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Pitt County kicking off 250th with celebration

The Daily Reflector

The first major event to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Pitt County kicks off today at East Carolina University's Joyner Library.

ECU and the Pitt County Historical Society are co-hosting a public reception at 7 p.m. on the second floor of Joyner Library to celebrate the 1760 founding of Pitt County.

Local historian Roger Kammers will give the keynote address, and the event will celebrate the opening of three exhibits documenting the history of Pitt County.

The library's special collections department will display an exhibit of manuscripts, photographs, maps and other items from its collection to celebrate the anniversary.

"Pitt County's 250th Anniversary Exhibit: From the Vaults of Special Collections" will be on display on the fourth floor of the library through July 31.

The exhibit, "Pitt County's 250th Anniversary: Special Resources from North Carolina Collections," will run through April 30. It includes printed resources like broadsides, maps, newspapers, memoirs, histories and works of fiction for the study of Pitt County history. It is located on the third floor of the library.

"The Seeds of Change: The Daily Reflector Image Collection" will be on display in the library through March 29.

The exhibit features 40 im-

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COUNTY
Continued from A1
ages from Daily Reflector negatives between the years of 1949 and 1967.

The exhibit is part of a 7,500 online digital image collection and will be featured on the second floor of the library through March 29.

Light refreshments will be served, and parking is available in the Joyner Library/Mendenhall Center lots behind the FedEx Kinko's lot with overflow parking across the street from McDonald's. For more information, call Dawn Wainwright at 328-4090.
David Redwine wants to return to NC Legislature

OCEAN ISLE BEACH, N.C. -- A once-powerful member of the North Carolina House wants to return to the General Assembly, this time to the Senate seat held by the retiring R.C. Soles.

David Redwine announced Monday he's seeking the Democratic nomination for the 8th Senate District seat for Brunswick, Columbus and Pender counties.

Redwine served in the House for nearly 20 years and was one of the chamber's top budget-writers until he was defeated in 2002.

Soles announced in December he wouldn't seek re-election after more than 40 years in the Legislature. He's been indicted on an assault with a deadly weapon charge after shooting a former client at Soles' home last summer.

Redwine serves on the East Carolina University board of trustees and the state Turnpike Authority.
ECU sits in Top 20 of 6 polls

The Daily Reflector

For the first time in school history, the East Carolina baseball team has garnered a Top 20 ranking in six preseason polls.

The Pirates were tabbed No. 11 by Rivals.com and No. 16 by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association (NCBWA) Monday afternoon. The Pirates are also ranked No. 18 by Baseball America, Collegiate Baseball and in the ESPN/USA Today Coaches Poll, and No. 20 by PingBaseball.

The Pirates, who finished 46-20 last season, have made 10 NCAA Regional appearances in the last 11 seasons, and claimed the 2009 Conference USA regular season and 2009 Greenville Regional titles before advancing to their third NCAA Super Regional last season.

ECU welcomes back 20 let-

See BASEBALL, B3

BASEBALL

 Continued from B1

In their record this season, including 2010 preseason All-America selections Kyle Roller and Trent Whitehead, along with 2008 All-American Seth Maness, 2009 Freshman All-American Kevin Brandt, All C-USA second-teamer Brad Minney and eighth-round draft pick and NCAA Regional star Devin Harris.

Also stepping onto the diamond are eight new faces. Junior college transfer Daniel Warzon (Young Harris), joins seven freshmen — Bryan Bass, Chris Gosik, Jake Harris, DJ Jauss, Tyler Joyner, Tanner Merritt and John Wooten — in head coach Billy Godwin's latest recruiting class.

Godwin and the Pirates will open the season against No. 2 Virginia at Clark-LeClair Stadium on Feb. 19 at 3 p.m.

— ECU Media Relations

Pirate Preseason Honors

Kyle Roller: First-Team All-America | Collegiate Baseball, Second-Team All-America | NCBWA and PingBaseball, sixth-best player in college baseball (CollegeBaseballBlog.com), First-Team All-Conference USA | Trent Whitehead: Second-Team All-America | NCBWA and Third-Team | PingBaseball, C-USA First-Team, Seth Simmons: NCBWA Topper of the Year Watch List | Seth Maness: CUSA First Team, Devin Harris: C-USA First-Team.
UNC students plan protest against coal plant

CHAPEL HILL -- Students at the University of North Carolina are mobilizing to pressure school leaders to stop using coal to power a campus power plant.

Students, neighbors and faculty members plan to highlight the issue Tuesday at the site of the school's coal-burning plant.

They're hoping for an appearance by James Hansen, the director of NASA's main climate research center and a pioneering voice warning that humans were causing the Earth's climate to heat up.

Hansen was scheduled to speak on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus Monday night.

The protest is part of a nationwide campaign by the Sierra Club targeting coal-based power at colleges. Student organizers say colleges have a social obligation to cut and eventually eliminate coal use in favor of renewable energy.
Big news at Davidson College: $10 million gift

By David Perlmutt
dperlmutt@charlotteobserver.com
Posted: Friday, Jan. 29, 2010

Davidson College became the second Charlotte-area school in two days to get big news: a multi-million-dollar gift.

On Thursday, Queens University of Charlotte received a $7 million gift to create a college of health.

Today, it was Davidson's turn. President Tom Ross announced at a trustees meeting this afternoon that the school has been given $10 million to recruit and support international students.

The gift, the fourth largest in Davidson's history, comes from Carlos Alvarez and wife, Malu, of San Antonio, Tex., whose daughter, Malu, graduated from Davidson as an international student in 2002. The Alvarezes also have a niece who was a Davidson international student, graduating in 2007, and another niece at Davidson now.

Their money will establish the Alvarez Scholars Program to help Davidson recruit the best and brightest from around the world and enhance Davidson as a global community, Carlos Alvarez said in an interview today.

"The Alvarez Scholars Program will open Davidson's doors more widely to the most talented students from all over the world," Ross said.

Of the total gift, $6.5 million already have been given to the college, Alvarez said. The rest will come by 2012. The college is still working out the details for the program and how many international students it will help each year, he said.

"We felt that this gift would provide something that's particularly unique and transformational to Davidson, where we could make a difference," said Alvarez, a Davidson trustee since 2003 and U.S. citizen since 2001. "... The international program here is already very good, but it
can be significantly improved ... by engaging the college in a much more focused international student experience.

"I admire Davidson's focus on educating students for leadership and service, and I hope that the Alvarez Scholars Program helps demonstrate the college's commitment to creating a global community at Davidson."

Alvarez is founder and President of San Antonio-based Gambrinus Company, which owns, markets and distributes beer from three breweries in three states. It was once the importer for the popular Mexican beer Corona and Canadian beer Moosehead.

Read more about Carlos Alvarez and his family's generous gift in Saturday's Observer.

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January 31, 2010

Type-A-Plus Students Chafe at Grade Deflation

By LISA W. FODERARO

When Princeton University set out six years ago to corral galloping grade inflation by putting a lid on A's, many in academia lauded it for taking a stand on a national problem and predicted that others would follow.

But the idea never took hold beyond Princeton’s walls, and so its bold vision is now running into fierce resistance from the school’s Type-A-plus student body.

With the job market not what it once was, even for Ivy Leaguers, Princetonians are complaining that the campaign against bulked-up G.P.A.’s may be coming at their expense.

“The nightmare scenario, if you will, is that you apply with a 3.5 from Princeton and someone just as smart as you applies with a 3.8 from Yale,” said Daniel E. Rauch, a senior from Millburn, N.J.

The percentage of Princeton grades in the A range dipped below 40 percent last year, down from nearly 50 percent when the policy was adopted in 2004. The class of 2009 had a mean grade-point average of 3.39, compared with 3.46 for the class of 2003. In a survey last year by the undergraduate student government, 32 percent of students cited the grading policy as the top source of unhappiness (compared with 25 percent for lack of sleep).

In September, the student government sent a letter to the faculty questioning whether professors were being overzealous in applying the policy. And last month, The Daily Princetonian denounced the policy in an editorial, saying it had “too many harmful consequences that outweigh the good intentions behind the system.”

The undergraduate student body president, Connor Diemand-Yauman, a senior from Chesterland, Ohio, said: “I had complaints from students who said that their professors handed back exams and told them, ‘I wanted to give 10 of you A’s, but because of the policy, I could only give five A’s.’ When students hear that, an alarm goes off.”

Nancy Weiss Malkiel, dean of the undergraduate college at Princeton, said the policy was not meant to establish such grade quotas, but to set a goal: Over time and across all academic departments, no more than 35 percent of grades in undergraduate courses would be A-plus, A or A-minus.

Early on, Dr. Malkiel sent 3,000 letters explaining the change to admissions officers at graduate schools and employers across the country, and every transcript goes out with a statement about the policy. But recently, the university administration has been under pressure to do more. So it created a question-and-answer booklet that it is now sending to many of the same graduate schools and employers.
Princeton also studied the effects on admissions rates to top medical schools and law schools, and found none. While the number of graduates securing jobs in finance or consulting dropped to 169 last year from 249 in 2008 and 194 in 2004, the university attributed the falloff to the recession. (Each graduating class has about 1,100 students.)

But the drop in job placements, whatever the cause, has fueled the arguments of those opposed to the policy. The grading change at Princeton was prompted by the creep of A’s, which accelerated in the 1990s, and the wildly divergent approaches to grading across disciplines. Historically, students in the natural sciences were graded far more rigorously, for example, than their classmates in the humanities, a gap that has narrowed but that still exists.

Some students respect the tougher posture. “What people don’t realize is that grades at different schools always have different meanings, and people at Goldman Sachs or the Marshall Scholarship have tons of experience assessing different G.P.A.’s,” said Jonathan Sarnoff, a sophomore who sits on the editorial board of The Daily Princetonian. “A Princeton G.P.A. is different from the G.P.A. at the College of New Jersey down the road.”

Faye Deal, the associate dean for admissions and financial aid at Stanford Law School, said she had read Princeton’s literature on the policy and continued “to view Princeton candidates in the same fashion — strong applicants with excellent preparation.”

Goldman Sachs, one of the most sought-after employers, said it did not apply a rigid G.P.A. cutoff. “Princeton knows that; everyone knows that,” said Gia Morón, a company spokeswoman, explaining that recruiters consider six “core measurements,” including achievement, leadership and commercial focus.

But Princetonians remain skeptical.

“There are tons of really great schools with really smart kids applying for the same jobs,” said Jacob Loewenstein, a junior from Lawrence, N.Y., who is majoring in German. “People intuitively take a G.P.A. to be a representation of your academic ability and act accordingly. The assumption that a recruiter who is screening applications is going to treat a Princeton student differently based on a letter is naïve.”

Stuart Rojstaczer, a retired professor at Duke who maintains a Web site dedicated to exposing grade inflation, said that Princeton’s policy was “something that other institutions can easily emulate, and should emulate, but will not.” For now, Princeton and its students are still the exception. “If that means we’re out in a leadership position and, in a sense, in a lonelier position, then we’re prepared to do that,” Dr. Malkiel said. “We’re quite confident that what we have done is right.”

David Walter contributed reporting.

David Walter contributed reporting.
College tuition hikes in double digits
State budget deficits contribute to higher education costs

The Associated Press
updated 3:30 p.m. ET, Mon., Feb. 1, 2010

SEATTLE - As students around the country anxiously wait for college acceptance letters, their parents are sweating the looming tuition bills at public universities.

Florida college students could face yearly 15 percent tuition increases for years, and University of Illinois students will pay at least 9 percent more. The University of Washington will charge 14 percent more at its flagship campus. And in California, tuition increases of more than 30 percent have sparked protests reminiscent of the 1960s.

Tuition has been trending upward for years, but debate in statehouses and trustee meeting rooms has been more urgent this year as most states struggle their way out of the economic meltdown.

The College Board says families are paying about $172 to $1,096 more in tuition and fees this school year. The national average for 2009-2010 is about $7,020, not including room and board, according to the nonprofit association of colleges that oversees the SATs and Advanced Placement tests.

Mike Sarb, a University of Illinois senior from suburban-Chicago Elk Grove Village, Ill., says money is a big concern for his blue-collar family scrambling to find the money to pay more than $20,000 for tuition, room and board.

They are not pleased that university officials are likely to raise tuition 9 percent this summer.

"They do complain that the school's taking advantage of people (by raising tuition)," Sarb said.

But interim President Stanley Ikenberry says the school has run out of options. With a budget deficit expected to top $11 billion this year, the state of Illinois owes the university more than $430 million, money he doesn't expect to see any time soon.

Florida on a long, rising road
In some cases, one student's tuition disaster is another's bargain.

State officials have told Florida students they can expect 15 percent tuition increases every year until tuition reaches the national average. That could be a long slog, as the state is starting its tuition realignment from a place other students envy — about $3,000 a year.

In California, unprecedented budget cuts to higher education have led to huge fee increases at the state's two public university systems, as well as layoffs, furloughs, enrollment cuts and reduced course offerings.

At the University of California, which has 10 campuses and about 220,000 students, in-state undergraduate fees in fall 2010 are set to reach $10,302 — 32 percent more than in fall 2009 and three times what California residents paid 10 years ago.

But at California State University, the nation's largest public university system with 23 campuses and 450,000 students, resident undergraduate fees rose 32 percent from fall 2008 to fall 2009 to $4,026, which is nearly three times what students paid 10 years ago. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's budget proposal for 2010-2011 assumes that the system will raise fees another 10 percent in the coming academic year.

"We're paying more and getting less," said Steve Dixon, a Humboldt State University senior who heads the California State Students Association.
At the University of Washington, where tuition and fees are expected to pass $9,000 by the 2010-2011 school year, students are worried about threatened cuts in financial aid as well.

"It's kind of a perfect storm for students," said Jono Hanks, a political science major from Everett, Wash., who is the UW student government lobbyist at the statehouse this quarter.

Hanks lives at home, packs his lunch and pays tuition with work and about $4,000 in student loans a year. Others have told him they're looking for a second job and adding to their debt to keep up with this year's 14 percent tuition increase.

"Some of them are even talking about dropping out for a few years so they can pay off the loans they have," Hanks said.

The Seattle university expects to raise tuition another 14 percent next year. UW tuition used to double every decade. At 14 percent a year, it could double in five.

Hanks is almost finished with school so he's not that concerned about his ability to pay for the last few quarters of his degree. But he does worry what barrier tuition increases will pose for his younger sister and brother, who are both in elementary school.

**Some exceptions to the new norm**

Other states have been more subtle in their budget balancing attempts.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison is in the first year of a four-year tuition increase plan aimed at improving quality. In addition to statewide tuition increases of about 5.5 percent, in-state students at UW-Madison will pay an extra $250 a year each year.

This year, tuition went up by $617 to $7,296 or about 9.2 percent, but financial aid increased at the same time.

Still, few are complaining because the extra money — $100 million in the first four years and $40 million each year afterward — is reserved for providing more classes, improving student services and increasing need-based financial aid.

The Georgia Board of Regents has suspended indefinitely its popular "Fixed for Four" guaranteed tuition program, which since 2006 has meant students have paid the same tuition rate annually for four years of college. A freshman at the University of Georgia this year pays $3,865 in tuition and fees per semester if they take between seven and 15 hours of classes.

Some students are relieved at modest tuition increases this year, including 3.5 percent in Ohio, less than 5 percent in Pennsylvania, and 3.9 percent at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

So far a few states, like Oklahoma and Missouri, have avoided tuition increases entirely. And the Oklahoma Legislature gave its state universities no reason to complain when it fulfilled the state higher education budget request.

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