

## A lacrosse player's goodwill sticks

Greensboro News & Record  
Friday, February 25, 2011  
(Updated 5:26 pm)  
By [Jennifer Atkins Brown](#)  
Staff Writer

### Accompanying Photos



Photo Caption: An avid lacrosse player, Northwest High sophomore Chase Bunting died as a result of a skateboarding accident in October. The “A Stick from Chase” program was started in his honor to introduce young children to lacrosse. (Courtesy of Ashley Bunting)

### WANT TO HELP?

**To make a donation** to the “A Stick from Chase” program, make checks payable to “A Stick from Chase,” and mail to: Triad Blackhawks, 1100 Lamp Post Lane, Greensboro, NC 27410 .

**Information:** Call 294-4836 or e-mail [info@triblax.com](mailto:info@triblax.com) .

Tom Brawner knew Chase Bunting was a good kid and an excellent lacrosse player, but when he witnessed Chase, without hesitation, give his defense stick to a new player so that he could experience playing defense with a long stick, Brawner knew this was a special guy.

“For a player of Chase’s talent to offer his equipment to a new player is extremely rare, and it made a huge impact on both the new player and on this old coach,” said Brawner, director and coach of the Triad Blackhawks, a nonprofit organization dedicated to character development for high school and middle school boys through of lacrosse.

Brawner knew Chase through the Triad Youth Lacrosse Association's fall high school program. "Generosity was a key part of Chase's character."

Chase died in October as the result of injuries in a skateboarding accident. The 16-year-old was a sophomore at Northwest High School and member of Northwest's lacrosse team, as well as Old North State Lacrosse, which provides opportunities to play lacrosse in the off season.

"He never called attention to himself when he did things like giving his stick up for another player," said Mark Goldsmith, Northwest's men's lacrosse coach. "He just did it."

Moved by Chase's generosity and passion for lacrosse, Brawner and Billy Hook, a coach for the Triad Youth Lacrosse Association and the Blackhawks, decided to start a stick-giveaway program — "A Stick from Chase" — to honor Chase.

Goldsmith and Chase's parents, Jay and Robin Bunting, offered their support of the program.

"We think this program is a wonderful way of remembering Chase," Robin Bunting said. "Chase loved the game of lacrosse, and hopefully there will be some great lacrosse players to develop because of an early interest and start."

The main initiative of the program is to give away mini lacrosse sticks to younger children with a message about Chase's generosity. (A sticker is placed on each stick.)

"In this way, we try to pass Chase's legacy on to the younger generation and perhaps introduce them to Chase's favorite sport," Brawner said. "During the short time I knew Chase, I found him to be someone who lived and breathed lacrosse."

Goldsmith knew Chase for about three years and described him as "generous, witty, funny, sharing and just plain nice."

"He worked hard and played hard, and for me his death not only meant losing a good lacrosse player and someone I was looking forward to coaching on a varsity level, but I also lost one of my kids," Goldsmith said. "Anytime you spend as much time with these kids as I do as a coach, the kids become a part of your family; I lost a family member."

To date, about \$1,200 has been raised for "A Stick from Chase," and about 190 sticks have been acquired through donation or purchase. While game-quality lacrosse sticks run from \$25 to more than \$200, the mini lacrosse sticks cost about \$10 each. STX Lacrosse and Warrior Lacrosse also have donated sticks. Area lacrosse organizations give away the sticks at tournaments, games, scrimmages and other lacrosse events to help grow the game.

"Chase was the sort of person who brought others together through his positive attitude and passion for life, and this 'A Stick from Chase' initiative brings together a variety of lacrosse organizations which are often used to competing more than cooperating," Brawner said. "Lacrosse was Chase's favorite sport, a sport that allowed him to develop and shine, and 'A Stick from Chase' may introduce other young children to the game that Chase loved so much."