THE DAILY CLIPS

March 4, 2008

News, commentary, and opinion
compiled by the East Carolina University News Bureau from:

The Greenville Daily Reflector
The Raleigh News & Observer
The New York Times
The Wall Street Journal
USA Today
The Charlotte Observer
The Fayetteville Observer
The Greensboro News & Record
Newsweek
U.S. News & World Report
Business Week
Time

East Carolina University News Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@ecu.edu  Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481 FAX: 252-328-6300
Appalachian State has brief campus lockdown

The Associated Press

BOONE — Appalachian State University locked down all campus buildings for more than an hour Monday as authorities searched for a man who was seen carrying a gun nearby.

Officials lifted the lockdown shortly after 6:30 p.m., after no further sightings of the suspect were reported.

"Both Appalachian State police and Boone police have been consulting, and they think that the threat no longer remains," said school spokeswoman Lynn Drury.

Officials asked students to use caution as they left campus, which is roughly 100 miles northwest of Charlotte in the western North Carolina mountains. Authorities remained on alert and asked people to report any suspicious activity. Monday night classes were canceled, but were set to resume Tuesday.

An alert posted on the university's Web site said a white male in a black Pink Floyd T-shirt and wearing a dark jacket and ski mask was seen near campus with a small black handgun. No shots were fired and no injuries were reported.

Forrest Gilliam, a senior and president of the school's student government association, said students on campus were alerted over campus public address systems and by e-mail. He was locked down with other students in the campus' student union.

"Everyone's relieved," Gilliam said. "With the technology we had in place, I think communication to the students went well."

The lockdown came just hours after school officials sent a campus-wide e-mail to students updating them about plans for an emergency messaging service. Many universities are deploying such systems in a response to last year's shootings at Virginia Tech, where a student gunman killed 32 people and himself.

Earlier Monday, police questioned a man who carried a gun into Middle Georgia College in Cochran, about 120 miles south of Atlanta. The college was placed on lockdown as authorities searched the campus. It was lifted around noon, and classes resumed, said college President Mary Ellen Wilson.

The man realized he had a handgun in his vehicle when he went to exchange cars with his brother, a cafeteria worker at the school, and stuck it in his waistband, Cochran Police Chief Jon Thrower said. A student then reported seeing a man with a gun.

During the lockdown, a separate call to a Veterans Affairs center in Dublin touched off another alert when the caller said a student was being held hostage in a dormitory. That call was believed to have been either a hoax or a misunderstanding by a parent about what a student had told them, Thrower said.

At any rate, it led to the dorms being emptied a second time, he said. Meanwhile, authorities learned of the car exchange between the cafeteria worker and his brother, Thrower said.
Grade-schoolers get more laughs out of Mozart

By Kim Grizzard
The Daily Reflector

What the average grade-schooler knows about opera, he probably learned from the Bugs Bunny cartoon “What’s Opera Doc?” There are no horned hats in Mozart’s “The Magic Flute.” That is one stereotype East Carolina University’s Opera Theatre performers hoped to shatter when they took some of the opera’s high (and low) notes to Wahl-Coates Elementary School last week.

“Unfortunately, opera is mostly known for being for richer folks and snotty types,” said Timothy Messina, who plays the role of prince Tamino. “It’s a completely different experience actually watching one of these performances.”

To give elementary schoolers that experience, Jeffrey Ward’s music-education students at ECU have spent the last several weeks writing lesson plans and even helping to instruct some music students in Edie Snider’s classes at Wahl-Coates. Elementary students learned about the basic plot of the opera (a magical fairy tale of a prince’s quest for love), along with some opera etiquette.

“I think it’s been a great partnership for our students to have the opportunity to get into the schools and work with real kids,” said Ward, assistant professor of choral music education and associate director of choral activities at ECU. “We can talk about it in theory all we want, but until we actually get in front of real (kids), they can’t see how it really works.”

The test came Wednesday, when ECU’s Opera Theatre performed selections from “The Magic Flute” in the Wahl-Coates gym. Children as young as kindergarten were captivated.

“It was cool because the lady could sing really, really high, and the man could sing really, really low, and almost nobody I know can do that,” Wahl-Coates third-grader Demi Smalls said.

Director John Kramar said the reactions of children who have never been exposed to opera are dramatically different from what performers get from regular patrons.

“When Christina (Bartholomew) and Allison (Jones) sang high notes and when T.J. (McNair) sang low notes, it would go quiet because you knew they had never heard that before at this quality and at this level,” Kramar said. “... They’re a little bit more excited about it.”
Luke Hancock, who portrays Monostatos, said performers are energized by the unconventional audience response.

"When we perform at the college, you don’t get as many laughs," he said. "When you perform for these kids, you get a reaction for literally everything you do. You rest your hand on a girl’s shoulder, they all go eeeeww (yuck)."

That was nothing compared to the students’ reaction when characters Papageno (Stephen Howell) and Papagena (Monika Vrabel) kissed onstage.

“They were totally grossed out,” Kramar said, laughing. "Usually the kissing thing is a problem."

Despite thumbs-down reaction for almost any onstage display of affection, performers got a tremendous show of appreciation from their young audience.

“I noticed that in the opera assembly that they worked really hard when they were doing the play,” third-grader Odyssey Sherrod said. “I think they must have practiced a lot.”

Rehearsal schedules were one thing students asked about in a brief question-and-answer session with performers after the show. "How do you get a voice like that?" one child wanted to know. Another asked performers if they had been in plays when they were younger.

Farmville native Alyssa Howell was happy to field that question. She got her first onstage role in "The Princess and the Pea" at age 5.

“I think that if you start them out at an earlier age, then they have a better appreciation for it throughout their life,” said Howell, who plays one of the queen’s attendants in “The Magic Flute.”

“I know when I did stuff like this, I went home and told my parents every detail, down to the last feather,” she said. “I hope they will do the same.”

So does Kramar.

“We’ve got to build our audience,” he said. "... Maybe when these kids grow up and become engineers and doctors and lawyers, they will support the arts. They’ll take their husbands and wives and kids to concerts and remember that Mozart guy was pretty cool.”

Stephen Howell hopes kids will think opera is cool, a message that’s not necessarily reinforced by the cartoon song “Kill the Wabbit.”

"I feel like if kids are exposed to opera at a young age, and see (something) like "The Magic Flute,”'” he said, “then they can think ‘Hey, that was fun’ instead of the contrary movie version of opera.”
State sets new vaccine requirements

FROM STAFF REPORTS

A booster dose of the childhood vaccine for tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis, called Tdap, will be required for most North Carolina students entering the sixth grade and for students going to college for the first time.

The new rules, approved Monday by the state Commission for Public Health, also mandate a second dose of mumps vaccine for all children before enrolling in school, college or university.

The changes put North Carolina immunization rules in line with national recommendations, which were changed in recent years to encourage additional vaccine coverage for mumps and pertussis, otherwise known as whooping cough.

Most children are fully protected against whooping cough before entering kindergarten, but immunity wanes after about 10 years. In recent years, cases of whooping cough have been rising nationally.

The new state immunization requirements are designed to reduce the incidence of whooping cough and mumps in North Carolina, said Beth Rowe-West, head of the state immunization branch.

Boots shots will be available at no cost to all children through the state's Universal Vaccine Program.

Most children receive two doses of mumps vaccine in standard immunizations. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's pediatrician to determine whether the shot is required.

A BOOSTER DOSE OF Tdap VACCINE WILL BE REQUIRED FOR:

- Any student attending public school who is entering the sixth grade on or after Aug. 1 if five years or more have passed since the student's last shot.
- Students in private, home-school and nontraditional schools who are 12 years old on or after Aug. 1 if five years or more have passed since the last dose.
- Students enrolling in college for the first time on or after July 1 who have not been vaccinated against tetanus and diphtheria within the past 10 years.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
PHONE: 707-5550
ONLINE: www.immunize.com
BRIEFS

FROM STAFF REPORT

WAKE COUNTY

Campbell takes over new law building

RALEIGH - Campbell University has assumed ownership of the downtown building that will be the new home of the institution's law school.

Known as Hillsborough Place, the 107,000-square-foot brick building was sold to the university in October, with the school officially assuming ownership Thursday, according to a news release.

The university recently retained two architecture firms, Shepley Bulfinch of Boston, Mass., and Small Kane of Raleigh, to oversee renovation of the building, at 225 Hillsborough St. The future home of the Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law will include a state-of-the-art law library.

School officials hope to start classes in the refurbished building in August 2009.
ASU has gunman scare

Campus locked down for 82 minutes

BY LORENZO PEREZ AND JANE STANCI LL
STAFF WRITERS

Appalachian State University locked down campus buildings for 82 minutes and canceled classes Monday evening after the reported sighting of a man wearing a dark ski mask and carrying a gun near the campus.

After announcing that no shots had been fired and no injuries had been reported, the university lifted the lockdown at 6:32 p.m. Campus and Boone police planned to remain on alert through the evening, but no further sightings of the alleged gunman were reported after the campus re-opened.

Lynn Drury, associate vice chancellor for university communications, said authorities are still investigating, but they never located a suspect. She said officers were interviewing the person who made the initial report.

“There were no shots fired that we can ascertain,” she said.

According to the original report, a masked man carrying a small, black gun and wearing a black Pink Floyd T-shirt with a rainbow prism and red-and-green tennis shoes was spotted near Appalachian South Apartments in the Hill Street area.

The university posted frequent updates on its Web site and sent mass e-mail messages to faculty, staff and students, Drury said.

There was no hesitation by university officials to order a lockdown on campus, she said.

“I don’t think you can be too cautious with the safety and security of your students, faculty and staff,” Drury said.

Some students on campus first heard about the reported gunman from parents calling from back home who had seen breaking news reports.

Freshman Robert Cohen of Cary was walking back to his room in Hoey Residence Hall after working out when his mother called his cell phone before 5 p.m.

“When I heard from my parents, I thought they were lying to me,” said Cohen, 18. “I came back to my dorm and checked my e-mail. It was kind of freaky.”

Other students recounted having their classes interrupted by announcements to stay in class or steer clear of the area where the alleged gunman had been seen.

Junior Alejandro Gonzalez, 22, said that a university representative walked into his macro-economics class in Raley Hall about 4:35 p.m. to inform students that someone had been spotted carrying a gun on the opposite end of campus.

“She interrupted everything, let us know if we’re headed toward that direction not to do it because the whole campus was on lockdown and there was cops all over the place,” Gonzalez said in a phone interview. “Once that happened, classes were let out. Everybody that was heading out just got on the bus or got picked up or something but pretty much went in the opposite direction.”

Universities prepare

Campuses around North Carolina and the nation have conducted drills to simulate mass shootings since the massacre at Virginia Tech in April and the killings last month at Northern Illinois University.

Elizabeth City State University officials were criticized last week when an undercover officer burst into a classroom with a fake gun and threatened to kill terrified students and a professor.

The university said it had notified the campus about the exercise, but apparently not everyone on campus received the warning. Campus leaders apologized.

In January, UNCGreensboro held a daylong drill to test law enforcement responses from a mock shooter. The test was held when students were on winter break.

lorenzo.perez@newsobserver.com or (919) 829-4643
When your kid isn’t college bound

Is it really so bad to pursue an art, a trade, a backpacking tour of Europe?

By Melissa Schorr

Special to msnbc.com

updated 8:23 a.m. ET, Mon., March 3, 2008

At Fairport High School in upstate New York, the class of 2008 has been buzzing for months about SAT scores, college apps and the rapidly approaching acceptance letters. But senior Paul Marchioni, 18, is planning to take the road less traveled: Instead of college, he wants to enroll in a local martial arts school to pursue his dream of becoming a professional fighter.

“My dad wants me to go to college — he’s a very ‘education-is-the-greatest-aspect-of-life’ kind of guy,” Marchioni says. But despite the lectures from his father and the taunts of his classmates, he has no regrets about his decision. “I’ll be doing something better,” he says confidently.

As college acceptances arrive this spring, some parents who always assumed their child would attend college may instead be seeing those dreams fall short, leaving them disappointed, even embarrased, and fearful for their child’s future.

“It’s scary to be a parent and think, ‘What’s going to happen to my kid without that degree?’ says Mark Kuranz, past president of the American School Counselor Association, and lead counselor for the Racine Unified School District in Racine, Wis. “We’ve done a really good job of selling that the ‘American Dream’ can only be accomplished through a four-year degree.”

The reality, of course, is far different. Only some two-thirds of seniors nationwide will enroll in college next fall, according to the most recent figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. And experts say only 30 percent of jobs today actually require a four-year degree.

Still, parents are justifed in some of their concerns. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, adults with a college degree earned on average $54,689 in 2005, while those with a high school diploma earned only $29,448. Over a 40-year career, that spread would add up to nearly a million dollars in lost earnings. And studies show that a break in education very often does mean the student will never return.

Hear them out

So, what to do if your teen approaches you about detouring off the college path?

First, listen carefully to their reasons why, advises Lindsay Weisner, a family therapist in New York City. “Be open-minded,” she urges. “Maybe you want your kid to do what you did — or what you wish you should have done. Maybe you’re wrong — maybe they are making a decision that’s better for them.”

In fact, educators point out there are downsides of insisting kids go against their wishes: the hefty tuition cost; the high dropout rate, estimated as high as 45 percent; and the wasted time, if they ultimately decide on a career path with different requirements.

“Why should you go to college and stumble around? It’s expensive,” Kuranz says. “Maybe you ought to do some things where you discover that working for 10 bucks an hour ain’t all that.”

After earning his high school degree, Craig Rutherford, 23, decided not to pursue college, and has been working an IT job in Nashville, Tenn., while trying to break into the music business as a sound tech.

“People act like it’s just a given that you’ll go — like it’s the next in line after birth, childhood, puberty, high school, then BAM!” he laments. “Every day I work with people who went to college and now have really boring jobs. Is that what college gets you?”

His parents still have “mixed emotions” about his decision. “Not having that ‘piece of paper’ means he will be limited on opportunities, and, of course, we don’t want that for him,” says his mother, Theresa Rutherford. “But we know beyond a shadow of doubt that he will be successful. His character and work ethic will speak for themselves.”

“Not every kid wants to study Shakespeare,” points out Harlow Unger, author of the career guidebook “But What If I Don’t Want to Go to College?” He encourages vocational schools as a viable alternative, for training
to be an electrician or a medical technician, for example. "Our whole culture devalues the trades, which is tragic."

On the flip side, there are some academically oriented seniors who graduate feeling too burned out to head straight to campus. For these students, deferring college and taking what is known as a "gap year" might be a solution.

"Sometimes, kids need to step away from the race for a moment," says Bob Gilpin of Time Out Associates, an interim year consulting group based in Milton, Mass., that has counseled 3,000 kids on gap years. "Doing a gap year gives them a break to rebuild their batteries, refresh and recharge."

This little-known option has been long favored by Australian, New Zealand and British students and is growing in acceptance stateside, especially among elite schools such as Phillips Andover Academy and Harvard University.

To parents unfamiliar with the concept, the suggestion may sound alarmingly unfocused at first, says Holly Bull, president of the Center for Interim Programs, based in Princeton, N.J. "The parent is thinking, "What are you going to do, stay home and play computer games?"" In reality, these programs tend to be highly structured, setting up internships, course work and volunteerism around the globe.

Rebecca Sigel, a 2006 Milton Academy graduate, deferred college to spend a year backpacking in the Southwest, farming in New Zealand and working in the Galapagos. Now a freshman at Brown University, she touts the value of her year off. "I come at my academics from a much broader perspective — more apt to ask questions, more informed on the specifics of what I study."

**Best for the child — or parent?**

Ultimately, whether a young adult heads straight to college, takes a break or never pursues that degree, parents need to analyze whether their own expectations are getting in the way of what's truly best for their child.

"Parents think of a college admission as a final grade on their parenting — and, of course, it's not," says psychologist Michael Thompson, the Arlington, Mass.-based author of "The Pressured Child: Helping Your Child Find Success in School and Life."

"The goal of every parent should be to send a child out into the world who is independent, loving, productive and moral," Thompson says. "Does going to college immediately after high school guarantee those goals? The answer is no."

That's what Marchioni's mother, Gretchen Stahlin, a tech writer who is pursuing her master's degree, firmly believes.

"I really give Paul a lot of credit for daring to be different," she says. "All those times when I told him to ignore what everyone else was doing, that he should pursue what he felt most passionate about — I guess he was listening, after all."

_Melissa Schorr is a Boston-based freelancer who has written for the Wall Street Journal, the Boston Globe Magazine, Reuters Health, Working Mother, Self, GQ and People. She is the author of the young adult novel "Goy Crazy."_

© 2008 MSNBC Interactive

URL: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23344817/
Medical Identity Theft Turns Patients Into Victims

By Michelle Andrews
Posted February 29, 2008

If identity thieves were to disregard your financial accounts and instead target your medical information, your first thought might well be, "Take my medical identity. Please." What nut would want your high cholesterol, trick knee, and family history of Alzheimer's? The answer is simple: one without health insurance who needs surgery or prescription drugs, or someone who sees a medical ID as the open sesame that will allow him or her to collect millions in false medical claims. These thieves don't actually want your medical ailments, of course, but by pretending to be you they can get what they're really after.

Untangling the mess is hard: Unlike financial identity theft, there's no straightforward process for challenging false medical claims or correcting inaccurate medical records. For victims, the result can be thousands in unpaid charges, damaged credit, and bogus, possibly dangerous details cluttering up their medical records for years to come.

Medical identity theft currently accounts for just 3 percent of identity theft crimes, or 249,000 of the estimated 8.3 million people who had their identities lifted in 2005, according to the Federal Trade Commission. But as the push toward electronic medical records gains momentum, privacy experts worry those numbers may grow substantially. They're concerned that as doctors and hospitals switch from paper records to EMRs, as they're called, it may become easier for people to gain unauthorized access to sensitive patient information on a large scale. In addition, Microsoft, Revolution Health, and, just this week, Google have announced they're developing services that will allow consumers to store their health information online. Consumers may not even know their records have been compromised. In January, a new law took effect in California that requires providers to let consumers know if their medical information has been "breached." But only a handful of other states spell out notification requirements
regarding unauthorized release of patient medical data. In contrast, most states have so-called breach laws that address accidental disclosures of financial information; these may also apply to medical data in certain instances. This month, Democratic Reps. Ed Markey of Massachusetts and Rahm Emanuel of Illinois, with support from several privacy groups and Microsoft, introduced a bill that would strengthen safeguards protecting access to consumers' medical information and make it a federal requirement to notify patients if their healthcare data get exposed.

Brandon Reagin didn't realize someone had snatched his medical identity until his mother called to tell him he was the lead suspect in a car theft in South Carolina in 2005. The 22-year-old marine had lost his wallet more than a year earlier while celebrating with friends after completing boot camp at Parris Island, near Beaufort, S.C. After his training, he was posted to California. But in South Carolina, Reagin lived on, as an impostor used his military ID and driver's license to not only test-drive new cars and then steal them but also visit hospitals on several occasions to treat kidney stones and an injured hand, running up nearly $20,000 in medical charges. Reagin found out about the unpaid hospital bills when he asked for a credit report following the car theft. "It was horrible," he says. "And what made it worse is that no one really knew what to do when it first started happening."

Reagin got nowhere with local police, but with the help of a state senator, he finally connected with the U.S. attorney's office in South Carolina. Staff there notified the Secret Service, and Reagin's doppelgänger, a 30-something guy named Arthur Watts from a tiny Midlands town called Blythewood, was eventually arrested. Watts pleaded guilty last September to identity theft and is awaiting sentencing.

But for Reagin, now serving in Iraq, the case isn't closed. Because of the outstanding hospital bills, the state intercepted his $362 tax refund, money he has yet to see. And although the hospitals no longer dun him for the unpaid balances, he's still trying to clean up his credit. (In addition to racking up medical bills, Watts opened cellphone and other accounts in Reagin's name and stole another car.) There's another potential problem: The hospitals Watts used may have medical records in Reagin's name for treatment he never received. If he visits his family in South Carolina and needs medical attention, those records could complicate his treatment, even cause harm. And if those medical records
someday become electronically linked to one big nationwide health information network, as envisioned by the Bush administration, some privacy experts worry it may be impossible to find and correct the errors once they percolate through the vast interconnected system. Others argue that the technology could actually make tracking errors easier. The reality is unclear.

Victims of financial identity theft have a much clearer path to recovery than those whose medical identities are stolen. If someone swipes your wallet and goes on a spending spree, you can ask any of the three major credit bureaus for a free credit report, place a fraud alert on your account, and get inaccurate charges expunged. With medical identity theft, it's not that simple. In the first place, your records are most likely scattered among many different providers, and there's no medical records clearinghouse that keeps them. Under HIPAA, the federal law that addresses medical privacy, you're entitled to a copy of these documents, though you may have to pay for it. If there's an error, you can add a correction to the record, but you can't have information deleted. And if an impostor gets healthcare services in your name, you may really be stuck. Healthcare providers may actually refuse to let you see your own record because once it's intermingled with someone else's, that person's privacy must be protected.

Even seemingly obvious errors can be hard to clear up in this fragmented system. Wayne Ivey, who formerly led an identity theft task force at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, remembers getting a call from an extremely agitated Illinois woman a few years ago. A hospital in Miami, she said, was calling her repeatedly and demanding that she pay a $2,000 bill for giving birth. She told the callers she'd never been to that hospital—and was 72 years old. It still took weeks of phone calls to various agencies to resolve the problem.

**Insider fraud.** Until recently, experts believed most medical identity thieves were solo operators who pretended to be someone else because they needed medical care. Now a different picture is emerging, one of employees inside the healthcare system stealing patients' information to make false insurance claims. "It's trending above the 90th percentile that insiders are doing the identity theft," says Pam Dixon, executive director of the World Privacy Forum, who authored a 2006 report on medical identity theft that was perhaps the first in-depth examination of this crime.
An insider was behind the theft of more than 1,100 Medicare beneficiaries' medical identities at the Cleveland Clinic in Weston, Fla., a few years ago. A front desk clerk named Isis Machado downloaded their names, addresses, and Social Security and Medicare numbers and sold the data to her cousin, who then made more than $2.8 million in false Medicare claims. Machado was caught because a coworker told her supervisor she was acting suspiciously. "There's no way to prevent insiders from becoming crooks," says Robert Gellman, a privacy and information policy consultant in Washington, D.C. With sometimes hundreds of employees legitimately needing access to patient records, even robust computer monitoring and auditing systems may not pick up a problem.

Healthcare providers can be victims, too. A dying man confessed to his doctor that he'd posed as a cousin to fraudulently receive more than $85,000 in medical services at the University of Connecticut Health Center in Farmington. The hospital got stuck with the bill when the patient died. It now requires a picture ID at every visit and pastes a photograph to the inside of each patient's medical chart, says Marie Whalen, assistant vice president for ambulatory services. But that's not going to protect the facility from the kind of insider crime that experts now believe is more common.

Ultimately, no matter how sophisticated the technology or diligent the healthcare provider, patients themselves may be the best first line of defense against medical identity theft. "Most of the time, these problems are consumer reported," says Byron Hollis, managing director of the national antifraud department for the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, which coordinates antifraud activities for the 39 independent BCBS companies nationwide. "They know what procedures they did or didn't receive."

Tags: medical safety | identity theft

Copyright © 2008 U.S. News & World Report, L.P. All rights reserved.