THE DAILY CLIPS

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ECU honors local dentist

The East Carolina Board of Trustees votes to name the dental school building after Dr. Ledyard Ross, who donated $4 million to the school.

BY JOSH HUMPHRIES
The Daily Reflector

East Carolina University officials announced Friday that the dental school building opening in 2011 will be named for Dr. Ledyard Ross, who donated $4 million to the school.

The ECU Board of Trustees voted to name the building for Ross at its regular meeting Friday at the East Carolina Heart Institute.

Ross, 84, is a retired Greenville orthodontist. His gift is one of the largest from an individual in school history.

The board welcomed Ross to the meeting Friday and revealed the building's design with the name Ledyard E. Ross Hall.

"It is extremely difficult to get $4 million for schools of dentistry," ECU Chancellor Steve Ballard said. "This is huge for our dental school and it will mean many things like better faculty, retaining that faculty and world-class programs."

Dr. James Hupp, dean of the School of Dentistry, said the donation will allow the school to perform its primary function.

"He will inspire the students that will walk under the doors with his name," Hupp said. "And he will inspire them to give back — and that is what we want from our students — to give back like Dr. Ross is.

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Ross attended Greenville High School and Hardbarger Business College before attending East Carolina College. He graduated from Northwestern University Dental School with a doctorate of dental surgery in 1953 and received a master science degree in orthodontics in 1959 from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Ross is married to Alta Dant Ross and he has four children.

The dental school will begin taking applications this summer and admit its first class in the fall of 2011. The first class of 50 will be composed solely of students from North Carolina, Hupp said.

Ross Hall will be a 100,000-square-foot building constructed with $90 million from the North Carolina General Assembly. The school also will operate 10 community learning centers in rural and under-served areas throughout the state.

In his report to the board, Ballard said securing operating funds for the dental school is his top priority for the coming legislative session. The General Assembly appropriated $3 million for operations last year, but the school needs another $11 million to begin hiring faculty.

The school is expected to have 65 faculty members, 100 staff members and 200 students once it is filled.

"We understand the economic condition of the state, and we are taking nothing for granted," Ballard said. "I need the help of every board member and everyone possible to make sure we stay on target."

The school is on schedule to open in the fall of 2011.

Ballard said that he also will be seeking continued support from the Legislature for the Brody School of Medicine and funding for a bio-science building on campus.

The bio-science building would house faculty offices, classrooms and labs.

Ballard said the building would be vital to science, technology, engineering and math classes.

"Everybody in the state knows that money for capital projects is tight," Ballard said. "It will be a hard hill to climb but it is very important for our region."

The dental school will begin taking applications this summer and admit its first class in the fall of 2011. The first class of 50 will be composed solely of students from North Carolina.

Contact Josh Humphries at jhumphries@reflector.com or (252) 329-9565.
ECU extends Holland’s deal

The Daily Reflector

The East Carolina University Board of Trustees, in an unanimous vote Friday, approved a three-year extension of athletics director Terry Holland’s contract.

The board also officially approved new head football coach Ruffin McNeill’s five-year contract. The board’s Executive Committee had endorsed a memorandum of understanding with McNeill during a conference call on Jan. 21.

Holland’s contract, which was originally set to end in 2011, now runs until Dec. 31, 2014.

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HOLLAND

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Holland’s annual salary will remain at $356,400. In a release from the university, ECU Chancellor Steve Ballard noted that none of his senior administrators are receiving raises in the current budget climate.

Holland, who previously served as athletics director at Davidson and Virginia, was hired as ECU’s AD in 2004.

McNeill, who replaced Skip Holtz, has a five-year deal worth $5 million and will get bonuses for winning the Conference USA title and the Liberty Bowl.

— ECU Media Relations
Author bringing ‘life’ to ECU

Greg Mortenson, who wrote ‘Three Cups of Tea,’ will speak at East Carolina tonight at 7.

BY KIM GRIZZARD
The Daily Reflector

Though he is a best-selling author and in-demand speaker, Greg Mortenson might not make the top 10 list of sought-after lecturers for a series on business and leadership. The 52-year-old former

emergency

room nurse is better known for his benevolence than his business sense. Still, Mortenson, who will speak at 7 p.m. today at East Carolina University, is the most talked-about guest in the history of the university’s Cunanana Leadership Speaker Series, which has included entrepreneurs, chief executive officers and “leadership guru” Steve Farber.

“There’s really no business side to this (Mortenson’s speech),” said Rick Niswander, dean of the College of Business at ECU. “It’s life.”

Mortenson, co-founder of the Central Asia Institute, has dedicated nearly two decades of his life to establishing schools in isolated and sometimes turbulent areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. He is the co-author of “Three Cups of Tea,” which recounts his journey from a mountain climber to a modern-day crusader for literacy and education.

The book has sold more than 3.5 million copies, and Mortenson has established more than 130 schools for nearly 60,000 children, many of them girls with little or no educational opportunities. Mortenson, who has more than a dozen honorary doctorate degrees and has twice been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize, released his

See TEA, A7

TEA
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“One of the great things we do at ECU is bring people to Greenville that it would be very unusual for our students and faculty and the citizens of the community to hear,” Niswander said. “He’s the kind of guy that everybody needs to hear.”

Calls coming into Niswander’s office indicate that Mortenson is apparently the kind of guy everyone wants to hear as well. The university is expecting thousands to attend the lecture, which was moved from Wright Auditorium to Minges Coliseum to accommodate anticipated crowds.

“I had a call from a lady in New Jersey whose son is a freshman,” Niswander said. “She found out that Mortenson was going to be here, and she and a friend are coming down ... because they think it’s that important.”

The university thought Mortenson’s work was so important that “Three Cups of Tea” was named the freshman reading selection for the 2009-10 academic year. Karen Smith, associate director of the First Year Center at ECU, said the book was integrated into English and freshmen seminar classes.

“Three Cups of Tea” was required reading for EC Scholars, Freshmen Honors Students, North Carolina Teaching Fellows and Maynard Scholars, who will meet with Mortenson today prior to his address.

A young readers edition of the book became required reading for middle school students at Paktolus School this year. Principal Joe Nelson said 70 of his students will attend Mortenson’s lecture.

They will bring with them a donation for the Central Asia Institute — money students have collected as a part of the “Pennies for Peace” fundraiser. The service learning program was initiated by Mortenson’s mother, a former elementary school principal, to give children a chance to contribute to educating their peers in other parts of the world.

Nelson said that donations have been coming in for the last three weeks.

“It actually became a schoolwide event (collecting money),” he said. “I think that really opened their minds up to I can make a difference.”

Several teachers at Paktolus have structured lessons around “Three Cups of Tea” in social studies and vocational education classes. Though the book has not previously been part of the curriculum, Nelson said it is a valuable subject.

“We need to talk to our children about peace and what we can do when we all work together and what it means to give back to society,” he said. “I think that’s an extremely important lesson for students to learn beyond the ABCs.”

Niswander feels the same way about business students at ECU, who typically expect to hear from the head of a corporation rather than a humanitarian working in other countries.

“You look at this, and you say, ‘Why in the world would a business school be the one (to sponsor)?’” Niswander said. “We all need to think broader.

“We so infrequently have the opportunity to hear from someone who has truly made a positive difference in the lives of tens of thousands of people,” he said. “If, for no other reason, we need to hear his message.”

Doors open at 6 p.m. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Contact Kim Grizzard at kgrizzard@reflector.com or (252) 329-9578.
Dominick, McNeill share stories during Boys & Girls Clubs event

BY JIMMY LEWIS
Times-Leader

A loss in a pickup basketball game was the ultimate blessing in disguise for Kirk Dominick.

Then 12 years old, Dominick recalled a facility in Pitt County opening its doors on Arlington Boulevard.

Friends urged him to stop by what was then the Boys Club. The basketball games that took place there were compelling, they would say.

But life experiences convinced Dominick that he didn’t need the support of others. He was determined to go it alone.

Dominick shared his story at Winterville’s Jack Minges Unit in front of community leaders on Thursday as part of the “All 4 One: Now! More Than Ever” luncheon supporting the Boys & Girls Clubs of Pitt County.

Although born into a well-to-do family, there was no immunity from conflict. Eventually, the family split, and Dominick’s father left home.

“When my father left, that’s the first time I remember being heartbroken,” Dominick said.

“That lasted for a long time. And to some degree, it lasted until a few years ago.”

James Ormond, Dominick’s best friend, wouldn’t take no for an answer. The two placed what amounted to a wager on a basketball game of “21.” If Dominick couldn’t continue his hardwood dominance over Ormond, he would have to attend the local club at least once.

The rest is history.

“That’s the first time in his life he’s ever beaten me in ‘21,’” Dominick said.

Today, Dominick is executive vice president of Club Services of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, where he oversees more than 4,000 local units across the country.

Newly minted East Carolina University football coach Ruffin McNeill credited the presence of his local Boys & Girls Club as a valuable supplement to a loving parental upbringing. Both of McNeill’s parents were educators.

McNeil, a Lumberton native, was quick to point out that there still were abundant chances for negative influences to take hold in his life.

It was McNeill’s participation in club activities that helped push those influences to the periphery.

“I am a result of the Boys & Girls Club,” he said. “The reason I am here to speak to you today is because of the Boys & Girls Club.”

Although the start of a new football season is several months away, McNeill shared a pair of acronyms with the audience that will become a part of the ECU locker room.

The first, ACOP, stands for “Attitude, Confidence, Organize and Preparation.”

Part of that mind-set involves knowing the proper approach to take with each individual player, or in this case, a child that walks into a local Boys & Girls Club.

“Some of the kids will be different” McNeill said. “Some of them may be shy, some of them may need some help. If we prepare before we meet them, it will be great.”

The second acronym, ABC, carries a functional message of “Avoid Bad Company.”

“We tell our guys that not everyone is going to be for you,” McNeill said. “But ... surround yourself with great people, people who are trying to be successful in life, people that want to make it, people who have like ideas and avoid bad company.”

Jimmy Lewis is group sports editor for the Times-Leader.
Kristin Day/The Daily Reflector

Diane Rodriguez of ECU, left, Juvenicio Rocha Peralta, president of AMEXCAN, and Saul Moram, an exchange teacher from Mexico, discuss the upcoming education conference.
Saul Moram, right, teaches a traditional dance class to AMEXCAN to students Estela Treto, left, and Nallely Villeda.
Greg Eans/The Daily Reflector

Christopher Price, English instructor for AMEXCAN, left, works with Martin Orgemal during an English class.
Greg Eans/The Daily Reflector
Working for a better future
By Kristin Day
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, February 27, 2010

Juvencio Rocha Peralta came to North Carolina when he was 16 years old to make a better way for his family, but for more than 25 years, he's been devoted to resolving the burdens of his neighbors. From volunteering in nonprofits as a young man to his current roles as president of AMEXCAN (The Association of Mexicans in North Carolina) and vice president of the NALACC (National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities), Peralta and his staff work tirelessly to create understanding in a society divided by race, and to promote health, education and leadership initiatives to the local Latin community. On Thursday, he also filed as a candidate for the Pitt County Board of Education District 3A seat.

In short, he's working for a better future.

"To have more Latinos in leadership roles," Peralta said of his vision. "To use organizations (like AMEXCAN) as a way to facilitate that movement, and to have individuals within the community be more active."

That dream started shortly after Peralta moved to the United States from Veracruz in 1980. By 1985, when he was 21 years old, he was volunteering most of his time and services to different groups around Pitt County. He says working with the Special Olympics first encouraged him to continue giving back.

"What inspires me to volunteer is the need that's out there for the community," Peralta said. "Sometimes, you feel like you have a community to provide for, to the ones who provided for who you are today."

In the mid-1990s, after eastern North Carolina began to see a large growth in Latinos, he wanted to become even more involved in issues concerning residents of Latin decent and started his own organizations, like the Latino Soccer League (to promote sports in the Latino community) and he cofounded the Eastern Carolina Latin American Coalition, based in Greenville.

By 2000, there was another dramatic increase of Mexicans and Latinos in North Carolina, but many of them were not counted in the national census. While the census recorded 4.8 percent of Pitt County residents being of Latin descent, Peralta says the true number is closer to 7 percent or 8 percent. Thus begat AMEXCAN, a nonprofit organization that offers assistance to Mexican-Americans and Latinos and promotes health, education, leadership and community involvement.

To Peralta, working together — Latinos and non-Latinos — is the greatest way to create an understanding about one another and their cultures.

"People have a misconception of the Latino community," Peralta said, "and I think it helps to come together and, instead of being separate communities, to be engaged. ... There are a lot of resources out there, but the gap needs to be closed."

AMEXCAN first began in Raleigh in September 2001. Peralta would travel to the state's capital twice a week for meetings, but brought headquarters to Greenville in 2002 in order to make it a more grassroots effort. After building its headquarters in Greenville,
AMEXCAN established seven other chapters in Duplin, Wilson, Wayne, Lenoir, Edgecombe, Greene and Nash counties. From its offices off N.C. 33, AMEXCAN collaborates with other local organizations to enact its mission and develop cultural activities, like the Spring Festival each year in collaboration with Pitt Community College.

“(Festivals are) to promote the Latin American culture, and get people informed on where we come from and why we’re here,” Peralta said.

With assistance from the Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation, AMEXCAN also has formed partnerships with ECU’s Department of Anthropology, School of Social Work, Department of Nutrition and School of Nursing to educate these demographics on major health concerns, like diabetes and HIV. AMEXCAN also works with the Office of Institutional Diversity and offers internships and work study opportunities for ECU students.

Two of the major projects held annually for the last three years are the Latino Leadership Conference and the Latino Educational Conference, held in collaboration with ECU. This year’s educational conference is titled “Building Latino Leadership for Greater Access to Education.”

“You introduce the community into higher education,” Peralta said of the conference, “introduce them to an opportunity to a pursuit beyond high school. I feel we accomplish this by bringing them to the community setting and seeing what the university offers. ... On the other hand you bring educators, leaders from the community, and other individuals to engage and to discuss issues that will help them understand and carry on their responsibilities, when they’re out in the field working with the Latino community.”

A primary focus of Peralta’s and of the organization is Latino youths. AMEXCAN now works with 150 kids in a program called “Young Latinos in Action,” organizing Latino youths to be more active in the community and helping them understand why civic action is important.

In a dual effort to get kids involved and to push the adults to send in their 2010 Census forms, AMEXCAN is holding the “My Latino Family Counts” contest and local forums called “Reaching Latinos in Eastern North Carolina for the Census 2010” to help Perlata and the Complete Count Committee rally for more accurate numbers. Without true representation, the city can lose a lot of federal funding, Peralta said.

“It gives us a very tough challenge to build schools, highways, services and so forth,” he said. “I think it’s very important for us as an organization to be very active. ?EUR? If we don’t, we’re going to lose a lot of resources.”

In the past, all Peralta has given to better the local Latino community has garnered him the Defender of Justice Award, by the N.C. Justice Center, the Spanish Network Univision “Nuestro Orgullo Latino Award” (Our Latino Pride Award), and OHTLI Award, given by the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs to individuals or organizations that have an impact on relations with Mexico.

On Feb. 13, Peralta also received the ACLU-NC Award to recognize his service to the state for equality and justice. Jennifer Rudinger, executive director of ACLU-NC (American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina), said the award isn’t given out every year, but only when their board of directors receives a nomination for someone who has made a personal sacrifice for a civil liberties cause.
“In Juvencio’s case, he’s just been such a tireless advocate for people who have no voice,” Rudinger said. “people particularly in North Carolina in the Latino community and the immigrant community. He’s been so committed to improving the quality of life for people who are at the bottom of the economic food chain.” Rudinger said the ACLU-NC had worked with Peralta as an advocate for due process rights, which holds governments accountable for respecting the rights owed a person. But it was the nomination by ECU faculty member Diane Rodriguez that brought all of his other work to their attention.

“I totally admire his work and his love toward the community,” Rodriguez said. “... He wants children and youth to have opportunities he didn’t have.” Peralta, the first Mexican-American to receive the award, says he was surprised to hear he was selected. But winning such recognition doesn’t mean his work is over.

“Recognitions are good because they recognize work and service,” Peralta said, “but I think it (winning) is also a responsibility. I think it’s something that there are expectations (from) to be more proactive.

“...We are one of the organizations that has sustained firm into what they believe needs to be done to address the needs of the community. ... So I think that is an accomplishment, especially in this day and time when the economy is so terrible, we still continue to work and do what is necessary to be done for the community.”

For more information on Latino issues, the 2010 Census or to register for Friday’s education conference, send an e-mail to amexcan@gmail.com or call Perlata at 258-9967 or 757-3916.

Contact Kristin Day at kday@reflector.com or (252) 329-9579.

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Education conference

This year’s educational conference from AMEXCAN and East Carolina University is titled “Building Latino Leadership for Greater Access to Education.” It will be held from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday in Mendenhall Student Center. The guest speaker will be Tony Dandrades, reporter for the Primer Impacto Univision television station. Admission is free, but registration is required. Register by contacting Juvencio Rocha Peralta at amexcan@gmail.com, 258-9967 or 757-3916
Campus Kitchen volunteers gave tours Wednesday of their new home at Todd Dining Hall. Kim Caudle explains how the project will cut food waste and address hunger.
Cliff Hollis/ECU News Services

More in news

- City may have to scale back retiree benefits
- City holds open houses on eight properties
- Council to debate election funding
- Author bringing 'life' to ECU
- Commissioners to mull Chiecod School land purchase

**ECU Notes: Campus Kitchen to help ease hunger**

ECU News Service
Saturday, February 27, 2010

East Carolina University this week became the first college in the UNC system to open a Campus Kitchen, a project that will bring student-powered hunger relief to Pitt County.
ECU's Volunteer and Service-Learning Center and Aramark opened the kitchen on Feb. 24 at Todd Dining Hall. Using surplus food from campus dining halls, student volunteers will prepare and deliver meals to those in need through partnerships with the Ronald McDonald House and the Little Willie Center.

"I believe that when we feed the hungry in our community, especially children, we not only strengthen their bodies but their minds," Sarah Schach, a member of Campus Kitchen's ECU leadership team, said.

Initially, CKECU will package and deliver meals at least once a week. Meals will be planned by a Serv-Safe certified student leadership team under the supervision of the VSLC and Aramark, and delivered to adults and children at partnering locations at no cost.

Mike Lysaght, resident district manager for Aramark, said the company welcomed the partnership.

"The big question I get asked all the time is, 'What do you do with all that leftover food?' I finally have an answer," he said.

CKECU joins a national network of 20 other colleges and universities and one high school to fight hunger.

"After a great deal of anticipation, I am very excited to see the Campus Kitchen become a reality here at ECU," Kelly Pippin, a leadership member of CKECU, said. "The opportunities for students and community partners to be involved in this project are countless."

The students became involved through the VSLC. More than 11,000 students are registered at the VSLC, and they performed more than 161,700 hours of community service last year.

A study released this month by the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina and Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, found that more than 545,000 people receive emergency food each year through the FBCENC and its network of agencies. Twenty-nine percent are children.

For more information about ECU's Campus Kitchen, contact Kim Caudle at 737-1670 or caudleke@ecu.edu.

Scholar to discuss constitutional politics

One of the nation's leading constitutional scholars will give a free, public lecture Wednesday on "The First Question: Constitutional Politics in the Gilded Age."

Michael Les Benedict, professor emeritus at The Ohio State University, will discuss a time when people considered almost every political question to involve constitutional issues, when the constitutional authority to enact laws was "the first question" to be decided, and when the people themselves made most of the decisions about how the Constitution should be interpreted.

The presentation will be at 7:30 p.m. in Room 0C-209 of the Science and Technology Building.

Benedict received his doctoral degree from William Marsh Rice University Graduate School, and his master of arts and bachelor of arts degrees from the University of Illinois. He spent 34 years at Ohio State, where he taught courses on American Legal and Constitutional History, American Civil War, Philosophy of History and Historical Methods, and U.S. Constitutional Law.
This presentation is sponsored by Charles W. Calhoun, ECU professor of history and the 2009 Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences Distinguished Professor. Through this professorship, a scholar is invited to campus each academic year to give a free, public presentation on his or her area of expertise. For additional information, contact Calhoun at 328-6666 or calhounc@ecu.edu.

**ECU troop support earns center honors**

ECU’s Volunteer and Service-Learning Center is among the final recipients of a popular award honoring supporters of the U.S. Army. The center was honored last month with the Freedom Team Salute Award and presented a certificate signed by Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh and Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

The N.C. chapter of Give2TheTroops nominated the center for inclusion in the awards program. Through the center, more than 1,000 ECU students last year helped the nonprofit provide care packages and supplies to service members overseas.

“It’s a favorite place for students to go,” Shawn Moore, the center’s community partner coordinator, said. “Everybody’s touched by the military in some way, especially in this area. I think that it empowers students to feel like they’re doing something for the troops.”

Col. Dave Griffith of the U.S. Army presented the Freedom Team Salute certificate on Jan. 27. Barbara Whitehead, organizer of the Give2TheTroops state chapter, said she was pleased to nominate the center.

“They are an amazing group of students and staff, and we appreciate their support so much,” Whitehead said. “We could not be the largest branch of Give2TheTroops in the nation without ECU.”

Whitehead has a son in the 82nd Airborne Division.

The center has worked with the nonprofit since the N.C. branch began in 2005. Students have helped with collection drives and card-making parties, among other activities.

“It just makes you feel like you’re sending a little piece of home to them,” Moore said. “You’re reminding them of what they’re fighting for, that they’re not alone.”

Most troops aren’t stationed on bases but are in remote areas where supplies aren’t abundant, Whitehead said. Care packages often include local magazines and newspapers, Pirate Club T-shirts and anything else “that can bring a smile to their faces and remind them that home still is there,” Whitehead said.

The center strives to engage students in volunteer and service-learning activities in order to strengthen communities, promote an enduring commitment to civic responsibility and enhance the academic experience.

The Freedom Team Salute began in 2005 to recognize the bond between soldiers, family, community and veterans. The recognition program will cease at month’s end because of the Army’s competing missions and demands on resources, according to the program’s Web site.

For more information on the Freedom Team Salute, visit online at www.freedomteamsalute.com.

**Award established at College of Nursing**
A community-based service award for nursing students has been established by Susan L. Henry, assistant research professor at Laupus Library and liaison to the East Carolina University College of Nursing.

The award honors Henry’s parents, Erma and Paul Henry, for their lifelong dedication to public service. Paul Henry was an associate superintendent of schools in Montgomery County, Md. Erma Henry was a stay-at-home mother. They led by example, participating in their community, PTA, church and neighborhood.

Erma Henry died in 2007, and Paul Henry died in 2009. The community-based service does not have to be performed in Greenville or Pitt County. Students are eligible if they are degree-seeking ECU nursing students.

An award of up to $500 will be given each year. The deadline for application is March 16. For more information, contact henrys@ecu.edu.

Panel to discuss idea of ‘weak female’

The idea of the “weak female” in the late 19th century will be discussed Thursday. The William E. Laupus Health Sciences Library will host a panel discussion, “Weak Female? Medical Justifications Behind Restrictions on Women in the Late 19th Century.” It is free and open to the public.

The program, sponsored by the Friends of Laupus Library, will be held from 5:30-7 p.m. in the fourth floor exhibit gallery. Panelists will be Cheryl Dudasik-Wiggs, director of women’s studies; Marie Farr, retired associate professor of English; Martha Libster, associate professor of nursing; and Todd Savitt, professor of medical humanities.

The panelists will discuss modern perspectives about the restrictions on women’s professional and creative opportunities in the late 19th century and today. The last 30 minutes of the program will be reserved for questions from audience members and viewing the library’s latest exhibit, “The Literature of Prescription: Charlotte Perkins Gilman and ‘The Yellow Wall-Paper.’”

The six-banner traveling exhibit, on display through March 6, provides a glimpse into the late 19th century, when women were challenging traditional ideas about gender that excluded them from political and intellectual life. During that time, medical and scientific experts drew on notions of female weakness to justify inequality between the sexes. Artist and writer Charlotte Perkins Gilman, who was discouraged from pursuing a career to preserve her health, rejected these ideas in a terrifying short story titled “The Yellow Wall-Paper.” The famous tale served as an indictment of the medical profession and the social conventions restricting women’s professional and creative opportunities.

For more information, visit http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/laupuslibrary/events/LitPresc.cfm.

Upcoming Events:

Today: Youth Expressions Art Exhibit opening reception, 2 p.m., Greenville Mall. Exhibit continues through March 12.

Monday: Cunanan Leadership Series lecture: Greg Mortenson, author of the bestseller, “Three Cups of Tea,” 7 p.m., Minges Coliseum. It is free and open to the public.

Monday: Marjorie Hudson, author of “A Fool’s Errand: Searching for Virginia Dare,” will speak on “Mosaic Writing,” 8 p.m. Bate Building. Free.
Visit online at www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm for times, places and more information on these events and other ECU upcoming activities.
Orthodontist gives ECU $4M for dental school

Posted: Feb. 26, 2010

A retired Greenville orthodontist on Friday pledged to give $4 million to East Carolina University for its new dental school.

Dr. Ledyard E. Ross, 84, graduated from what was then East Carolina College in the early 1950s. His gift is among the largest in ECU’s history, officials said, and the university Board of Trustees voted to name the 100,000-square-foot building housing the School of Dentistry as Ledyard E. Ross Hall.

“This generous gift comes at a time when we are starting a new school and puts us in a position to support faculty and students at its inception,” Chancellor Steve Ballard said in a statement.

ECU’s dental school plans to admit its first students for the fall semester of 2011. About 50 students will enter the program every year.

The General Assembly provided about $90 million to launch the dental school, including construction of the new building and 10 community service learning centers in rural and underserved areas of North Carolina.

The first three centers will be in Sylva, Ahoskie and Elizabeth City. Dental school faculty members will be based in each, along with advanced dental residents and senior students who will receive enhanced dental education in real practice settings.

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NC orthodontist gives $4M to East Carolina

GREENVILLE, N.C. -- A retired North Carolina orthodontist has given East Carolina University $4 million for its new dentistry school.

As thanks for his gift, university trustees voted on Friday to name the new building for the dentistry school after 84-year-old Dr. Ledyard E. Ross.

East Carolina University Chancellor Steve Ballard says the gift comes at a vital time. The new school will admit its first students in the fall of 2011.

University officials say the $4 million gift is one of the largest in the school's history.
Campuses help students handle pricey textbooks

N.C. State's physics department and library have teamed up to strike a blow against a foe college students know too well: high textbook costs.

The library has posted a free textbook online this semester for about 1,300 students taking a key physics class.

Normally, a text for Physics 211 and 212 -- required courses for many non-physics majors -- would be between $140 and $190.

For Rikki Horne, a junior zoology major, getting the free physics text was a modest but welcome relief, given that she spent more than $600 for books this semester even though she hunted down as many used ones as she could and even recycled a couple from previous classes.

"I didn't buy all of the books I needed this time because I just couldn't afford them," she said.

The free e-book joins a growing range of alternatives to pricey new texts. With those at some UNC system schools now shelling out more than $1,000 a year if they have to buy all new books, they have turned to an almost bewildering array of alternatives, from full-price e-books, to online booksellers, to online and on-campus book rental.

Gripping about textbook prices is a college tradition, but price hikes appear to have accelerated. A U.S. Government Accountability Office study in 2005 determined that prices had nearly tripled since 1986, and blamed at least some of the problem on increasing costs associated with creating materials that instructors wanted, such as CD-ROMs and teaching supplements.

UNC measures

The UNC system in 2006 and 2007 began requiring its universities to gather more information on textbook costs, and asked the campuses to find ways to reduce book costs. Four of the smaller universities now have rental programs. The three largest schools, NCSU, East Carolina University and UNC-Chapel Hill, have formed a consortium to buy in bulk. And all campuses have implemented guaranteed buyback programs for some texts, so students won't get stuck with books that have no resale value.

UNC-Wilmington, which is among several with bookstores run by the Barnes & Noble chain, was among 25 universities nationwide that the chain picked for a pilot program that will rent textbooks. A text for Biology 366 there costs $134.64 new or $101 used. It will rent for $57.25

The NCSU library staff has been getting the word out about the various alternatives, including creating a Web page explaining "open textbooks," which are published online and are free to anyone.
These are typically created by scholars who have decided it's important to give students a break.

NCSU officials think the savings to students from using the free physics text could approach a quarter of a million dollars, given the typical cost of new textbooks. But they also see the move as another step toward a perhaps not-so-distant time future when there are no longer printed textbooks.

"I do think it's inevitable that this is the way of the future," said Michael Paesler, chairman of the physics department. "It's obvious that the students are comfortable with electronic information, and to ignore that a lot of learning takes place electronically now would be just sticking your head in the sand."

In this case, the university library was able to offer the book free because the publisher is new and trying to gain a foothold, and didn't ask for a large licensing fee, said Greg Raschke, associate director for collections and scholarly communications. The physics department approached the library about the idea and the library negotiated a modest licensing fee -- about $1,500 -- to put the book online.

Other costs remain

The physics department had been pondering the idea of an online text for a few years, but hadn't found one that was suitable until recently, Paesler said.

Early reviews on NCSU's free book experiment are mixed, but that may have more to do with the specific book, "Physics Fundamentals," than the idea of online texts. Mary Lewis, an NCSU sophomore who is using the online book, panned it. Among other issues, it needs to have more practice questions to help get the material across, she said. Horne agreed, saying she doesn't have the same problems with another, standard-priced online text.

Also, the book doesn't completely eliminate costs associated with the class. There are still $70 in fees for a lab manual and online interactive homework, which the university had to set up with a private company.

Paesler said the department will check student evaluations at the end of the semester to see how well the book worked. It seems inevitable, though, that more texts will end up online.

Paesler, for one, is convinced that online books are the future. The department, he said, will introduce its next low-cost online text in the fall, for a class on optics. It's a text he had written and already had in electronic form, so the main costs will be associated with things such as creating a lab manual.

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Duke professor's family lives on campus

DURHAM -- Maeve Cook-Deegan will have plenty of new experiences when she heads off to college this fall. But dorm life won't be one of them.

Maeve, a 17-year-old Durham Academy senior, has already spent six years living in a Duke University residence hall as the daughter of one of the university's 13 faculty-in-residence professors.

Which means she's already had a few "crazy college kids" moments.

Exhibit A: "I walked out the door yesterday and there was a guy with his shirt off," Maeve recounted recently. "And his friend was reading what people had written on him the day before."

Such is life in Alspaugh dorm on Duke's East Campus, Maeve's home since she was 12. She lives there with her parents, Bob and Kathryn, and their dog, Oshie, a friendly mutt named for a Swiss lake.

For Maeve, Duke dorm life was a dramatic change from the suburban bliss of Annapolis, Md., where the family lived before Bob Cook-Deegan was recruited away from a Stanford University program in Washington. She left a neighborhood where her best friend lived next door and moved into a cramped room at the back of the Cook-Deegan compound, a retrofitted apartment fashioned from several standard dorm rooms.

The apartment is long and narrow, with a spacious kitchen, a cozy living room, two bedrooms, two bathrooms and a giant dog bed for Oshie.

For Maeve, life has been one slow transition. When she moved in at age 12, she got funny looks from students who may have mistaken her for a resident's little sister. As she grew, she began to fit in more. Now 17, she's just a year or two younger than the students.

Still, she doesn't mix with them much. In fact, the most interaction she has with students is during fire drills, which often come on weekends or late at night.

"This year hasn't been so bad," said Maeve, who will enroll at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland this fall. "They've learned how to use the microwave."

Dorm life can be frustrating at times. It's hard to direct friends to her dorm, which is tucked away in the back of the campus. And when they do visit, they risk a parking ticket from the campus cops.

A few suite perks

But there are bonuses, though, such as campus arts events, use of the campus gym and the quiet that comes with winter break. That's when Maeve has the run of the place, so she and her friends can enjoy the rec room and its flat-screen television - and pool and foosball tables.
Bob Cook-Deegan is a public policy professor and director of Duke's Center for Genome Ethics. When he was recruited to Duke, he insisted on living with his family in a dorm, in an attempt to recapture the experience he had as an undergrad at Harvard, where faculty members live in "houses" with students and act as advisers. The idea is to eliminate barriers between faculty and students and enhance the academic experience.

"I figured this would be the most efficient way to learn this new universe," he said. "I learn a whole lot more about the students hanging out with them and then eating breakfast with them."

The faculty-in-residence model is not common at Triangle universities, though N.C. State started a program this year aimed at bringing a faculty member to live in a residence hall.

Round-the-clock job

In exchange for free housing, utilities and wi-fi, Cook-Deegan is both a formal and informal adviser to the 120 students who live in Alspaugh. The formal: He helps organize dorm events, outings and educational activities, though he has no official disciplinary duties. The informal: He becomes a crisis counselor on occasion when an overstressed student bangs on the door in the middle of the night.

It's an arrangement he likes. He routinely chats with his students, and when they camp out in Krzyzewskiville for weeks to score coveted basketball tickets, he brings them coffee and doughnuts. But while he's a familiar enough presence in the dorm that students refer to him simply as "BCD," there are boundaries.

"I'm not one of the gang," he said. "There's a definite disconnect between the student and the faculty. Every year, I do have very close friendships with students, but it's not the expectation."

Connie Chai lived in Alspaugh as a freshman and enjoyed having a faculty member living among the students. Chai, now a senior, said it was nice to have an adult adviser close by, and seeing a professor outside the classroom set students at ease.

"You're seeing him in a different setting, and you meet his family and his dog," she said. "We'd be eating pizza in the common room, and Oshie would come in and try to get a piece of pizza."

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A tight year

This will be one of those every-other-year "short" sessions in which the General Assembly convenes in May rather than January. Be assured, the legislators will not run short of rock-hard budget issues. The outlines of another fiscal crunch have already taken shape.

Last week Gov. Beverly Perdue and others cautioned that the revenue outlook continues to be generally bleak. Perdue's conclusion: "The state has got to shed services that are not core to our mission," she told mayors meeting in Wilmington. "I'm going to look at consolidating pieces of state government." Too many of us know where such consolidation often leads - layoffs. There's talk of a $500 million gap between estimated revenues and expenses.

As if state employees didn't have enough to worry about, after years of slim-to-none pay hikes and constantly rising health insurance costs.

Meanwhile, most folks' family incomes continue to suffer, under pressure from widespread layoffs and furloughs. Far too many North Carolinians have lost their jobs in the recession - the figure is stuck above 11 percent, higher than the national average. Overall, the state has lost 280,000 jobs since 2007. Fewer people are employed than in the mid-1990s, despite substantial population growth since then. Total tax withheld from paychecks has dived still deeper than the sinking employment level, a measure of the hit that even still-employed workers have taken.

Revenue on the rocks

Sales tax revenue, a barometer of in-state economic activity, has risen little from last year's depths despite a 1-cent-on-the-dollar increase that took effect last September. As for the state's all-important income tax revenue, the outlook is uncertain at best. Cheery optimism is not the catch phrase of the day in the Fiscal Research Division.

Bottom line: Legislators will have a hard time finding the money to keep state government going even at the reduced level mandated in the current fiscal year's budget - because the money just isn't there.

But the needs are. They don't go away in a recession, and in many ways they have intensified.

More people are attending our universities and community colleges, in part to gain new job skills. The mental health system remains in near-crisis mode and still can't serve all those in need. Medicaid, a federal/state partnership that puts a huge load on the state budget, is burdened by increasing demand for health services and the ever-rising cost of care. K-12 public education, which our state government supports to an unusual degree (teachers are state employees), is a vital expense that is especially hard to cut in light of continuing population growth. Roads and bridges don't build or repair themselves.

Efficiency imperative
A business that loses customers because of the bad economy can lay off workers and still - maybe - maintain service. That's much harder for a state agency if its workload is growing. This is one reason why the "run the state more like a business" argument doesn't hold as much water as it might.

Last year the federal government helped bail out the 50 state budgets via economic stimulus money, and a good thing it was. Stimulus funds held layoffs of teachers and others to a minimum. Given the recession's persistence, more help is warranted this year. But Uncle Sam is strapped too.

For the legislature and for state employees, then, a relentless drive for greater efficiency, which includes Perdue's pledge to "shed services that are not core to our mission," is the only logical and reasonably humane route to balancing the budget. Legislators should continue looking at the sales tax, with a view to lowering the rate while expanding the levy's reach to more services, but in an election year progress there would be a surprise. Unless the economy turns up sharply, the state will have to keep tightening its belt. The goal must be to keep the crunch from hurting those who most need help.
Duke University costs will rise 3.9 percent in the fall

DURHAM -- Duke University undergraduates will be charged a 3.9 percent increase in tuition, room and board next academic year, bringing the total annual cost to attend Duke to $51,865.

Tuition rates for 2010-11 were set Saturday by the university's Board of Trustees. The board also approved the creation of a new 18-month master's program in engineering and the construction of a $20 million chilled-water plant to serve Duke Medical Center.

Though the annual cost to attend Duke has risen past $50,000, many students do not pay full freight. More than 40 percent receive financial aid, a Duke news release said Saturday.

The board also signed off on the construction of a new 150-bed residence hall. Nicknamed K4, the new dormitory is scheduled to be completed by January 2012.

It will be part of the Keohane Quad on West Campus. The residence hall will consist of two "houses," one with 90 beds and one with 60 beds.