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PCMH opens lot for additional parking

The Daily Reflector

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Starting today, Pitt County Memorial Hospital will open nearly 350 additional parking spaces for patients and visitors.

The new parking lot is located in front of the main hospital and the Heart Institute and will connect with the existing patient/guest parking lot. The cashier booths will be relocated to exit points between the two lots, providing an easier exit from the campus and less congestion in front of the main entrance to the hospital.

The new parking layout comes after the dedication of the East Carolina Heart Institute a collaboration between the hospital and East Carolina University focusing on research, treatment and education surrounding heart disease. An outpatient facility is at ECU and last month the hospital hosted a dedication ceremony for its $150 million, six-story cardiovascular bed tower.

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WILLIAM RILEY ROBERSON JR.

William Riley Roberson Jr. WASHINGTON, N.C. - Mr. William Riley "Bill" Roberson Jr., 90, of Washington, N.C., died Saturday Jan. 3, 2009, at his home. A funeral service will be held at 3 p.m. Monday at the First Presbyterian Church of Washington, officiated by the Rev. Spotwood Graves and the Rev. Darryl Evans. Burial will follow in Oakdale Cemetery. Charles Zophar Potts Jr., Reed Mills Potts, Morgan Patterson Potts, William "Will" Riley Roberson IV, Dr. Marcus Hardee Jones and Latham Gray Potts will serve as pallbearers. Roberson was born on June 6, 1918, in Washington, N.C., son of the late Rosa Watson Roberson and W.R. Roberson Sr. He graduated from Washington High School, attended Davidson College and graduated from Strayer-Bryant-Stratton College in Baltimore in 1938. In 1940, he married Frances Dillard Morgan, of Washington, N.C., who preceded him in death Nov. 3, 1999. Roberson had homes in Washington and Atlantic Beach. From 1986-98, they also resided in Bath. Surviving are daughter Robin and husband, Charles Zoph Potts, son William Riley Roberson III and wife, Olivia Grimes Roberson; six grandchildren, Riley Frances Simpson, Charles Zophar Potts Jr. and wife, Christie Lewis Potts, Reed Mills Potts and wife, Casey Hockaday Potts, Morgan Patterson Potts and wife, Joy Law Potts, William "Will" Riley Roberson IV and wife, Tabitha Domian Roberson, Lilly Grimes Roberson Jones and husband, Dr. Marcus Hardee Jones; and six great-grandchildren, Raven Cassandra Simpson, Morgan Alexandra Potts, Latham Gray Potts, Skylar Elizabeth Potts, Davis Roberson Jones and Olivia Stanfield Jones; one sister, Hannah Bagwell, and one brother, Joseph Phil Roberson, now deceased, both of Washington, N.C.; and a very special friend, Ms. Peggy Jordan. Roberson was a member and former elder and deacon in the First Presbyterian Church of Washington, N.C. He was chairman and chief executive officer of Roberson's Beverages Inc., a family owned business operating several bottling plants in Eastern North Carolina from 1946 until 1982. He was past president of both the North Carolina Soft Drink Association and the National Soft Drink Association. He served 12 years as a member of the Board of Directors of the Dr. Pepper Company, Dallas, Texas. In 1989, he received the first award for Distinguished and Meritorious Service given by the North Carolina Soft Drink Association. In 1989, Roberson was elected to the Beverage World Hall of Fame. Roberson had a long and varied career in broadcasting, starting with being a founder of WRRF Radio in Washington in 1942 and WRRZ Radio in Clinton in 1946. A companion FM station in Washington followed in the 50s. He was a founder and for thirty years chairman and chief executive officer of WITN-TV, an NBC affiliate which went on the air in 1955. He was a past president of the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters and recipient of the North Carolina Broadcasters' "Hall of Fame" Award. He served as a member of the NBC-TV Board of Delegates Representing over 200 NBC-TV affiliates with the network. Roberson was a former member of Broadcast Pioneers and the International Radio and Television Society. Roberson served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Washington and its successors for 33 years. He served as a charter member of the Advisory Board of Duke Hospital and as director of ECU Medical Foundation. He was a director and past president of ECU Educational Foundation. He was a former member of the Davidson College Board of Visitors and was a former trustee of Atlantic Christian College. In 1981, Roberson was named "The Tar Heel of the Week" by the News and Observer. Roberson was a founding partner of Washington Square Mall and the Smallwood Subdivision. Roberson was a former board member and president of the North Carolina Art Society. He was a trustee of the North Carolina Museum of Art. In 1997, Roberson created a fund at the North Carolina Museum of Art to establish and perpetuate the "William R. Roberson Jr., and Frances M. Roberson Endowment for North Carolina Art." Proceeds from this endowed fund are to be used to acquire works of art by North Carolina artists for the museum. In addition to this, the Robersons contributed a substantial number of paintings from their personal collection to the museum. On June 6, 2007, the board of trustees voted unanimously to make Roberson a Trustee Emeritus. Roberson was a member of the Governor's Business Council on the Arts and Humanities. Roberson was a member and past Master of Washington Masonic Lodge No. 675 and a member of Sudan Temple. He was past president of the Washington Lion's Club and a charter member of the Washington Jaycees. Roberson was a past president and member of both the Washington Yacht and Country Club and the Coral Bay Club. He was a member of the Dunes Club and the Cardinal Club. He was a member of the Down East Seniors in Washington. Roberson served as Representative in North Carolina
General Assembly from 1966 until 1974. He introduced or co-introduced legislation which created Goose Creek State Park, the Swan Quarter-Ocracoke Ferry, Beaufort County Community College, which at that time was a branch of Pitt County Technical Institute and the Coastal Area Management Act. He was active in passing legislation that made possible East Carolina University and the ECU School of Medicine. He was appointed Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Transportation by Governor James B. Hunt Jr. on July 20, 1981, and served until Governor Hunt went out of office in January 1985. The family will receive friends from 7-8:30 p.m. today at Paul Funeral Home of Washington and at other times at the homes of Mr. Roberson’s children Riley and Olivia Roberson at 164 River Walk Drive, Washington, or Robin and Zoph Potts at 107 S. Reed Drive, Washington. In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to the charity of one’s choice. Mr. Roberson’s online guestbook may be signed by visiting www.paulfuneralhome.com. Paul Funeral Home of Washington is serving the Roberson family.

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Darts and Laurels

Saturday, January 03, 2009

Laurels — To those who have managed to keep their new year’s resolutions through the first three days of the year. It is difficult to make profound lifestyle choices, and your resilience and determination is admirable. Those who have fallen short should pick themselves up and try again. The new year brings opportunity, and it should not be abandoned at the first sign of turbulence.

Darts — To Wednesday’s high winds and dry conditions that led to several brush fires in the county and the collapse of a wall beside a building in downtown Greenville. Thankfully, no one was hurt during the incidents, which served as reminders that precipitation and extreme temperatures are not the only weather conditions that call for added caution.

Darts — To a depressed Pitt County job market that ranks among the worst in 15 years. An official with the county Employment Security Commission reported that Pitt has the fewest number of available jobs since 1995, reflecting growing worry about the economy and its effects locally. The outlook is dismal, though residents and officials should hope these trends turn around in the new year.

Laurels — To grant funding awarded to the Greenville Police Department toward a proposed program to reduce the dropout rate in Pitt County. Project Success intends to identify 100 students between the ages of 16-21 who are on probation but want to get on the right track. The General Assembly will provide money for the program, which officials believe can be running by April.

Laurels — To Greenville-based Cornerstone Ministries for expanding its program aimed at removing health disparities among adults. Part of a statewide program that involves 68 organizations, the ministry’s “Healthy Lives, Healthy Choices” program will now reach into Bertie County with health education and efforts to reduce cardiovascular disease in the black community.

Darts — To an increase in auto insurance rates sought by insurance companies, rejected by the state’s insurance commissioner and now under a court challenge. The N.C. Rate Bureau sought a 12.9 percent rate hike to start Jan. 1, but Commissioner Jim Long elected to cut rates by 16 percent instead. Motorists must await the outcome of a court battle to see how much they will pay in the new year.

Laurels — To the end to drought conditions in Pitt County. While most eastern portions of the state are no longer plagued by drought, state officials hasten to point out that 23 North Carolina counties remain under varying degrees of drought classifications. Drought or no drought, water conservation should be a lifestyle adopted by all of us who have learned hard lessons from the dryness of 2008.

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