

Teens lead Bobcats anthem

Sing for crowd of over 17,000

BY MELODY GUYTON
STAFF WRITER

The chance to sing at a professional sporting event is a lifelong dream for many performers.

And for about 40 local middle schoolers, a chance to live their dreams came early.

Eighth-grade members of Julie Covach's chorus classes at McDougle Middle School performed "The Star-Spangled Banner" before the Charlotte Bobcats game against the New York Knicks in Charlotte on Saturday.

Chorus member Nicole Graham said performing at the game was a great experience.

"It went very well," she said. "It was something I'll always remem-

ber." The group was chosen to perform as part of the National Anthem Project, a national campaign to spark youth interest in American patriotic traditions.

Covach said that when she received a call in September asking if one of her choral groups would like to perform, the answer was easy.

"How can I not do this?" she asked. "It's too cool."

Covach said she asked her eighth-grade students to perform because of their maturity.

"They're really a singularly nice bunch of kids," she said Friday before the game. "I'm really proud to be taking them on this trip."

The McDougle group was originally one of three groups asked to perform, but the two other groups ultimately chose not to come.

Chorus member Abby Lehman

said she felt honored to be part of one of the groups asked to sing.

"There were probably a lot of choruses looked at to do this," she said. "It's a big game, so it's cool to be able to sing there."

Some students said the prospect of being the only group to sing for such a large crowd was nerve-racking. The crowd reached 17,615 for Saturday's game.

"It's pretty cool to be able to sing there because I've always been a big NBA fan," chorus member Evan Lewis said Friday. "But once we step on the court, I know I'll be pretty nervous."

Other students seemed thrilled with the opportunity.

"I don't know if there will ever be another chance to do something like this," Graham said. "It's a once-in-a-lifetime thing."

Covach said students held a variety of fund-raisers — including

selling pizza discount cards, holding bake sales, caroling at local grocery stores for donations and planning a Mardi Gras-themed school dance — in order to cover expenses.

The students also organized a singing Valentine project in which classmates could pay them to sing love songs to other students.

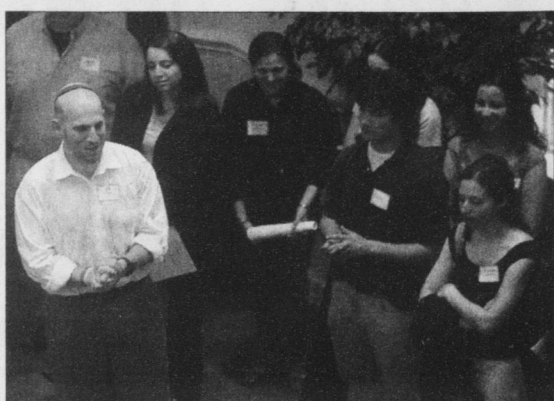
The students' fund-raising efforts met their \$5,000 goal.

Covach said her students' eagerness to participate in those events showed their determination to making the trip possible.

"It may not seem hard, but looking another person in the eye and singing those songs is difficult when you're 13," she said. "These kids were really committed to making it to Charlotte."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN



DTH/LEAH GRONING

Or Mars (left), executive director of N.C. Hillel, speaks at a memorial service held at Hillel to honor victims of the Holocaust. The service concluded a series of events that formed Holocaust Week, including a keynote speech by a survivor and the reading of names of victims.

Council to tweak rules on duplexes

BY TED STRONG
ASSISTANT CITY EDITOR

Duplexes have been a key part of Chapel Hill's housing scene, and they have also been a disdained part.

Now the Chapel Hill Town Council is considering a tweak to the requirements for double domiciles.

The proposals in question could change the number of lots that duplexes can be built on, the way they are reviewed, and how many parking spaces they can have.

Waldon said the proposals are designed to make sure duplexes mesh well with their surroundings.

"The overriding objective is that construction of a new duplex would fit in with its neighborhood context rather than stand out and be intrusive," he said.

Town staff has come down in favor of the parking restrictions and an extra review by the Community Design Commission but is opposed to the decrease in lot size on the grounds that it would increase too dramatically the number of lots on which duplexes are permitted.

If duplexes were permitted on lots only one-and-a-half times the size required for single houses, instead of the current two, staff found that in the Colony Woods neighborhood, the number of lots on which duplexes are allowed jumps from 13 percent to 62 percent.

Instead, the town recommends that the council ask the planning board to review the report.

"Overall, the main point of all of this is that ... most folks in this regulatory arena have come to the conclusion that we still don't have our regulations right with regard to duplexes," Waldon said.

The fact that different parts of the proposal have received differ-

ent reviews from town staff is perhaps indicative of the sensitivity and complexity of what can seem a mundane issue.

"It's not a black-and-white issue in terms of a right and wrong way to do it," council member Jim Ward said.

"I think it's a difficult issue in a growing community like Chapel Hill where we are dealing with how to grow in size without diminishing our quality of life," he added.

Amid concerns that newer, more expensive duplexes were corrupting the characters of existing neighborhoods, a moratorium on the structures was enacted in October 2002.

"What's being built is often 200 to 300 thousand dollars for one half of the duplex," Ward said.

The moratorium was lifted, except in the Northside neighborhood in February 2004, and regulations, which are currently being revised, were enacted.

"It's time to come up with language that will allow people to build duplexes that do not adversely impact the quality of life in the existing Chapel Hill community," Ward said.

But historically, town officials say, duplexes have offered a myriad of different housing options.

Waldon pointed out that sometimes both sides are rental units, sometimes both sides are owned and sometimes an owner lives on one side and rents the other.

"This is a diverse community with diverse needs, different kinds of people different kinds of households ... so it's important that there be a lot of housing options for the community."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

Space is the place for researchers

UNC looks to revamp galaxy quests

BY JERRI SIMMONS
STAFF WRITER

Self-healing is a concept that might soon be a reality not only for living organisms, but also for space vehicles — and UNC could have a hand in the technological revolution.

Three years ago, NASA selected UNC and several other schools to develop new materials that will revolutionize space travel and the way astronautic machines are built.

The collaboration — which includes Northwestern University, Princeton University and the University of California-Santa Barbara — is called the University Research Engineering Technology Institute.

Chemistry professor Ed Samulski, who heads the NASA-sponsored team at UNC, said NASA is interested in research in "smart" materials that could fix themselves if damaged.

"Biological things can repair themselves, so NASA has asked us to think about self-healing materials," he said.

"You can imagine that (if) a satellite traveling millions of miles away from the earth gets hit by a small meteor, NASA could lose the entire mission if they are not able to repair this satellite."

Samulski said the project will take ideas from biology and use those to create new materials.

"We look at bone that is very high strength and yet rather light, and we look at the structure of bone and ask ourselves if there is a way we can make a similar structure out of materials," he said.

The NASA program also has been beneficial to the chemistry

department: The funding the organization provides covers nine faculty members at UNC and pays the salaries for about 15 to 20 graduate and postdoctoral students, Samulski said.

He said the NASA-sponsored program also makes researchers tackle difficult issues.

"I think that we are the long-range thinking arm of NASA," Samulski said.

"They want us to think about these impossible kinds of problems, and they are counting on the fact that something useful can come out of the fact that we have tackled such hard problems."

This project is not UNC's first

collaboration with NASA. From the late 1950s through the mid-1970s, Morehead Planetarium trained almost every astronaut who participated in the Mercury, Gemini, Apollo, Skylab and Apollo-Soyuz space programs.

Star Theater Director Richard McColman said astronauts came to Morehead to learn navigational techniques.

"Astronauts needed to look out a very limited narrow view that they would get of space, recognize constellations and parts of constellations, and use various techniques to determine what their orientation was in space," he said.

The program at the planetarium ended in 1975 when space shuttle navigation no longer required astronauts to have in-depth

knowledge of the constellations and stars, McColman said.

Tony Jenzano, longtime director of Morehead Planetarium, said the University's long-standing association with the space program has brought recognizable prestige.

"Carolina is the only university in the country — in fact, the world — that can claim all the astronauts as alumni," he said.

And Samulski reiterated that NASA's recent involvement at UNC also speaks highly of the school's science departments.

"This is evidence that Carolina science is competitive with that in the best universities in the country."

Contact the Features Editor at features@unc.edu.

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