THE DAILY CLIPS

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By Kathryn Kennedy

Roger Kammerer loves the quirky bits from our past. His historical accounts are peppered with tales of drunken cannon firings, cattle mistaken for invading troops and ghosts haunting female dormitories.

Kammerer hosted a walking tour of uptown Greenville on Sunday, an annual event sponsored by the Pitt County Historical Society. Nearly 50 people turned out for the afternoon stroll, to hear a wealth of information from Kammerer about the city's birth, Civil War years and growth spurt in the early 1900s. The walk also highlighted the architecture and artifacts that remain.

"He's a natural," said Jerri Sutton, a historical society member who's attended most of the walks. "It's always different ... We always take a different route. He doesn't have a script."

Over half of Sunday's crowd, however, were first timers. Will Corbitt has spent more than 50 years in Greenville but had never participated in the walk.

"Thank God we are waking up in time at least to save what we have left," said the self-proclaimed history buff. "The more people learn and appreciate the history, the better chance that we can save some of these old buildings."

"We've tried to pretty much leave as much exposed as possible, but still have it look modern and contemporary," said Alan Boutilier, owner of Starlight Cafe.

He bought the newest section of the restaurant about eight months ago and chose to leave that essential character intact — old ceiling tiles, a rough brick wall they had to hand brush clean, iron beams from the Brody's Department Store days.

"And under all the plaster and the bricks, every one of these buildings has its own little secrets." — Alan Boutilier

Surprisingly, Boutilier said restoration costs were far lower than he anticipated.

He said he thinks a high-price stigma may be keeping others interested in uptown buildings at bay.

"It's a simple thing to do because you're talking about what's already there," he concluded.

"And under all the plaster and the bricks, every one of these buildings has its own little secrets."

Kathryn Kennedy can be reached at kkennedy@coxnc.com or 329-9566.
Students' designs honored

By ECU News Bureau
Special to The Daily Reflector

Students from East Carolina University and Pitt Community College took home two awards April 19 at the Sustainable Building Design Competition.

Held in Raleigh, the statewide competition required student teams to design a duplex within budget and size parameters and present it to the judges. Team Clean Slate, from ECU and PCC, won an honorable mention and a $1,000 Founders Award. Members of Team Clean Slate are Chris Dill, Matthew Wilson, Meghan Anders, Karin Jaden of ECU, and Edgar Cullipher of PCC.

ECU professors Robert Chin and Rebecca Sweet as well as William Hofler, who also teaches at PCC, worked with each team on their design projects.

"This is a big deal for these students," Chin said. "They learn how to manage projects with a real-world understanding of crucial elements like budgeting, costs and time as well as meeting requirements and deadlines."

In all, four teams from ECU and PCC who were either architecture technology or interior design students participated in the competition, beating out a total of ten local teams April 11 to secure one of the top four spots. There are 16 student teams statewide.

Free skin cancer check

Free skin cancer screenings will be offered from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Saturday at the Leo W. Jenkins Cancer Center in Greenville. The screenings coincide with National Mole/Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month.

ECU and private practice physicians will, by request, examine any unusual moles or lesions, examine exposed areas such as the head and neck, or perform whole body examinations.

The screenings are by appointment only. Call 847-6018 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Seven awarded Schweitzer Fellowships

Seven students at ECU's Brody School of Medicine were selected as 2008-09 North Carolina Albert Schweitzer Fellows.

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The students, who are completing their first year of medical school, will commit to a year of service with a community agency, devoting more than 800 hours to local communities lacking access to adequate health services.

Ashley Alexander and Ying Zhang will create a series of therapeutic programs to improve the quality of life and emotional well-being of adults undergoing cancer treatment in Greenville and staying at the Hope Lodge.

Anita Unnithan and Brandi Edwards will develop and implement a first aid program for children ages 8-11 at local agencies such as the Summer Significant Academy Club of the United Way. The purpose of START (Stop, Think, & Act Responsibly Today) First Aid is to introduce topics such as emergency action steps, rescue breathing, the Heimlich maneuver, how to stop bleeding and treat wounds as well as self-protective measures in a hands-on, interactive manner.

Brandon Yarns and Nancy Shinouda will develop and conduct a pediatric pre-operative class and tour at Pitt County Memorial Hospital for children scheduled for surgery to lessen their fears or anxieties concerning the surgical experience.

Laura Wolfe will create an after-school program at the Little Willie Center for children to learn to plant and grow a vegetable garden and incorporate healthy habits into their lifestyles.

Federal agency recognizes ICT

ECU has been re-designated as one of the nation's National Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education.

The designation, issued every three years by the National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security, indicates that ECU's Information and Computer Technology program exceeds governmental standards in information security research and education.

The designation will also provide scholarship, grant and job opportunities to students in ECU's Information and Computer Technology program.

"This is an important achievement for our university since criteria for this designation get more rigorous every year," said Erol Ozan, a professor of Information and Computer Technology who oversees the designation for the Center of Academic Excellence.

"This title presents enormous value for our students and faculty because it recognizes their hard work and outstanding achievements in
Appointments

Becky Bagley has been named director of the nurse-midwifery concentration in the graduate program of ECU's College of Nursing. Bagley joined the nurse-midwifery faculty in October 2005 and holds the rank of assistant clinical professor. Before joining ECU, she spent 12 years with Greenville OB/GYN.

Larry Dennis, chairman of the physician assistant studies department in the College of Allied Health Sciences, has been recognized as a distinguished fellow of the American Academy of Physician Assistants. Dennis has spent 24 years in clinical practice and nine years in full-time physician assistant education. His clinical experiences were in family medicine, occupational medicine and orthopedics. He helped open and operate three rural health clinics, one located in a remote mountain area.

Mark A. Stebnicki, professor and director of the graduate program in rehabilitation counseling in ECU's College of Allied Health Sciences, has a new book scheduled for release in May titled "Empathy Fatigue: Healing the Mind, Body, and Spirit of Professional Counselors."
Economy in transition,
but it's still afloat

Event showcases water recreation products

By Tom Marine

The local boat and water recreation industry is trying to increase awareness about its merchandise by getting customers out of their homes and into the water.

As part of that effort, Park Boat Company Powersports and Overton's hosted the Malibu Boats National Demo Day on Saturday at Seine Beach outside of Grimesland.

Bryan Harris, salesman at the Park Boat Company in Washington, said the main reasons behind the demo day were to generate excitement about their products and give people a reason to come out and have fun.

"Anything having to do with water is event driven," Harris said. "We're taking the boats to the people instead of waiting for the people to come to us. You can't wait for people to walk through your doors."

As part of the demonstration, Harris said Park Boats showcased three models, including the 20-foot VTX, 21-foot VLX and 23-foot LSV. The event also featured new wake-boarding equipment and a pig roasting, he said.

"We're reaching out and bringing people from all over eastern North Carolina and just inviting them to get out on the water and experience it," Harris said, referring to water skiing and wake-boarding. "Some people like to show off what they got and the tricks they can do behind the boat."

Harris said selling boats is very seasonal, with February to September being the best time.

"If you don't make it in those seven months, you've had a bad year," he said.

Despite certain economic challenges, such as rising gas...
ECONOMY
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prices, Harris said this year has been one of his personal bests, in terms of boat sales. He said customers are now buying more economically efficient boats, instead of the big "gas-guzzlers."

"Our geographic location, with East Carolina University and Pitt County Memorial Hospital, it seems to be able to sustain itself better than other places in the country," Harris said.

That point, about the buffer provided by the university and PCMH, was echoed by an economics professor at ECU in a telephone interview Thursday.

"We can consider healthcare pretty much recession-proof," Gary Zinn, teaching professor at ECU, said. "Because when people need health care, they need health care."

Zinn also said the university is not going anywhere and the enrollment continues to steadily climb every year.

"The economy is in a transition," Zinn said. "The economy that was previously dominated by traditional manufacturers is evolving into one where there is less weight on manufacturing and more weight in services."

Nevertheless, Zinn said local manufacturing is still very important in terms of employment and payroll.

Zinn said statistical evidence showed at the end of 2007, the national economy was not in a recession. However, he said the numbers from the first and second quarter of 2008 will have a more direct indication.

As for the increasing speculation directed at this issue, Zinn attributed that to the media exposure spotlighting the 2008 presidential election.

"If you think back, for the last 30 or 40 years, anytime there is a presidential election, the candidates running in the primaries and then the general election are going to pull out the most tried and true election issue," he said. "And that is the state of the economy. That will be campaign issue number one."

Zinn said in this election campaign, particularly between Sen. Barack Obama and Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, the candidates are telling everyone how they are going to fix it.

"Our current economic situation is being over-dramatized in the process," Zinn said.

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Schmidt joins pediatrics department at ECU's Brody School of Medicine

Dr. Jeffrey Schmidt, a pediatric critical care specialist, has joined the Department of Pediatrics as a clinical associate professor at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. He comes to Greenville from Colorado, where he was a pediatric critical care specialist and hospitalist.

Schmidt has a medical degree from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, a master's degree in pharmacology and toxicology from the Medical College of Wisconsin, and bachelor's de-

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grees in chemistry and studio art from Grinnell College in Iowa. He completed residency training in pediatrics at Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock.

Schmidt is board-certified in pediatrics and pediatric critical care medicine. His clinical and research interests are caring for critically ill children with cancer, pediatric sepsis and systemic inflammatory response syndrome, the modulation of molecular inflammatory response pathways, pediatric neuropharmacology and modulation of molecular inflammatory response pathways in traumatic and ischemic brain injury. He provides care in the pediatric intensive care unit at Pitt County Memorial Hospital under the auspices of ECU Physicians, the group practice of the medical school.
Laurels — To Thursday's Med-Law Classic basketball fundraiser at Minges Coliseum, projected to raise more than $50,000 for the Pitt County Health Education Foundation. The entertaining spectacle of doctors and lawyers going to "court" for charity has become a yearly tradition that also helps raise awareness about community health care needs.

Laurels — To the annual Billy Taylor Jazz Festival, which concludes today with an 8 p.m. gala concert at the Greenville Convention Center featuring Geri Allen and the East Carolina University Jazz Ensemble A. The festival and Taylor's international prominence as a legendary performer, composer and teacher shines a most favorable light on his native city of Greenville.
TABLE
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Comed the Wright brothers to the Outer Banks in 1900. "Bill has vast knowledge of the families in the area for the past century, which was quite helpful. We examined and studied the table for almost three hours. The more we looked, the more we decided this could not be a fluke," Tise said.

The table consists of three "convincing" components: the legs are from a pre-existing writing table and the top is made from the sides of a shipping crate and two remnants of ash rib material used by the Wrights to build their gliders.

"The different types of wood combined with the shipping label, a distinctive exposed nail that can be seen in the photos which is in the same place in the table, it was exciting to put all the evidence together," Tise said.

The way the shipping crate has been addressed to Wilbur Wright was consistent with others that had been documented previously by Tise. As for the future of the table, Ciarmello said he would like for it to be permanently displayed at the Wright Brothers National Memorial for the public to see. He has already begun discussions with the National Park Service about this possibility.

For more information on the Wright brothers' life in Kitty Hawk, see the ECU Web site, focusing on their 1908 flights: www.WorldAloft.org.

Also, more on the Wright brothers can be found at www.digital.lib.ecu.edu/exhibits/wright/index.html
ECU faculty, students work to authenticate Wright brothers' wooden table

By ECU News Services

When the Wright brothers moved to Kitty Hawk to follow the wind more than a century ago, they brought limited household supplies. Their thoughts seemed to be focused more on glider materials at first than basic goods to get their "camp" established.

One of the crates that shipped supplies to "W. Wright, Elizabeth City, North Carolina" is believed to have been recycled by the Wrights to create the top of a wooden kitchen table, which resurfaced last month in Kitty Hawk.

Larry Tise, a leading Wright brothers authority, and several of his students at East Carolina University have worked since that time to analyze and authenticate the history of the small wooden table.

Tise, the Wilbur & Orville Wright Distinguished Professor of History in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, is author of the 2005 work, "Hidden Images: Discovering Details in the Wright Brothers' Kitty Hawk Photographs 1900-1911." In that book, Tise used modern computer technology to magnify and examine small areas of the black and white photos made by the Wright brothers to document their life and quest for flight while conducting experiments at Kitty Hawk.

Tise admitted he was skeptical when he was first contacted about the table by a Kill Devil Hills resident, but after close examination and further study, he said he is positive it is the same table shown in 1902 photographs of the Wright brothers' living quarters.

How Ron Ciarmello, an Outer Banks jeweler, came to own the table is almost unbelievable: He answered a classified ad earlier this year.

A self-described aviation enthusiast, Ciarmello said he spotted the ad and called the telephone number. The person selling the table said her family had it for about a century and had used it through the years in the family laundry room and as a utility table in a family-operated barber shop. The family was moving and had decided to sell it. Ciarmello in his own research located a photo with the table in it on the Library of Congress Web site.

Ciarmello contacted Tise after seeing his book at the Wright Brothers National Memorial gift shop and finding that the book contained a second image of the table. Tise asked Ciarmello to send him digital images of the table. "When I saw the photos, I was 70 percent sure it was the table, but I wanted to see it in person," Tise said.

Tise travelled to Kitty Hawk and met Ciarmello at the home of Bill Harris, whose grandfather...
Universities woo community college students

By Eric Ferrer, Staff Writer

DURHAM — In its quest to improve lagging graduation rates, N.C. Central University is looking for more students like Diane Darlington.

The 38-year-old mother of two transferred to NCCU after registering a 4.0 grade point average in two years at nearby Durham Technical Community College. She had planned to enroll at UNC-Chapel Hill's pharmacy school until a personal letter from NCCU caught her eye. Two campus recruiters at career day sealed the deal.

She's now in NCCU's well-regarded BRITE biotechnology program and is one recent example of a new push by the university to bolster its graduation rates through the aggressive recruitment of community college transfers.

Across the state, universities are enrolling more community college graduates toting two-year degrees. In this pool of prospects, campus officials see eager, mature and motivated students who may be a better bet to reach the academic finish line than an 18-year-old freshman who has never set foot on a college campus or lived away from home.

“They have gone through two years, and they have gone through the transition to college,” said Bernice Johnson, NCCU’s assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs. “We find they tend to be a lot more mature and a lot more serious about learning.”

NCCU has 8,300 students now, but enrollment is expected to swell to about 13,000 over the next decade. Simply admitting more freshmen, many of whom aren't yet prepared for the day-to-day rigor of college life, would put even more strain on an undergraduate curriculum that this year provides 41 sections of freshman English and 20 sections of freshman math, Johnson said.

Community college transfers have already cleared those initial hurdles. NCCU enrolled about 300 such transfers this year. In five years, officials

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hope that the number grows to 1,000, Johnson said.  

"It makes good sense for the universities to focus more on the junior and senior year, and the community colleges can offset the cost of the freshman and sophomore years," said Stephen Scott, president of Wake Technical Community College, where 600 to 700 students take their two-year degrees each year and transfer to four-year institutions.

Wake Tech has also received greater attention from local university recruiters in recent years. The school has forged relationships with several public universities — including East Carolina, N.C. State and UNC-Charlotte — that make the transfer process nearly seamless.

In many cases, community colleges with technical institutes are catching the eye of four-year institutions with similar programs. Wake Tech and East Carolina, for example, inked a deal last year allowing Wake students with a two-year Associate in Applied Science degree to move into a bachelor's degree program in industrial technology on the Greenville campus.

Around North Carolina, students whose two-year degrees in technical fields once led directly to the workforce are now being recruited by universities whose own programs build on community college curriculums.

NCCU, meanwhile, is recruiting aggressively not just at Durham Tech, but also at eight other community colleges in the region, looking in particular for students in nursing and criminal justice, two of NCCU's specialty areas. Each year, Durham Tech sends at least 50 to 70 students with associate's degrees to NCCU, said Maria Fraser-Molina, Durham Tech assistant vice president for arts, sciences and university transfer.

NCCU's interest in community college students goes beyond words. Chancellor Charlie Nelms has put aside $200,000 for scholarships specifically intended to help lure community college students, and a faculty committee is working to make the transition easy so students won't get stuck with credits that aren't honored.

For Darlington, NCCU's personal touch made the difference.

"There were two recruiters there, and I had them calling me," Darlington said. "It makes you feel like you're something more than just a number. It made me feel like an actual human being who they wanted in their program."
Book: Blackbeard and crew born in Carolinas

BY JERRY ALLEGRO
STAFF WRITER

BATH — In a pirate-worthy broadside on conventional history, a Raleigh author claims that Blackbeard and many of his henchmen weren't rogue Englishmen, but sons of North Carolina landowners.

Most historical accounts contend that the notorious pirate known as Edward Teach or Thatch was from Bristol, England. But Kevin P. Duffus said his review of archives and genealogical research indicates that Blackbeard was probably Edward Beard, son of a landowner in Bath in Beaufort County.

"There's never going to be a smoking gun to determine who he really was," Duffus said of the pirate. "My version is a lot more plausible than what's been foisted upon us for nearly three centuries."

The writer also claims that several of Blackbeard's crew members were not hanged as earlier accounts said and at least three returned to North Carolina to respectable — and wealthy — lives. With the help of genealogists,

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Duffus has found a descendant of one of Blackbeard's known crew members, Edward Salter. Under prodding by Duffus, state officials are investigating whether a skeleton kept for years in a state archaeology lab in Raleigh is that of Salter, who lived out his life near Bath.

The bones were recovered in 1986 from a crypt near the Pamlico River. If DNA tests show that the bones are Salter's, the identification would establish that at least one of Blackbeard's men had family roots in Bath.

Steve Claggett, the state archaeologist, said such a scenario could be true.

"I think there's a pretty good case for it," he said.

The state already claims the wreckage of Blackbeard's flagship, the Queen Anne's Revenge. Hundreds of artifacts, including cannons, ship rigging and even traces of gold dust have been recovered since 1996 from Beaufort Inlet, where historians say the pirate ran the ship aground.

Duffus is bracing for a backlash from historians and Blackbeard buffs. He admits he doesn't have conclusive proof of his assertions, but he thinks they are more plausible than versions that have been around for generations.

"Blackbeard followers revel in retelling their favorite Blackbeard fable over the years," he said. "I realize they will not let go of them easily."

The pirate is largely known for his exploits late in his life, before troops from Virginia tracked him down and killed him at Ocracoke in 1718. His ties to Bath have been documented and some have become the stuff of legend, but there is scant evidence of his early life.

The new theory

Duffus' theory is that Blackbeard was the son of Capt. James Beard of the Goose Creek area near Charleston, S.C., who owned about 400 acres on the west bank of Bath Creek as early as 1707. He says Beard's son Edward, born in South Carolina in 1690, came to Eastern North Carolina with his father, but was also taken to Philadelphia, where he learned his sailing skills.

Duffus suggests that Edward Beard sported a black beard and used "Black" as a nickname, much like fellow pirate Black Sam Bellamy. By his account, Thatch or Teach was an alias, and the pirate's moniker was actually Black Beard, later condensed to Blackbeard.

Most accounts of Blackbeard's early years stem from references by Capt. Charles Johnson in "A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notori-
ous Pyrates [sic]," an 18th-century best-seller. "Edward Teach was a Bristol man born," he wrote.

But Duffus says there is no documentation of a Teach or Thatch in Bristol and no one knows for sure who Johnson was or where he obtained his information.

"They [skeptics] can accept seven words written by an author whose true identity remains a mystery," he said — "or a preponderance of circumstantial evidence."

David Moore, curator of nautical archaeology at the N.C. Maritime Museum in Beaufort, agreed that the link to Bristol is tenuous. But he also said the link to Bath is speculative.

"I find it extremely hard to believe if there was an association we wouldn't know it now," he said.

Moore, who has researched Blackbeard's career, said new claims will spur more interest in the legends — not that pirate lore has been lacking.

"Pirates and piracy have held a fascination with the general public since piracy began," he said.

Another pirate researcher, Charles Ewen of East Carolina University, said Duffus' theories about Blackbeard and Edward Salter are plausible, but he maintains his skepticism. He said it may be difficult to ever find a definitive answer.

"The onus is on the naysayers," he said.

Overlooked documents

In his self-published book, "The Last Days of Blackbeard the Pirate," Duffus recounts his search for answers to the mysteries surrounding Blackbeard's link to Eastern North Carolina. He says he found documents that earlier researchers either overlooked or ignored.

For instance, he cites a document in British archives that says two vessels that cornered Blackbeard at Ocracoke approached from Pamlico Sound. Earlier accounts indicated they came from the ocean. That is a significant difference, he said, because it explains why Blackbeard was surprised in waters he knew well.

"If history could make this error, what other errors could have been made in telling the Blackbeard story?" he asked.

Traditional accounts also said that 15 men suspected of being part of Blackbeard's crew were tried in Williamsburg, Va., in 1719. Thirteen were reportedly convicted and hanged, one was pardoned for his testimony, and the other was not a crew member and was acquitted.

According to Duffus, nine were either pardoned or acquitted, and only five were executed. Three with ties to Bath, including Edward Salter, were not hanged, he said, adding that Salter became a merchant and gentleman who owned substantial property.

Some of Duffus' findings are not new. He credits genealogy research on Beard and Salter by Allen Hart Norris and John H. Oden III and Jane Stubbs Bailey that was published in a journal in 2002. But he has also traced Salter's link to a possible living descendant.

State officials are reviewing Duffus' request for DNA testing on the skeletal remains in Raleigh. Cagleau, the state archaeologist, said the studies could cost up to $6,000. He said other researchers are considering facial reconstructions that would show what the man looked like.

Duffus is challenging other myths and legends about Blackbeard, including the fanciful tale that Blackbeard's headless body continued to swim after being tossed overboard. He says Blackbeard's body is probably buried at Ocracoke along with those of the slain pirates and Royal Navy sailors.
Combat veterans face extra hurdles as students

Colleges learning to deal with PTSD, lost limbs, brain injuries

BY MARTHA QUILLIN
STAFF WRITER

Spc. Natasha McKinnon survived losing part of her left leg to an improvised bomb in Iraq. Now that she's back, she's trying to find her balance in college life.

Sometimes she can't recall a professor's name. She loses track of test dates. Occasionally, she forgets she has pulled off her prosthetic leg to rest her stump during a long lecture, only to tilt off balance when she tries to stand.

As tens of thousands of veterans of the fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq try to collect on their promised college benefits, McKinnon and others are finding that their combat experience complicates the transition from soldier to student.

Some have trouble collecting the government money that is supposed to pay for college, or they discover that the benefits aren't nearly enough to cover tuition and other bills. While their classmates complain about homework and hangovers, many vets struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder, the effects of traumatic brain injury, lost limbs and a range of chronic medical problems.

"Not only am I a full-time student," McKinnon said during a break between classes, "I'm a full-time patient. It takes a toll, mentally and physically. Sometimes I'm there in class, but only in body. Not in mind."

With 1.5 million service members coming out of military duty in Afghanistan and Iraq since October 2001, universities across the state and the nation have been anticipating a postwar influx and looking for ways to welcome veterans to campus.

NCSU has a historical connection to veterans; immediately after World War II, the campus was inundated with returning soldiers attending school on the generous GI Bill of 1944. By the fall of '46, they made up more than three-fourths of NCSU's enrollment, part of the national "GI Bulge" that sent 8 million vets to college or vocational training.

Compared to that flood, today's student veterans are a trickle, coming quietly onto campus a few at a time, often without mentioning their military service. No one tracks how many enrolled at NCSU, Duke or the University of...
Veterans often don't want to admit they have a disability and won't seek help, Branker says, even though they would qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The law says any student with an impairment that affects a major life function is eligible for assistance, no matter the cause of the impairment.

Brancker has seen student veterans who have hearing loss, vision loss, decreased physical stamina, mobility issues. She says most of the veterans she sees have been diagnosed with PTSD, thought to afflict as many as 20 percent of Iraq war veterans, or they have traumatic brain injury from being too close to too many explosions.

"Most of them have both," she said. Veterans often take medications such as antidepressants and sleep aids to help with the psychological effects of the war and paintkillers to deal with the physical reminders. Such drugs can interfere with a student's ability to focus.

Student values seem trivial

"You just feel like you're on a different playing field," said Jason Lindsay, 25, an Army reservist who spent five months in Iraq in 2003 before being called home to tend to his dying mother. A senior at NCSU, Lindsay is taking this semester off to work on Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's presidential campaign.

"You think, 'why are these people complaining they have to do homework? Don't they know they could be in a mud hut and it be 130 degrees and they could be killed just for supporting the opposition? Or be in military uniform, getting shot at?'"

After being in Iraq, Lindsay says, "You take everything a lot more seriously because you know how fortunate you are."

Though he has PTSD, a herniated disc in his back that doctors attribute to his service, and trouble concentrating on one thing for more than a few minutes, Lindsay says his main problem has been red tape involving his educational benefits. Last year, he says, the Department of Veterans Affairs, which administers the GI Bill, erroneously decided that Lindsay was no longer in the Reserves. It cut his monthly payments of $430 a month and said he would have to repay about $7,000. Dozens of calls and letters to the Army and the VA have not corrected the record.

It doesn't help, Lindsay says, that a school with 31,000 students, of whom at least 400 are vets, still has only one person designated to certify those students for VA benefits — or that the current GI Bill, which spells out how much money vets are allowed for school, pays out a maximum of $8,900 per year. It allows considerably less for those in the National Guard and Reserves.

"It shouldn't be a part-time job submitting applications and resubmitting applications and bugging people and having to go to your congressman to get it straightened out," Lindsay said. "You am I giving up a weekend a month? Why did I just put my life on the line?"

Jim Benson, a spokesman for the VA in Washington, said the department is working hard to help veterans get the benefits they're entitled to, but it can be complicated. Programs compete and overlap, and it takes time to determine which ones each vet is qualified for and which best suit his needs.

"Generally, we're doing pretty well," Benson said. "There are lots of challenges, lots of choices. It can be confusing."

The challenge of mobility

For McKinnon, just getting from one class to the next can be an exhausting ordeal.

McKinnon launched her college career at Kent State University in her native Ohio but knew her scholarships and grants would run out before she could finish. Athletic, patriotic and, above all, pragmatic, she was lured by the military's most effective recruitment tool: the offer to help pay for school when her service obligation was done.

After Army basic training, McKinnon was assigned to a quartermaster battalion at Fort Bragg. In June 2005, the unit was sent to Iraq, where McKinnon drove trucks in the convoys that supplied the war with men and materiel.

On a mission that October, McKinnon was in the front passenger seat of a
Humvee when an improvised explosive device went off underneath it. With her uniform and boots and the black smoke that filled the cab, she couldn’t see her injuries, but when she reached down to get her weapon, she remembers, “I could feel blood.”

Lifesaver’s training told her to apply a tourniquet, which doctors later said probably kept her alive, but it couldn’t keep her from losing much of her left leg. She awoke in a military hospital in Baghdad with shrapnel in her right leg and her left leg severed below the knee.

Two years of recovery at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and more than 20 prosthetic limbs later, McKinnon is able to walk some without assistance, but she usually relies on a cane or, when she’s really hurting, crutches. She enrolled full time at NCSU in January, aiming for a degree in animal science. She drives to campus from her apartment in West Raleigh and parks in handicapped spaces as close to her classroom buildings as possible.

She builds in extra time to loop around buildings to reach access ramps and elevators, avoiding stairs. Her instructors make sure she has a seat in the front row.

The university issued McKinnon a hand-held computer, as it does for many student veterans, on which she tracks class schedules and appointments with doctors at the VA Medical Center in Durham.

She is proudly independent but says sometimes it’s all she can do to keep up. For a 25-year-old, she tires easily. By the time she gets to class, she says, “I don’t have the energy to hear what the prof is saying.”

She spends nights and weekends studying. She hasn’t had time to form close friendships at school and hasn’t met other vets. But she says she would enjoy vets’ company because “they’ve been there.” She still corresponds by e-mail and instant messages with her “battle buddies,” members of her Army unit and friends from Walter Reed. Most days, she hangs her Army ID around her neck and wears a shirt or jacket with an Army insignia.

Brancker wonders whether some campus housing could be set aside where returning vets could share experiences, maybe have a counselor on site. At least one public college, the University of Arizona, has launched a pilot program of two courses to teach vets how to learn in a classroom and how to cope with stress.

Already, McKinnon knows she will have to cut back her class schedule from 15 hours this semester to eight or 12 in the fall.

After she graduates, she says, she thinks she would like to work with military companion dogs.

“I can do this,” she said. “I just have to find a balance” — which she is learning to do with every step on her new left foot.
Inexperience might pay

Amid layoffs and a slowdown, fresh faces, cheaper wages make new grads enticing

BY JONATHAN B. COX
STAFF WRITER

The U.S. economy shed almost a quarter of a million jobs in the first three months of the year.

The unemployment rate has risen above 5 percent, and layoffs keep coming: AT&T and Citigroup this month rolled out nearly 14,000 job cuts.

The signs are worrisome for workers skilled at navigating the threats of a downturn, and even more so for students. "I would be willing, in this economy, to take whatever job is available," Duke University senior Allison Gianino said.

But although college graduates are entering the most sluggish economy in seven years, there is a bright spot: Companies are still hiring them.

Half of graduating seniors at UNC-Chapel Hill have jobs or have been accepted to graduate school. Within a month, the head of the university's career center expects that number to be closer to 65 percent, higher than average.

"Things are a lot better than most people would expect with the conditions of our economy," said Marcia Harris, the director. "A lot of employers may be decreasing their higher-level or midlevel managers, but they're recognizing they need to develop a pipeline for when business improves."

Recent graduates bring energy, the latest technical skills and fresh perspective to an organization. And they're cheap.

A CareerBuilder.com survey found that 42 percent of 3,147 hiring managers interviewed plan to start new graduates this year at annual salaries below $30,000.

That's not to say hiring is altogether robust. In a survey this spring, the National Association of Colleges and Employers found that companies expected to hire 6 percent more graduates than they did last year. That was down from the fall, when they projected a 16 percent increase, and far off expectations last year. In spring 2007, employers had projected a 19.2 percent increase.

The year-over-year decline in projected hiring was largely driven by two industries closely linked to the economic downturn — financial services and construction. All other industries reported increases in college hiring — as much as 49 percent in the utilities sector and 33 percent in government.

"Then you've got your standard areas that are always going to do well — education, nursing," said Johnnie Sutherland, director of career services at N.C. Central University in Durham. "Our hospitality and tourism program is blowing up."

The university saw solid corporate recruiting this year. At a spring job fair, 93 companies signed up to meet with students — 11 percent more than last year. Disney and the Office of State Personnel have been on campus recently.

Wake Technical Community College has listings for 200 jobs from companies seeking to hire its students, excluding positions for those in medical fields.

"The demand is really strong," said Steve Scott, the college's president. That's partly because of the school's location. The Triangle has fared better than...
other communities during the economic slowdown, which benefits Wake Tech students. Most of them plan to stay in the area.

Scott said he's seeing strong interest in students trained in automotive, software, child care and engineering fields.

N.C. State University senior Kylee Goodell can attest to the demand in engineering.

An industrial engineering major, she was in Cork, Ireland, last semester and couldn't begin a full-fledged job search until January.

By the end of the month, Goodell had connected with Tyco. She had an interview in February and a job offer at the beginning of March.

After graduation, she will work in the conglomerate's Greensboro operation.

"It wasn't that difficult," said Goodell, 21, from Plattsburgh, N.Y. "I think being an engineer helped."

All of her friends in the major have job offers, but she has heard "horror stories" about some students still struggling to find work.

**Capstrat gives students a leg up**

This month, Capstrat tried to help those still searching.

The Raleigh public relations and marketing firm held a career fair with companies such as Quintiles Transnational, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina and Fidelity Investments.

About 170 students attended to talk with representatives of the businesses, most of which have openings. That was more than double the number that attended the inaugural event last year.

Capstrat hosted the gathering so that students could see their options, said Karen Albright, the firm's president. "Sometimes they don't have any way of knowing all the different career options that are out there. This gives them exposure."

Gianino of Duke was among the attendees. She scoped the name tags of company representatives and confidently strode up to them.

"I think I can find some job," said Gianino, who is a cultural anthropology major and is seeking a communications job. The downturn has "been enough to make me reconsider what fields I'll go into."

Gianino, from Palm City, Fla., has a different perspective from some of her peers.

For one thing, at 24, she's older, and she has worked full time in recent years. That has given her a longer view.

"I do understand there is a bit of patience in getting where you want to be," she said.

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Records: 3 officials deleted e-mail

BY PAT STITH
STAFF WRITER

Records released by the Easley administration show that until recently, several public information officers deleted most of their e-mail messages to and from top officials in the governor's press office.

Gov. Mike Easley, in a meeting with editors of The News & Observer and The Charlotte Observer earlier this month, conceded that the heads of the public information offices in various agencies thought they had been told to delete everything to or from his press office, but he said they didn't do it.

"The good news is, in spite of all that, they all kept their stuff like they were supposed to," Easley said. "They all followed the [correct] policy and said, 'I know this was the direction, but I'm not doing it.'"

But at least three public information officers did delete e-mail as they had been instructed to do last May 29 by Renee Hoffman, the governor's press secretary. Ernie Senechi, Keith Acree and Julia Jarema, the head public information officers at the Departments of Transportation, Correction, and Crime Control and Public Safety, collectively saved more e-mail messages to or from the governor's press office in March than they did in the previous nine months combined. E-mail retained by other spokespersons show that Hoffman also deleted many of the e-mail messages she sent or received.

Andrew Vanore, the governor's counsel, said in an interview that he had instructed those involved not to discuss their e-mail pending the resolution of a public records lawsuit filed earlier this month by The News & Observer and nine other news organizations. The lawsuit asserts that the administration's policy and practice involving retention of e-mail violates the state's public records law.

Vanore said he assumed that every e-mail message deleted was in accordance with the [correct] policy and said, 'I know this was the direction, but I'm not doing it.'"

WHAT THE LAW SAYS

State law defines public records as "all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes, electronic data-processing records, artifacts, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received pursuant to law or ordinance in connection with the transaction of public business by any agency of North Carolina government or its subdivisions."

The law also prohibits destruction of public records "without the consent of the Department of Cultural Resources." The Easley administration policy, which allows individual employees to delete e-mail if that employee determines the message no longer has value, was approved by the Department of Cultural Resources.

SEE RECORDS, PAGE 2B
the record retention policy of that agency.

"We look forward to successfully defending the lawsuit, including the policy which allows employees to delete e-mail messages when their administrative value ends," he said in an interview.

The Easley administration's policy, approved by the Department of Cultural Resources, allows individual employees to decide whether to discard e-mail; the standard is whether they still have value to the employee who is in possession of the message.

Vanore declined to answer questions about why most of the e-mail messages sent or received by Seneca, Acree and Jarema were dated March 2008 and so few were written or received by them in the nine previous months, from June 2007 through February.

The allegation that public information officers had been instructed to delete e-mail — which the Governor's Office and his chief legal counsel, Reuben F. Young, initially denied — surfaced March 4 after the governor approved the dismissal of Debbie Crane, who had been head of the public information office at the Department of Health and Human Services.

At The N&O's request, Vanore turned over notes of meetings of public information officers, including a May 29 meeting attended by Jarema and Diane Kees, public information officer at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Their notes of that meeting say they were instructed to delete all e-mail to or from the governor's press office.

Vanore also gave the newspaper a box full of e-mail messages that he said were written by or sent to Hoffman, Jarema or Kees.

In a March 29 letter to Hugh Stevens, an N&O attorney, Vanore said those records were evidence that e-mail messages that "needed to be preserved as public records" were retained.

"I am confident that e-mails to and from the governor's press office have not been systematically destroyed," Vanore's letter said.

The N&O examined the e-mail messages given to the newspaper by Vanore and found:

Seneca, at DOT, saved two e-mail messages that he received from the governor's press office in March; he saved a total of four in the previous nine months. E-mail retained by Hoffman show that she sent to or received from Seneca at least 97 e-mail messages during that 10-month period.

Acree saved 18 e-mail messages that he sent to or received from the governor's press office in March, eight in February and none in the previous eight months. During those 10 months, e-mail saved by Hoffman alone show that she sent or received at least 33 e-mail messages from Acree.

Jarema saved 59 e-mail messages she sent to or received from the governor's press office in March, compared to 44 in the previous nine months. Vanore said earlier that "about 20 pages" of her e-mail came from a server, meaning that she had deleted them from her personal computer but a duplicate was saved on another computer. During those 10 months, Hoffman alone sent to or received 141 e-mail messages from Jarema.

Kees appears to have ignored the instructions to delete her e-mail. During that 10-month period, she saved 365 e-mail messages, most of them in 2007.

Kees' e-mail indicated that Hoffman may have deleted most of her e-mail. Kees saved 334 e-mail messages that she sent to or received from Hoffman during that 10 months, but Hoffman saved only 107 e-mail messages to or from Kees.

News researcher Brooke Cain and database editor David Raynor contributed to this report.

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His passion is getting involved

Wilson: Reacting isn't solving issues

BY ERIC FERBER
STAFF WRITER

DURHAM — At Durham's West End Community Center, George Wilson is the fixer.

Need a grant proposal written? George will do it. Is the heater broken? Call George. Need an accountant to do the nonprofit group's taxes on the cheap? George probably knows someone.

"He's the first line of defense," says Ethel Simonetti, a friend and fellow board member for the community center, which provides after-school programs for poor neighborhood youngsters. "He's our board leader, and he replicates that role all over town."

By day, Wilson is a criminal justice professor at N.C. Central University. But by night — like the midnight-to-8 a.m. shifts he once pulled at a local halfway house — he can often be found working with underprivileged children or with groups that help rehabilitate felons.

Wilson grew up in Birmingham, Ala., in the 1960s, a place and time of great racial turmoil. His current view of the world — and of recent violence attributed to young black people from Durham — is influenced by his upbringing and his academic training. He sees imbalance in the attention given to the killing of UNC-Chapel Hill student body president Eve Carson — a pretty, blonde, white woman — and the killings of blacks are often glossed over. He preaches prevention and sees little point in ratcheting up punishment — such as tougher anti-gang laws, for example — if resources aren’t also poured into intervention.

"Poverty does not create crime, being black does not create crime," Wilson says in an interview in his cluttered NCCU office. "You get doctors from the same neighborhoods from where you get thugs."

But don’t complain, he says, if you don’t get involved.

Ready to help anywhere

Wilson’s involvements range widely. He co-founded a local chapter of the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice. For the group Durham Rites of Passage, he trained mentors to work with young at-risk black men.

With the Durham Dispute Settlement Center, he was a community mediator. With the Durham County Youth Advisory Board, he helped decide where more than $400,000 in grant money went each year. With Durham County Sentencing Services, he badgered legislators for funding for a project to relieve prison overcrowding.

From 1990 to 2003, Wilson served on the state’s sentencing and policy advisory commission, which changed the state’s sentencing practices.

When the Troy Halfway House’s board dismissed the director and half the staff quit several years ago, Wilson worked the overnight shift for several weekends until new employees were hired. He worked with other community groups to craft a positive image for the halfway house — which houses more than a dozen former offenders — and helped establish a community relations board.

"Troy House would not be open if it had not been for the commitment and diligent work of Dr. Wilson," wrote James W. Ellis Jr., the executive director, in a letter recommending Wilson for the George Preston Wilson

AGE: 60

OCCUPATION: Professor, Department of Criminal Justice, N.C. Central University

FAMILY: Wife, Zenobia; children, C. Sandra, Kaia and Preston

EDUCATION: B.S. in biology, Lorin College; master’s in social work, George Williams College; doctorate in criminal justice, Michigan State University

WORDS OF WISDOM

On the need for people to get involved: "I can see a kid on the verge. If someone grabs that kid and sends him in the right direction, he’s OK."

On the need for early intervention instead of “get-tough” approaches to gangs and crime: "Prohibition did more than anything to foster organized crime in this country. By the time we stopped a few people from drinking..."
UNC system's first distinguished public service award.

Wilson received that award last fall.

Learning amid horrors

Wilson's father was at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham one September day in 1963 when members of the Ku Klux Klan bombed it, killing four young black women preparing to sing in the choir. Wilson, a teen at the time, knew those four girls. He saw his city on the brink of riot; he developed a distaste for white people at the same time as he listened intently to Martin Luther King Jr. preach against violence.

"I didn't deal with white folks then," he recalls. "I hadn't gone to school with white folks before. I had to go through a transition where you learn that all white folks aren't bad, all white folks aren't racist."

Wilson leaped from his comfort zone. He enrolled at Loras College, in Dubuque, Iowa, one of just a handful of black students there and the only one studying chemistry.

"I was in lab by myself," he recalls.

His first job was teaching sixth grade at an inner-city Catholic school in Chicago. The kids he taught — the struggles they faced, the gangs they belonged to — made an impression. Though his background was in chemistry and biology, he navigated to the social sciences. He got a master's degree in social work and a doctorate in criminal justice.

Contributions to NCCU

Wilson spent six years on the University of Cincinnati faculty before coming to NCCU in 1984, where he turned a criminal justice program into a full department and then bolstered it with a graduate curriculum. He spent 20 years as the program's director and department's chairman. He did the academic work required for job security; then, he dove into service.

"I did enough publishing to get tenure, but my passion is getting involved," he says. "If you're not involved, nothing changes. If you don't get involved, don't complain."

Wilson is 60, with bushy hair, a wry smile and a beard flecked with gray. Around campus, he is in constant motion, always on the way to this meeting or that. Students, colleagues — and at least one newspaper reporter — seeking a quick chat often have to dive in alongside him as he moves. These days, NCCU's Faculty Senate, which he leads, keeps him busy.

"He's very high-energy," says Arnold Dennis, director of NCCU's juvenile justice institute. "That's the only way he can get everything done."

Wilson smiles when he talks. He jokes with students. He speaks so fast his words run together, and in an interview, he answers questions as if he's quizzing a student.

He urges policymakers to be proactive rather than just reacting to violent crime with tougher gang laws. "Reacting is not what? Solving the problem," he says.

Wilson says Durham's crime and gang problems are neither new nor disproportionate. He thinks a local judge's call for tougher anti-gang legislation in the wake of recent high-profile slayings of Carson, the UNC student, and Duke graduate student Abhijit Mahato is reactionary and falls short of addressing the root problems so many young black men face.

And perhaps most of all, he thinks felons need a hand when they get out of prison.

"I'm not against punishing folks, but if you punish folks, you have to have a way to help them readjust to society," he says. "We're setting them up to fail."
UNC mascot dies of blow from son, Rameses XVIII

BY DAVE HART
STAFF WRITER

Rameses XVII, the blue-horned ram who led the UNC-Chapel Hill football team onto the field for the past five years, died Thursday of complications from a wound he suffered at the horns of his own son.

Rameses XVII was 8.

The son Pablo, 3, will take the name Rameses XVIII and succeed his slain father as Carolina mascot, keeper Rob Hogan said.

Rameses and Pablo shared a field at Hogan's farm outside Carrboro. On April 13, they butted heads, as rams are occasionally wont. This particular collision was so jarring that it snapped off one of the older ram's horns.

The injury was serious. Infection set in.

Hogan, whose family has kept all the Rameses since the UNC tradition began in 1924, treated the deposed patriarch with antibiotics and wound care.

"On Thursday I got up before daybreak and went out to check on him, and he was doing worse," Hogan said. "It was obvious he wasn't going to make it."

Hogan summoned a vet to put Rameses XVII down, but before the vet could arrive the elderly sheep breathed his last.

The mascot is dead.

Long live the mascot.
Wake Tech plans expansion

Morrisville planners back rezoning to make way for a campus near the Outer Loop.

BY MATTHEW EISLEY
STAFF WRITER

Wake Technical Community College plans to build a new western Wake campus in Morrisville.

The town's Planning and Zoning Board on Wednesday endorsed rezoning 77 acres for the campus and five adjacent acres for restaurants and shops that would remain in private hands.

The college hasn't yet bought the site, which stretches from the intersection of N.C. 54 and Watkins Road northeast to Paramount Parkway, just inside Wake's Outer Loop.

Morrisville's town board and Wake County's commissioners would have to approve the plan for it to go forward, as is expected.

Wake Tech President Stephen Scott said construction probably won't start until 2012, and would last about a decade. At build-out, he said, the school would serve about 7,000 students, with a focus on job-training tailored for local high-tech industries.

"It will allow us to serve better the large population in Cary, Morrisville, and western Wake County," Scott said Friday. "It will also allow the college to serve the industries creating jobs in western Wake."

The school would become Wake Tech's third major permanent campus, after its main one off U.S. 401 between Garner and Fuquay-Varina and its northern campus at I-540 and U.S. 401 between Raleigh and Rolesville.

The college has a temporary western Wake site at Cary's Millpond Village shopping center and a Health Sciences branch near WakeMed Raleigh Campus.

The purchase price hasn't been disclosed, but the college has up to $12.5 million to spend on the land and initial planning.

That money comes from a $92 million bond Wake County voters approved last year.

"We would like to thank the citizens of Wake County for their support," Scott said. "This is another way we can serve them."

Morrisville's planning board unanimously endorsed the rezoning, which was necessary to allow a school to be built there.

Morrisville's town board will receive a report on the plan May 13, town Planning Director Ben Hitchings said. The board will conduct a public hearing May 27. Final town board action isn't expected until at least June 24.

The campus will be an asset for Morrisville, Hitchings said. "There's the prestige factor," he said. "And it's important for the new economy, as we prepare knowledge workers."

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