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## »» Forgive

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At the event, the Stephensons spoke about their son, who earned a bachelor's degree in art from UMD in 2009. He worked as part of the kitchen crew at Bulldog Pizza and Grill and was looking for work as a high school art teacher.

Selma Stephenson said Tim was an avid player of disc golf and was close to his 7-year-old niece, Martha Stephenson. After the crash, "Martha said, 'Timmy went to heaven because God needed another player on his Frisbee team,'" Selma Stephenson said.

Selma Stephenson said she forgives Shea because



TIM STEPHENSON

all four friends are responsible.

"All four boys knew what they were doing and (the responsibility) falls on all of them," Selma Stephenson said. "Tim had recently received a DWI. They knew what could happen (from drinking and driving) and did nothing about it."

Shea spoke about the response of his friends' parents two weeks ago at St. Eligius Health Center, where he is recovering from two broken femurs, a broken sternum and a broken wrist.

"The families were just so forgiving and worried



SHEA

about us all," he said. "I didn't know if the Stephensons were going to hate me or not, but

they came and showed me love.

"They walked in (to my room) and Selma Stephenson gave me a big hug, and I started crying. Then Jeff Stephenson told me in my ear, 'It's not your fault.'"

But Shea, who is recovering from broken legs, wrist and sternum, said he knows better.

"I'll probably live with it for the rest of my life," he said. "I can't get rid of the guilt. I have no plan to get

over it."

Once Shea makes a full recovery, Jeff Stephenson said he thinks Shea should speak to groups about his experience.

"It would be a very positive thing for him to tell his story of the effects (drinking and driving) had on him and the community," Stephenson said.

He also said he hopes Shea comes to terms with what happened.

"He should forgive himself for (the crash), because that's going to help him emotionally and mentally," Stephenson said. "He didn't plan to kill his best friend. People make mistakes. He should say, for his own well-being: 'Tim just beat me to heaven.'"

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