THE DAILY CLIPS

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Sudden death brings grief to co-workers

By Bobby Burns
The Daily Reflector

Frankie Peaden was late, and his buddies were a little impatient.

So they headed out Contentnea Creek to see if they could catch some fish on a hot Friday early last June.

Before too long, a cell phone rang, and Frankie was on the line telling them to turn the bass boat around and pick him up.

“And there he stood at the end of the dock with two big sacks of groceries,” fishing buddy and coworker Kevin Dorsey said Thursday.

On Wednesday, Peaden was killed in a head-on crash with a driver the State Highway Patrol suspects was impaired.

Peaden brought enough food for a week, his friends said, even though they would be gone just a half day. He wanted to be sure nobody lacked for anything.

“He was just a good-hearted guy, the kind of person that would stop to help you change your tire on a rainy day even if he didn’t know who you were,” said Dorsey, one of four plumbers who worked with Peaden at Facilities Services on East

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Carolina University's medical campus.

Peaden's death brought shock, grief and anger to his friends at the university and elsewhere in the community.

Dozens of people left messages about him with a story about the wreck that appeared early Thursday on reflector.com.

As they learned details about Wednesday's wreck, co-workers at the steam plant behind the Brody School of Medicine expressed remorse and shared stories about a good plumber and a people person who liked to cook, fish, hunt, sing and smile.

Peaden, 33, died at Pitt County Memorial Hospital at 8:32 a.m. from injuries he suffered during a wreck on his way to work. He was driving his 1985 Toyota south on N.C. 43 in the Falkland Township about 7:44 a.m. when a 1998 BMW headed north crossed the center line.

Danny Vick, 31, of Tarboro, is cited for driving while impaired. Sgt. J.J. Collins of the State Highway Patrol said a preliminary investigation indicates that Vick was under the influence of a controlled substance. Other charges are pending.

Vick's car overturned into a ditch, leaving him with minor injuries, according to the Highway Patrol.

Peaden's supervisor at Facilities Services, Ray Baldree, rushed to PCMH on Wednesday morning and was there when hospital staff delivered the news to Peaden's wife.

Shock and numbness have gripped him and others since, he said.

"I know Frankie is in a better place, but just the people he left behind, that's a big old hole," Baldree said.

As plumbers, Peaden and his co-workers covered every nook on the medical campus, fixing toilets and faucets and maintaining systems, Baldree said. Peaden's personality was well known. Baldree has spent most of his time since Wednesday replying to messages and phone calls about the news, he said.

Peaden worked for ECU for three years. Prior to that, he worked with Pitt County Schools, a uniform company and a Pizza Hut, Baldree said.

He was a graduate of Farmville Central High School and grew up in the Falkland area.

He was more than a co-worker at Facilities Services. A great "shop cook," he would rustle up a pot of sausage and butter beans for lunch using hot plates and supplies from the Piggly Wiggly.

He'd make pork chops, bring peanuts from a farmer friend and Brunswick stew from the Sharpe Point Volunteer Fire Department.

He'd take his friends deer hunting. He made it a mission to help Baldree fell a buck, taking him to his own stand for several unsuccessful trips. Baldree turned down the last invitation, figuring he brought Peaden bad luck. Peaden got a buck that time, called Baldree immediately and told him he should have come.

His death has made Baldree think.

"Make sure you give your wife a hug. You make sure you give your wife a kiss. Tell her you love her because you're not guaranteed nothing. You want to make sure the last memory you have is a good memory."

Peaden shared a 30-by-10 foot, cinder block shop space with the four other plumbers who covered the west campus, Dorsey, Alton Brunton, Kenneth Flake and Brock Jones.

The four of them crowded into the room Thursday afternoon and talked about the cooking and the fishing and even the plumbing.

Dorsey said he discovered Peaden was claustrophobic when they had to go under a house together while working a side job. Claustrophobia is not good for any plumber, his friends said, particularly one who's taller than 6 feet and weighed more than 265 pounds.

He scrambled out of the crawl space, took anxiety medicine prescribed by a doctor, the crawled back under the space to finish the work.

"He did what it took to get the job done," Dorsey said.

He was "doing what he was supposed to be doing" when he was headed to work on Wednesday morning, Dorsey said. And Dorsey and the other men fumed that the wreck's other driver was charged with being impaired.

"An innocent man lost his life because somebody who had no business being in an automobile was driving at a high rate of speed at 7:30 in the morning," Dorsey said.

"And it's not just that it's Frankie, it could have been anybody. It could have been kids, it could have been a school bus. It's such a tragic loss of an innocent life."

Peaden is survived by his wife, Kristen; his parents, Dalton and Margie Sessoms Peaden, and a sister, Wendy Wooten.

Co-workers also noted a pair of chihuahuas important to Peaden and much beloved by the couple.

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Thursday’s joint meeting focuses on safety

By T. Scott Batchelor
The Daily Reflector

A “town and gown” summit Thursday scored high marks with both the Greenville City Council and East Carolina University student government representatives.

The joint meeting, the first in quite some time, according to city officials, took place at City Hall and was billed as a way to encourage a dialogue on relations between the city and university students.

“I think it was a productive meeting,” Mayor Pat Dunn said after the one-hour sit-down. “I think we’re all better off if we talk to one another and find out the perceptions of each other.”

SGA President Keri Brockett praised the meeting.

“I think we had some really great dialogue,” she said. Though student leaders generally are well versed on city and campus policies, “There are a few things that we didn’t know,” Brockett said, “and I think it’s great that we are educated, because we can go back and educate the students about additional policies and procedures.”

At the suggestion of Councilman Larry Spell, the mayor and student government president agreed to meet and discuss a list of specific items to put on the agenda for a future meeting.

Topics Thursday ranged from off-campus safety, to city housing-occupancy codes, to volunteerism.

The meeting kicked off with an overview of city ordinances that relate to the large number of ECU students who live off campus.

Merrill Flood, head of Greenville’s community-development department, noted that more than three unrelated tenants sharing a dwelling is a violation of city ordinance.

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Dunn said the rules are there to protect the quality of neighborhoods and aren’t designed to target students for special punishment.

“Bad neighborhoods are not good for students either,” she said.

Brockett expressed confidence that most students have an awareness of city rules, owing to “great communication.”

“I think it’s a great collaboration between both the city and the university to bring that together ...” she said.

“We have a lot of students coming and going,” she said. In an effort to keep awareness up of city codes, “Even to have just a warning notice, that helps,” Brockett said.

Turning to the topic of safety, Ashley Yopp, speaker of congress at ECU, said she feels uncomfortable walking in some areas off campus.

“I definitely don’t feel comfortable between First and Fifth streets after dark,” she said.

City Manager Wayne Bowers said the city and ECU signed a cooperation agreement about a year ago “that allows ECU police jurisdiction within that area.”

“We’ve done several joint operations together just to try to get visibility in that area,” Bowers said.

The number of assaults has gone down because of increased patrols and enforcement initiatives, he said.

Andrew Griffin, SGA vice president, said ECU provides a program of public transit for students to keep them from walking through potentially dangerous areas at night. Campus transit buses run late to help keep drunk students off the roads as well, he said.

“We definitely lead the way with the transit system,” he said.

Spell probed the SGA members’ take on the relationship between city cops and students.

“How would you characterize that?” he asked.

Brockett said “there’s been more positive feedback from students, as opposed to when I was a freshman, 3½ years ago.” The collaboration between ECU and city police “makes it seem they’re more accessible to students,” she said.

Bowers said that when Police Chief William Anderson took over he decided to go with “a more friendly approach, not a SWAT-team approach” with respect to his officers’ outfits, a change the students noted Thursday night.

Yopp asked if there was a plan of coordination between the city and campus police if a Virginia Tech-type shooting occurred at ECU.

Bowers said there is.

“Since the Virginia Tech shootings there have been numerous meetings between our police department and the campus police department,” he said. The departments have held exercises as well, he said.

Bowers added that he met with nine new police recruits Wednesday.

“About half of them are ECU graduates, so maybe that will help with our relations,” he said.

Councilman Bryant Kittrell asked about volunteerism and mentoring efforts by students.

SGA secretary Brittany Adams said part of the mandatory curriculum provides emphasis on such outreach.

Brockett said she was “impressed” with the myriad ways the student body lends its help off and on campus.

Kittrell said students volunteering with organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club could address the “systemic problems” with crime.

At the meeting’s conclusion, Councilwoman Mildred Council told the SGA members that there could be opportunities for campus leaders to work with the city’s elected officials and learn about government in the process.

“It would be great for you to shadow us or be, really, interns, because we have been working and this a great way to learn true public policy,” Council said.

Brockett said she was sure one of the main topics on the next meeting’s agenda will be safety.

“Safety was probably one of the biggest initiatives that we probably need to hit up first,” she said.

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Our Views

An early start

High school program builds for future

East Carolina University's tradition of preparing students for careers in education serves a vital purpose for North Carolina, where the need for talented educators is almost insatiable. The mission will be expanded further in a matter of months when the university begins a new program that starts ninth graders on the path to be educators.

The Early College High School appears to be an ambitious new program that should serve area students and the needs of the state. This innovative partnership between Pitt County Schools, Pitt Community College and East Carolina deserves commendation.

Beginning in August, 40 high school freshmen will begin a curriculum that will allow them to take college courses as they complete their high school education. At the time of their graduation, they will have earned 60 credit hours toward a college degree, the equivalent of two years of university study or an associate's degree.

Importantly, they will be closer to becoming trained educators. The program is intended for students on that career path, and should accelerate that process to serve the needs of the state. The state Department of Public Instruction estimates that North Carolina needs 11,000 teachers annually, but graduates only a fraction of that number each year. This program should assist in meeting that goal.

Officials hope to eventually expand Early College High School enrollment to 400 students in the coming years, but it must prove successful first. The initial group of students will be an important measure for how the program works.

That will depend on how this partnership between this community's educational institution operates. With proven leadership and motivated students, the outlook will be promising. It is an exciting and ambitious effort, one that should benefit Pitt County and North Carolina.
Driver rear-ends ECU transit bus

The Daily Reflector

An East Carolina University student was transported to the hospital Thursday after she drove into the rear of a stopped ECU Student Transit Authority bus, a transit official said.

Bus No. 33 was carrying 10 student passengers when it stopped just after 3:15 p.m. on 10th Street at the intersection of Heath Street, said Wood Davidson, interim director of ECU Student Transit.

The stop is one of the regular locations on route 401, known as the "Purple Corridor."

A Ford Explorer Sport Trac sport-utility vehicle driven by Chloe A. Butler drove into the back of the bus at about 40 mph, Davidson said.

Bus driver Greg Giles and the 10 bus passengers were released without medical treatment, Davidson said. Butler, a resident of Greene Hall on the ECU campus, was conscious when transported by Greenville Fire-Rescue to Pitt County Memorial Hospital for treatment.

Despite the speed of the sport utility vehicle, the bus was barely dented.

"These buses are designed to withstand this type of impact, but the front end of the SUV just crumpled on impact," Davidson said.
Ideas sought for cancer fund

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

What would you do with $50 million?
Cancer researchers from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are posing a form of that question all over the state. Endowed with up to $50 million a year from the General Assembly, officials with the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center began a search for spending ideas Thursday in Greenville.

"The real fun of this thing begins as we go out in North Carolina and begin getting an idea of what you think we should do," Lineberger Director Dr. Shelley Earp told an audience of nearly 40 at the Edwin Monroe Conference Center.
UNC-CH is the lead agency administering grants from the University Cancer Research Fund, a renewable, eight-figure pool created by the Legislature in 2007. The fund will grow from $25 million this year to $50 million in 2009. It's the largest state-sponsored cancer research fund in the country, said Dr. Eta Fisano, vice dean for academic affairs of the UNC School of Medicine.

The fund will focus on basic science research — the causes and characteristics of cancer — studies of demographics and prevention and patient care research. There will be an emphasis on speeding clinical advances to patients, said Dr. Richard Goldberg, Lineberger associate director and physician-in-chief of the N.C. Cancer Hospital.

"While it starts in the mouse lab and the cell culture lab, it really has to go into the homes of the people that are afflicted with this disease," he said before the forum.

With state support, N.C. investigators will be able to do research the UNC schools alone couldn't fund, said Dr. Adam Asch, associate director of the Leo Jenkins Center, who joined the Lineberger officials at the forum.

"What's remarkable is having this amount of money available on a statewide basis," he said during an interview before the forum.

Dominated by health professionals from eastern North Carolina, the Monroe Center audience urged the panel to improve cancer treatment in remote and underprivileged areas of eastern North Carolina.


Eastern North Carolina has been central to existing research Lineberger officials hope to expand with the grant, Earp said during an interview before the forum. More than half the counties in the Carolina Breast Cancer Study, conducted in the 1990s, were in the eastern part of the state. Researchers will likely launch a larger version of the breast cancer study with the new fund, he added.

"Our aspirations are to replicate that in a more sophisticated way because there were things we didn't know to do in the '90s," he said.

Ruth Ann Henriksen, a former Brody faculty member, encouraged the panel to fund projects at East Carolina University.

"Our faculty have meager resources, and just a small portion of your grant funneled in this direction would be a tremendous help for investigators at the Brody School of Medicine," she said.

Brody doctors will be able to apply for grants from the fund, Pisano said. Further, a new partnership with Brody already has the Lineberger center working with ECU, Goldberg said. UNC-CH has put "significant funding" into upgrading clinical research facilities at the Leo Jenkins Cancer Center, he said.

"I would say we're further ahead here than we are anywhere in the state," he said at the forum.

IDEAS
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Other speakers encouraged the researchers to study how cancer treatments affect survivor health and to help primary care doctors in remote areas offer some cancer treatment to their patients.

"I think, quite frankly, that many primary care physicians don't leave training comfortable and confident that they have the skills necessary to manage a complicated chemotherapeutic regimen back at home," said Dr. Stephen Willis, executive director of the Eastern Area Health Education Center.

The gathering Thursday was the first of three forums around the state. Earp, Goldberg and others will be in Asheville on Tuesday and Wilmington on Wednesday.

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Borrowed instruments allow band to compete

BY ERIC FERRERI  
STAFF WRITER

DURHAM — The band will play on. By the time you read this, N.C. Central University's marching band and more than a dozen borrowed instruments will be well on the way to Atlanta for the prestigious Battle of the Bands, an invitational showcase for marching bands from historically black colleges and universities.

The band was scheduled to load up the bus this morning at 3 and head south. Its ability to perform came into question last week with the discovery that more than a dozen instruments — including 14 massive sousaphones — had been stolen from the band room in two break-ins in November and December. Since then, band officials worked to rescue the excursion with instruments borrowed from various sources.

"The band is definitely going," said Miji Bell, a spokeswoman for the university. "They were able to borrow all the instruments they need and don't have to rent any."

It wasn't clear Thursday just where the borrowed instruments came from. Jorim Reid, the band director, declined to comment Thursday on the situation.

The stolen sousaphones are valued at $3,000 each; buying them new could run as much as $7,000, Reid said last week. Sousaphones are large, big-bellied tubas that wrap around the body. They are most often purchased by schools, music groups and churches, but there is also a market for individual instruments, particularly on the Internet.

Saturday's Battle of the Bands showcase will be held at Atlanta's Georgia Dome. NCCU's band is one of 10 invited to the event this year, and one of three from North Carolina; Winston-Salem State University and Shaw University in Raleigh will also be represented.
Chancellors in demand

The committee looking for UNC Chapel Hill's next chancellor might have some competition in the marketplace.

A flurry of vacancies in higher education recently make for an interesting search climate, particularly in the South, consultant Bill Funk told the search committee at a meeting in Chapel Hill on Thursday.

Funk gave an overview of other searches now underway. Openings were recently announced at Louisiana State University, the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, the University of Arkansas and the University of South Carolina, he said.

"I don't know what's going on in the South, but presidents and chancellors are turning over at an amazingly rapid rate," Funk told the panel.

Other universities looking for new leaders include the University of Wisconsin, Vanderbilt University and the University of California system.

"So it's a pretty active president/chancellor market right now," Funk said. "Vanderbilt may be the only campus on a similar timeline as UNC-CH, Funk added." After the brief report from Funk, the panel met behind closed doors to discuss potential candidates to replace the retiring James Moeser.
The growth of endowment funds at Duke University and UNC-Chapel Hill outpaced most colleges in the country among those who oversee funds of more than $1 billion, according to an annual survey released Thursday.

A combination of investment returns and new gifts increased the endowment at each school by more than 30 percent, according to the National Association of College and University Business Officers.

Duke’s endowment of $5.9 billion as of June 2007 ranked 15th among the 785 colleges and universities surveyed.

UNC-CH ranked 30th at about $2.1 billion.

The endowments at N.C. State University also did well, growing 29 percent. But at $535 million, the fund didn’t crack the top 100.

Endowment funds are increasingly important for universities as they depend on a portion of the investment returns to pay for new faculty positions or increase financial aid for students.

That, in turn, gives schools with the largest endowments tremendous influence in the competition for top students and faculty.

Harvard University reported the largest endowment fund in the nation last year with $34.6 billion. Yale University was a distant second at $22.5 billion.
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role in the investment mix. Schools with endowments of more than $1 billion invested an average of 20 percent of that money in hedge funds, which are a mix of investments including some that are considered risky. Hedge funds also require less detailed reporting.

The schools saw an average return of 17.2 percent for the year compared with a 20.6 percent increase in the S&P 500 for the same period.

Duke, UNC-CH and NCSU all topped the average return of other schools, but Richard Mann, vice chancellor for finance and administration at UNC-Chapel Hill, said the more important goal of any fund is to remain diversified.

"You want to ride out the rise and fall of any market," Mann said. "If you are diversified, you are not going to get the very best returns, but you won't get the worst when you hit a crater like we just did."

Fund managers will move money when markets shift, but "you're not going to see them put everything into bonds," Mann said.

Markets will need to stage a big comeback in the coming months if schools are going to post similar returns in the current year, university officials said.

"If you find somebody who says they outperformed in the recent time period, I'd like to talk with them," said NCSU Treasurer Kathy Hart.

But the increases of the past several years ensure that endowment spending will remain steady for now. Both Duke and Carolina spend about 5 percent of the fund's annual value each year, while reinvesting additional earnings and new gifts.

In addition, recent fundraising campaigns at all three schools virtually guarantee money will keep flowing into the endowment funds.

While some of that money is designated for specific buildings or other projects, university officials say significant amounts are also put directly into school endowments.

Source: Chronicle of Higher Education

ENDOWMENTS NEARLY DOUBLED SINCE 2002

Endowment funds increased about 30 percent at the Triangle's three major research universities in the past year and have almost doubled since 2002.

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Source: Chronicle of Higher Education

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After slaying, Duke mourns

Death touches a nerve in India

BY ANNE BLYTHER AND ERIC PERRIER STAFF WRITERS

DURHAM - Unfulfilled by his brief experience in the corporate world, Abhijit Mahato came to Duke University a year and a half ago, his friends said, to see whether a life in academia might be more rewarding.

In Durham, the doctoral student from India built a circle of friends who remember him as studious, compassionate, an avid reader, a film buff and a talented cook of Bengali sweets.

But the computational engineer's quest to pursue a broader path in life was cut short last Friday when, according to Durham police, a teenager on a robbery spree shot and killed him in his apartment near Duke.

Stephen Lavance Oates Jr., 19, of 2303 Anthony Drive made a first appearance in a Durham County court Thursday morning on a first-degree murder charge.

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SERVICES FOR ABHIJIT MAHATO

A memorial service is planned at Duke at 1 p.m. today in the Schiciano Auditorium in the Fitzpatrick Center for Interdisciplinary Engineering, Medicine and Applied Sciences.

The Hindu Temple of North Carolina will hold a prayer service at 10:30 a.m. Sunday. The temple is at 200 Aviation Parkway, Durham.
addition, Oates has been charged with 15 counts of robbery with a dangerous weapon, two counts of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill, one count of assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury and one count of obtaining property by false pretense.

Oates was arrested Tuesday night after authorities chased a white Ford Taurus through Durham and into Wake County. Oates, who has been in Durham courts numerous times on breaking-and-entering and burglary-related charges, was in the Durham County jail with no bail set. A 20-year-old and a 14-year-old were also arrested after the Taurus was stopped.

Police have not said what led them to charge Oates in the shooting death that has rocked the Duke campus. But Police Chief Jose Lopez Sr. told the Durham City Council on Thursday that the arrest was part of a thorough investigation into a string of more than 70 robberies, often involving guns, since Jan. 1 that seemed to target Hispanics and others who might be wary of reporting the crimes.

Mahato, 29, a graduate student in engineering who worked in the Duke Computational Mechanics Lab, was found dead late Friday night by friends.

Rinku Majumder and four others went to the Anderson Street apartment, worried because Mahato had not been answering his phone. Majumder discovered his body.

A harsh reality

Madhu Majumder and her husband, Pranab, who are not related to Rinku Majumder, came to the United States in 1997. They did graduate work at the University of Rochester before coming to the Triangle, where, like many other Bengali families, they put down roots and assimilated. For expatriates living the American dream, Mahato’s slaying was a stark and brutal splash of cold water across the face.

“We have this image of the wonderful American way of life,” Majumder said. “None of us see the seamiest side.”

Majumder thinks the incident could make it more difficult for Duke to recruit students from Bengal.

“Parents will think before they let their sons and daughters go abroad,” she said. “There is an attraction to saying, ‘I did my Ph.D. at Duke or Harvard or Michigan.’ But [parents] will be wondering if it’s really worth it.”

Suatha Jagannathan, 23, a graduate student studying molecular genetics and microbiology at Duke, was not sure the killing would keep other Indian students from picking Duke.

“It’s a very personal decision,” Jagannathan said. “It depends on what comes out of the investigation.”

Many Duke students from India chose not to dwell on the violent end of Mahato’s life and instead focused on celebrating their slight friend with the big spirit.

They talked about how he was an avid reader who delighted in the Harry Potter series. He was always game for an adventure, whether it was a date to a French film festival where he understood very little of the language or a camping trip in the Appalachians.

He was a great cook, they said, who would dish up elaborate meals and then eat very little himself.

“He was just very compassionate,” Jagannathan said.

Staff writers Stanley B. Chambers Jr. and Matt Dees contributed to this report.
Basketball is important to Barton's Lievense, but living out his faith transcends it

BY A.J. CARR
STAFF WRITER

The men's basketball locker room at Barton College — home of the 2007 National Division II champions — is a small, crowded cubicle bearing a pungent scent of sweat.

For coach Ron Lievense, it's also a sanctuary, a place to meditate, read Scripture and pray. Several times during the week, he stands in front of each locker and prays for the player whose name is taped above the door.

He asks God to help with personal needs and to help the players grow spiritually.

"I want my players to understand I care for them," said Lievense, a 27-year coaching veteran from Bloomington, Minn. "I push them hard. I try to help them get better. But more importantly, I want them to know I pray for them and would help them in spiritual things as well. [This profession] is about things far greater than winning and losing — though you have to win to keep your job."

Lievense has won big at Barton since enduring three straight losing seasons from 1999 through 2001. In more than 11 seasons, his Bulldogs were 220-107 going into Thursday night's game. Eight of his teams have earned regional rankings, and last March the Bulldogs produced the Miracle in Massachusetts.

Barton won all nine of its 2007 overtime games in a 31-5 run capped with a David-over-Goliath comeback. Down 7 points with 45 seconds left in the national championship game, Anthony Atkinson scored 10 points in 39 seconds,

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including the winning basket, to end Winona State's 57-game winning streak.

That dramatic title brought unparalleled athletic attention to this small Wilson school of 1,130 students. It also generated an unusually high number of speaking opportunities for Lievense, but no television show or multimillion Nike contract.

Before a recent practice, Lievense — who is also director of athletic compliance — swept the Wilson Gymnasium floor and hung fresh nets on the rims. Then he led his team in prayer and orchestrated a rigorous two-hour workout, exhorting, challenging and praising his players.

"You've got to get tougher," he said, his voice rising several decibels. "Move it! Push it! That's it!"

Lievense, 50, has been there. He played for his father at Normandale (Minn.) Community College, then starred at Northwestern College in St. Paul, making All-America and leading his team to the National Christian Colleges Division II title.

He still stands tall (6-foot-3, 200 pounds) and straight and speaks in a crisp, resonant tone. He walks gingerly on knees feeling the toll of many years on the hardwood.

Praying to keep balance

Lievense, born into a Christian home, says that it's challenging to keep from stumbling in the emotional, pressurized climate of college basketball.

"It's a day-to-day struggle, especially in heated competition, with the expectation level, my own weaknesses and the pressure on myself to be successful," he said. "There are times I'm too hard on my team; times I'm too hard on the officials. I want to win. I pray to keep that balance, for [God] to do with me as he sees fit, so I can be a positive example and not shame the Kingdom in my behavior."

To stay strong, Lievense settles in his office on game days and reads from a stack of about 50 Bible verses he has handwritten on well-worn index cards.

When praying for his players, he lifts up specific issues, but always prays they will realize the "need to seek the Lord with all their heart, soul and mind and look for a relationship with him."

David King, a former Athens Drive High School standout, says his coach's influence has made a difference and is visible in the way he treats players.

"He's very encouraging and knows how to motivate without being negative," King said.

Brian Leggett, a 6-foot-6 senior from Alexandria, Va., says it is gratifying to play for someone who shares the same religious belief.
"[He] has definitely had an impact on me and the rest of the team," Leggett said.

Former players still call. One recently dialed Lievense and asked him to pray for his sick grandmother.

Lievense did, over the phone.

"His coaching, in the sense of a ministry, has been such a role model of faith for many years," said athletic director Gary Hall, who hired Lievense.

**Family involved**

Lievense's wife, Darla, and their three daughters share his conviction.

The team has been to the Lievense home twice this season for home-cooked meals. And they always come on Thanksgiving and Christmas. The daughters — Tiffany, 18, Kristy, 16, and Angela, 13 — have made brownies for several teams.

In addition to coaching basketball and handling compliance duties, Lievense and his wife also have long been volunteers in the Barton Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter, which is open to the entire student body.

There was a time when Darla didn't envision being on a college campus.

"At first, I didn't want him to go into coaching, having seen how much his father worked," Darla said. "Then I realized that's exactly what the Lord had in store" — to minister through coaching.