THE DAILY CLIPS

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ECU analyzing state budget cuts
By Jackie Drake
The Daily Reflector
Sunday, June 26, 2011

East Carolina administrators are processing how cuts in the state budget will affect the university's structure, programs, staff and class offerings.

The $19.7 billion two-year spending plan became law June 15 despite a historic veto from Gov. Beverly Perdue due to the budget's deep cuts to education.

While officials are still analyzing the numbers, university spokesman John Durham said the estimated cut to ECU is 14-16 percent.

Last year state funding made up roughly $300 million of the university's $800 million budget. At worst, a 20 percent or $60 million cut was expected. The K-12 public school system sustained cuts of an estimated five to six percent statewide.

“The coming academic year will inevitably be challenging as the university absorbs significant appropriations reductions again,” Durham said. “Vice chancellors, deans, and department chairs have been working for months on how to absorb budget reductions. We simply cannot absorb the kinds of reductions that have been imposed in the last few years without noticeable effects both inside and outside the classroom.”

Some classes will be larger, some subjects will not be offered and some will not be offered at convenient times, according to Durham, so it may take some students longer to graduate.

“The number of faculty members and staff members will be reduced, although, as in the past, we will make every effort to avoid layoffs of people, preferring instead to take the reductions from vacant positions wherever possible,” Durham said.

Committees are evaluating academic reorganization and consolidation. The prestigious Teaching Fellows program will be phased out. Library resources will be reduced. Support services will continue to be affected. It could take longer to pay bills and phones may not get answered as quickly.

“But even with the bad news, there are exciting things happening on our campus,” Durham said. “The dental school building will be completed, and the first class of dental students begins in the fall. Our new Honors College will be up and running. The Family Medicine Center will open next month. These developments are good for ECU, for our students and for our region and state.”
ECU will keep upholding its vision despite budget cuts, according to Durham.

“We will continue to be the state's leading producer of educational professionals, nurses and allied health practitioners,” he said. “We will continue to be a leading economic engine of eastern North Carolina and we will continue to provide health care, arts and entertainment and athletic events for the Greenville area and beyond.”

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Feds OK Medicaid change for Brody

By K.j. Williams
The Daily Reflector
Saturday, June 25, 2011

A federal agency has approved a state amendment giving East Carolina University's Brody School of Medicine a boost in federal dollars for Medicaid patients treated at its clinical practice.

The boost potentially will allow Brody to break even financially for the first time in three years. The change also will take effect at University of North Carolina's Health Care.

Dr. Paul Cunningham, dean of Brody School of Medicine, said he was “delighted” by the go-ahead given last week by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

“The reason for my sense of satisfaction is that it will allow us to continue to provide our safety net services to our patients in this region,” he said Thursday.

Cunningham said the higher Medicaid reimbursements will be retroactive from a point last year that hasn't been finalized. The retroactive payments, along with cost-saving measures, are expected to allow its clinical practice, ECU Physicians, to break even for the fiscal year ending on June 30.

In North Carolina, only ECU and UNC were eligible to apply for the reimbursements since it is open only to state-supported medical schools.

“We're the only practices in the state who could qualify for this federal adjustment,” Cunningham said.

While approval is definite, Cunningham said that details on the length of time it would be retroactive and the expected financial effect weren't known yet.

“The final arrangements have not been completed so we're not even sure what funding will be coming in our direction from a dollars and cents point of view,” he said

ECU Physicians loses at least $10 million annually by treating indigent patients who pay on a sliding-fee scale or rely on federal programs like Medicaid and Medicare, he said.

The clinical practice's insured patients and other contributions close most of the gap, but higher Medicaid payments will help alleviate the financial burden, Brian Jowers, ECU Physicians executive director, said.
Cunningham said ECU Physicians has to be conservative and hasn't been able to expand its services due to the financial strain.

“We'll be able to keep the lights on,” he said of the effect of higher reimbursements. “It will allow us to close the gap eventually but I don't think it's going to solve the problem completely.”

In North Carolina, Medicaid claims are paid with 72 percent of federal dollars and the remainder from state funds. The higher reimbursement will mean more federal dollars without more state funding for ECU and UNC.

The federal decision marks the close of a two-year effort by ECU and UNC that was marked by the initial objection by not-for-profit WakeMed Health & Hospitals, whose officials saw it as giving UNC an unfair advantage, according to media reports. An agreement was made between WakeMed and UNC in March that specified that the higher reimbursement would not apply to UNC physicians hired after July 1, 2010. This helped remove opposition to the plan.

Jennifer James, a spokeswoman for UNC Health Care, said Friday that the increase will help them offset the cost of providing safety net services.

“We're obviously very pleased that this was approved and the supplemental payment will be used to improve access to care and help support our teaching functions,” James said.

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Two ECU players charged
Saturday, June 25, 2011

East Carolina women's basketball player Ashley Clarke and former ECU player Kim Gay, the team's two top scorers during the 2010-11 season, were charged on Friday with credit card violations, according to Pitt County Detention Center records.

Clarke, a rising senior guard from Myrtle Beach, S.C., was charged by Greenville Police with a felony count of unlawful obtaining of a credit card. Gay, an Eastman, Ga., native who recently completed her playing career at ECU, was charged with financial card fraud and resisting a public officer. Both were held on $2,500 bond.

ECU head coach Heather Macy is not permitted to comment on the situation because it is an ongoing legal matter.

“We have been made aware of an incident involving our women's basketball program and are in the process of gathering additional information while we cooperate with the investigation,” ECU director of media relations Tom McClellan said in a statement.

“With that said, it is currently an ongoing legal matter, so any further comment on the situation would be premature at this time.”

Gay led the Pirates in scoring last season, netting 12.3 points per game to go along with a team-high six rebounds per contest. Clarke was second on the team in scoring at 9.5 ppg., and led the Pirates with 112 assists.
For 50 ECU employees, work time also will be exercise time this summer. They will be pedaling under their desks, helping to research ways to offset the effects of sedentary work.

The Pedal@Work project, in part funded by an award to Dr. Lucas Carr, assistant professor in the Department of Exercise and Sport Science, College of Health and Human Performance, will test whether intermittent physical activity reduces individual risk for cardiovascular and metabolic diseases.

Participants will get mini exercise bikes, which they will use to pedal at their desks while they work. They will get a pedometer and access to a website which will help them keep track of their daily physical activity.

“This study will be among the first to test whether introducing several breaks from sedentary time, as opposed to exercising at a moderate to high intensity, is effective at reducing risk for chronic disease,” Carr said.

The idea appealed to Joy Hahn, an administrative support associate in the Department of Exercise and Sport Science.

“I love physical activity but felt that I could not really do anything during my working hours that would be routine,” Hahn said. “Walking the hallways and stairs just isn't exciting or interesting to me.”

Hahn's goal is to pedal an hour each day in the beginning and increase that amount weekly. On her first day, she pedaled in 10-minute increments for a total of an hour's workout. She recorded a distance of 13 miles at an average speed of 15 miles per hour and calculated she burned 479 calories.
Carr expects the study to yield information that could improve intervention and support a larger study. The long-term goal, he said, is to provide some guidance to employers who might want to invest in health promotion resources and equipment to improve employee health.

“If we find that introducing short breaks in the day is effective at reducing our risk for disease, this may be a more feasible option for many that are unable to exercise for long periods on a regular basis,” Carr said.

Carr won a $5,000 Ralph E. Powe Junior Faculty Enhancement Award from the Oak Ridge Affiliate Universities to underwrite the research. That is being matched by a $5,000 ECU research grant. He's one of 30 junior researchers in the nation to receive the Powe award. ORAI includes 98 universities. It promotes partnerships with government, national laboratories and private industry.

Carr began teaching at ECU in 2010. He holds a bachelor's degree in exercise and sport science, a master's in exercise physiology and a doctoral degree in physiology. He completed a two-year post-doctoral fellowship at the Alpert Medical School at Brown University.

**Treadwell to lead medical society**
Dr. Edward Treadwell, a rheumatologist and professor of medicine at the Brody School of Medicine at ECU, was installed as president of the Old North State Medical Society at the organization's annual meeting on June 18 in Greensboro. His term lasts two years.

The Old North State Medical Society is the nation's oldest association of black physicians. Founded in 1886, the society works for equity in health care, equal opportunity for African-American health care professionals and equal care for blacks, other minorities and the poor.

**Endowment to help learning disabled**
A large endowment from the Harold H. Bate Foundation will support an ECU program for students with learning disabilities.

The Harold H. Bate Foundation has pledged $333,000 in five years to endow a distinguished professorship for Project STEPP (Supporting Transition and Education through Planning and Partnerships) in the ECU College of Education. The program pools community and university resources to provide academic, social and life-skills support for students with identified specific learning disabilities who have shown the potential to succeed in college.

Sarah Williams, associate professor and Project STEPP director, said the program helps students “who have historically fallen through the cracks in terms of university access and retention.”
The program boosts STEPP students through guidance in the transition from high school to college. It includes courses in self-advocacy, time management, study skills and note taking. Participants have individualized plans including set study hall hours and assistance from a network of advisers, mentors, technology specialists, tutors, counselors, instructors and other experts.

The extra attention is getting results, Williams said. “The students… are holding their own and doing well.”

“We have a strong retention rate… stronger than the university retention rate in general, and remembering these students weren't even supposed to be here, that's saying something,” she said.

The program's success has attracted attention in Chapel Hill. STEPP staff members have been asked to work with the UNC System to implement customized learning differences programs at other universities in North Carolina.

Beyond its success in student retention, the ECU STEPP program is unique because it is affordable.

Williams said that many university-level programs exist to help students with learning disabilities. In fact, “whole colleges established and organized around teaching individuals with learning disabilities.”

The problem is that “many of them are private colleges and very, very pricey,” Williams said. The ECU program is offered at no additional cost beyond normal university fees and tuition.

“Nationally, we have not found other programs that provide this comprehensive level of support to students who are very deserving and very capable of being successful in the college setting without any additional cost,” she said.

“That piece, not charging students extra, is part of our foundation and not something we're interested in compromising on.”

The Bate Foundation endowment will help keep the STEPP program from charging extra. The $333,000 commitment will translate to even more funding, because the State of North Carolina matches $1 for every $2 donated to endowed professorships. That could result in a $500,000 endowment for Project STEPP.

For additional information about the STEPP program, contact Williams at 327-1101 or williamssar@ecu.edu or visit the program's website: http://www.ecu.edu/cs-educ/stepp/index.cfm.

The Bate Foundation was founded by donations from Harold H. Bate, a philanthropist, investor and retired lumber executive to enhance education, youth and recreation and
quality of life for the communities of Craven, Pamlico and Jones counties and East Carolina University.

**Grant supports Pitt youth enrichment**

A $5,000 grant will support academic and cultural enrichment activities for Pitt County youth at the Lucille W. Gorham Intergenerational Community Center, an ECU partnership program.

Provided by the Wachovia Wells Fargo Foundation, the donation will support the YES (Youth Excelling for Success) Summer Bridge Program, which targets children in grades three through five with activities to help them stay engaged and prepared for success when school resumes in the fall.

Held Monday through Thursday from June to early August, YES offers mathematics, language arts, science, martial arts, chess and other board games. Participants enjoy activities on the Wii along with physical education, gardening, computer lab and other cultural enrichment activities.

Academic enrichment follows the N.C. Standard Course of Study and is taught by qualified teachers. Campers are served breakfast, snacks, and lunch daily.

YES program director Shawan Sutton expressed gratitude for the donation. The foundation's members “clearly understand the importance of quality summer programs for youth,” Sutton said. “The YES staff is excited about helping the youth keep their academic skills sharp while promoting positive social growth and development. We have lots of great activities planned for participants and even some for their parents and families.”

Lee Watson, market president for Wells Fargo in Greenville, said the foundation was pleased to present the donation in keeping with its mission of building strong and vibrant communities, improving the quality of life and making positive differences.

“It helps demonstrate Wells Fargo's ongoing commitment to the Greenville community,” Watson said. “We're responsible for being leaders to promote the long-term economic prosperity and quality of life for everyone in our communities. If they prosper, so do we.”

The Lucille W. Gorham Intergenerational Community Center, at 1100 Ward Street in Greenville, is a partnership among the City of Greenville, ECU, Pitt Community College and multiple community-based agencies.

For more information about the center and its programs, call 328-5800 or visit http://www.ecu.edu/che/igcc/.
Garrard event has star power

By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector
Monday, June 27, 2011

The National Football League players who steadily trickled into the big crowd inside the Hilton Greenville on Sunday evening were easy to spot thanks to the attention they drew.

But even as the football pros and other sports notables like pro golfer Will MacKenzie, BMX pro Josh Harrington and boxing legend James “Bonecrusher” Smith exuded that certain star quality that separated them from the rest at a reception and banquet kicking off the David Garrard Golf Classic, everyone in the room had something in common — cancer.

“It seems everyone has had cancer involved in their life in a negative way,” said Jacksonville Jaguars punter Adam Podlesh, a recent cancer survivor who was one of a large cast of athletes who joined Garrard, the former East Carolina star and veteran Jags' starting quarterback, for the charity event. “This is a big fight that we need to work on. My saying is I want to turn the big ‘C’ into a little ‘c,’ where cancer isn't one of those debilitating, life-changing events.”

It's that kind of thinking that initially spurred Garrard to organize the event, which includes Sunday's dinner and auction as a prelude today's golf tournament at the Greenville Country Club.

Garrard decided to bring his tournament to Greenville, where the Durham native starred under former coach Steve Logan and where he knew he could bring together a large number of people. The tournament raises money for the David Garrard Foundation and the Beau's Buddies Cancer Fund.
“My mother died of breast cancer, but that's just one type of cancer, and little Beau died from another (neuroblastoma), but so many different people are stricken with cancer,” Garrard said. “It's great to come back here and keep raising money and awareness for it.”

Garrard will share the spotlight with plenty of other celebs and teammates past and present during the event, including newly-crowned Super Bowl champion and former ECU standout C.J. Wilson of the Green Bay Packers.

Also on hand are former Pirates like Tony Collins, Rod Coleman, Vinson Smith, Patrick Pinkney, Damane Duckett, Matt Dodge and Jay Ross.

“It really feels like I never left,” Garrard said shortly after arriving on Sunday. “I've still got a lot of friends here, guys that I played with and guys that came in right after I played. It's really cool. It's a great event, a great time and a lot of socializing, but really for a great cause. Everybody that's here, they're really a part of this great cause, and that's fighting cancer, all kinds of cancer.”

And even as valuable as some of the guests are in terms of star power — Tennessee Titan and former ECU running back Chris Johnson is expected to be on hand along with former NBA all-star Rasheed Wallace — guys like Podlesh have every bit as much clout at the Garrard Golf Classic.

“Being able to contribute to anything involving the fight against cancer, it really hits home for me with being diagnosed a little over a year ago,” said Podlesh, who successfully overcame salivary gland cancer, and who now hosts his own event, the Adam Podlesh Play for Life Celebrity Golf Classic in Jacksonville, Fla.

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or 252-329-9595.
Redistricting of our legislature and congress is the responsibility of the General Assembly every ten years after the census. Eastern North Carolina may lose one senate seat and two house seats this year. The piedmont area of our State is having the most growth. We in Pitt County have also seen tremendous growth due to the expansion of East Carolina University and the Hospital. We should be very proud of this.

As your last resident State Senator I have spoken twice already at the video connected sites and will do the same again this week. Before my term we had two resident Senators. They were both drawn into new districts that they could not win. The new district was from Ayden to Roanoke Rapids and included Pitt, Edgecombe, Martin and Halifax Counties. I filed in that district and months later a Wake County Judge drew a new district that included 96,000 residents from Pitt County and all of Wilson County. The next year the district lines were drawn again. They took 35,000 from the district I represented in Pitt County and placed in another district. They placed Wilson County in another district. Wilson County citizens complained of not having representation so I established an office there at my own expense and was there two days a week when the general assembly was not in session. The new district placed the southwest portion of Pitt County with all of Greene and an eastern portion of Wayne. An 18 year veteran of the senate from Wayne and I were now to be in the same district. We were the only Senate Democrats placed in the same district. I had been shown the maps months before the public hearing. The public was told that the maps were not available at the final public hearing.

I hope they do a better job this time around. We need honest government officials making decisions good for us. Let's see what happens!

TONY MOORE
Winterville
Wilmington graphic artist Brian Reed with a few of his band posters at his home studio Thursday June 16, 2011.

**Wilmington illustrator and graphic artist makes his mark with poster art**

By Brian Tucker, StarNews Correspondent

Brian Reed's 9-month-old daughter, Coraline, sits behind the sliding glass doors of her parents' Wilmington apartment, staring with inquisitive eyes at her father on the back porch. She gently taps the glass and smiles, seemingly curious as to why he's outside talking and she's inside.

Nearby is a small, exterior storage closet that houses a workroom. It's where Reed has spent much of the past year when he hasn't been working his day job as a graphic designer and production assistant at Morvil Advertising & Design Group.

Inside the workroom is equipment that Reed uses for screen printing and a black, homemade light box that he built from plans found on the Internet. Here, he burns screens and presses colors until he has enough layers to make a finished image.

Reed's daughter taps on the glass again and grins ear to ear. He smiles, reacting like a new father.

"You have a rough day at work and she looks up at you and smiles," Reed said. "I don't know how you just made my horrible day better."

**Pop art**
Reed's artwork has been seen around town on posters for bands like The Love Language and The Thermals. Some have been sold at Gravity Records or at shows for Wilmington indie folk band Beta Radio. But the images he draws, then screens, are more artwork than promotional show bills.

They're also stories within themselves. For the college band Lydia, which was on a farewell tour, Reed's poster featured a woman's head (based on a photo of Reed's wife, Julie) looking up at feathers falling through the letters of the band's name. The image was based on speculation that it wasn't really a farewell tour.

"I liked the idea of rumors floating around," Reed said. "Are they forming another band and done with Lydia? I like the idea of not being able to see what she's looking at. Is the bird flying away? Did a hawk catch it? You're seeing remnants of what was the band."

Reed's artwork echoes what he knows of the band, or is at least a sideways representation. For Beta Radio he created a simple construction—a hand holding by a string "balloons" that look like old records. The image—which comes with background colors of yellow, red and sky blue—is playful and tender, much like Beta Radio's music.

"I always love his concepts and the thoughts behind his art. We talk to each other about the projects we are working on all the time," said Beta Radio's Brent Holloman, who's also a graphic designer. "I also love seeing the process his art goes through to get to the final design."

For a poster promoting a solo show by Tyler Ramsey of Band of Horses at UNCW, Reed thought about an underwater cowboy. Ramsey had recently joined Band of Horses, and Reed recalled the musician mentioning a long dream he had about swimming across the sea.

"I wanted (the poster to be) surreal, how things don't line up in your dream," Reed said. "I wanted him to have his clothes on, a normal buttoned-up shirt, (but to not) seem like he was drowning. So I gave him the goggles and snorkel."

**Azalea/Avetts**

During the Azalea Festival in April, The Avett Brothers performed in Wilmington. Reed and his wife used to see the band play at Chico's in Greenville when they attended East Carolina University.

Reed attended ECU from 1998 to 2002, around the same time as Scott Avett, who formed the Avetts with his brother, Seth. Last year, Reed bumped into a print making professor from ECU, who said Scott comes back to the school occasionally. A print maker himself, Scott created the band's 2011 tour poster from what was a five-by-2½-foot linoleum cut.
"He was a painting major, a phenomenal print maker," Reed said. "The band started as Nemo during college, more grunge rock, before whittling it down to I guess what they grew up with, more roots."

The idea for the Azalea/Avett poster came up during conversation with his wife.

"I wanted to get across the idea that it's not just one person in the band," Reed said. "(It's) a duality of, it's Scott's band and it's Seth's band."

The result was a green and blue poster modeled on a playing card that can be hung four different ways. Prints were sold through Reed's website, www.iAmReedicus.com, and Gravity Records. Some were shipped as far away as Las Vegas and California.

"The Love Language poster sold decent, but the Avetts poster sold out completely in days," said Eric Parson of Gravity Records. "My first impression of (Reed's) work was how outstanding the screen printing is, just insanely good. I can't stress that enough. He's a damn fine illustrator and competent designer, but his skills truly lie in the actual printing of the posters."

**Felt Jesuses**

He was born in California, but Reed grew up in Fayetteville. His father was a preacher who also worked as a youth minister. Reed remembers his mother working in the children's department at church and putting his talents to work creating handouts from the time he was 2 through middle school.

"She was trying to encourage the art and cultivate it," he said. But even then, he wanted to do more than "make felt Jesuses," Reed said, "as horrible as that sounds."

Reed was also into comic books. He spent time with friends trying to best each other in emulating the artistry of Jim Lee and Erik Larsen or cartoon characters like Huckleberry Hound and Yogi Bear.

Years later, Reed and a friend travelled to Philadelphia to visit an exhibit of Chuck Close's massive portraits. Being able to see the work's actual size, as opposed to small photographs in college art books, impressed Reed.

"The older I've gotten the more I wish I'd paid more attention in Art History," Reed said. "I think there's something to be pulled from just about every segment and time period."

Reed chose to attend ECU in part because of its art school, but also for financial reasons. On the way home from visiting the university with his parents, they asked him for his thoughts. He felt good about ECU but knew the costs involved.

"I was blessed to have parents who encouraged it," Reed said. "(They said), ‘It's going to take work on everyone's part.' (They didn't want me) to have to get loans and graduate with a bunch of debt."
Reed applied for scholarships and saved up. He says the classes were hard work. "A lot of it is based on talent and drive. How much are you willing to give up through your social aspect of college to get in and hone your craft for semesters at a time? As far as professors, they were top notch."

Reed half-jokingly refers to Design 101 as having to paint gray squares for a month to learn the values of black and white and the beauty of angles. Classes contained fewer than 20 students, resulting in a tight-knit group of friends who spent time together all the way through graduation.

The atmosphere and the environment of college is something Reed said he misses. "It definitely was encouraging to be around it. You'd always have somebody that would see something you didn't. To be able to feed off of, it was exciting to be a part of. You're in (the art building) and hear the masses about 10 o'clock at night making their way down 5th Street … It's party time. What seems like an hour later you hear them all coming back. 'There's no way its two o'clock already. I've been in here five hours.'"

ECU has a reputation as a party school, but Reed found himself and the other students from the program doing their own thing: art parties where living rooms sometimes turned into mini-concerts by art students in a garage band. Still, in the circle of art students there was a hierarchy where painting majors ("We're purists," Reed said jokingly) sometimes referred to the graphic design kids as sell-outs.

"I was trying to decide between painting and drawing or illustration," Reed said. "I'm not sure what made me choose graphic design. It seemed more versatile. Once in there I fell in love with print making even more, doing wood cuts and linoleum cuts."

**Back at home**

On the ceiling of his apartment Reed has a small S-hook that attaches to the air conditioner vent. On it he'll hang a string and stretch it across the living room, forming an assembly line to hang freshly printed posters as they're done, one color at a time.

"One color, pull it, hang it, let it dry. Then another color. Because (ink is) so thin it does dry quickly."

On a table near a display of wood letter types he's collected for years Reed opens up a small book the size of an address book. In it are scores of little drawings, ideas and some sketched beginnings of finished work, like the Ramsey poster. It looks an artist's diary of thoughts and serves as a test canvas to experiment with ideas.
Reed's next idea might involve a show poster for Bela Fleck & The Flecktones at Greenfield Lake Amphitheater Aug. 14. He's also making an entry for September's Hopscotch Music Festival in Raleigh.

For something he does on the side, screen printing is not without multiple hours of work. There are several stages, from initial sketches to an actual drawing. Then it's scanned and rendered in Photoshop, where Reed separates each color and makes screens for printing each part of the image by color. He'll spend upwards of 40 hours on a detailed poster before he spends more hours screen printing them.

"When you get down to it," Reed said, "it's totally a labor of love."

Features: 343-2343 Copyright © 2011 StarNewsOnline.com
At 85, the show goes on for Asheville's Hazel Robinson

Written by Tony Kiss

ASHEVILLE — When Hazel Robinson makes up her mind on something, she’s not easily dissuaded. In 1973, she decided that Asheville needed its own Shakespeare theater company.

Others were not so sure, she said.

“They said it wouldn’t be commercial,” Robinson recalled a few days ago, sitting on the big wraparound porch at her Montford home, built in 1893.

“And they said, ‘What about the accents?’ No one was doing Shakespeare except for a few colleges here and there. They just didn’t want to tackle it.”

But Robinson pushed ahead and her Montford Park Players opened June 29, 1973, with the Bard’s classic “As You Like It,” performed outdoors in Montford Park.

“We had 25 or 30 people,” she said. “They came and they stayed.”

Through the summers that have followed, the Montford Park Players have continued the tradition, staging many of Shakespeare’s grand masterworks.

In 1983, the shows were moved to a new amphitheatre in Montford, now renamed in Robinson’s honor.

Much beloved as the first lady of Asheville theater, most of Robinson’s work has been offstage as a director, stagehand, costume designer and more. But those around her agree that she has touched countless lives.
“She has been a mentor and an inspiration to so many,” said Citizen-Times theater reviewer Tim Reid. “There are generations of people who have come up in theater because of what she started and maintained. She is just a dynamic force.”

Robinson changed the life of Kenn Kirby, now the general technical director of the Montford Park Players. He came to the theater at 16.

“I did not have good direction in my life, but she took me in and gave me the opportunity to succeed,” Kirby said. “Every time I see her, I tell her what wonderful things she has done for me. She has changed this town for the better.”

Director and actress Deborah Austin was just 12 when she first met Robinson and the friendship remains unbroken. “She gave me an incredible taste of technical theater,” said Austin. “She is the original recycler. There is always something you can create out of nothing.”

'Look, I can do this'

Now 85, Robinson remains active, continuing to usher at the theater that carries her name. “It’s nice to have my name on it, but I would have been just as happy if they had called it the Montford Amphitheatre, as long as people came, and enjoyed themselves,” she said.

Robinson was born in Bogue Chipto, Miss., but has lived much of her life in Western North Carolina. She attended East Carolina Teacher’s College (now East Carolina University) in Greenville, N.C., from 1940-44, where she got her first taste of theater at the school’s drama club.

Her love of performance “came to me right then,” she said. “I thought, ‘Look, I can do this, and it has this effect. You could do anything, you could sing or you could dance.”

In 1944, she shifted to UNC Chapel Hill, earned an undergraduate degree in dramatic arts and then pursued graduate studies in theater. “I was going to go and look for work in New York,” she said.

But her life changed, with marriage to her first husband Albert Huffstickler, followed by three children.

Still, she kept her theater ties, working with playhouses in Florida and Phoenix, Ariz. She eventually divorced, met her current husband John Robinson, and they came home to Western North Carolina.

Her love of theater still strong, she connected in 1962 with the Tanglewood Children’s Theatre, and then Asheville Community before starting the Montford Park Players.

Often working with a small budget but a big heart, Robinson and the Montford Park Players have become a key part of the summertime scene in Asheville.

“It had to be very frustrating at times, but she has persevered,” said John Russell, now the theater’s managing director. Robinson’s continuing presence provides “a sense of continuity,” he said.

“She gives us stability. A director might want to go off the beaten path, but she is very firm about being true to what Shakespeare is all about.”
Shakespeare & Dickens

For Robinson, Shakespeare’s written word still has plenty of power. “You can just fall in love with that language,” she said. “I think that everyone who speaks English should be given the chance to listen to it and to watch it live.”

In 1977, the Montford Park Players added Dickens to their repertoire when they mounted an annual holiday production of “A Christmas Carol,” which continues each December. She sees a lot of similarity between the two playwrights. “Neither of them is afraid of going over the top when it’s necessary,” she said.

Only rarely has Robinson made it on stage herself. A rare exception was an Asheville Community Theatre production of “Driving Miss Daisy,” directed by Ralph Redpath. “She has the acting chops,” he said.

Robinson wonders if anyone taped the performance. “I never got to see it,” she said.

Robinson continued to direct plays for the Montford Park Players until 2005. She’s like to give it another shot, doing “A Christmas Carol” at the Masonic Temple in downtown Asheville, where the company performs a winter and spring season.

“It’s hard work,” she said. “But it’s the most fun I can think of.”
Questions pile up with tickets

BY J.P. GIGLIO - Staff Writer
The University of North Carolina released documents Friday identifying the names of eight players associated with thousands of dollars in parking tickets.

UNC confirmed that Greg Little is the former football player who received 93 parking tickets associated with five different vehicles. According to records obtained by The News & Observer, the vehicles were a Dodge Charger, a BMW 525i, a Honda Accord, a Nissan Altima and an Acura 3.2 CL.

Those five vehicles had nine different license plates associated with them.

There were inconsistencies in the information released by the school on Friday, which was a follow-up to a June 16 release which revealed that some Tar Heels football players had racked up 395 campus parking tickets totaling $13,125 in fines over a three-and-a-half year span.

The News & Observer and Charlotte Observer's original request for campus parking citations issued to 11 UNC players was submitted on Aug. 11.

Last week's university report, which came as a result of a court ruling requiring UNC to release public records involving the Tar Heels football program, did not identify by name the players associated with the tickets. In Friday's release, however, eight players were identified: Little, Bruce Carter, Charles Brown, Deunta Williams, Johnny White, Kendric Burney, Robert Quinn and Ryan Houston.

The data released on June 16 totaled 395 tickets. The names of the eight players provided on Friday accounted for 318. The school did not provide details Friday for tickets accumulated by former UNC defensive tackle Marvin Austin, who was included in the June 16 total. In an email released Friday by the school, it was noted that Austin, referred to as an "additional player," was responsible for 68 tickets.

Nine tickets remain unaccounted for.
Nancy Davis, the Associate Vice Chancellor for University Relations, said parking services and University Counsel conducted the internal investigation but did not quantify the length of time of the investigation. The N&O and Charlotte Observer requested all documentation related to the university investigation on June 16.

Friday, UNC provided a printout of players' names associated with specific license tags of ticketed vehicles; 11 emails - dated June 15 or June 16 - sent by university officials; and duplicate copies of a previously released statement on the internal investigation.

No documentation pertaining to the registration portion of the investigation was included.

"In some cases, the vehicles were registered to the student-athletes themselves," Davis wrote in one email Friday. "In other cases, we conducted Internet searches to identify the relationship between the vehicle registrant and the student-athlete. That review showed that each car receiving a ticket was registered either to the student, a parent or grandparent, or a fellow student."

It does not appear that the university researched how vehicles were acquired by the players.

In Tuesday's Notice of Allegations from the NCAA, containing nine major alleged violations by the football program, former university tutor Jennifer Wiley was identified as paying $1,789 worth of parking tickets for one of the eight players named on Friday.

Asked if the other seven players paid their own tickets, Davis replied yes.

"Other tickets were paid in cash, in which case there's no record of the payor, or by check or credit card," Davis wrote in an email. "A student-athlete or family member of a student-athlete made all of the non-cash payments, with the (mentioned) exception."

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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. Two aging professors accused of running a sophisticated prostitution website appeared to have one goal: Police say they wanted to create a place where respected men like themselves could go for sex without having to worry about getting caught up in street stings.

"They have a lot to lose, and they tried to build an organization to protect themselves," Albuquerque police Lt. William Roseman said.

The website, based in the Albuquerque-Santa Fe area, featured "weather reports" about police vice stings; physical descriptions and cell phone numbers of undercover police to help members avoid arrest; training videos on what to do if members were busted; and detailed information on the prostitutes themselves, including prices and star performance rankings from other members.

Southwest Companions had 1,400 members, including former University of New Mexico President F. Chris Garcia, who police said was among the site's top echelon.

Membership was invitation-only, and new members were vetted as they worked their way up through three tiers. The first level was "probation," Roseman said, where the new clients secured prostitutes through the site.

After they hooked up, the prostitute would tell a moderator what she did and how much she was paid. As the members progressed through the "verified" and "trusted" tiers, they gained access to more information about undercover officers and the hookers.

The hookers were paid in cash, with prices ranging from $200 for a single act to as much as $1,000 for an hour of time. Police found no evidence students were recruited, or that the site was a university network.
David C. Flory, a physics professor at Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey, is suspected of buying the site in 2009. The site was created by a woman named Cara Garrett. Investigators say Garrett was still involved in the ring when she tipped police to its existence in December after being arrested on drug, child abuse and prostitution charges.

Flory, 68, who lives in New Jersey but has a home in Santa Fe, told police he bought the site to create a safe place for people to buy and sell sex, referring to it as a hobby, Roseman said.

Flory, who used the handle "David 8," ran the site and was the main moderator, police said. He scolded people for being too graphic and failing to use the site's acronyms for describing specific acts, according to the criminal complaint. Members were removed if they were arrested or found to have had contact with police.

Flory bonded out of jail on Wednesday and is facing 40 charges of promoting prostitution. He did not return phone calls seeking comment.

Garcia used the handle "Burque Pops" while acting as a moderator. But his main job, police said, was to act as a leader of the site's "Hunt Club," which looked for new talent - prostitutes willing to come to New Mexico. Police identified at least 20 females recruited by "Burque Pops."

Garcia's attorney, David Serna, called his client "one of the most respected citizens the state has ever known." He added that he learned a long time ago to "view with scrutiny" what is said by Albuquerque police at a news conference.

Garcia faces charges of promoting prostitution, conspiracy and tampering with evidence.

He made his first appearance Friday along with two other defendants, Douglas Plummer, 40, who owns a landscaping company in Albuquerque, and Mike Dorsey, 36, who lives in New Mexico. Plummer and Dorsey both face charges of promoting prostitution and conspiracy. Their attorneys did not comment after the appearance.

The judge set their bond at $35,000 each and restricted them from using the internet.
Garcia has been suspended from his current post as professor emeritus of political science at the University of New Mexico.

Ring leaders did not appear to be getting kickbacks in the prostitution ring. But the investigation was continuing, with the Secret Service looking into financial dealings.

Police said racketeering and human trafficking charges were possible depending on what evidence might be uncovered.

Garcia and Flory also are suspected of using the site to secure hookers for themselves.

In fact, Roseman, said, that's what Flory was doing when police arrested him Sunday in an Albuquerque coffee shop after following him and monitoring his home in Santa Fe for several weeks.
Third-Party Groups Take Up Challenge of How Best to Improve Public Universities

By REEVE HAMILTON

For years, Gov. Rick Perry’s efforts to increase efficiency and productivity at public universities — largely by pressuring university system officials to carry out specific changes proposed by the Texas Public Policy Foundation, a conservative research group — were mostly conducted out of the public eye.

Now, after months of controversy, with several third-party organizations across the state cropping up to focus on the issue, along with a new oversight committee created by the Legislature, the various constituents are preparing for a protracted public discussion about how to best address problems like rising tuition and ballooning student debt.

“I think the more people who are looking at the discussion and bringing their ideas to the table, that’s a good thing,” said David Guenthner, a spokesman for the policy foundation.

Christopher Covo, a recent graduate and former student body president of Texas State University, is the director of one such outside group, America’s
Next Impact, a project of the Texas division of Americans for Prosperity, a national conservative advocacy group. The group’s higher-education efforts are branded under the banner “Rock the Ivory Tower.”

Mr. Covo, strapped with $30,000 in student loan debt, said making universities more efficient is an idea that resounds among the young professional crowd he is trying to rally.

Meanwhile, the newly formed Texas Coalition for Excellence in Higher Education has called for a tack different from the one pushed by the governor, one that gives more weight to ideas from faculty members and administrators. With Natalie Butler, the current student body president of The University of Texas at Austin, as the youngest executive committee member, the coalition includes a bipartisan who’s who list of influential, deep-pocketed players in higher education. Karen Hughes, a former counselor to President George W. Bush, is handling communications.

“There are some reforms floating out there that we do not think are in the best interest of our institutions, particularly our flagships,” said Pamela Willeford, a former United States ambassador and chairwoman of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, who also sits on the executive committee. “I think we’re being mischaracterized as just for the status quo and against change.”

Michael Quinn Sullivan, an influential ally of Mr. Perry with a loud online megaphone, now blogs frequently on the issue.

“We’re talking about public policy at the intersection of politics — of course there is hyperbole,” Mr. Sullivan said, shortly before referring to Ms. Willeford’s group as “the folks building the brick wall around the ivory tower.”

A recent post questioned a promotion at U.T.’s recreation center offering two free upgrades with the purchase of a table massage. “Apparently life in the tax-funded ivory tower comes with some interesting benefits,” Mr. Sullivan wrote.

As interest in the issue increases, so does the scrutiny of U.T., which has largely served as the focal point of the debate. Last month, an organization in Washington used unverified data to make the case nationally — despite detractors contending that the analysis was “simplistic” — that the university is run inefficiently.

In response, Don Hale, a U.T. spokesman, said the university is “committed to managing its resources wisely and efficiently.”
Such assurances, however, may not be enough to cool the back-and-forth. Daniel Greer, a blogger and associate of Mr. Sullivan, said: “Ultimately, what’s going to have to happen is you’re going to have to have a shakeup or some sort of paradigm shift. It’s a stalemate until one side takes another.”

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