THE DAILY CLIPS

January 4, 2010

News, commentary, and opinion
compiled by the East Carolina University News Bureau from:

The Greenville Daily Reflector
The Raleigh News & Observer
   The New York Times
   The Wall Street Journal
   USA Today
   The Charlotte Observer
   The Fayetteville Observer
The Greensboro News & Record
   Newsweek
   U.S. News & World Report
   Business Week
   Time

East Carolina University News Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@.ecu.edu  Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481 FAX: 252- 328-6300
The 'short bridge' to oblivion

An alternative must be found to replace the aging Bonner Bridge over Oregon Inlet that provides the sole road connection between Hatteras Island and the North Carolina mainland, and soon. But state leaders are sticking their heads in the sand as they cling to a plan for a short replacement bridge to a precarious section of highway through the narrow and unstable north end of Hatteras Island.

The science is clear: Between storm events, global climate change, sea-level rise and the general instability of this type of barrier island, the short bridge replacement plan cannot work.

The proposed bridge and highway run through Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, which occupies the north end of Hatteras Island (also called Pea Island, as it was once a separate island). Building a short replacement bridge to the northern tip of Pea Island requires the long-term maintenance of N.C. 12 through the refuge to connect the bridge to the eight villages on Hatteras and Ocracoke islands. Yet Pea Island is becoming increasingly incapable of supporting that road, and residents of the villages will inevitably be left isolated, without access to either the new Oregon Inlet bridge or the mainland.

The half-billion-dollar bridge will ultimately become a pier into the ocean, unreachable and unusable by the very people it was meant to serve.

Pea Island Refuge typifies a simple barrier island system, meaning that it is a low, narrow, sand-poor and more dynamic island than other higher and wider, sand-rich, complex barrier islands such as those at Avon, Buxton Woods and Ocracoke. With rising sea levels, Pea Island is migrating westward as storms and tides open inlets through the island and overwash deposits sand over the island.

However, these natural processes are impeded by ongoing efforts to protect the current, extremely precarious transportation corridor. For instance, sand that would naturally overwash the island, building island elevation and shallow back-barrier shoals to the west, is used instead to construct and maintain dune ridges to protect the existing road on ever-steepener beaches. The terminal groin installed to stop the erosion at the north end of Pea Island and prevent the bridge from becoming detached from the island is now, however, causing additional erosion of the eastern side of Pea Island.

The result of these processes is a net narrowing of Pea Island, making the transportation route more, rather than less, precarious. Construction and maintenance of the dune ridges to protect the highway cause the beach to narrow and steepen and prevent island overwash. This in turn prevents increases in island elevation and width, which are critical for island maintenance in a rising sea level. This makes the refuge less suitable for barrier island wildlife habitat, its primary mission, and also increasingly jeopardizes its ability to support the coastal highway.

As the island narrows, the ocean shoreline continues to recede westward at approximately 13 feet per year, with some sections receding even quicker. At its narrowest points, the refuge is already less than several hundred yards wide, and the highway is precarious close to the ocean for most of the length of the refuge. The surf continues to chew away at the road and, with time, new inlets will form, separating the planned bridge from the villages it was built to serve - long before the end of the bridge's useful life.
Indeed, in mid-November a nor’easter washed approximately 800 feet of N.C. 12 into the ocean and left more of it submerged under sand and water, stranding island residents for days.

If North Carolina truly cares about the well-being of residents and visitors on Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands, it will devote resources to designing and funding a safe, reliable transportation route to connect those islands to the mainland. The route, at a minimum, should function even during storms like the recent nor’easter and should not be rendered obsolete as natural processes change the character of Pea Island.

Several alternatives are far more sensible. A longer bridge connecting to the more stable part of the island would be preferable to the current short bridge plan. A system of modern, high-speed ferries and water taxies could serve high volumes of passengers even in fairly shallow waters and is another sensible solution.

The San Juan Islands, Channel Islands National Park and Cumberland Island National Seashore are examples of popular tourist destinations reached by ferry. Likewise, Ocracoke and Bald Head islands, Cape Lookout National Seashore and Hammocks Beach State Park have all been connected to the mainland only by ferry boats for their entire histories, and yet remain among the most popular tourist destinations on the North Carolina coast.

Stanley R. Riggs is distinguished research professor in the Department of Geological Sciences at East Carolina University. Julie Youngman is senior attorney at the Southern Environmental Law Center.
Masthead
Published Sat, Jan 02, 2010 10:40 PM
Modified Sat, Jan 02, 2010 10:40 PM

Missed field-goal attempts sink East Carolina Pirates

MEMPHIS, Tenn. -- There will be time down the road when East Carolina looks back on the success of the 2009 season - the nine wins, the second Conference USA title and the fourth straight bowl trip.

In the immediate aftermath of Saturday's 20-17 overtime Liberty Bowl loss to Arkansas, none of that mattered.

Given a second chance to knock off a Southeastern Conference team, the Pirates (9-5) failed to make the most of it Saturday with sub-freezing temperatures and a sea of Razorback Red, that made Memphis feel like Moscow.

ECU's normally clutch kicker, Ben Hartman, missed two potential winning field goals in the final 63 seconds of regulation.

East Carolina had the ball first in overtime and Hartman again missed a go-ahead field-goal attempt.

The Razorbacks (8-5) capitalized on Hartman's third miss, from 35 yards in overtime, to deny ECU its 10th win of the season season and improve the SEC to 4-0 against C-USA in the Liberty Bowl matchup.

Arkansas kicker Alex Tejada hit a 37-yard field goal to win the game in overtime.

Just like last year, a heart-breaking loss to Kentucky, ECU took a double-digit lead into the half but couldn't close out the game. A pair of interceptions by senior quarterback Patrick Pinkney led to 10 quick points for Arkansas and set the table for the overtime heroics.

Hartman, who had hit six winning field goals in his career, missed a 39-yard attempt off the left upright with 1:03 left and then missed wide right as time expired.

The bitter loss left the Pirates short of their preseason goal of avenging last year's bowl loss and becoming only the second team in program history to win 10 games.

Instead of a signature win over a team from a Bowl Championship Series conference, the Pirates were left with their sixth straight loss to a name-brand opponent.

A strong defensive performance and an epic 99-yard drive posted the Pirates to a 10-0 advantage at the half.

Then Pinkney threw two interceptions, on back-to-back series, which led to 10 straight points for Arkansas.

After Arkansas safety Tramain Thomas returned Pinkney's second interception 37 yards for a touchdown, Pinkney responded by hitting Dwayne Harris for a 13-yard touchdown on the next drive for a 17-10 ECU lead.
The Razorbacks, who led the SEC in passing and scoring, finally found their offense. Mammoth quarterback Ryan Mallett, who's 6 feet 7, hit receiver Jarius Wright for a 41-yard touchdown on a quick-strike, two-play drive to tie the score at 17.

ECU's offense, which got 151 rushing yards from Dominique Lindsay, started and sputtered but produced the game's best drive in the first quarter. Starting at their own 1, the Pirates drove 99 yards in 13 plays, capped by Dominique Lindsay's 3-yard touchdown run for a 7-0 lead.

Pinkney was sharp on the drive, hitting all five of his passes for 73 yards, including a 61-yard hook-up with Darryl Freeney to set up Lindsay's touchdown.
Nathan Summers: The use of 'we' doesn't make it through adversity

Sunday, January 03, 2010

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — People sure do love to say 'we' this and 'we' that when describing their favorite sports teams.

Funny, when one of the actual members of one of those teams makes a mistake, or maybe three, the 'we' generation often expels that person from the group, the team for which they themselves have done little if anything beyond cheering and booing.

'They,' in fact, have never legged out a three-hour practice in the pouring rain, run suicides after that practice or ever had a part of their bodies permanently rearranged in the name of the almighty 'we.'

The members of the modern 'we' generation often don't even have to identify themselves with a real name anymore when hammering away at a player or coach. Its members often need only to create a cute pen name for themselves and bash away at those who actually have to stand up, be counted and be who they actually are — imperfect people like the rest of us.

Two years ago, East Carolina kicker Ben Hartman forever cemented himself into ECU football lore when he drilled a game-winning field goal that felled heavily-favored Boise State at the 2007 Hawaii Bowl. Fans were quick to gush over Hartman's poise under pressure.

He was just one person on a team of more than 100 young men, yet it was his kick made with all eyes glued to his back which put the word 'champion' back in front of ECU's name for the first time in a long time ("We won!") they all shouted with glee. Since that night in Honolulu, 'champion' has become synonymous with the Pirates.

On Saturday night in Memphis, after Hartman botched three consecutive field goal tries to break a 17-17 impasse with Arkansas, the ECU kicker was effectively and immediately washed over in a sea of negativity. A senior who always tried to do his part to keep the championships coming was quickly banished by some of those 'we' wannabes, and most certainly still is.

Many fans — though certainly not all, so save your emails — just couldn't accept the fact that Hartman had the audacity to mess up their good time at the Liberty Bowl, and immediately began using all of the modern communication devices of the world to make sure all the other constituents in the 'we' world knew they no longer accepted Hartman as one of their own.

They proved that in the 'we' world, you're usually just one screw-up away from being kicked out of the clubhouse.

Those people love to call themselves by the names of the teams which they don't play for but assume ownership of nonetheless. People either become good Pirates or bad Pirates, good Gamecocks or bad Gamecocks, good Banana Slugs or bad Banana Slugs, whatever.

When things are going well — Hartman, one of 28 ECU seniors this season, delivered game-winning kicks against Southern Miss, Marshall, Boise State, UCF, Tulsa and, who could forget, North Carolina — you'll always have your place with the 'we' crowd.

Make a mistake and they might have no use for you anymore.
That's why there are far fewer people in the world who choose to take the chance at success despite the risk of failure than there are ones who stand ready to point the finger at those who do fail.

There are also a lot more people in the world who claim adversity is a good thing than there are ones who actually stand by people who are facing adversity. Annoying bumper stickers, t-shirts and tattoos all suggest qualities many people don't actually possess about toughness.

In short, when you mess up, you usually find out who your real friends are.

When Arkansas kicker Alex Tejada delivered the Liberty Bowl winning kick for the Razorbacks after Hartman missed two field goals in the fourth quarter and then another in overtime, the reaction from Pirate players and fans was understandably disappointment and even anger.

But to claim to be so much a part of a team as to place 'we' into any and all conversations about that team should mean doing so with some sense of reality about the guys who really are a part of the team.

Accepting imperfection in others is the cornerstone of being a part of any friendship, family or team. Being a true member of the ECU football team in the wake of the Liberty Bowl collapse means, like it or not, being forced to remember all the good times you had because of someone, like Hartman, and knowing life isn't always a good time.

Think Hartman would have had an easy time living down the Liberty Bowl loss without the abuse from some of his own supposed fans? Not likely.

In the case of many so-called members of the Pirate football family, the alienation of Hartman for his miscues is nothing more than a feeble cry of, “What have you done for ‘we’ lately?”

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or (252)329-9595.

Copyright 2010 The Daily Reflector All rights reserved. - -
Nancy Jane Miller Houston

Nancy Jane Miller Houston Mrs. Nancy Jane (Miller) Houston, age 62, a resident of Chocowinity, passed away Thursday, Dec. 31, 2009 at home after a courageous battle with cancer. A memorial service will be held 11:00 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 2, 2010 at First Presbyterian Church, Washington, N.C. conducted by the Rev. Darryl Evans. There will also be a memorial service held 1:00 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 9, 2010 at Christ United Methodist Church, 3440 Shroyer Road, Kettering, Ohio 45429. Mrs. Houston was born in Canton, Ohio on Jan. 10, 1947. She was the daughter of the late James C. and Margaret E. Miller. Mrs. Houston graduated from Mount Lebanon High School, in Pittsburgh, Pa., Wittenberg University, in Springfield, Ohio with a BS in Education, and the University of Dayton, in Dayton, Ohio with a Masters of Science in Education. She was a highly regarded educator in Ohio for 30 years as a teacher, Reading Specialist, Curriculum Coordinator, and a Regional Director of Teacher Development for the State of Ohio. During this time, Mrs. Houston was active in a number of organizations and was President of the Ohio Chapter of the International Reading Association. Mrs. Houston has spent the past 10 years at East Carolina University (ECU), in Greenville, where, most recently, she was the Lead Coordinator in the Office of Clinical Experiences for the College of Education. Mrs. Houston was a member of the Cypress Landing Golf Club, Cypress Landing Home Owners Association and the First Presbyterian Church. On August 9, 1969, Mrs. Houston married Robert Alan Houston, who survives. Surviving with her husband are two daughters, Carrie Lin and husband, Jon Schade, and their children, Mary Caroline and Luke Robert, all of Dayton, Ohio, and Melinda Beth and husband, Matthew T. Shultz, and their children, Jackson Matthew and Colton Robert-Thomas, of Columbus, Ohio; a sister, Carolyn Fleig and husband, Dan, of Cleveland, Ohio and Carolyn’s sons, Todd Weber (deceased), and Scott Weber and wife, Loree, and their children, Mackenzie, Mallowee, Chase and Colby, Dan’s daughter, Kathy and husband, Jeff Wichert, and their children, Kaylee, Brian and Justin; and Dan’s son, Jeff Fleig, a sister, Margie Langworthy of Atlanta, Ga., and her son, Jason and wife, Sara; a brother, Jim Miller and wife, Pam, of Chicago, Ill. and their sons, Greg and Marc Miller, sister-in-law, Beth Ann Houston of Dayton, Ohio; brother-in-law, W. Brock Houston and wife, Nola, of San Diego, Calif., their son, Jason and wife, Kimberly, and their daughters, Emma and Kathryn, son, Ryan and wife, Jennifer, and their children, Wyatt and Benjamin, and son, Brant and wife, Tricia and their son Liam. Memorials may be made to the First Presbyterian Church, 211 W. 2nd St., Washington, NC 27889-4941 or Hospice, #5 Doctors Park, PO Box 6028, Greenville, NC 27835-6028. Condolences may be sent to the family by visiting www.paulfuneralhome.com. Paul Funeral Home of Washington is honored to serve the Houston family.

Published in The Daily Reflector on January 1, 2010
Small changes can promote weight loss, improve health

By Kathryn Kennedy
The Daily Reflector

Sunday, January 03, 2010

Doubts about the benefits of dieting are winning an East Carolina University professor national recognition and acclaim.

Lesley Lutes developed the "small changes" program to help people lose weight through simple, sustainable measures and keep it off. She is concerned that 65 percent of Americans are overweight or obese. And 95 percent of those who lose significant amounts through dieting regain the weight over time.

Small changes begins with an assessment by Lutes to establish a baseline of eating and fitness habits before setting small lifestyle goals. They could be as simple as cutting back from two sodas a day to only one, or taking the stairs instead of the elevator. It's very extremely individualized. She believes in everything in moderation.

"We don't believe in a world without Coke or pie," Lutes said.

Dieting can cause people to feel bad about depriving themselves, she said. Those on a strict exercise regimen feel guilty if they only get to the gym three days a week instead of five. But that three days could be great news to someone who never worked out before, she said.

From there, Lutes and her team of doctoral students at ECU provide consultations over several months to check on the progress of participants and provide guidance when needed.

The program's not conventional, Lutes said, but it's catching on. Even in a time when shows like NBC's The Biggest Loser glorify huge life changes and inhuman weight loss.

"My outcomes are medically related," she said. "On average (participants) lose eight to 10 pounds (during a semester). One pound a week? That can be maintained."

She does, however, boast about one early participant, Gary, who lost 100 pounds through small changes over a five-year period.

Lutes has won several awards for her research and has been featured in academic journals. Her techniques were also highlighted in the January issue of Prevention magazine, but it's a program that's been in development since she started her 2002 doctoral dissertation at Virginia Tech.

Open-heart surgery as a child prompted Lutes to pursue a masters in exercise science, focusing on the prevention of heart disease. Weight loss is key in lowering risk. She combined that knowledge with a psychology doctorate because so much of weight loss has to do with awareness of habits, mindful eating and ignoring societal pressures and expectations.

It only takes losing five percent of body weight — think 10 pounds off someone weighing 200 pounds — to have a "clinically significant benefit." Lowering and maintaining a healthy weight can reduce high blood pressure, cholesterol and risk of heart disease while improving self-image and esteem.

Lutes experienced her own struggles with weight and found dieting unsuccessful. She put small changes in place to improve her health and keep the weight off.
She walks her dog four times a week, parks in a lot further from campus and swaps mustard for mayonnaise on her sandwiches. All while enjoying the occasional latte or slice of lemon meringue pie.

Still, she wants the success of small changes to be based on independent, scientific research rather than personal experiences. So it’s fulfilling that four separate studies have found the program works in a variety of populations with various modes of keeping connected to patients.

Face to face meetings are just as effective as touching base in an online chat room, Lutes said.

“We’re still testing long-term, but there’s evidence this is a viable alternative (to dieting),” she said.

Most recently, Lutes began working with veterans — a population above the national rate with 70 percent of its members either overweight or obese. Next she’ll use the program to improve health for adolescents and children.

“We all have struggles. You can hide eating disorders or depression. Weight is the one thing you can’t hide.”

The small changes program will become a permanent community offering at ECU this month at the Healthy Lifestyles Lab under renovation in the Rawl Building. Anyone interested in participating, not for research purposes, can call 328-4874 or contact Lutes at lutesl@ecu.edu. The cost is $150 for a semester of treatment.

Contact Kathryn Kennedy at k kennedy@reflector.com or (252) 329-9566.

Lesley Lutes’ Weight loss tips

Keep these three words in mind when it comes to eating habits: quality, quantity and frequency. How good is the stuff I consume, how much do I eat and how often? Record your habits and try to improve based on those factors.

Buy a pedometer. Keep track of the average number of steps you take each day. Try to increase that number gradually.

Be conscious of when you eat. Eating for emotional reasons or when you’re bored can pack on the pounds.

Not every week is a good week to lose weight, especially during the holidays or times of stress. Sometimes a better goal is to maintain your current weight during those times.

Don’t set goals too high. Master one lifestyle change at a time before tackling on another.

Copyright 2010 The Daily Reflector All rights reserved. - -
Holtz family balances life, football

By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector

Friday, January 01, 2010

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — College football has a way of taking over the lives of its players, coaches, media members and even fans.

Nothing could possibly compare, however, to the amount of time a head coach must invest in his team in a given calendar year.

It is a seven-day-a-week task during the season, and when that ends, recruiting hits full speed until February’s national signing day. After that, spring practice kicks off in March and generally runs into mid April. Before long, it’s midsummer again, and another season is set to begin.

The game can often become the reason other parts of coaches’ lives, like family, take a back seat.

When Urban Meyer, the head coach of the perennial national powerhouse Florida Gators, announced last week he was taking a leave of absence from coaching, it was primarily for health reasons, but also because he said he wanted to rededicate himself to his faith and his family.

For East Carolina head coach Skip Holtz, the pressures and time constraints are not much different. Holtz will cap another winning season tonight when his 9-4 Pirates take on Arkansas in the 51st Liberty Bowl.

With the season’s end will come a little more time to spend with his wife and three children, but not much more.

“I think the key to being successful in anything, to being a successful parent, a successful husband or a successful football coach, it’s all about balance,” said Holtz, whose Pirates kick off against the 7-5 Razorbacks at 5:30 p.m. “You have to have balance in your life, and that’s really important to me, more important than just being a football coach or just being a father. If you try to do just one of them, obviously other parts of your life are going to suffer.”

Holtz admits it’s tough, particularly this time of the year, to achieve that balance. He said it’s easy to get locked into one phase of life, making that one part become the reason the others are neglected.

The fifth-year ECU coach, who has guided the Pirates to four consecutive bowl games and whose team — with a victory tonight — will become just the second ECU team to win 10 games in a season, has a unique perspective on the subject.

Holtz was on the other end of the equation as a child when his father, coaching legend Lou Holtz, was trying to create the same balance the younger Holtz now tries to maintain.

But there is a big difference between then and now, according to Holtz.

“I grew up in a different age of coaching, when there weren’t a lot of rules and regulations as far as recruiting and the time tables were concerned,” Holtz said. “You could go out all summer and be gone all the time, and if you weren’t out, you felt like you weren’t working. I think the NCAA has done some great things to give coaches a better opportunity to be better fathers and better husbands.

“It’s a different day and time than then,” he said. “If you spent a day with your family in the old days of coaching, that was a day you weren’t going to a high school game or doing some recruiting. It was viewed as a negative.”
Now, families are more a part of the experience than ever before.

Holtz's wife, Jennifer, is a fixture at ECU games — both home and away — and even at the ends of many practices in Greenville. Holtz's children are a fixture at ECU as well.

"My husband allows me to be a part of the program," Jen Holtz said. "I don't know whether he does that to satisfy me or because he knows coaches' wives play a significant role in everything they do."

In terms of her husband's time spent with the couple's kids, Jen Holtz said being at ECU has been great.

"Part of the reason we're so blessed is because of where we're at," she said. "Our kids have grown up on the sidelines. (Athletic director) Terry Holland has afforded the boys the opportunity to travel to away games. They really don't have to experience the absence of a father. The strain on the family, I don't feel that."

Jen Holtz said it pains her to see the health problems that Meyer — whom she said is a close friend of the Holtz family — has experienced, at least in part because of the pressure of being a head coach.

She said you'd have to be a head coach, or the wife of one, to fully understand.

"The expectations that are placed on you, even with Skip being offered a job somewhere else, can be tremendous," she said. "In his case, this biggest thing that burdened him was he wasn't making a decision based on him or me or the kids. It was every single one of those players too."

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or (252) 329-9595.

Copyright 2010 The Daily Reflector All rights reserved. - -
Pirate fans endure heartbreak at local eateries

By Michael Abramowitz
The Daily Reflector

Saturday, January 02, 2010

High hopes and great expectations carried East Carolina University football fans through 55 minutes of Liberty Bowl excitement Saturday against Arkansas. But in the final minutes they watched victory slide first to the left, then to the right off Pirate kicker Ben Hartman’s foot, allowing Arkansas’ Alex Tejada the opportunity he needed. His aim was true and the Razorbacks marched from Memphis with the 20-17 overtime win.

Thousands of Pirate faithful made the trip to Memphis, but most stayed in town and caught the action at the many sports bars that were ready with snacks and beverages to keep the fans happy.

Bob Gupton, manager of Buffalo Wild Wings in Arlington Village, said his customers began arriving as early as 4 p.m. to ready for the 5:30 kickoff.

Fans at Tie Breakers Sports Bar settled in for the battle with beers and plates of wings and other finger foods. Their predictions of a tight score and defensive battle seemed right on the money, and they all believed the Pirates would be the team left standing in the end.

Adam Ransom came from Charlotte to watch the game with family members. His recipe for success was simple.

“The Pirates have what it takes. They just have to seize the initiative and have the heart to win,” he said.

ECU played the first half as though it heard Ransom’s advice, scoring the first 10 points and using its stout defense to thwart Arkansas quarterback Ryan Mallett.

The excitement remained at a fever pitch throughout the game. Mouths dry with the tension and hot with barbecue sauce were quenched with pitchers of beer brought by busy wait staff at crowded sports bars throughout the city.

Just in case it got to be too much for the weak-hearted at O’Cool’s, Priscilla Bryan, Abigail Marshall and Mary Kate Williams, all nurses at Pitt County Memorial Hospital, sat in the back booth and kept an eye on things, ready to administer aid if needed, they joked.

“We’re ready, absolutely, and CPR-certified,” Bryan said.

“We’ll be ready in a heartbeat, or if any of them stop,” Marshall laughed.

No hearts stopped this night, but many were broken when Hartman missed three field goal attempts, and the Razorbacks made the one they needed to seal the victory.

Contact Michael Abramowitz at mabramowitz@reflector.com or (252) 329-9571.

Copyright 2010 The Daily Reflector All rights reserved.
Upset bid comes up short for Pirates

By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector

Saturday, January 02, 2010

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — The East Carolina Pirates and their 28 seniors appeared to be lined up to ride out of Memphis in victory formation Saturday night during the fourth quarter of the 51st Liberty Bowl.

A few minutes later, it looked that way again. In overtime, it looked that way a third time. But there was no magical upset waiting at the end of this ride.

All three times, senior kicker Ben Hartman could not deliver the game-winning field goal that had come to characterize his career and that of an ECU team which has come to thrive on beating teams it isn’t supposed to beat.

After Hartman missed three straight tries, it was Arkansas kicker Alex Tejada who strode onto the field in overtime and sent his team into hysterics after he calmly stroked a 37-yard kick to give the Razorbacks an improbable 20-17 triumph.

"Unfortunately, we had our opportunities and we didn’t capitalize on them," ECU head coach Skip Holtz said, the Pirates’ second straight Liberty Bowl loss and third loss in four bowl games with Holtz at the helm. "We didn’t make the most of them."

The Pirates (9-5) outplayed Arkansas for much of the night, building a 10-0 lead at halftime, then surging back into the lead, 17-10 before the Razorbacks (8-5) rallied to knot the game a second time late in the third quarter.

ECU’s offense amassed 24 first downs to 10 from Arkansas, and the Pirates produced more than 100 yards of offense more than their opponent, but when it came to burying the Hogs, Hartman and the Pirates simply could not connect.

ECU’s senior MVPs understandably found it difficult to locate the words to properly describe how the last game of their careers slipped through their fingers.

While the pain of the loss had only just begun to sink in, running back Dominique Lindsay (game-high 151 rushing yards) and outside linebacker Chris Mattocks (eight tackles) seemed to already realize their careers weren’t made or broken in one night.

"No one gave us chance, so to lose like that, it definitely hurts," Lindsay said. "We should have won that game. We left a lot of opportunities out there. No matter what happens, you can always look back and say, What could I have done to push us over the edge and get the win? That’s the worst way to lose."

"It’s unfortunate, it’s hard, and it’s painful," Holtz said of the loss.

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or (252)329-9595.

Copyright 2010 The Daily Reflector All rights reserved.
Dennis Massey: Pitt Community College grows enrollment, graduations

Sunday, January 03, 2010

Pitt Community College’s enrollment increases have been steady for several years, but the double-digit increases almost every term since Fall 2008 have been particularly large, an indication of the state of the economy and a strong desire by people to prepare for the jobs of the future. Local elected officials at the state and county level have done their best during this period of limited budgets to provide support, and PCC’s faculty and staff have worked hard to provide access to our programs.

The faces and stories behind this increase in numbers are diverse and inspiring. With a large number of dislocated workers among our students, the average age of students has increased to 28 years of age. We have also seen increased interest in our fast-track career programs like Food Services Management and other fields which get students back into the work force in six months or less of training. At the same time, ease of transfer has also motivated more recent high school graduates to enter PCC first before going on to a baccalaureate institution.

One statistic of increasing interest to state and federal sources of support is the graduation rate of our students. PCC has seen an increase of 45 percent in completers since 2006, and we will continue to improve our counseling and student support to grow this number further. The reality is that the paths of our students are extremely varied. They include current high school students like Lauren Starling who earned her associate’s degree and high school diploma almost simultaneously. Starling is now studying to become an elementary school teacher at East Carolina University. They also include many students who began college elsewhere. In Fall 2009, almost 31 percent of our credit students attended another college prior to PCC. Many delayed completion of their educational goals because of the necessities of work or family, or their initial plans shifted as job prospects developed locally.

With 24,000 credit and noncredit students on campus and in the community now, the challenges for PCC of finding classroom and office spaces are enormous. We have increased weekend and evening as well as online classes. The Herman Simon Health Sciences Building will open next fall, the result of private and public gifts as well grants from the Golden Leaf Foundation. Construction will begin on three more buildings in 2010 thanks to the local sales tax funding made possible by the Pitt County Commissioners and you, the voters. Our Facilities Master Plan is available on our campus Web site (Experience PCC, President's Message) and outlines specific plans for the next decade. They are ambitious but achievable in order to better serve our county and region.

We are proud to support students at a variety of levels, from adult basic education to calculus and medical sonography. There has been steady fulfillment of our Strategic Plan goals developed in 2007 thanks to the focused efforts of our full and part-time employees. These goals include continuing the “Open Door” tradition of the North Carolina community colleges and actively engaging with businesses and other partners for economic and workforce development. The goals also highlight our focus on instructional improvement, both in specific work skills and in the general education which prepares students for the changing job markets of the future. Expanding and developing our faculty is one of our highest priorities during this period of rapid growth. Our PCC Leadership Institute, with assistance from ECU’s College of Education, has served over 275 staff over six years, and professional development of our employees will continue to be one of our major concerns in the years ahead.

We especially thank citizens for your support and invite your participation in Pitt County’s "community" college. The learning which we facilitate requires your collaboration as resources, consultants, donors, students, and
friends.

Dennis Massey is president of Pitt Community College.