THE DAILY CLIPS

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An expert in caring for the gravely ill will discuss how people in their last days can have a quality life.

Dr. Charles Sasser, medical director for palliative care services at Conway Medical Center in South Carolina, will discuss end-of-life treatment at 7 p.m. Thursday in the Edwin W. Monroe EAHEC Conference Center, 2000 Venture Tower Drive. The End of Life Care Coalition of Eastern Carolina is sponsoring the event with a grant from Pitt Memorial Hospital Foundation.

Palliative care is typically defined as medical treatment that aims to ease pain and provide comfort for the gravely ill. However, Sasser said palliative providers offer much more.

Palliative care typically is provided by a group consisting of a doctor, nurse specialist or nurse practitioner, a social worker and chaplain who meet with a patient and the family to discuss goals for the rest of a patient's life, the options for care and how those options can help achieve the goals.

“Where (traditional medicine) will start with the organ that is not working ... palliative medicine begins by asking the person to tell their life story,” Sasser said. “Because only by helping them place their illness in the context of their life story will (patients) begin to understand they have tools and gifts that help them live triumphantly even if they are dying.”

The nation's population of people age 65 and older is growing, and greater numbers of the group are experiencing chronic illnesses that compromise how they live their lives and eventually lead to death, Sasser said.

While these individuals are healthy, they should be discussing what they want if they become chronically or terminally ill, Sasser said.

“When we are healthy, it is really a good time to consider it because we don't have to consider it imminently,” he said.

Sasser has worked with terminally and gravely ill patients since the early 1980s after he learned about Great Britain's hospice movement.
“This was at the beginning of the end-of-life movement, which was a grassroots movement to bring dignity, comfort and quality of life at the end of life,” he said. “It was a clash between a rapidly growing medical technology that was just learning to keep people alive for pretty prolonged periods in a pretty miserable state.”

Sasser had been practicing internal medicine for more than 10 years when he returned to his hometown of Conway and found himself treating many of the adults who nurtured him when his father died when he was 11.

“It became less clear that the medicine I gave them helped them deal with their disease,” Sasser said. “As I began to take care of more and more people at the end of life, I began to realize how courageous they were, how much they had to teach me and how much they appreciated that I was there.”

Following Thursday’s presentation, Sasser will appear at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University to participate in the Grand Rounds, a medical tradition in which doctors present a case and discuss its medical aspects.

Sasser will present a case and talk about how the palliative care would differ from traditional medicine.

Contact Ginger Livingston at glivingston@reflector.com or (252) 329-9570.
I'd like to thank The Daily Reflector for examining problems that result from high concentrations of rental property in some neighborhoods, especially in our city center.

To clarify, the rental program I envision would not be punitive. It is not intended to penalize landlords whose property meets minimum housing and code standards. Rather it would serve as a win-win-win for landlords, tenants and neighborhoods.

By enabling better compliance with standards already in place, a rental program would relieve taxpayers of the high costs of policing chronic rental housing problems. In addition, it would create a better renting climate for tenants, protect landlords' property values and benefit every neighborhood — and our larger community.

Many of our landlords keep up their properties. Indeed, when I rented in the university community my landlords were responsive with repairs. Like many landlords, they saw their properties as an investment.

Unfortunately, some landlords do not maintain or repair their properties. Their tenants live in unsafe, unclean and unmaintained homes. What's more, trash piles up, lawns go unmowed, roofs rot and other code violations drag down entire neighborhoods.

We have a strong code enforcement division and our officers deserve highest praise for the incredible work they do. But we have only six officers for more than 80,000 residents. For landlords who do not maintain their properties or whose tenants repeatedly violate city codes, there should be a systematic way to ensure compliance. It could be as simple as a privilege or business license.

A rental program would better protect the property values of landlords, create a reliable renting standard for tenants and neighbors and improve the quality of life for everyone without increasing costs for our taxpayers.

MARION BLACKBURN
District 3 Representative
Greenville City Council
Innovation's on agenda at UNC
BY ERIC FERRERI - Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL As UNC-Chapel Hill's chancellor, Holden Thorp, has stressed the importance of bold, innovative thinking.

Next week, he'll enlist some of the nation's top entrepreneurs to help drive home the point.

On Tuesday, UNC-CH will host the first public forum for the National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, a body assembled last year by President Barack Obama. Thorp is one of four university leaders on a 24-member panel that includes venture capitalists, philanthropists, educators as well as business titans like Steve Case, who co-founded America Online.

Obama challenged the panel to find better ways to spin the bright ideas that emerge on college campuses into practice - creating jobs and expanding the economy.

"The fact that they wanted to have the meeting in Chapel Hill is a strong sign," Thorp said. "I hope this will be a sign that Carolina is right in the thick of the American innovation discussion."

The public forum offers an unusual chance for citizens to help steer national policy discussion. It begins at 9 a.m. in the Koury Auditorium of the Kenan-Flagler Business School. It's free and open to the public, but tickets are required.

The day before, Thorp will host a panel discussion at the FedEx Global Education Center with fellow council members Case and Gururaj "Desh" Deshpande, chairman of Sparta Group LLC, an investment management firm.

The national council's forum Tuesday will include opening remarks by U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke as well as briefings, subcommittee reports and a public question-and-answer session.
Innovation is all the rage these days on college campuses, where leaders are looking for ways to better harness brainpower for real-world uses. Large research universities like UNC-CH and Duke University are particularly invested; in Chapel Hill, Thorp and others hope to raise $125 million in private money for innovation initiatives on campus.

Duke has tapped Kimberly Jenkins, an alumna and former Microsoft executive, to lead a similar effort there.

Thorp hopes next week's public forum at UNC-CH illustrates to students the role universities play in growing good ideas.

But he points to two of the nation's most prominent entrepreneurs - Microsoft's Bill Gates and Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg - as innovators he hopes his students won't imitate too closely. Though Gates and Zuckerberg are brilliant and wildly successful, they are also exceptions and not the rule, Thorp cautioned.

Each attended Harvard but didn't graduate.

"We have a lot of one-off stories out there, like Mark Zuckerberg and Bill Gates, who didn't finish college," he said. "But for every Mark Zuckerberg and Bill Gates, there are lots of others who dropped out of college and have stories that aren't nearly as interesting."

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A FREE FORUM
The March 15 public forum is free and open to the public, but tickets are required to attend. Tickets for students, faculty and the general public are available at the Carolina Union Box Office through March 14. Students and faculty with UNC One Cards may also pick up tickets at the Kenan Center lobby desk weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Limited parking is available; attendees are encouraged to use public transit. To reach the Carolina Union Box Office, call 962-1449.

The March 14 roundtable featuring Thorp, Case and Deshpande will be at 5 p.m. at the FedEx Global Education Center. It is also free and open to the public.
Under the Dome
Bill lets colleges shun federal loan program

The state House on Tuesday approved a bill giving North Carolina's community colleges the option of not participating in a federal loan program for low-income students. The bill, which was debated at length Monday night, now goes to the state Senate. It passed on a 69-47 vote.

On Tuesday, Rep. Deborah Ross, a Raleigh Democrat, said the bill would hurt young people whose parents can't afford four-year colleges, those seeking job training, employers who won't benefit from an educated work force, and small businesses whose customers with lower-paying jobs will have less cash on hand. Whom would it benefit? Loan sharks and payday lenders, Ross said.

The House defeated a last-minute amendment by Rep. Jennifer Weiss, a Cary Democrat, that would prevent colleges that opt out of the loan program from offering loans with higher interest rates.

Rep. Nelson Dollar, a Cary Republican, made the point that the bill wouldn't prevent local boards of trustees from participating in the loan program if they wanted.

The GOP-sponsored bill allows the college boards not to offer the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program from the U.S. Department of Education. The provision rolls back a 2010 measure that requires the schools to offer the loans starting this summer. Across the state, 34 community colleges do not offer the loans.

George Cleveland, a Republican from Jacksonville and a primary sponsor of the bill, said participation in the federal loan program puts campuses at risk of losing a host of federal funding if too many students fail to pay back the money. Some campus leaders are against the loan program because the colleges have no authority to deny the loans to students they consider to be at a high risk of default.
Democrats accused Republicans of creating a solution to a problem that doesn't exist. No North Carolina community colleges have lost federal funding because of defaults through the loan program.

**Wind energy boost sought**
Dozens of environmental groups in Atlantic Coast states are asking President Barack Obama for a series of efforts to increase offshore wind energy.

The groups are asking for a federal policy that encourages wind development with a strong plan and financial incentives. But they also want assurances that offshore wind farms won't harm delicate ocean ecosystems and that they can co-exist with the fishing industry.

The organizations sent Obama a letter Tuesday outlining their wish list. "For the sake of our environment and the hope of building a truly clean-energy economy in America, we must see numerous wind farms spinning off our shores within the next few years - and we need your help to make that a reality," the letter reads.

In North Carolina, the letter's signers include the Albemarle Environmental Association, Carteret County Crossroads, Environment North Carolina, the N.C. Conservation Network, N.C. Interfaith Power and Light, the N.C. League of Conservation Voters, the N.C. Wildlife Federation, the Pamlico-Tar River Foundation, Surfrider Foundation Outer Banks Chapter, and state Reps. Pricey Harrison, Rick Glazier and Susan Fisher.

**Invited to the White House**
N.C. Association of Educators President Sheri Strickland is invited to the White House today to watch a game of hoops with President Barack Obama.

Strickland will take NCAE Vice President Rodney Ellis as her guest to the viewing party tonight when the Chicago Bulls play the Charlotte Bobcats.

She announced the White House visit on Twitter.

Compiled by staff writers Craig Jarvis, Barbara Barrett and Jane Stancill
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Consequences uncertain as athletes tweet
BY TIM STEVENS - Staff Writer

Rodney Purvis has more than 4,400 people waiting to read the next thing that crosses his mind.

A high school basketball player at Raleigh's small Upper Room Christian Academy, Purvis is ranked among the best junior players in the country. He has committed to play collegiately for Louisville and frequently shares his feelings and thoughts with his band of followers on his Twitter account.

Many times, his messages on the popular microblogging site are as simple as "Good Morning, World," or "im sleepy."

"It is the way I stay in touch with my fans and friends," said Purvis, who has tweeted about 8,500 times since May.

Purvis' posts are squeaky-clean, but that's not true of those of all high school athletes. Some post off-color comments, often accompanied by pictures of
themselves wearing their high school uniforms - connecting their schools with their posts.

Sites such as Twitter, Facebook and MySpace allow users to instantly tell their stories and express their feelings to mass audiences. There is no filter, no editor and, sometimes, no time to think or reflect.

"With today's technology, the things people may have once done in the back seat of a car or in their homes is available for everyone to see," said Barbara Osborne, a UNC-Chapel Hill associate professor who teaches a course on legal aspects of sports. "We know that the children really don't understand the ramifications sometimes."

Though the N.C. High School Athletic Association and local schools have focused intensely on the issue of sportsmanship in recent years, language that would lead to discipline on the court or in the school is generally unmonitored online, despite the fact that many more people may read a social media post than witness an expletive-filled rant by an athlete during a game.

"What students post online is not monitored and is not a suspendable offense in and of itself," said Michael Evans, a Wake County Schools spokesman. "But the student code of conduct covers a wide area."

Cursing or use of vulgar, profane or obscene language is prohibited by Wake Board of Education policy. Wake County Schools student conduct policies do not directly address social media; the Charlotte-Mecklenburg system does. Johnston County Schools address social media specifically under a harassment and bullying policy.

Legal experts say school systems probably have the authority to discipline students for public posts, but there have been few rulings around the country that would set a clear precedent.

Bobby Guthrie, the Wake schools athletic director, said he had heard of a few cases in which high school athletic directors disciplined athletes for social media posts.

"From time to time, I've heard of a picture that shouldn't have been posted or some comments," Guthrie said.
Thousands of athletes making hundreds, if not thousands, of posts are impossible to monitor, Guthrie said. But coaches have the authority to discipline team members for conduct not only on the field but also away from it, he said.

The influence of social media is illustrated by the role of online posts in local college sports controversies in the past year.

North Carolina football players Marvin Austin and Kendric Burney posted pictures and information about vacations and shopping trips that drew the scrutiny of NCAA investigators. Fourteen UNC football players missed at least one game and seven missed the whole season in connection with the probes into improper benefits and academic misconduct that followed. Last fall, a recent Duke graduate received national attention when a mock "sex thesis" she posted as a PowerPoint presentation online went viral.

**Tough to control**
Most athletes' posts are benign, but a perusal of area high school players' Twitter posts turned up plenty of profanity and references to sexual conduct. The most explicit posts cannot be printed in a family newspaper.

For example, one recent tweet by a local high school girl basketball player, heavily redacted here, reads, "[Expletive] my [expletive] while ii [expletive] ya [expletive] off." There were many others of a similar nature. The posts cut through a wide swath - public schools, private schools, schools with religious affiliations.

Students generally are aware of the public nature of social media, but just as people sometimes speak too quickly, sometimes they also post too quickly. Marcus Walker, a basketball player at Enloe, said he uses his Twitter account at times to vent.

"I just write what comes into my head," he said. "Most of the time I don't think about what I tweet. I just tweet."

Walker occasionally deletes a post upon reflection, he said.

Some athletes' posts are popular with thousands of people seeking insights into the recruiting process. That's the case with Purvis and with Millbrook
running back Keith Marshall, who is one of the top junior football players in the country. Marshall said he used to restrict his account to a small group of friends, but he had so many requests to follow his Twitter feed that he just opened it for anyone to see.

"I have to keep that in mind any time I post anything," Marshall said.

Coaches and other adults are not immune from social media mistakes.

The Wake system has disciplined a West Lake Middle School teacher for comments made on her Facebook page. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg system disciplined eight workers for posts in 2008 and sent a memo to the district's 19,000 employees reminding them that public postings could jeopardize their jobs and diminish their professional reputations with parents, students and colleagues.

Que Tucker, a deputy commissioner of the N.C. High School Athletic Association, advises coaches to avoid setting up social media accounts and to assume that everything they say in practice is being recorded.

**Legal issues**

Most area high schools have a code of conduct for students and in many cases place additional expectations, on campus and off, on students who represent the school in athletics and other extracurricular activities. Defining those expectations legally can be difficult.

The authority of school officials to discipline athletes - and other students - for things posted on social media sites pits the schools' ability to maintain discipline and regulate the people representing schools against students' freedom of expression.

"Because social media is so new the law is scrambling to keep up. It is especially true in law dealing with social media and technology in general," said Osborne, the UNC instructor.

Courts have ruled that schools can restrict uncontrolled speech that could disrupt the school and its educational mission.

"It comes down to two things," said Duke law professor Paul H. Haagen. "Schools have fairly extensive rights in regard to high school students. The
courts also have said that participating in high school sports is a privilege, not a right. By participating, your First Amendment rights may be limited."

Nationally, several cases are being litigated concerning the ability of coaches and administrators to regulate what students distribute through social media sites, including actions in Indiana, Washington, Mississippi and New Jersey.

Last March, a federal court in Indiana refused to certify as a legal action a lawsuit brought by high school volleyball players who were suspended from their team because of provocative pictures they posted on their MySpace pages.

A U.S. District Court ordered mediation in a lawsuit brought by cheerleaders in a Washington high school who were suspended from the team in 2008 after nude pictures of themselves, originally sent to friends, were distributed to the entire football team and throughout the student body.

A case is docketed for March in Mississippi involving a former high school cheerleader who was dismissed from the squad after posting profanity-laced messages directed toward the cheer captain.

Mike Absher, the boys basketball coach and athletic director of Davie County High School, said the school brought in a district attorney to talk to the entire student body about social media and the law. The presentation emphasized that sex-related texting and sending nude or revealing photos in e-mail might be prosecuted as a federal felony for child pornography. If found guilty, a student could be sent to prison and be required to register as a sex offender.

"We just felt like we had to try to get in front of this," Absher said. "It is a new world."

Shanda McNair, Purvis' mother, talked to him about the nature of social networking before he made his first tweet, and she still occasionally reads his postings.

"I reminded him that people who don't know him will judge him by what he writes. And it is public," she said.

Purvis is careful about what he posts.
"I don't post any profanity, nothing offensive," Purvis said. "To tell you the truth, I'm really surprised by some of the things I see put out there."

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Andrew Ferguson had deliberately avoided reading articles about the college-admissions process until he realized it was time for his son Gillum to apply to college. Since Ferguson's time as an undergrad, SAT prep courses, high school schedules packed with AP courses and $40,000 college counselors had become the norm. Ferguson documented his and Gillum's journey through the jungle of college admissions in Crazy U: One Dad's Crash Course in Getting His Kid into College. TIME spoke with Ferguson about parental anxiety and the much dreaded personal essay.

Why write about the college application process?
It brings together all these huge national themes like personal ambition and status anxiety and ideas of equality and opportunity. [And it combines those] with the most intimate feelings that people have, which are their feelings as parents to do right by their kids.

Were you surprised by the way the process affected your own behavior?
I realized that there was something irrational that I was doing as a parent. I was about to either go broke or go into debt in order to get my son into a school that I knew was overpriced and that would continue to raise its prices and that probably wouldn't deliver the product that they were selling. We know two things about college from research in the last few years, and the
first is that kids don't learn very much when they're there. The second is that where they went to school has almost no influence on things like their future happiness, job satisfaction, even income. But [regardless], I was still willing to knock myself out to try to get my kid into the kind of school that he wanted to go to.

**Did you hit any particular low points as a parent?**

When we were filling out the essays. I say we. He was writing the college-application essays. The essays are supposed to be answers to questions that I thought were unfailingly ludicrous and particularly ill-suited for young 17-year-old boys. They were all touchy-feely: What was your most embarrassing moment? What does it feel like when you do x, y or z? As one counselor said, "You have to tell your son to reach in and bring out his innermost thoughts." And I said, "He's a 17-year-old boy, lady. He doesn't have any innermost thoughts, and if he did, you wouldn't want to know what they are and neither would I." So I was hovering over him as he had a terrible time trying to answer these touchy-feely questions. I remember at one point I said, "Why do you have this line in here? This line doesn't make any sense. You're trying to tell a joke, and the joke isn't funny. You really ought to just cut this line all together." And he said, "Dad, that was one of the sentences you wrote."

**Speaking of backing off, didn't you tell your son not to lifeguard the summer before his senior year?**

I didn't tell him not to lifeguard that summer. I just suggested he might want to look for a different kind of employment. [A professional college counselor] had said that there are all these things that the kids should do, you know, start a business, go to Guatemala and build wheelchair ramps in whorehouses. I knew he didn't have the entrepreneurial spirit and I wasn't going to send him to Guatemala, so we were sort of at a loss, and he ended up lifeguarding anyway.

**What's the worst thing you were advised to do?**

A lot of parents told me that if I wanted to learn about the general college experience, I had to go onto the Web and read collegeconfidential.com, which is this massive website that I describe in the book. It's a place where anxious parents and their children and professional counselors can come together in a common meeting space and spread misinformation and gossip and lies about going to college. And there's no way to tell a good piece of advice from a bad piece of advice. So you can go from one page to the next,
and an hour has passed and you have heard 12 different pieces of advice, all
of which contradict each other.

If I were a parent counseling other parents right now, the No. 1 thing I would
say is stay away from College Confidential. In fact, I'd stay away from the
Web as much as you can because the Web has no particular filter for good
information and bad information.

**Is there anything you wished you had realized earlier?**
I thought it would matter if he went to one school over another or if he went
to college at all rather than go off into business. But kids at 18 and 19 and 20
years old are going to grow no matter what they do. I look back on it now
and am very happy for what my son and I went through. I sure as hell
wouldn't want to do it again. But I have to, with my daughter.

**What will you do differently with your daughter?**
I think I would be much calmer. I think it has been much calmer. Partly due
to the fact that I do know how it ends. She will get into college. She will turn
into a fine young woman wherever she goes. So that kind of takes some of
the pressure off.

**So there are no lasting scars?**
We can look back on it and see that he's happy and know that it was worth it
for that reason. Kids in four-year colleges generally have a high level of
satisfaction. Why wouldn't they? What's there not to like?