THE DAILY CLIPS

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Author of ‘Three Cups of Tea’ to speak at ECU

ECU News Services

Greg Mortenson, internationally renowned humanitarian, bestselling author and co-founder of the Central Asia Institute, will speak at East Carolina University on March 1 as part of the Cunanan Leadership Speaker Series.

His presentation is titled “Promoting Peace through Education.” The event, which is free and open to the public, will begin at 7 p.m. in Minges Coliseum.

Mortenson’s book, “Three Cups of Tea: One Man’s Mission to Promote Peace ... One School at a Time,” recounts his journey that started with a failed attempt to climb Pakistan’s K2, the world’s second tallest mountain, and ended with successfully building schools in remote regions of Central Asia — work that he continues today. The book has sold 3.6 million copies, been published in 41 countries, and been a New York Times bestseller for three years since its 2007 release. He also is the author of a new bestseller, “Stones into Schools: Promoting Peace with Books, Not Bombs,” which takes up his story where “Three Cups of Tea” ended.

“The Three Cups of Tea” by Mortenson and David Oliver Relin was chosen as the “Pirate Read,” summer reading selection for first-year students arriving at ECU in August 2009.

Karen Smith with ECU’s First Year Center said the committee chose the book based on its message of compassion and leadership.

During his visit to ECU, Mortenson plans to meet with N.C. Teaching Fellows and Maynard Scholars to talk about his work.

For more than 15 years, Mortenson has advocated education and literacy in rural parts of the world. In 1996, he co-founded the Central Asia Institute, a nonprofit organization that promotes and supports community-based education in remote regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Mortenson has established more than 130 schools in rural and often volatile regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan. These schools have provided education to more than 58,000 children, including 48,000 girls, where few educational opportunities existed. He also founded Pennies for Peace, an international service-learning program with tens of thousands of participants.

For more information about Mortenson and his educational mission, visit www.gregmortenson.com.

The Cunanan Leadership Speaker Series is made possible by a gift from alumni Steve and Ellen Cunanan of Richboro, Pa. Matching funds also are provided by the Johnson & Johnson Foundation.

The series brings distinguished leaders to Greenville to speak on topics highlighting leadership, professional development, ethics and the role of business in modern society.

Mortenson’s visit also is supported by the ECU Parents Council, ECU Student Affairs, ECU’s First-Year Experience Program, ECU N.C. Teaching Fellows and Maynard Scholars.

Lecture will focus on Somerset Plantation

The history of Somerset Plantation, a North Carolina State Historic Site, will be the focus of a lecture Thursday by the former director at the former antebellum slave plantation near Creswell.

Dorothy Spruill Redford, author, historian and former executive director of Somerset Place, will lead a presentation titled “Somerset Plantation: A Case Study of Why We...
Should Study History," at 6:30 p.m. in Room 207 of the Science and Technology Building at ECU. The lecture, which is free and open to the public, is sponsored by the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences African and African-American Studies Program and the ECU Ledonia Wright Cultural Center.

Redford has managed Somerset Place and overseen the reconstruction of the plantation's former slave community since 1988, and her approach to the history of Somerset Place has been a familial one.

Inspired by Alex Haley’s "Roots," Redford spent nearly 10 years researching her connection to enslaved ancestors held on Somerset Place. Her research culminated in August 1986, at the first Somerset Homecoming, a celebration of African-American culture and heritage attended by 3,000 descendants of the enslaved community and other individuals connected to the former plantation.

About Redford and her work, ECU historian David Dennard said, "Ms. Redford has done extraordinary work in developing Somerset Place. And it is because of what she has done to document, and then tell the full story of life on an antebellum slave plantation, that I have made more than a single visit to the site." Dennard is the director of ECU's African and African-American Studies Program and a former board member of Somerset Place.

Over the years, Redford has lectured extensively on topics including African-American genealogy, antebellum history and slavery's legacy and from 1993 to 1996, and she served as a visiting lecturer at Elizabeth City State University teaching oral history methods.


For more information, contact Dennard at 328-4364 or dennard@email.ecu.edu.

ECU hosting JETS competition

East Carolina University will host the Junior Engineering Technology Society's annual competition for high school students Friday.

The JETS flagship program, TEAMS, or Tests of Engineering, Aptitude, Mathematics and Science, gives students the chance to discover practical applications of math and science by solving some of today's greatest engineering challenges.

The competition, hosted by ECU's College of Technology and Computer Science, will bring together 84 students from area high schools. They will compete in ten teams of four to eight students from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Mendenhall Student Center, Room 244.

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The theme will be "Water, Water, Everywhere." The competition will be divided into two parts. The first 90-minute section will include 80 multiple-choice questions. The latter 90-minute section will include four open-ended questions.

The JETS program reaches more than 40,000 students and 10,000 educators from 6,000 high schools across the country. More than half of JETS participants are from minority groups.

One-third of participants are female. The society aims to attract more minorities and women, who are traditionally underrepresented in the field of engineering and technology.

JETS is the leading non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting engineering and technology careers to U.S. youth. From coordinating student competitions to providing top academic resources and career explanation materials, JETS is helping students make informed decisions about their futures and developing a new generation of engineers.

For more information about JETS, visit www.jets.org. For more information about the ECU event, contact David Batts, assistant professor in the College of Technology and Computer Science, at 328-9673 or email battsd@ecu.edu.

**Thomas elected to statewide council**

Dr. Stephen W. Thomas, dean of the College of Allied Health Sciences, has been elected chairman for a two-year term of the Council for Allied Health in North Carolina.

The council, formed in 1991, represents allied health educators, employers of allied health providers, and allied health professionals through their state associations. The council keeps pace with trends in allied health and manages statewide workforce studies used in projecting future educational needs.

Thomas has been dean of the College of Allied Health Sciences since 2003. He served as interim dean from 2001-03, and is a past chairman of the college’s Department of Rehabilitation Studies. Thomas began his career at ECU in 1980 as an assistant professor and director of the graduate program in vocational evaluation, which he was hired to develop.

He has served as president of state and national rehabilitation associations and chair of his national professional certification commission. He serves on the board of the Eastern Area Health Education Center, the ECU Medical & Health Sciences Foundation and the N.C. Agromedicine Institute. He is secretary and a board member of the Southern Association of Allied Health Deans in Academic Health Centers.

A Houston native, Thomas received a bachelor’s degree in psychology and sociology from Texas Christian University and a master’s and doctorate in rehabilitation from the University of Arizona.

**Upcoming Events:**

- **Tuesday:** Whichard Visiting Distinguished Professor and Endowed Chair in Humanities Isaac Kallim will present, “Murders in Jerusalem and Robbers on the Road to Jericho,” at 7 p.m. in Room 02C07, Science & Technology Building.

- **Thursday:** The Imani Winds, a Grammy Award-nominated African-American wind quintet, will perform at 8 p.m. in A. J. Fletcher Recital Hall. Ticketed event. Visit online at www.ECUARTS.com or call 328-4788.

- See www.ecu.edu/cse/ecu/calendar.cfm for times, places and more information on these events and other ECU upcoming activities.
Dream night for girls

By Kim Grizzard
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, February 20, 2010

Part of Greenville became the Emerald City on Saturday night, complete with ruby slippers and a yellow brick road.

A colorful cast of characters turned out for the Girl Scouts’ annual Favorite Guy Dance, held at the Boys & Girls Club on Fire Tower Road. Tin Men, Cowardly Lions, members of the Lollipop Guild and quite a few “Dorothys” dressed for the “Over the Rainbow”-themed occasion, inspired by “The Wizard of Oz.”

Like the classic 1939 movie about a Kansas farm girl who is transported into a land of make-believe, the dance is simply a little girl’s dream. It is one time a year they can go on a dress-up date with Daddy.

“Girls and their dads really don’t get to do that much together these days,” said Carolyn Reed, leader of Troop 851, which helped organize the 10th annual dance. “There are some teenagers that come with their dads, and they’ve been coming forever.”

Among them is 14-year-old Jennifer Pabst, whose father is officially coming with her younger sisters, ages 10 and 6. Like many Girl Scouts her age, Jennifer has graduated from being a guest at the event to helping to host it. “I’m going to work some,” she said, “but I’m also going to hang out with my dad. I like dancing with my dad because my dad and me are really close. There’s not a lot of dances like this.”

For 16-year-old Mary Brown, there are no other dances like this one. The Favorite Guy Dance is the only event of its kind that the home-schooled Girl Scout has ever attended. She remembers going with her sisters, now ages 13, 11 and 7, to have their hair done just for the event.

“How often do you really get to dance with your dad unless it’s like a wedding or something?” she asked. “It’s cool.”

Her father considers the evening so special that he even wears a tie. “(Except for this) he never wears a tie,” Mary said, “ever.”

Duncan Fagundus wore a yellow flying monkeys tie for Saturday’s dance, his first.

“It’s just a good time to spend time with your daughter,” he said as he stood in line with 5-year-old Maci, who was dressed as Dorothy. “It’s good family time.”

Though some fathers wear suits and others even come in tuxedos for the event, there is no jacket required.
“We encourage a variety of wardrobe,” Reed said. “There really is not a
dress code. You can wear a tux; you can wear jeans. You can wear anything
in between.”
On Saturday, many chose “in between,” suiting up in outfits ranging from
the Scarecrow to the Great Oz himself.
Tony Heath remembers dressing differently for last year’s Favorite Guy
Dance, his first with daughter Gabrielle, 10. This year, he got a bale of hay
from Lowe’s and created his own version of the Scarecrow.
“I didn’t see any fathers dressed up (in costume) until I got inside,” he said,
laughing. “I was getting a little nervous. I thought she and her mom had
played a trick on me.”
It was no joke. Partymakers manager Jeffrey Meeks said the store was
bombarded with requests last week for almost anything related to “The
Wizard of Oz.”
Blue-checkered dresses seemed like just another part of the scenery at the
dance. Organizers had been working for weeks to make sure that from the
time the girls stepped inside, they wouldn’t feel like they were at the Boys &
Girls Club anymore.
Part of the reason for that was Roger Kammerer’s Emerald City mural. The
well-known artist and local historian transformed one wall of the club into
the famous field of red poppies, with the home of the Great Oz towering in
the background and one of the frightening flying monkeys perched in a tree.
Helping to transform the rest of the club were some theater education
students at East Carolina University.
Students not only volunteered to act as Dorothy, welcoming guests to the
merry old land of Oz, they also painted parts of Munchkin Land and made a
tornado, a heart and a badge of courage. Students also dug through old set
pieces used by ECU’s Storybook Theater to find a suitable “witch’s house”
they could recycle for the occasion.
“We love working with the kids,” ECU student Katherine Bland said. “This
is an excellent lesson on creating a set on a budget.”
Bland and fellow student Kassidy Sharp are both former Girl Scouts, but
neither remembers a father-daughter dance like the one they were helping to
stage.
“I’m very jealous,” Sharp said, laughing. “Now, looking back, I’d love to go
to a dance with my dad.”
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Linda McMahon, from co-founder of the WWE to U.S. Senate candidate

By Jason Horowitz
Washington Post Staff Writer
Monday, February 22, 2010; C01

HARWINTON, CONN. -- Melissa Russell, a Republican voter in a silk American-flag scarf, interrupted her chat with U.S. Senate candidate Linda McMahon at the Fairview Farms Golf Club here earlier this month to bring up an old acquaintance.

"On a side note," said Russell, 41, "when I was in high school, I met Sergeant Slaughter. He came out of a camouflage limo!"

McMahon dipped her head back and laughed. Sgt. Slaughter, the '80s-era professional wrestling character, was known for dressing in fatigues and applying the "cobra clutch" hold on his Iranian archenemy, the Iron Sheik. He also wrestled for McMahon, whose entire business experience -- her sole qualification for public office -- has been built on the broad backs of muscle-men and women in spandex.

A co-founder with her husband of the wildly successful World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE), McMahon is willing to spend up to $50 million to fill the Senate seat opened by Chris Dodd's retirement. First she has to get by former congressman Rob Simmons in the Republican primary, then the heavily favored Democratic state attorney general, Richard Blumenthal.

"I am an outsider," McMahon, 61, said in an interview. "What I hear over and over and over again is, 'We want somebody with real-life business experience.'"

"Real" is not the first word that leaps to mind when one thinks of Jimmy "Superfly" Snuka and Koko B. Ware leaping off the top rope, or other grown men pretending to clothesline, body-slam and "suplex" the living daylights out of each other. And yet the roughly billion-dollar enterprise McMahon and her husband, Vince, built from scratch is very real, as is the WWE's enduring popularity. "It's the longest running weekly episodic program on television, longer than 'Lassie' or 'Gunsmoke,'" she said.

McMahon, a remarkably polished and poised first-time candidate, is ready to embrace the serious success of the company and even the aura of scrappiness it lends her. Then with poise and legalese, she distances herself from wrestling scenes that are sexually explicit and purposefully inflammatory, moments her opponents hope to highlight. That trick is made even tougher by McMahon's star turns inside the ring. While her appearances were nowhere near as regular as those of Jesse "The Body" Ventura, the former governor of Minnesota, her groin-kicking alter-ego nevertheless did combat with
her own husband, son and daughter. Watching her recite well-coached corporate talking points to reconcile the two can be a spectacle in its own right.

On the rampant and deadly use of steroids in pro wrestling: "The thing of it is, there is no competitive advantage for using steroids -- it's not going to make you jump higher, run faster, hit the ball farther or anything like that," she said, adding that "drug policies have evolved, health and wellness policies have evolved."

On the sexually explicit content the company broadcast over the past decade, including the time in 2006 that brawny Edge and vampish Lita disrobed one another, hopped into a bed, simulated sex and flashed a bare breast in the center of the ring ("WWE.com's No. 7 Greatest Moment in Raw History," according to the company's Web site): "I'm glad to see that the programming has now evolved from TV-14 to PG," McMahon said. "Because that's where it should be. It's good for our audience. It's good for our sponsors."

And the way WWE wrestlers, including her husband, mercilessly taunted and beat up a mentally challenged character named Eugene in 2007: "He had a childlike quality about him, and he was a fictional character in a fictional world that was showed no special privilege by WWE and actually was part of a full running story line in which he was an underdog and wound up victorious."

And the footage of McMahon herself in the ring, being called a bitch and slapped to the ground by her daughter, kicking one man between the legs and then having her head inserted between the legs of another man as he pile-drove her down to the mat: "My skills as a CEO are absolutely and completely apart from my being a bad actress every now and then, written into a story line for emphasis."

McMahon is also quick to point out that she resigned from the company in September. Since then, the WWE has developed a primer for reporters, which answers commonly asked questions. "How many wrestlers have died while under contract with the WWE?" Only five! The lack of health coverage? "Such as actors and singers, WWE performers are independent contractors." And the risqué story lines? "Much like many other shows at the time [e.g., 'NYPD Blue,' 'Jerry Springer,' 'Big Brother'], WWE engaged in what was known as 'sensationalized TV' in a TV-14 environment."

* * *

McMahon's contortion is not an easy move to pull off, but she has proved to be an especially agile and impressive candidate. Her pearls, freshly coiffed blond hair and hundreds of millions in the bank ingratiates her to the country-club set even as her wrestling production provides jobs, packs arenas and boosts ratings with fans who respond to the anti-elite, nationalist jingoistic sentiment stoked by WWE scripts. Not a bad base in the "tea party" era.

After waking up at 4:30 a.m. to appear on MSNBC's "Morning Joe," McMahon ended her day at the Harwinton golf club with an entourage of five campaign aides. She sat near a table loaded with the sleek, wrestling-reference-free campaign fliers that are inundating Connecticut mailboxes. ("Two very different records," read one pamphlet depicting Simmons in an aged black-and-white photo next to McMahon smiling in vivid color.) She watched stonily as Simmons declared his confidence in the wake of Scott Brown's Massachusetts Senate race upset. A January Quinnipiac University survey showed him 10 points ahead of McMahon, but her campaign says its internal polling consistently
shows her up by two points in the Aug. 10 primary.

When it was her turn, McMahon stepped from behind a lectern adorned with an Abraham Lincoln portrait because, she said, she didn't want any barriers between her and the 200 gathered voters. Wearing a pink knee-length dress under a black blazer, calf-high black-suede stiletto boots, gold earrings and diamond rings, she jabbed her finger toward one man in the front and said, "I wanted to get to hear from you." Her speech was heavy on outsider talking points -- cut the deficit, cut taxes, Washington is broken -- and on overcoming early adversity and bankruptcy to build a successful corporation that allowed her to self-finance without any special-interest money.

"I've created a product that is one of America's greatest exports," she said, referring to the WWE programming in 145 countries and 30 languages. She called herself a "scrapper" who can both rub and "knock elbows."

As McMahon returned to her table to healthy applause, Simmons whispered his rebuttal from the corner of the room.

"A broader basis of experience is generally better," said the former congressman, a Vietnam veteran and onetime CIA official, who wore a blue tie flecked with golden mini-Connecticut capitol buildings. Asked if voters in Connecticut should be worried about McMahon's connection to the WWE, Simmons stepped back, nodded his head emphatically up and down and said, "I really can't comment on that."

After the speeches, McMahon and Simmons mingled with the voters, sometimes inches apart, without exchanging pleasantries. As Simmons talked to a group of men about his CIA experiences, a young McMahon aide snickered at the candidate's tie. McMahon, shadowed by her campaign photographer, put voters at ease with her down-home Southern accent and easy manner. She had them nodding along with her talk of deficit discipline and her assurance to get up to speed on national security with "the best people around." But wrestling was an irrepresible topic.

Jane Golec, a 77-year-old woman from Harwinton, asked McMahon to sign a WWE publicity head shot for the son of a friend who had taken ill. McMahon signed the picture "To Eric" and handed it back to Golec.

"Look how nice that is," Golec said to a friend.

* * *

As an only child growing up in New Bern, N.C., McMahon was more interested in basketball than wrestling. That changed when, at 13, she started dating 16-year-old Vince McMahon. They married right after her high school graduation. At East Carolina University, she majored in French and became pregnant with the couple's son, who, like his younger sister, has frequently appeared in the ring. In 1969 the couple moved to Gaithersburg and Vince began working as an independent promoter with his father's Capitol Wrestling company, located in the District at 1332 I St. NW.

To help make ends meet, Linda McMahon took a job as a receptionist at the corporate law firm Covington & Burling, where she said she used her familiarity with French to help translate documents.
related to the estate of the poet Ezra Pound, who had been a client of the firm.

"She was not real excited about the wrestling business at that time," said William James Myers, who met McMahon in 1973, when he wrestled as George "the Animal" Steele, a hirsute, green-tongued, missing-link character with a taste for the stuffing in turnbuckles. "It was not great theater to her. She kind of rolled her eyes." But they moved to New England and founded the World Wrestling Federation, and soon bought Vince's father's enterprise.

Myers said he then told Vince about "a promoter I knew very well in Detroit, the old Sheik. Everyone just thought the Sheik was just the toughest businessman in the world, but his wife handled all the payoffs. If here you are, a big burly guy, and you've got a problem with your payoff, you can argue with Vince, [but] how do you argue with a woman? The next thing I knew, Linda was in the chair."

McMahon handled the administrative side of the business, and she used skills acquired at the law firm to start trademarking her husband's ideas. In 1983, the McMahons moved to Greenwich, Conn., and started recruiting top wrestling talent.

"It was the greatest call of my life," said Jimmy "The Mouth of the South" Hart, a sequins-wearing wrestling manager from Memphis who usually spoke into a megaphone. "I said, 'Feet don't fail me now, brother.' I wouldn't be sitting here today if it weren't for them."

"She was always very pleasant, with a handshake, sometimes a hug ready," said Richard Henry Blood, a half-American, half-Japanese wrestler billed as Ricky "the Dragon" Steamboat. "She'd say, 'Hey, Rick.' Or, 'Hey, Ricky.' "

In 1985, the McMahons showcased their newly acquired star Hulk Hogan in "Wrestlemania," the Super Bowl of wrestling that helped build the lucrative pay-per-view television model.

"When we did the first 'Wrestlemania,' " McMahon said, "I think we had everything, including our children, hawked."

Not all the wrestlers appreciated McMahon's business practices.

Edward Leslie, who wrestled between 1983 and 1993 for the McMahons as Brutus "the Barber" Beefcake, a villain in purple hot pants and black bow tie who sheared the hair of his unconscious opponents, blamed McMahon for withholding the use of his stage name for more than a decade.

"I'm not sure what kind of politician she is going to make," said Leslie, who has had legal and personal troubles outside the ring. "If politicians are cutthroats and backstabbers and are not true to their word, then she'll probably make a great politician."

The McMahon campaign declined to respond to Leslie's accusations, and directed all inquiries to the WWE. "The WWE owns the copyright to Brutus the Barber," said Robert Zimmerman, a spokesman for the wrestling organization.

* * *

If the McMahons spent the '80s and '90s building their empire, they toiled over the next decade to
defend it in the era of rival companies and rampant steroid use.

"Steroids were muscle-builders and we wanted to look good," said Bret "The Hitman" Hart, who insisted the McMähons never encouraged wrestlers to use steroids. Asked if the couple ever discouraged the use of the performance-enhancing drugs, Hart responded, "I know that the guys who had a lot of muscles made a lot of money."

In 1991, the company started testing for steroids, a policy it dropped in 1996, as the WWE faced a challenge from a rival wrestling company owned by Ted Turner, who offered larger salaries and less stringent screening. In 1997 congressional testimony, McMahon said her talent had been "stolen," and argued that the company abandoned its steroid testing because it had proved so successful in bringing down abuse and was no longer "cost effective."

In the late 1990s, the company rebuilt with new stars, bought out Turner's wrestling business in 2001 and changed its name to the WWE after a successful suit brought by the World Wildlife Fund. The McMähons had become rich, flirting with a billion-dollar worth and socializing with Connecticut's gentry. To stay on top, their wrestling empire entered the "attitude era."

The McMähons introduced more sexually explicit story lines, many hawking the charms of "the rated-R superstar" Edge. In one episode, Edge demanded that his girlfriend Lita "finish me off" in the ring with "live uninterrupted sex." In another episode, a wrestler simulated necrophilia with a mannequin in a coffin -- a sequence, according to a radio interview with the wrestler, taped in an actual funeral home -- in a room adjacent to an actual funeral, with Vince McMähon urging the actor to "do it harder and make more noise and stuff."

The McMähon family also became characters in the show, sometimes wrestling one another. Vince became a leading villain, whose in-ring exploits -- forcing humiliated enemies to kiss his bare behind and having his own face shoved into hefty wrestlers' buttocks -- make for an opposition researcher's dream cache of YouTube moments.

"That blew my mind," Myers said. "They come across as a dysfunctional family, and they are anything but that."

Since June 2008, the WWE has cleaned up its image, and in recent months has scrubbed offending video clips from the Web. Vince McMähon has been kept away from the media, and the WWE declined a request to interview him. The programming is now entirely PG. The wrestling stars have continued to visit the troops abroad. The company held 2008 voter registration drives in its arenas. In 2009, the Connecticut House of Representatives approved Linda McMähon's appointment by Republican Gov. M. Jodi Rell to the state board of education.

Judging from the enthusiastic reactions to McMähon at the golf club on Friday night, wrestling seems a much more acceptable launch pad for a U.S. Senate bid.

"She's gone through her own business hardships," said Diana Lepore, 48, a supporter from New Hartford. "We need someone in Washington who knows how to run a business."

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When flu's the foe: a game shot

RALEIGH -- State public health officials hope to score big at college basketball games this month.

As winter wanes and traditional flu season shows signs of dying down, health care workers fear that too many college students have washed their hands of worries about the H1N1 virus.

With that in mind, state health officials are teaming with student health services on many North Carolina college campuses to offer flu vaccinations. They set up a clinic Saturday at the RBC Center to catch N.C. State University students at the Wolfpack game against Wake Forest.

NCSU freshman Siddharth Gandra got his shot before the game. "My parents have been asking me to get one since October," said Gandra, who was surprised to encounter the nurse offering mist or shots.

He also was given a coupon for free food. "I got a burger, and I got a shot, so I'm all right," Gandra said.

Though college campuses can often seem like petri dishes for communicable diseases - with young people who take less-than-stellar care of themselves mingling closely in shared living quarters - most students have not been vaccinated for H1N1. State records show that 5 percent of college-age people - 19- to 24-year-olds - have been immunized against the virus.

From late January through early February, according to public health statistics, student centers treated more cases of influenzalike illnesses than other health-care providers across the state. In the fall, when H1N1 swept through college campuses, student health centers consistently saw higher-than-average rates of flu.

"That age group is the least immunized in the state," said Julie Henry, H1N1 communications specialist with the state Division of Public Health.

The first H1N1 cases were identified in April. Nearly a year later, health officials are sure of one thing: "Most things about this flu have not been typical with seasonal flu," Henry said.

As spring break approaches and students prepare to travel and mingle, health officials are trying to remind young people that the new flu's threat is not over.

"If we are going to see a resurgence in March, April, even May, then colleges would be one of the most at-risk places," Henry said.

In the fall, campuses saw many students fall ill with flu-like symptoms. Sick students were encouraged to isolate themselves and seek treatment if needed, but most of the cases were not tested, making it difficult for health officials to know the number of students infected. Thus health officials
encourage everyone in the age group to get vaccinated.

On Saturday, Mr. Wuf, the NCSU mascot, sported a bandage bearing a message that public health officials hope to convey to students: "The Flu Stops With Me." Clinics are planned for games this month at UNC-Chapel Hill, UNC Wilmington, East Carolina University, UNC Charlotte and Winston-Salem State University.

"Back in December, about 13 percent of the vaccine that we sent to college campuses had actually been used by students," Henry said. "It's not an easy sell right now because people think it's over. It's not going to hurt you to get the vaccine. So why not?"

Staff photographer Ethan Hyman contributed to this report.

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Textbooks That Professors Can Rewrite Digitally

By MOTOKO RICH

Readers can modify content on the Web, so why not in books?

In a kind of Wikipedia of textbooks, Macmillan, one of the five largest publishers of trade books and textbooks, is introducing software called DynamicBooks, which will allow college instructors to edit digital editions of textbooks and customize them for their individual classes.

Professors will be able to reorganize or delete chapters; upload course syllabuses, notes, videos, pictures and graphs; and perhaps most notably, rewrite or delete individual paragraphs, equations or illustrations.

While many publishers have offered customized print textbooks for years — allowing instructors to reorder chapters or insert third-party content from other publications or their own writing — DynamicBooks gives instructors the power to alter individual sentences and paragraphs without consulting the original authors or publisher.

“Basically they will go online, log on to the authoring tool, have the content right there and make whatever changes they want,” said Brian Napack, president of Macmillan. “And we don’t even look at it.”

In August, Macmillan plans to start selling 100 titles through DynamicBooks, including “Chemical Principles: The Quest for Insight,” by Peter Atkins and Loretta Jones; “Discovering the Universe,” by Neil F. Comins and William J. Kaufmann; and “Psychology,” by Daniel L. Schacter, Daniel T. Gilbert and Daniel M. Wegner. Mr. Napack said Macmillan was considering talking to other publishers to invite them to sell their books through DynamicBooks.

Students will be able to buy the e-books at dynamicbooks.com, in college bookstores and through CourseSmart, a joint venture among five textbook publishers that sells electronic textbooks. The DynamicBooks editions — which can be reached online or downloaded — can be read on laptops and the iPhone from Apple. Clancy Marshall, general manager of DynamicBooks, said the company planned to negotiate agreements with Apple so the electronic books could be read on the iPad.

The modifiable e-book editions will be much cheaper than traditional print textbooks. “Psychology,” for example, which has a list price of $134.29 (available on Barnes & Noble’s Web site for $122.73), will sell for $48.76 in the DynamicBooks version. Macmillan is also offering print-on-demand versions of the customized books, which will be priced closer to traditional textbooks.

Fritz Foy, senior vice president for digital content at Macmillan, said the company expected e-book sales to replace the sales of used books. Part of the reason publishers charge high prices for traditional textbooks is
that students usually resell them in the used market for several years before a new edition is released. DynamicBooks, Mr. Foy said, will be “semester and classroom specific,” and the lower price, he said, should attract students who might otherwise look for used or even pirated editions.

Instructors who have tested the DynamicBooks software say they like the idea of being able to fine-tune a textbook. “There’s almost always some piece here or some piece there that a faculty person would have rather done differently,” said Todd Ruskell, senior lecturer in physics at the Colorado School of Mines, who tested an electronic edition of “Physics for Scientists and Engineers” by Paul A. Tipler and Gene Mosca.

Frank Lyman, executive vice president of CourseSmart, said he expected that some professors would embrace the opportunity to customize e-books but that most would continue to rely on traditional textbooks.

“For many instructors, that’s very helpful to know it’s been through a process and represents a best practice in terms of a particular curriculum,” he said.

Even other publishers that allow instructors some level of customization hesitate about permitting changes at the sentence and paragraph level.

“There is a flow to books, and there’s voice to them,” said Don Kilburn, chief executive of Pearson Learning Solutions, which does allow instructors to change chapter orders and insert material from other sources. Mr. Kilburn said he had not been briefed on Macmillan’s plans.

Mr. Ruskell said he did not change much in the physics textbook he tested with DynamicBooks. “You don’t just want to say, ‘Oh, I don’t like this, I’m going to do this instead,’ ” he said. “You really want to think about it.”

Mr. Comins, an author of “Discovering the Universe,” a popular astronomy textbook, said the new e-book program was a way to speed up the process for incorporating suggestions that he often receives while revising new print editions. “I’ve learned as an author over the years that I am not perfect,” he said. “So if somebody in Iowa sees something in my book that they perceive is wrong, I am absolutely willing to give them the benefit of the doubt.”

On the other hand, if an instructor decided to rewrite paragraphs about the origins of the universe from a religious rather than an evolutionary perspective, he said, “I would absolutely, positively be livid.”

Ms. Clancy of Macmillan said the publisher reserved the right to “remove anything that is considered offensive or plagiarism,” and would rely on students, parents and other instructors to help monitor changes.
A Case for Tenure That Some See as Falling Short

By GINA KOLATA

Neurobiologists say Amy Bishop did not actually have an exciting new idea for treating degenerative nervous system diseases like multiple sclerosis or Alzheimer’s. And her invention of a better petri dish did not seem like something that is needed or wanted in research laboratories.

To get tenure, scientists ordinarily have to demonstrate that they have an impressive record of published research. Dr. Bishop failed that test, scientists said.

Her publication record, a few papers in specialty journals, is “very skimpy,” said Feng C. Zhou, a professor of neurobiology, anatomy and cell biology at the Indiana University School of Medicine.

And, Dr. Zhou and others said, Dr. Bishop had no papers in high-impact journals, which ordinarily would be required for tenure at major universities.

Dr. Serge Przedborski, a neurology professor at Columbia University, said Dr. Bishop’s publication list is so unimpressive that if she were at Columbia, “I do not believe that she would even have been recommended for tenure by the department.”

The publications include a recent paper in The International Journal of General Medicine, published electronically by Dovepress, essentially a scientific vanity press. Dr. Bishop’s paper in that journal, on nerve cells grown in the laboratory and exposed to drugs used to treat depression, lists her school-age children as the first three authors. The fourth author is herself, and the fifth is her husband, who is identified as being at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, although he does not have a position there.

As for Dr. Bishop’s invention of an automated way to grow nerve cells in the laboratory, Dr. R. Douglas Fields of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, said, “There is not a great need for it that I’m aware of.”

Although it was characterized as a way to keep nerve cells alive for long periods of time, researchers say they do that anyway using cheap and easily available petri dishes.
GWU e-mail welcomes rejected early-decision applicants

By Jenna Johnson
Washington Post Staff Writer
Thursday, February 18, 2010; B05

About 200 students who had sought early-decision admission to George Washington University received an e-mail last week that proclaimed "Congratulations" and welcomed them to the Class of 2014 -- for several hours.

Then came every college applicant's nightmare.

"This afternoon, you received an e-mail from me titled 'Important GW Information,' " wrote Kathryn Napper, executive dean of undergraduate admissions. "Unfortunately, this e-mail was sent to you in error. We are truly sorry for this confusion regarding your application to GW."

"It's devastating to kids who feel they have gotten into their No. 1 school or their dream school, and then this crushing disappointment," said Shirley Bloomquist, a longtime college counselor in Fairfax County and now a private consultant. "Your emotions soar, and then something like this happens. It really clips one's heartstrings."

GWU isn't the first school to erroneously "admit" a group of students it had rejected. As universities move their application processes online, rely more on e-mail to communicate and use the Web to update students on applications, mistakes are easily made. GWU blamed its goof on a clerical error.

Cornell University sent a message in 2003 saying "Greetings from Cornell, your future alma mater!" to nearly 550 early-decision rejectees. Last year, the school's financial aid office accidentally e-mailed 25 students who had not been accepted. On April Fools Day last year, New York University mistakenly congratulated 489 students who had been rejected. Northwestern did the same thing to 50 graduate school applicants in 2008 and refunded their application fee as an apology.

One of the biggest gaffes was at the University of California, San Diego last spring, when the admissions office sent acceptance e-mails to all of the 46,000 students who had applied, including the 28,000 who had not gotten in.

The mix-up at George Washington, first reported by the GW Hatchet, the school's student newspaper, involved as many as 200 students who had applied to the university's second round of early decision, Napper said in a statement. If accepted, these students promise to withdraw all other applications and attend GWU. So usually, the college is their top choice.

On Feb. 4, six days before the Feb. 10 glitch, GWU e-mailed all the applicants, telling them to check
online to find out whether they had been accepted. That information was accurate. But when mail delivery was delayed by last week's snowstorms, admissions officials decided to send out another e-mail: the one that contained wrong information in about 200 cases, Napper said.

The e-mail catastrophes of recent years have pushed admissions officials to "double-, triple- and quadruple-check" their lists before hitting "send," said David Hawkins, director of public policy and research at the National Association for College Admission Counseling.

Some schools have shied away from digital communication altogether, he said, although mistakes can also occur with paper acceptance letters. And some schools that have accidentally admitted a few students have honored those acceptances, as long as the students met admissions requirements, he said.

But when dozens or hundreds of students are involved, Hawkins said, "you have to say it's a mistake, you have to own up to it, and there's really no easy way out."

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