Forrest Croce
Rick Niswander

Council to discuss debris on ECU land
By Michael Abramowitz
The Daily Reflector
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Debris accumulating on East Carolina University property following Hurricane Irene is among the scheduled topics for discussion tonight by the Greenville City Council during its first meeting of 2012.

Rick Niswander, ECU vice chancellor for administration and finance, will attend the meeting.

The university used its property on Clark Street between 11th and 12th streets to store debris removed from other campus properties following the damage caused by Irene, city staff said.

During the Nov. 14 council meeting, some council members expressed concern about the property becoming a dumping area for ECU. These concerns were emailed to ECU officials, and a response was received, staff said.
Tonight’s discussion is at the request of Councilman Max Joyner Jr.

Also scheduled for discussion at the 6 p.m. council meeting:

- A staff recommendation to adopt the master plan for the west Greenville Dream Park, a 2.4-acre “mini-park” that predominately serves the residents of the Higgs Brothers neighborhood.

The original Dream Park concept was conceived in the mid-1990s as a part of the “Weed and Seed” program, city officials said.

The initial effort resulted primarily in open green space with only the most basic playground amenities; the site had limited recreational value resulting in little use, they said.

The new plan proposes a more vibrant recreation area, developed with stakeholder input. Proposed renovations include an entry plaza and promenade walk, a “spray-ground” sprinkler, an improved multipurpose field and picnic shelter, an upgraded playground unit and community gardens, planners said.

The planned improvements would become one more factor in ongoing neighborhood redevelopment and contribute to the overall revitalization of the general area, its staff proponents said.

The Greenville Recreation and Parks Department hosted a series of public meetings in 2011, resulting in plan components including exploring shared land use with Greenville Community Shelter and the American Legion and elements and programs for youth and seniors.

The park’s city and public supporters envision a family friendly park that serves the neighborhood as well as the west Greenville community and keeps the community engaged with the design and development process, city staff said.

The plan was adopted on Dec. 14 by Recreation and Parks commissioners, who recommended that the City Council adopt it as well.

There would be no cost to adopt the plan, staff said, but the cost of implementing it would be $784,900.
The project, however, is designed so it can be separated into phases, spreading out development and associated costs. The recreation and parks department will apply for a $250,000 grant in January to fund a portion of the project, which would require a master plan.

- Council Member Calvin Mercer requested that the City Council discuss the Police Athletic League (PAL) program, whose funding is contained in the police department’s budget.
- The Community Appearance and Environmental Advisory commissions are scheduled to make their annual presentations to the council.

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People intending to leave their bodies to science might find they bump up against weight limits, especially given America's growing girth.

**Donating your body to science? Nobody wants a chubby corpse**

By JoNel Aleccia

It’s a rare day when Richard Drake turns down a dead body, but last week, he had no choice.

At 6-foot-1 and 350 pounds, the deceased in question was simply too big for the Cleveland Clinic Body Donation Program, which provides specimens for anatomy classes at the Lerner College of Medicine and elsewhere.

“Someone that’s shorter and carrying a lot of weight, that is a problem,” said Drake, director of anatomy and a professor of surgery. “The storage is one issue, but when you are obese, there’s a lot of tissue everywhere. The students don’t get as good a learning opportunity.”

Reluctantly, Drake informed the dead man’s family he’d have to turn down the donation request because their loved one exceeded the size limits for medical research.

“They understood that, because, actually, they had tried a few other places,” Drake said. “They were sort of checking around.”

In a country where more than a third of adults are obese, the impact of extra weight extends, it seems, even beyond death.

Officials at some whole body donation programs in the United States tell msnbc.com they’ve turned away corpses that are too fat for scientific study.
Others say the bigger issue is that potential donors simply don’t sign up once they learn of weight limits that can be as low as 170 pounds, but generally top out at 300 pounds.

“Family members, or the person themselves, sometimes they’re a little taken aback,” said Stephen D. Anderson, coordinator of the Willed Body Program at the University of Louisville School of Medicine in Kentucky. “They didn’t assume there were any restrictions.”

That surprise could be a problem, considering that a 2004 Johns Hopkins School of Medicine study found that about half of adults surveyed would consider donating their bodies to science.

But officials at the university-affiliated programs that supply perhaps 10,000 to 15,000 dead bodies each year to the nation’s nearly 140 medical schools say that weight and height limits are an unavoidable part of the process.

“The embalming process adds considerable weight. Generally, a 250-pound person might weigh 350 to 400 pounds when embalmed,” said Richard Dey, professor and chairman of the Department of Neurobiology and Anatomy at West Virginia University in Morgantown. His program receives about 275 bodies a year and turns away at least a few.

To be frank, bodies taller than about 6-foot-4 or heavier than about 300 pounds simply don’t fit on the trays that are sometimes stacked six high in the coolers where the deceased are kept, experts say.

It can be difficult for technicians to handle huge corpses, which have to be lifted and transferred frequently, often by slim technicians or students, said John Lee Powers, curator of anatomical materials at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University in Greenville, N.C. That program limits donors to between 170 pounds and 180 pounds, though an exceptionally tall donor might be allowed at 190.

“It’s the maximum our equipment will handle,” Powers said.

There’s also the educational aspect to consider. Donated bodies are used primarily for first-year anatomy students, who need to learn how the human body is supposed to look, said Ronn Wade, director of the Anatomical Services Division of the University of Maryland Medical School in Baltimore.

“In a perfect world, they’d like to have a perfect body with perfect anatomy - - or near perfect,” said Wade, whose program is among the largest in the nation, with a peak donation of some 1,800 bodies a year.
Studying obesity and other pathologies can come later, once students are familiar with the basics, he added.

Obese bodies are more difficult, time-consuming and unpleasant to study, said Wade, who also heads his state’s anatomy board. “Basically it’s having to get at the structures you want to see,” he said. “Between the skin and the rest, there’s layers and layers of fat cells.”

Only about a quarter of the bodies Wade receives meet the ideal criteria, he said. Perhaps 5 percent of them are morbidly obese.

Wade generally doesn’t reject them outright. But they won’t be used by medical students in first-year classes. They might wind up as clinical specimens used for practice by paramedics or other medical professionals. Some obese bodies can't be used at all, so they're simply cremated and the remains are returned to the families -- without ever serving any research purpose.

So far, medical schools are still able to get enough lean bodies for students to use, experts said. Some programs use corpses from for-profit tissue brokers, which are loosely regulated and supply an unknown number of bodies each year.

Still, considering America’s growing girth, some experts are worried about the future.

Anderson, the director of the University of Louisville program, says he can’t use about 10 percent of the 175 to 200 bodies donated each year because of size problems.

He said he’s thought about upping the program’s weight limit from 200 pounds to 250 pounds to ensure a steady supply.

“If we keep it at 200, we may see that we’re turning down potential donors because of that,” he said.

Having to turn down any willing donor is a shame, said Drake, the Cleveland Clinic expert who is also an officer with the American Association of Anatomists. He doubted the family of the 6-foot-1, 350-pound man would find a program to accept his remains. Instead, they likely had to make other arrangements for the man’s disposition.

“It is an emotional thing,” he said. “People really do want to do this.”

That was the case for the mother of Tara Parker-Pope, a New York Times health reporter who recently wrote about the struggle to lose weight and keep it off, both in her own family and in the population at large.
“My mother died of esophageal cancer six years ago,” Parker-Pope wrote. “It was her great regret that in the days before she died, the closest medical school turned down her offer to donate her body because she was obese.”

Those who leave their remains to science tend to be sensitive folks interested in enhancing the public good, said Wade, the Maryland expert who has promoted whole body donation for more than 35 years. At the end of a life perhaps spent struggling with weight, learning they’re too heavy to fulfill those altruistic wishes can be devastating.

“It’s kind of another stigma,” said Wade. “They kind of feel victimized.”
Stan Eakins appointed dean of ECU College of Business
Monday, January 9, 2012

Stanley G. Eakins has been named dean of the East Carolina University College of Business, effective Jan. 3.

Eakins has served as interim dean since December 2010, replacing Frederick Niswander, who now serves as ECU’s vice chancellor for administration and finance.

A professor of finance at ECU, Eakins previously served as associate dean of the college or nearly six years and is former chairman of the Department of Finance. He was instrumental in implementing the college’s new Leadership and Professional Development Program, which teaches students 21st-century skills such as professionalism, leadership and communication, in addition to the nuts and bolts of business.

“I’m honored to be at the helm of the College of Business as we celebrate a significant milestone this year, our 75th anniversary,” Eakins said. “We have a lot to be proud of and a lot more to accomplish over the coming years.”
Eakins received his Ph.D. from Arizona State University in 1990. He served as vice president and comptroller at the First National Bank of Fairbanks, Alaska, and has experience as a commercial and real estate loan officer.

A founder of Denali Title and Escrow Agency, a title insurance company in Fairbanks, he ran the operations side of a bank and was the chief finance officer for a multi-million dollar construction and development company. He has authored several textbooks.

The College of Business at East Carolina University was founded in 1936 and has been continuously accredited by the AACSB since 1967. The college has more than 2,900 undergraduate students, 900 graduate students, 130 faculty members, as well as 30 degrees, majors and concentrations.
Editorial: Termination unfortunate for ECU
Monday, January 9, 2012

East Carolina University declines comment on issues involving personnel, so it may never explain last week’s decision to fire Paul Isom, the adviser of the student-operated East Carolinian newspaper. It offered only a brief statement following Isom’s termination though he had helped guide students through the various pitfalls of student media for more than three years.

Left unsaid is that Isom is being punished for the paper’s publication last semester of photos showing a streaker at a November football game, though Isom was legally unable to intervene as an employee of the university. Absent other factors involved in the decision, East Carolina has set a poor example for students and failed to protect the type of open environment conducive to learning.

The editors of the East Carolinian exercised deplorable judgment when they published the Nov. 8 edition featuring unedited front-page photos of a streaker. They contended that the audience, mainly East Carolina students, should have a full account of what happened when 21-year-old John Sieglinger ran naked across the field at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium at halftime of the Pirates’ game against Southern Miss.

Instead, the photos were a salacious and inappropriate accompaniment to a story that did not need full-frontal nudity to explain the concept of streaking to a college-aged audience. It was amusing to many and earned the East Carolinian national notoriety. But it embarrassed the university community and stands as a black mark on the burgeoning careers of these students.
That aspect — that students produce the East Carolinian — bears repeating. The newspaper is intended to be an incubator of instruction, a place where aspiring journalists can walk the tightrope familiar to professionals with the safety net that an adviser like Isom provides. Though court rulings protecting students’ First Amendment rights prevent intervention in events like these, the guidance of an experienced hand should be there to help when consulted.

In this case, the system failed and the photos were printed. But that looks more like a call for repairing the system than terminating the adviser. The same should be said of any other aspect of the university’s academic mission, which should prepare young women and men for the real-world challenges they will face as professional decision-makers.

There may be more at work here — East Carolina officials aren’t saying — but the decision seems distasteful and sends a unwelcome message about the university as a teaching environment tolerant of missteps.
It is ludicrous to think that my alma mater, ECU, would feel it was right to fire the student adviser of the East Carolinian over the pictures published of the streaker at a recent ECU football game. How can an institution of higher learning promote censorship?

While I do not agree with the decision to publish uncensored photos of the man, I feel that it was the newspaper’s right to publish them. ECU has forgotten a basic right of the United States. The First Amendment is an important tenet of our country, even if it protects an entity when acting idiotic. The pictures were not pornographic; no laws were broken. The adviser was legally unable to stop the editor of the paper from publishing the photos.

This is a clear example of ECU acting in a heavy-handed way because it is scared of controversy and using bully tactics against an employee. This entire situation could have been used as a teaching moment for the writers of the East Carolinian. Frankly, isn’t that what ECU is doing, teaching future members of the work force? It seems to me that the administration at ECU needs to audit a class in American history or government so that it can be reminded of what our country is based upon.

JODY HOLLIS
Winterville
A group of recent graduates from East Carolina University’s Department of Engineering never considered the equipment required to deliver a baby. A senior capstone project assigned to the four males last January changed that.

Hours of research led to the creation of a labor, delivery and recovery bed unveiled this December — incorporating three essential functions in one mobile apparatus. Capable of running without electricity, their prototype was intended as a model for use in an Afghanistan hospital that is partnering with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The student team was led by Dustin Rogers and included two other students also concentrating in biomedical engineering, Andrew Bott and A.J. Malicdem. A fourth member, Josh Browder, earned a degree focused in mechanical engineering.

Stephanie George, assistant professor of engineering in the College of Technology and Computer Science, suggested and oversaw the project. George worked with the CDC while earning her doctorate at the Georgia Institute of Technology. When she inquired about potential student capstones, they mentioned the need for such a bed.
“There’s a big push to improve maternal health and fetal health internationally,” she said. “The bed could improve care ... and by improving the care, perhaps you could reduce the mortality rate.”

She said many women must move from room to room between beginning labor, delivering the baby and recovering after the birth. That can increase the risk of infection or injury to both mother and child.

Their liaison with the CDC provided only a small list of requirements, including that it should function without electricity and be light enough to be lifted by two grown men. The student team expanded on that, choosing to make it somewhat collapsible and adding wheels to aid mobility.

“We wanted to design something that’s going to work in real life,” said Bott. “It was kind of open-ended. It could have gone many different directions.”

The design phase went smoothly with the assistance of a computer software program, but actually building the prototype was a greater challenge.

“None of us really had any welding experience or machine shop tool experience,” Rogers said, explaining that they got a crash course in use and safety before setting to work. Bott said construction was his favorite phase of the project.

The prototype could be improved, the students agreed. Consultations with nurses and a doctor in ECU’s Brody School of Medicine led them to consider the addition of stirrups or foot rests for the bed. They also think circular tubing, instead of square metal tubing, would be ideal, as would the use of a lighter metal.

“It seemed like everyone we showed it to was surprised with how much we got done,” Rogers said.

“It was real-life engineering work experience,” Bott said.

Hayden Griffin Jr., chair of the Engineering Department, said all capstone projects match students with local industry or government partners to complete a meaningful project that encompasses all they’ve learned. Still, this one struck him as unique.
“One of the differences with this capstone is that it has a clear benefit to people and their health and well-being,” he wrote in an email.

The department may carry the project forward with another capstone team, George said, who could make the adjustments suggested by the initial team in a more polished prototype that can test its use in birth simulations. Students from the College of Nursing and the College of Allied Health Sciences could also get involved, she suggested.

George is expecting her third child in February, and though she wasn’t pregnant when the project began, it seems fitting she should oversee it. Asked if she planned to deliver on the prototype bed, she said she would rather not, but added, “I would trust it to hold my weight.”

Faculty member gets national honor

An ECU faculty member was honored recently for her contributions to research and human sciences in higher education.

The Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities named Elizabeth “Bettie Ann” Carroll among four 2011 recipients of the Board on Human Sciences Awards. Carroll, associate professor of child development and family relations, accepted the award at the organization’s 124th annual meeting in November in San Francisco.

The award recognizes scholarship in the development and application of outreach and extension, extensively promoted and advanced human sciences in higher education, or significant contributions in developing the next generation of science scholars.

Carroll, who has been on the ECU faculty for 15 years, received the award for exceptional creativity and scholarship in the development, application and evaluation of outreach, extension and public service programs.

She has worked to improve the lives of military families in North Carolina through the program she developed in 2004, Essential Life Skills for Military Families. Using a $2.8 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Carroll created the program to help strengthen
marriages and couple relationships by providing an engaging, evidence and skills-based curriculum for National Guard and Reserve families.

Founded in 1887, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities is a research and advocacy organization of public research universities, land-grant institutions and state university systems. For more information, visit www.aplu.org.

**Upcoming Events:**

- **Monday:** Gladys White Celebration featuring ECU voice faculty, 7:30 p.m., A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall. Free but donations will be accepted at the door to support the Gladys White Voice Student Scholarship Fund.

- **Thursday:** Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival concert, 7 p.m., A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall. Call 1-800-ECU-ARTS for tickets.

- **Friday:** “Locomotion” presented by the Kennedy Center Theatre for Young Audiences, a Family Fare event, 7 p.m., Wright Auditorium. Call 328-4788 or 800-ECU-ARTS for tickets.

See [www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm) for times, places and more information on these events and other ECU upcoming activities.
McNeill focused on recruits, assistants
By Nathan Summers
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Losing a couple of assistant coaches hasn’t slowed the dogged recruiting approach of East Carolina head football coach Ruffin McNeill.

Last year, McNeill’s recruiting campaign was coupled with the first of his two major offseason surgeries. This winter, the third-year ECU coach is simultaneously piecing together what might become the Pirates’ most star-studded recruiting class to date and finding a couple of new coaches to replenish his staff.

A steadfast mutli-tasker, McNeill hasn’t shirked any responsibilities, and in fact expects to announce his staff additions on Monday.

“We wanted to bring people in here that would advance our staff, not just replace those who are gone,” McNeill said of his search to replace outside wide receivers coach Dennis Simmons and running backs coach/special teams coordinator Clay McGuire, who both headed north and west in mid December to rejoin Mike Leach, the new head man at Washington State with whom they’d worked at Texas Tech. “I’ve focused a great deal on recruiting, but during that time I also did my research on the hiring process, so it was a two-fold thing.”

Losing two coaches in the height of recruiting created a heavier workload for the ECU coaches, but McNeill said his seven remaining staff members hit the road as hard as ever this year.
Now in his fourth decade in coaching, McNeill wasn’t surprised when his former employer came calling about members of his ECU staff.

“When I hired these guys, I knew they met the qualifications that I wanted on my staff — great teachers, very demanding, they understood the Xs and Os and they were great recruiters and great people,” said McNeill, who on Thursday named Brian Overton the Pirates’ new director of football operations. “But I also knew other people would come after them. Coach Leach is familiar with our guys and familiar with what I want because Mike and I worked together for 10 years.”

A short dead period is approaching in recruiting but is followed by the two biggest visitation weekends of the year leading into the Feb. 1 National Signing Day.

The Pirates — who got a verbal nod on Thursday night from nationally-touted defensive back Lucas Thompson during the Under Armour All America Game — hope to sign 20 or 21 recruits this year.

“Now comes the good part. You’ve got three weeks left and you’ve got to hold on to them to make sure they sign on signing day,” said McNeill, who was back in Greenville on Friday following a recruiting trip to Chicago but was headed back out Sunday, of his commitments for the 2012 signing class.

Following a critical week of in-home visits this week, the ECU staff will join virtually every other coach in the nation in converging on the national coaches’ convention, being held this year in San Antonio.

McNeill has attended almost every convention during his 32 years in the business, and said he can always learn something new among his peers.

“This is my 32nd year I’m beginning right now, and I’ve missed two conventions,” McNeill said, noting that he’s looking forward to hearing this year’s keynote speakers. “One was last year for the (bariatric) surgery and then one was when they had one of the worst ice storms they’ve ever had in Atlanta, back in 1988, I think.”

*Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or 252-329-9595.*
Bucks and the bangs

If it were Super Bowl titles or Stanley Cups, 11 straight years would be hailed as a dynasty. The "championship" claimed by UNC-Chapel Hill for 11 years running doesn't lend itself to the familiar sports lingo. But it's certainly a sign of sustained excellence when the university throughout that period has been named, by Kiplinger's Personal Finance magazine, as the top value among public universities in the country.

Speaking of value, this designation sends the kind of positive signals about North Carolina and the opportunities it provides that money can't buy. But even if the state has become accustomed to this recognition, the key is to avoid taking it for granted. The equation that yields value in higher education has several variables, and the outcome can easily shift - for the worse.

The same applies to Kiplinger's rankings of other UNC system campuses, which all in all paint a flattering picture of how that system serves the state. UNC-CH took top honors as the best value for both in-state and out-of-state students - another feather in its cap, or more precisely in the cap of the public that supports it.

The UNC system has come under severe budget strain in recent years, none so pressing as this year. Campuses react by raising tuition, saying they need the revenue to avoid cutting into academic muscle.

Striking a good balance between quality and price is not a simple matter. But it is the key to upholding value. Revenue must be adequate, especially from general appropriations, while costs to students must be held firmly under control. The "dynasty" in Chapel Hill could be more fragile than it appears. It is worth fighting to preserve.
UNC Health Care has paid $14.2 million for a portfolio of seven Chapel Hill office buildings that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina vacated last year as part of a cost-cutting effort.

The deal includes 47 acres and 152,000 square feet of space in the Eastowne Office Park. The property is across U.S. 15-501 from Blue Cross' 40-acre campus headquarters.

UNC expects to develop a master plan this year to determine how best to use the property, but spokeswoman Jennifer James said it would likely end up being home to a mix of administrative and patient-care facilities.

"We're continuing to grow, and so is the Triangle," she said. "To support research and clinical and teaching missions, we don't really have enough space right now. We're kind of at capacity on campus."

UNC Health Care employs about 8,000 people on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus, where parking is limited for employees. James said for much of the fall, the system's on-campus hospital beds were at near capacity.

"It's a great location and is convenient for both our patients and our staff," she said of Eastowne.

Blue Cross is one of several large employers in the Triangle that have been re-evaluating real estate portfolios as part of a larger effort to reduce operating expenses. The insurer announced its review in 2010.

At the time, Blue Cross owned roughly 825,000 square feet of office space in Durham and Chapel Hill. The majority of that space is at the company's campus along U.S. 15-501, and its customer service center and campus buildings on University Drive in Durham.

The insurer's buildings in Eastowne have been vacant since April, said Lew Borman, a Blue Cross spokesman. He said the insurer and UNC conducted independent appraisals of the property before reaching an agreement.

"We believe it will benefit both organizations and the Chapel Hill community," Borman said. UNC "is a great health care partner, and this is a great opportunity for us."

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