

**THORPE**

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"One of the first things he would always say was, 'What's your name?'" said Fred Battle, the former head of the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. "He loved being a politician."

But Thorpe never hesitated to tell council members when he thought they were wrong, friends and public officials said.

"One thing about Bill Thorpe, he spoke his mind and people knew when he would come out on an issue that it's coming from the heart," said Eugene Farrar, current head of the local NAACP.

Thorpe was instrumental in Chapel Hill becoming in 1984 one of the first municipalities in the country to officially recognize the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. as a holiday.

And 20 years later he asked then-Mayor Pro Tem Edith Wiggins to present a resolution to rename Airport Road after King, whom Thorpe idolized as a civil

rights hero.

Thorpe, who was not an elected official at the time, spoke personally with every member of the council in advocating for the change, Mayor Kevin Foy said.

"He was not only the initiator but the leading proponent throughout the process," Foy said.

"That has had repercussion throughout the community over the last few years that have ultimately been good for Chapel Hill to have."

The change initiated a town-wide conversation about race and institutional racism, Foy said.

Thorpe was a political force in Chapel Hill as long-time president of the Hank Anderson Breakfast Club and as a consultant for many local candidates. Candidates crave the club's endorsement and brag when they receive it.

In the 1970s, he was part of a committee that rewrote the town charter, Foy said.

He took a medical leave of absence from the council earlier this month and did not return.

"Who's going to really be, I guess, a watchdog of the commu-

nity for the people?" said Battle, who has known Thorpe since 1970.

Thorpe attended University Baptist Church on South Columbia Street almost every week while he was in good health, Jean Thorpe said.

University Baptist will hold Friday a public viewing session from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and services at 1 p.m.

Mitchell Simpson, the pastor at University Baptist, said Thorpe's faith was given voice in the larger community.

"Clearly this is a guy who had influence but did not try to wield it in a tacky way, and I think that says a great deal about him," said Simpson, who Thorpe called "Doc."

"With a guy like Bill, all you have to do is stand up and tell the truth about him."

Thorpe is survived by Jean, a retired educator, and his two children, William, 41, and Beverly, 43.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

**GUIDING**

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Council member Mark Kleinschmidt said Thorpe called him almost every week.

Easthom, too, said she would meet Thorpe to talk politics and town policy over lunch.

And in an attempt to expand the council's mentorship to students, Thorpe proposed an internship program for 10 undergraduates, approved in 2006.

"That also shows a part of what Bill was interested in, which was giving people opportunities," Mayor Kevin Foy said.

Council members said Thorpe's personal and leadership experiences gave him a unique outlook on town issues.

Born in segregated Oxford, he moved to Chapel Hill in 1970. He worked for the N.C. Department

of Labor and maintained a link to workers at UNC and the town after leaving.

As a council member, Thorpe focused on initiatives on behalf of town employees and pushed for more affordable housing.

"He understood that we needed to create places for people," Kleinschmidt said.

As the only African-American on the council, Foy said Thorpe shared what it was like to be part of Chapel Hill's black community in the past and today.

But he said Thorpe told council members, who are elected at-large, to consider all residents their constituents.

"Bill would always make clear

that everybody on the council represents all the citizens," Foy said.

He was known to pontificate on what he called the "council-manager form of government" and to remind town staff and council members alike of their roles in the system.

And his ability to take a step back from the nitty-gritty of politics gave him a reputation for a wry sense of humor.

"He could laugh about politics and just not take things too seriously when they didn't need to be taken seriously," Easthom said. "He could rise above the fray and just say, 'This is how it is.' And it was funny."

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

**SEXTON**

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"There were tough times. There really were," he said Monday with a shrug. "I remember distinctly telling my dad after leaving (practice) one day, 'Dad, I feel like my dreams are kind of falling apart around me.'"

Starter T.J. Yates' ankle injury opened up the starting spot on the depth chart, and still Sexton found himself behind rookie QB Mike Paulus, the highly touted first-year.

But Paulus' debut against Virginia Tech was less than impressive, and coach Butch Davis announced that Paulus and Sexton both would play against Miami.

Now, two touchdowns, an ACC Player of the Week honor and "a couple hundred text messages" later, Sexton is back in the driver's seat as UNC's starting quarterback, as he found out Monday morning.

"You have to say that probably Cam has earned slightly a bit of an edge," Davis told reporters after Saturday's game.

For Sexton, that game was, as he called it repeatedly, "a relief."

"More or less I was just excited about the win. There have been a lot of struggles over the years and then that moment was emotional."

"I don't even really know what I was thinking. I was just excited."

Sexton repeatedly considered transferring. He wondered if he could get a starting job at another school and if his hard work in spring training was being ignored.

But eventually a love for the program kept him at North Carolina.

"I couldn't see myself anywhere else and I didn't want to be anywhere else," he said.

"I felt like at this point in my career, I wanted to stay and fight instead of going somewhere else."

Sexton's bad record — four touchdowns, eight interceptions in 2006 — was thought before the game to be his biggest weakness. That experience proved to be his biggest asset.

"He knows how to keep his composure," wide receiver Hakeem Nicks said after Saturday's game. "He's a veteran, he's been here a while, and we knew he could step in and do the job."

Sexton likes to think he hasn't changed. The past 18 months have been a "growth process," but he considers himself still the same quarterback — more importantly, the same person.

His coach might disagree.

Comparing Sexton's 2006 starts to Troy Aikman's 1-15 rookie season — "nobody would think he'd have gone to the Hall of Fame" — Davis said Sexton's constant work ethic helped him succeed when his chance came.

"I think probably the best lesson that any young football player can make is watching how Cam Sexton has handled the last 18 months," Davis said Monday. "Hoping to be the starter, didn't get the starting job, never quit, never backed down."

"Kept preparing, watching film, going to practice ... and then when his number was called, he took advantage of it."

Contact the Sports Editor at sports@unc.edu.

**National News**

**House rejects bailout legislation by a narrow margin**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (LAT-WP)

— In a narrow vote, the U.S. House of Representatives on Monday rejected the most sweeping government intervention into the nation's financial markets since the Great Depression, refusing to grant the Treasury Department the power to purchase up to \$700 billion in the troubled assets that are at the heart of the U.S. financial crisis.

The 228-205 vote amounted to a stinging rebuke to President George Bush's administration and Treasury Secretary Henry M. Paulson Jr., and is sure to sow massive anxiety in world markets. Just 11 days ago, Paulson warned that inaction would lead to a seizure of credit markets and a virtual halt to the lending that allows Americans to acquire mortgages and other types of loans.

As it became apparent that the measure was heading to defeat, stock markets took a steep dive and stayed down. The Dow Jones industrial average closed down 778 points, recording a fall of nearly 7 percent and its largest closing point drop in history.

Paulson said after a meeting

with Bush at the White House that he was "very disappointed" in today's vote but that he was committed to working out a solution with Congress.

"We've got much work to do, and this is much too important to simply let fail," he said. "We need to put something back together that works."

After a week of intense debate in both party caucuses, 95 Democrats and 133 Republicans opposed the bill just five weeks before they face voters in an election that is shaping up as a referendum on the economy; 140 Democrats and 65 Republicans supported the controversial measure.

Republican and Democratic House leaders later blamed the defeat of the bill on each other but vowed to continue working to produce legislation that could pass Congress. They did not say when this could happen.

Bush expressed disappointment but said he would work with his economic advisers "on a way forward" and would "continue to address this economic situation

head-on."

GOP leaders put the onus on Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), asserting that she failed to bring on board 95 fellow Democrats who voted against the bill and charging that a "partisan" speech she delivered at the end of today's debate turned off many Republicans.

At the beginning of a floor speech urging support for the bill, Pelosi denounced the \$700 billion price tag as "the costs of the Bush administration's failed economic policies — policies built on budgetary recklessness, on an anything-goes mentality, with no regulation, no supervision and no discipline in the system."

Democrats scoffed at the Republican effort to blame Pelosi.

"There is a terrible crisis affecting the American economy, we have come together on a bill to alleviate the crisis, and because somebody hurt their feelings they decide to punish the country," said Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), chairman of the House Financial Services Committee.

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