold capacity. But bar owners still argued against the proposal, and the council again yielded to their concerns.

Now, no existing bar will need to have a sprinkler system installed, no matter how many people it holds.

It is a sad story of how a piece of legislation with a specific purpose got watered down during the approval process.

While the intent of the new ordinance is clear, its effect will be nonexistent.

While the bar scene is strong in Chapel Hill, especially in the downtown area, the bill only will impact newly built structures. Don't expect many of those.

The downtown area is developed. Coupled with the number of vacancies, it is unlikely that any new bars will be built.

The vote on the sprinkler ordinance shouldn't mark the end of the sprinkler discussion in Chapel Hill. There still remains the risk of a very great tragedy taking place in downtown Chapel Hill, and the Town Council must recognize this fact.

It will take more time and energy, but officials should seek to make changes, including possibly using economic incentives to spur sprinkler installation.

While the Town Council has found itself incapable of forcing bars to make a change, the responsibility still remains for its members to make downtown a safer place for patrons.

EDITORS' NOTE: The above editorials are the opinions of solely The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board, which were reached after open debate. The board consists of eight board members, the assistant editorial page editor, the editorial page editor and the DTH editor. The 2003-04 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials.

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READERS' FORUM
Policy to help students attend games
TO THE EDITOR:
 I am writing in response to Mike Blacker's letter expressing outrage at the new basketball ticket policy requiring every student to show a UNC ONE Card with their ticket to gain entry to the Smith Center.
 At UNC, we're lucky enough to have the kind of basketball program that inspires enthusiasm among students, alumni and other fans. However, we have a limited number of seats for a large student body. While I sympathize with students who want to share, every student who brings a non-student guest to a game is one less activity fee-paying student who gets to attend that same game.
 Students already are required to show their student ID at ticket distributions, which underlines the fact that these tickets expressly are meant for students. The new policy is not like an "anti-nuclear proliferation treaty" aimed at keeping tickets out of the "wrong people's" hands but rather is intended to ensure that the maximum number of students get to attend each home game. Yes, some will miss the opportunity to bring friends and family to UNC home games. In the end, though, ensuring that each person through the gates with a student ticket is in fact a student is the only conceivable, just and fair option.
 Jeff Markman
 Carolina Athletic Association
 Director of Public Relations

ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"We should therefore claim, in the name of tolerance, the right not to tolerate the intolerant."

KARL POPPER, BRITISH PHILOSOPHER

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Selena Beckman-Harned, sebe@mail.unc.edu



UNIVERSITY

Senior input missing piece in decisions involving class

As a senior, three words exemplify why I'm jealous of the class of 2003: Paymon and Rob.

Last year's senior class president, Paymon Rouhanifard, and class Vice President Rob Albright raised the bar in soliciting student input and producing results that made the class proud.

This year's officers have yet to live up to those standards. Senior Class President George Leamon and Vice President Doug Melton have not even approached the mark set by Rouhanifard and Albright. Their term has sorely lacked student involvement and an open process.

The Commencement speaker selection process most notably highlights this trend.

The selection itself is not the most problematic issue. Julius Chambers deserves the utmost respect for his long list of achievements and devotion to civil rights.

But many seniors have expressed dissatisfaction with the selection, hoping for a speaker with more of a national reputation. And many students are altogether unfamiliar with Chambers. Surely it's not good when Senior Class Secretary Allison Lewis says in The Daily Tar Heel that class marshals spent their time after Chambers' selection getting "educated on who he was."

But the biggest problems lie in the process, and those flaws signify a consistent weakness in Leamon and Melton's term thus far.

Leamon rightfully insisted in a telephone interview Sunday that the choice ultimately isn't up to him. As he has frequently pointed out, the Commencement speaker choice is one part of his job over which he has little control.

While he and Melton are part of



NATHAN DENNY UNDER THE WELL

"There's something to be said for ... a strong effort to solicit student input at early stages."

the 10-member Commencement Speaker Advisory Committee, that group only makes a recommendation to Chancellor James Moeser. The decision is entirely Moeser's. But there's something to be said for putting forth a strong effort to solicit student input at early stages in the process.

Leamon and Melton avoided using a formalized means of obtaining student input, such as a poll, saying they couldn't guarantee that the students' selection would get Moeser's approval.

But Leamon says he and Melton did offer seniors an opportunity to give input, citing three e-mails he sent asking seniors for their suggestions for a speaker. Two of the e-mails specifically addressed the May Commencement speaker.

They got more than 100 responses. But these include the senior marshals, each of whom had to give their own suggestions. In beginning last year's search for a speaker, Rouhanifard and Albright set up a Web site asking for nominations.

The class of 2003 submitted about 400 responses.

And this was not just a simple online poll. Seniors were asked to write a short essay on why their choice would honor the University.

Rouhanifard told the DTH in April 2002 that he was shocked by the number of students who took time to prepare a brief essay, prov-

ing that students were very concerned with the selection process.

Leamon said the discrepancy isn't indicative of a problem.

"Maybe their class just cared more," he said.

This argument is, frankly, an insult to the entire senior class. I know many seniors who care passionately about ensuring a rewarding Commencement experience.

And that Leamon would speak so condescendingly of the senior class is a shame.

To Leamon and Melton's credit, they have provided an impressive amount of social events. But there's more to their job than social coordination, and the lackluster effort to secure student input is indicative of a problematic philosophy behind Leamon and Melton's term.

They have shown a reluctance to move beyond their own platform, preferring their own ideas to seeking advice from their constituency: the class of 2004.

Leamon seems to discount the importance of the student voice. "We didn't have to have a vote," Leamon said of the senior gift selection process. "I could have just chosen whatever I want."

Thankfully, Leamon was generous enough to offer us what we should have had in the first place: a voice in the process.

Contact Nathan Denny at ndenny@mail.unc.edu.

OFFICE: Suite 104 Carolina Union
 CAMPUS MAIL ADDRESS: CB# 5210, Carolina Union
 U.S. MAIL ADDRESS: P.O. Box 3257,
 Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3257

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