THE DAILY CLIPS

June 6, 2012

News, commentary, and opinion
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The Bethel Family Medicine Center is closing, effective Sept. 1, because of declining patient numbers and financial losses, leaders of the Brody School of Medicine announced.

Dr. Richard Rawl and his three-person staff are moving to the medical school’s new Family Medicine Center in Greenville, Dr. Ken Steinweg, professor and chairman of the Department of Family Medicine, said. Rawl’s Bethel patients will get priority for his appointment schedule.

“No continuity will be lost,” Steinweg said.

School officials have studied the Pitt Area Transit System and believe it should be a reasonable solution for patients who do not drive or have readily available transportation.

Patients will be notified about the closure through signs posted at the clinic, in appointment reminders, through the media and a letter, said Dr. Nicholas Benson, vice dean of the Brody School of Medicine.

“We realize this is a change for the Bethel community,” Benson said. “We will offer the same physician services and staff assistance that our patients are accustomed to in our Bethel clinic, but in a new facility and an enhanced setting.”
The majority of people being treated at the clinic are older and suffer from chronic illnesses such as diabetes, renal and heart disease, Benson said. A few children are seen at the facility for vaccinations.

The medical school opened the Bethel clinic 32 years ago.

The clinic building, located at 7439 Main St., is 62 years old and the renovations it needs aren’t financially feasible. Some patients already have to travel to Greenville for X-rays and certain lab tests.

The clinic has always operated at a financial loss, Steinweg said.

Within the last decade that loss approached $200,000, he said. Through a combination of cutting Rawl’s hours and reducing the staff size, the losses were cut to $100,000.

Steinweg said the losses were acceptable at one time because the medical school’s primary mission is to train doctors who’ll work in rural settings, but the facility’s age is hampering that training, he said.

The clinic also has seen a 22 percent decrease in patient visits between fiscal year 2006-07 and 2010-11, according to data from the Brody School of Medicine.

Steinweg said the decrease is likely because of a drop in population around Bethel and patients visiting other medical facilities in Greenville.

Discussions about closing the Bethel facility have been under way for four years, Steinweg said. Bethel’s leaders have argued that the facility should remain open.

It was concern about the closure’s impact on the community that kept the facility open in recent years, Benson said.

However, increasing pressure due to state budget cuts mean changes are needed to deliver high-quality health care with limited resources, Benson said.

The Bethel clinic was the only facility outside of Greenville that the family medicine department operated on a full-time basis. Family Medicine clinicians do hold regular clinics in nearby communities.

Benson and Steinweg didn’t know what would happen to the Main Street office or the clinic’s original building, both which are owned by the medical school.

Contact Ginger Livingston at glivingston@reflector.com or 252-329-9570.
Angels pick Wright in 12th round
By Nathan Summers
Wednesday, June 6, 2012

Like many of his college baseball peers across the country, Zach Wright went from the anguish of seeing his career at East Carolina come to end last Sunday at the NCAA Chapel Hill Regional to the jubilation of knowing there will be a next step for him.

That’s what Wright — a veteran power hitter, backstop and emotional leader for the Pirates during his memorable career — was talking about at the postgame table in Chapel Hill, hoping that one end would bring a new beginning.

On Tuesday, that new beginning arrived when the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim selected the Goldsboro native in the 12th round of the Major League Baseball amateur draft.

“It’s been pretty crazy,” Wright admitted on Tuesday night. “You go from losing in Chapel Hill (a 5-3 elimination loss to UNC) to going to play for the Angels. You never know what you’re going to get handed, and it’s pretty awesome.”

As a Pirate, Wright hit 35 home runs to finish in a four-way tie for seventh on the team’s all-time list with Ryan Wood, Lee Delfino and Steve Salargo.

It was that kind of power, his increasing versatility as a contact hitter and Wright’s keen sense of working with pitchers that initially got him drafted in the sixth round by the Philadelphia Phillies last spring.
But Wright and the Phillies could not come to terms on a contract, so he came back for his senior season. Now, he knows his college days are over.

“Hopefully, it all turns out for the best and we can get things sorted out as quickly as possible,” Wright said of the Angels. “I’m trying to leave after the weekend on Monday and venture on out to wherever they’ve got me playing.”

The first stop for Wright could be one of the Angels’ short-season rookie league teams, the AZL Angels (Arizona League) or the Orem (Utah) Owlz (Pioneer League), or possibly the Angels’ Class-A affiliate, the Cedar Rapids (Iowa) Kernels (Midwest League).

Wright finished third on the ECU team this season with 39 RBIs and started 59 of his team’s 61 games behind the plate.

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Summers: Omaha eludes more than Godwin
Wednesday, June 6, 2012

When the East Carolina baseball team lost to North Carolina last Sunday afternoon, the dream of a trip to Omaha, Neb., largely credited to the late ECU coaching great Keith LeClair failed to materialize once again.

Not long after the 5-3 setback bounced the Pirates from the Chapel Hill Regional, season-long grumblings about ECU head coach Billy Godwin’s ability to carry the club to its first-ever College World Series began to get louder.

On Tuesday, a rumor surfaced that Godwin might be set to call it quits, which would seem highly out of character to anyone who’s been around him.

The records of renowned previous ECU skippers and their similarities to Godwin’s — not the least of which is the three Super Regional appearances shared by Godwin (2009), Randy Mazey (2004) and LeClair (2001) — should seemingly draw praise from those adorers of past coaches, not criticism.

Not only has there been unrest among fans in the wake of the regional, however, but also speculation about the midweek days off of ECU director of athletics Terry Holland and whether or not he is on a mission to find a new coach, the apparent hope of many fans.

That speculation seems similarly unfounded. ECU confirmed on Tuesday afternoon Holland scheduled the days off well in advance of taking them.

Holland had not returned a message sent to him on Monday by Tuesday night, and that might be because he’s waiting until his days off are complete to tell the media he was simply taking a couple of days off.

But the Godwin-Omaha debate continues, even if it shouldn’t. Godwin should and likely will remain at the helm, especially given that he’s still under contract and would have no trouble whatsoever landing another job with a 253-162-1 record (15 wins were vacated by the NCAA following the 2010 season) at ECU — which ranks him second only to Gary Overton’s 427 wins — and five regional trips in seven seasons.

The life of LeClair (212-96-1), whose name is appropriately on the team’s state-of-the-art stadium, was cut tragically short by ALS in the midst of a
remarkable coaching career that lasted only five seasons in Greenville. But he didn’t go without leaving a permanent impression — and imparting a passionate goal — on East Carolina baseball.

With all due respect, however, one cannot assume that LeClair would have taken the Pirates to Omaha either. If ECU’s history of 26 NCAA postseason appearances and zero College World Series berths proves anything, it’s that college baseball is an erratic game on its calmest days.

Recent history is usually a pretty good indication of that, and feel free to follow upstarts St. John’s, Stony Brook and Kent State in this weekend’s Super Regionals for further proof.

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or 252-329-9595.
Dawn Loggins will graduate Thursday from Burns High School in Lawndale.

**Beating odds, teen's going from homeless to Harvard**

By Steve Lyttle

LAWNDALE–Dawn Loggins returned from a prestigious academic camp last summer and discovered her parents had abandoned her.

So she did the only thing she knew. She adjusted.

She went to live with a friend’s mother. She took a part-time job as the custodian at her school, starting work at 6 a.m., two hours before classes began at Burns High. She carried toothpaste, toothbrush, shower soap and shampoo in her bag, because taking a shower was a matter of opportunity.

Federal studies estimate 1.4 million students in the United States are homeless. Officials at Burns High say about a half-dozen of their 1,100 students are without a home.

Studies show many homeless students drop out, sometimes turning to crime. A few make it to college.

Dawn Loggins is going to Harvard.

“There were a lot of things outside Dawn’s control,” says Robyn Putnam, a counselor at Burns High and one of many people who have tried to fill the gap left by parents who weren’t there. “But Dawn learned that succeeding in school was something she could control.”
With nothing less than an A-minus, Loggins, 18, has beaten the odds and will graduate Thursday with the other 300-plus seniors from her northern Cleveland County high school.

Her story has attracted national attention. CNN plans to be at the graduation ceremonies at Gardner-Webb University.

But, Loggins says, “It’s not the end for me – just another step.”

She has reached this point despite:

• Having to study by candlelight and by wearing an overcoat on nights when the power had been turned off at her family’s home.

• Dealing with the embarrassment of wearing the same dress to school several days in a row in middle school, going days without a shower, and walking with her older brother to the town park with buckets, to get water from the public spigots.

• Moving from house to house, from school to school, frequently adjusting to new surroundings and classmates.

“This might seem strange,” she says, “but I love my parents. My mother, in her way, believes she did the best for us. My stepfather tried to support us. My grandmother taught me a lot.

“They meant well.”

She and her brother Shane, now 19, lived until Dawn was 12 with her grandmother in Catawba County. When she turned 12, Dawn’s mother and stepfather took over.

“As soon as that happened, we started moving around,” she says. “At first, things were good. My stepdad had a job, and the house was clean.”

But then, Loggins says, her stepfather lost his job. That started a cycle of problems, as the family moved from house to house, dealing with the utilities being cut off for non-payment, and then the evictions. She and Shane missed several months of the 2009-10 academic year, before her mother finally enrolled her at Burns High in March 2010.

“She was behind, academically,” Putnam says. “She had to take classes online, but she caught up.”

Those online courses prevented Loggins from enrolling in Advanced Placement classes and earning extra academic points. It’s the reason she ranks about 10th in her senior class, despite having straight A’s.
During that sophomore year, the family’s personal belongings were auctioned off. That cost Loggins many of her childhood belongings, she says. But the junior year was one of achievement, capped by an appointment to Governor’s School last summer in Raleigh.

Putnam drove Loggins to the camp and brought her back home when it was finished. Loggins says she tried calling her parents near the end of camp, but their phone service had been cut off.

“When she returned,” Putnam says, “the parents were gone.”

Shane moved in with friends in Hickory and will graduate this week from high school there, having received a college scholarship himself.

Dawn Loggins says she later learned her parents had moved to Tennessee. Initially, she stayed at friends’ houses, sleeping on their couches. But with the help of Putnam and others, Loggins found a temporary home with a friend’s mother, Sheryl Kolton, custodian at Burns Middle School.

“Sheryl gave me stability,” Loggins says. “Because of her, I could stay at Burns. There wasn’t the drama of another school change.”

Cornerstone Dental Office in Shelby supplied Loggins with a lot of personal belongings, and others in the community stepped in.

So it was with college. Loggins was accepted at UNC Chapel Hill. But Carol Rose, a volunteer who had helped Loggins fill out college applications, asked her, “Why not aim high?”

Rose told her to try for Harvard. The acceptance letter arrived about two months ago. Accompanied by her boss, Burns High custodian Junie Barrett, she visited the Ivy League campus recently.

“I wondered how I’d be accepted, being homeless and from a rural area in North Carolina,” she says. “But everyone – the students and faculty – was great.”

Putnam says Harvard “won’t let Dawn Loggins fail. In some ways, she’s better off there than at a bigger public school.

“It’s like it was here at Burns – Dawn will have a community, ready to help her.”

Loggins will have grants and will get an on-campus job to pay her tuition, books, room and board. She says she isn’t worried about taking the step from an 1,100-student school about 15 miles north of Shelby, to an academic powerhouse in the shadows of Boston.
“I’ve had to work to get where I am,” she says. “I think everything that happened to me was preparing me for what’s to come.”

She is grateful for the help from her community but says she wants to make it on her own.

“In my family, I saw people taking advantage of one another,” she says. “I don’t want to take advantage of anyone. I just want a chance to succeed. And I’ll have that at Harvard.”

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**How to help**

Dawn Loggins says she has everything she needs now. She says she hopes her story brings to light the plight of other homeless students and says she is working to set up a foundation to help them. The Observer will publicize that information when it becomes available.
N.C. colleges to help push cost disclosures

By Jim Puzzanghera - Los Angeles Times

WASHINGTON—Ten U.S. colleges and universities have committed to provide more information to students about tuition and other costs, including estimated monthly loan payments after graduation, as part of a federal push to improve disclosure to help prevent financial-aid recipients from overextending themselves, the White House said.

Leaders from those institutions, which include the state university systems in Maryland, Massachusetts, New York and Texas, were scheduled to meet Tuesday in Washington with Vice President Joe Biden, Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Richard Cordray, director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to discuss financial aid transparency.

In addition to the state university systems, participants in the new disclosures are the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina A&T State University, Arizona State University, Miami Dade College in Florida, and Syracuse University and Vassar College, both in New York.

The White House said more disclosure is key to making college more affordable.

Total student debt rose more than 3 percent in the first three months of the year to $904 billion, part of a surge in outstanding educational loans over the last decade, according to a report last week from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Meanwhile, Democrats and Republicans in Congress are battling over how to avoid a doubling of interest rates for federally subsidized student loans that is set to kick in July 1.

The 10 colleges and universities committed to providing key information, in an easily understandable way, to all incoming students as part of their financial aid packages starting in the 2013-14 school year.

The information includes the cost of one year of college, financial aid options such as grants and scholarships, and estimated monthly payments after graduation on federal student loans.
Vice President Joseph R. Biden led a discussion on Tuesday about simplifying college expenses.

**Biden and College Presidents Talk About Paying the Bills**

By TAMAR LEWIN

The Obama administration is pushing hard this week to keep the spotlight on its efforts to make college more affordable. On Tuesday, administration officials met with 10 college presidents who have agreed to include a consumer-friendly “shopping sheet” in the financial aid packages they send to incoming students.

Although the Education Department and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau proposed such a form in January, only Congress could make it mandatory. But at a round-table Tuesday led by Vice President Joseph R. Biden, the presidents of some of the nation’s largest institutions, representing 1.4 million students — among them, Arizona State University, Miami Dade College, and the state university systems of New York, Massachusetts, Maryland and Texas — volunteered to provide the information, starting with the 2013-14 school year.

The sheet would simplify the current process of comparing colleges. It would clearly state the cost of a year of classes, the student’s net cost after grants and scholarships, financial aid options to pay that cost and estimated monthly payments for federal loans. It would also provide information about the colleges’ retention and graduation rates and the share of graduates who
default on their student loans. “These aren’t standards,” said Secretary of Education Arne Duncan at a briefing on Tuesday afternoon after the college presidents’ meeting.

“This is basic transparency.”

About two-thirds of bachelor’s degree recipients borrow to attend college, but many colleges send out confusing financial aid offers, sometimes blurring the lines between grants and scholarships, which do not have to be repaid, and loans, which do. Without uniform information, students and their parents often find it difficult to compare offers.

Mr. Duncan said he hoped the “coalition of the willing” at Tuesday’s meeting would induce other universities to adopt the shopping sheet.

The shopping sheet is not the administration’s only effort in the area. In a visit to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, on Thursday, White House officials said, Mr. Obama will again push for Congressional action to stop the interest rate on certain federal student loans from doubling to 6.8 percent on July 1, as is now scheduled. Since the president began lobbying on the interest rate issue in April, both Democrats and Republicans have said they want to keep the interest at the lower rate. But so far, they have made no headway in agreeing on a plan to pay for it.

Also Thursday, the officials said, Mr. Obama will issue a memorandum aimed at easing access to student loan repayment options — in particular income-based repayment, which caps borrowers’ monthly payments based on their ability to pay.
College Board Drops Plans for Summer SAT

By TAMAR LEWIN

Just days after word that the College Board would offer an unusual summertime SAT to students enrolled in a preparatory course conducted by the National Society for the Gifted & Talented, the plan has been dropped. Critics complained that the Aug. 3 test was unfair, because only students enrolled in the $4,500 course, held on the Amherst College campus, could take it. The next general SAT test date is in October. The College Board initially said the August test was a pilot for summer testing. But on Tuesday, it said that because the SAT was “created to democratize access to education,” any summer pilot would have to be “better aligned with our mission.”