THE DAILY CLIPS

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City to divert downtown traffic

By Ginger Livingston
The Daily Reflector

Wednesday, July 08, 2009

Starting at 10 tonight, driving through downtown Greenville is off-limits.

The police department is launching a traffic diversion plan city officials hope will lessen the potential for gun violence along the city’s Fifth Street nightclub district and surrounding areas. The plan was unveiled Wednesday afternoon during a meeting in Greenville City Council chambers of more than 50 city officials, police, downtown business owners and their supporters.

“I think the biggest thing (people) want is to feel safe,” Greenville Police Chief William Anderson said.

The plan will barricade streets and parking lots to keep vehicles off Fifth Street between Washington Street and Reade Circle and Cotanche Street between Fourth and Reade.

“The key is to decrease the cruising and making sure pedestrians feel safe when walking downtown,” Anderson said. “We know individuals are a lot less likely to carry a weapon walking downtown because we have such a large presence of law enforcement.”

“By getting vehicles out of the downtown area, I think you will stand less of a chance of an incident happening like the ones that happened this past week,” he said.

The department is launching the initiative following the June 30 shooting death of two men outside a Fifth Street nightclub. Witnesses say the men, who were standing in front of the nightclub, were struck when the occupant of a car passing by opened fire on the structure. Five days later a dispute between two groups of people resulted in gunfire that damaged a building at the corner of Fourth and Evans streets. Suspects have been arrested in both incidents.

The barricades will be used Wednesday through Saturday from 10 p.m. until 3 a.m. Anderson said the majority of restaurants and non-nightclub businesses operating in the area are closed by 10 p.m. so it shouldn’t inconvenience their customers.

“We’re really looking at individuals who are coming down here for the night life,” Anderson said.

The department already has increased the number of foot patrols in the downtown area. The increased patrols will work Sunday through Wednesdays from 9 p.m. until 3 a.m.

The city spends $400,000 a year to deploy 20-25 officers in the downtown area Thursday through Saturday. City Manager Wayne Bowers said he and the chief are finalizing plans to add more officers to the weekend deployment. The costs haven’t been determined, he said.

Anderson said the city also is discussing the possibility of paying another law enforcement agency to use its officers for weekend patrols, but that planning has just begun. Bowers said the financial resources for that option will be available.

During Wednesday’s two-hour meeting, closed to the media, city officials and citizens discussed other ways to improve security in the downtown area. Anderson said a recommendation to increase lighting at the intersection
of Fourth and Evans streets will be pursued.

During the meeting, Anderson said he emphasized that law enforcement can't solve the problem by itself. He and other city officials encouraged nightclub owners to create, publicize and enforce a dress code. He encouraged the owners to meet with police to help them identify certain aspects of gang attire.

Under North Carolina law, nightclubs must operate as private clubs and require memberships. Anderson said club owners were encouraged to work on their membership requirements. They also were urged to work with the community and local college students to design policies that let people have fun in their clubs while limiting potential acts of violence outside their businesses.

Anderson said the bar owners agreed there were things they could collectively address. He said that spirit of cooperation made Wednesday's meeting a success.

City officials and business owners will meet July 29 at 4:30 p.m. in council chambers to review the traffic plan's effectiveness.

Contact Ginger Livingston at glivingston@coxnc.com o (252) 329-9570.

SAFETY MEASURES

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We Were Wrong

Wednesday's story about the ECU student vigil against violence incorrectly described Erin Gough as the girlfriend of slain student Landon Blackley. She was the girlfriend of Andrew Kirby, manager of Michaelangelo's Pizza, also slain in the incident.

Wednesday's story about the investigation into the deaths of Landon Blackley and Andrew Kirby gave an incorrect address for Dorothy Richardson, mother of suspect James Earl Richardson. The suspect's last known address was 1905-A Kennedy Circle, not his mother's.

If you notice an error, give me a call at 329-9560 or send an e-mail to aclark@coxnc.com. If I am not available, and you need to speak to someone right away, please call 329-9573.

Al Clark, executive editor
Student announces run for City Council

By Kathryn Kennedy
The Daily Reflector

Wednesday, July 08, 2009

An East Carolina University student will run against Greenville Councilman Calvin Mercer in this November's municipal election.

Matt Smith, 21, filed to run for the District 4 seat Wednesday afternoon. The junior majoring in English said he's always had a very strong interest in politics.

"I'm young and idealistic, but I'm pragmatic," he said. "Ultimately, my goal is to get things done."

Smith said he moved to Greenville more than three years ago and has "fallen in love with the place, but I still see there's a long way to go."

The candidate said he is concerned about safety — especially following the recent violence downtown — while developing downtown into a source of pride, as it is for other college communities. He would also like to see increased recycling and a City Council more connected to the community.

"The difference between me and the other council members is that I'm available 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

Mercer filed for re-election Monday. He was first in the door at 8 a.m. with a dozen supporters cheering him on.

The East Carolina University professor is finishing his first term on City Council.

Several Grifton residents filed today. Alton B. Clements, 80, is hoping to fill one of two unexpired commissioner terms available in Grifton. A longtime resident — since 1956 — Clements served as a commissioner for 15 years before taking a brief medical leave. He also spent more than 20 years as a volunteer fireman and has worked with the rescue squad.

"All these qualities make me a good commissioner and I want to lead the town as we grow and prosper," he said.
"I love my little town."

Current commissioners Richard Hill and Johnny Craft will be running for re-election. Hill, 62, is a retired assistant chief with the Grifton Police Department who said he has enjoyed being a commissioner for the last three terms and wants to continue helping the town find ways to improve economically.

Sammy Whitehurst will also be running against them for the two open commissioner posts.

Aydin Commissioners Leonard Gibson of Ward 3 and Gloria Dixon of Ward 5 both filed for re-election Wednesday. Gibson, 62, has served seven years as commissioner since his retirement from the N.C. Highway Patrol. He said there are still several infrastructure projects he'd like to see completed.

Fountain Commissioner Sharon Pryor, 61, also plans run for another term in office. She's nearing the completion of her first 4-year term during which the town began work on a sports complex. Pryor said she wants to continue developing recreation and parks in Fountain — outside of running the local flea market — and see that complex come to fruition.

Brian Cooke hopes to be re-elected as a Grimesland alderman.
Filing opened Monday and runs through July 17 at noon at the Pitt County Board of Elections. They are open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Craft, Dixon, Whitehurst and Cooke could not be reached for comment.

**Candidates who filed Wednesday**

Matt Smith, Greenville City Council District 4
Leonard Gibson, Ayden commissioner Ward 3
Gloria Dixon, Ayden commissioner Ward 5
Johnny Craft, Grifton commissioner
Richard Hill, Grifton commissioner
Sammy Whitehurst, Grifton commissioner
Alton B. Clements, Grifton commissioner (unexpired term)
Brian Cooke, Grimesland alderman
Sharon Pryor, Fountain commissioner

**Others who have filed**

**Greenville**
Pat Dunn, mayor
Bryant Kittrell, City Council at-large
Rose Glover, City Council District 2
Marion Blackburn, City Council District 3
Calvin Mercer, City Council District 4
Max Ray Joyner Jr., City Council District 5

**Winterville**
Tony Moore, mayor
Douglas Jackson, mayor
John David Powell, alderman
David Hooks, alderman
Frank Fields, alderman (unexpired term)

**Farmville**
Durwood T. Little, mayor
Bobby Evans, mayor
Mike McLawhorn, commissioner
David Shackleford, commissioner
Former NCSU fundraiser talks to feds

She had worked alongside Easley

BY J. ANDREW CURLISS, Staff Writer

A former fundraiser at N.C. State University who worked closely with former first lady Mary Easley talked Wednesday with federal agents about her job at the university.

The fundraiser, Wendy Brown, spoke with authorities for a couple of hours, according to her lawyer, Raleigh City Council member Philip Isley.

Isley said that he represents Brown in a separate civil action against the university. "She was cooperating with a request to discuss her job duties at N.C. State," Isley said, declining to elaborate.

Separately, the university has received a subpoena to provide documents about Brown's work to a federal grand jury, NCSU Chancellor James Woodward said.

Brown was part of a News & Observer report published June 21 that detailed aspects of the fundraising around Mary Easley's position, including that Mary Easley focused on raising money from people or businesses that she had said "owed" favors to her or her husband, former Gov. Mike Easley. Through a spokesman, the Easleys have said all aspects of the efforts that brought in $180,000 for a lecture series overseen by Mary Easley were appropriate.

Brown was let go by the university in early March, a decision made by former provost Larry Nielsen, who cited budget cuts. Records show Brown had raised $1.5 million for programs in the provost's office in two years on a salary of about $58,000.

Woodward said Brown's departure was one of many forced by a tight budget.

Federal authorities are investigating several issues surrounding the former governor, including how Mary Easley obtained her position at NCSU.

The university's trustees fired the former first lady June 8 amid revelations that the governor had helped instigate the creation of a new position for his wife.

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- Read the series about perks of Mike Easley's power
USC archaeologists locate Confederate cannons, naval yard

Artifacts, artillery shells retrieved from Pee Dee River

Archaeologists from the University of South Carolina and East Carolina University have located two large cannon from a sunken Confederate gunboat in the Pee Dee River and have identified where the Mars Bluff Naval Yard once stood on the east side of the river in Marion County.

State underwater archaeologist Christopher Amer and state archaeologist and research associate professor Dr. Jon Leader began work April 30. The project called for locating and, eventually, raising three cannon, each weighing upwards of five tons, that were once aboard C.S.S. Pee Dee, as well as determining the location of the naval yard where the gunboat had been built.

Amer said the underwater research has been very successful, despite rising waters that have created a higher or more swift-moving current and lower visibility.

"Our underwater work hasn't been easy," Amer said. "In spite of high, near-flood water in the river, we have located two of the three cannon and have raised two 7-inch Brooke artillery shells and four 6.4-inch Brooke shells. Water operations also have located pilings from the dock where vessels were outfitted and evidence of post-war logging operations."

Leader, with the help of eight university students, conducted terrestrial operations using ground-penetrating radar and other remote-sensing technologies to identify where the buildings of the naval yard once stood. The data was used to create a 3-D map for excavation work.

Archaeologists and graduate students are digging pits, measuring 50 centimeters wide down to the Pleistocene layer, so that artifacts can be dated in the soil layers where they lay before they are excavated. A variety of objects, including ceramics, glass and nails, provide clues to the location of specific buildings and activity areas at the naval yard, which operated as a Confederate States of America (CSA) stronghold from 1862 - 1865.
"A smoking pipe bowl fragment recovered by the excavation team bears the initials "WG,"" Leader said. "WG pipes are known from American Revolutionary War and other sites to ca. 1850. It gave us quite a start, as one of the original owner's initials was also WG, a remarkable coincidence."

Among the resources Amer has used in the project is a letterbook kept by Confederate Lt. Edward Means from Aug. 3, 1864, to March 15, 1865 (among holdings at Louisiana State University), which provides valuable information about operations at the Mars Bluff Naval Yard.

Amer says the university's research findings and the artifacts recovered will help tell the story of the people who worked at the Mars Bluff Naval Yard and how they constructed the Confederate warships.

"The artifacts recovered to date provide us with a tantalizing glimpse into past lifeways at the site," Amer said, "and remind us of a time in this nation's history when, in the face of advancing overwhelming odds, the Confederate officers, sailors and workmen at the only inland Confederate naval shipyard in South Carolina, along with the local community, gave it their best shot."

The Mars Bluff Naval Yard was one of a score of Confederate naval yards that were located inland in Southern states so gunboats and support vessels for the war could be built and protected from Union forces. Mars Bluff was chosen for its inland location, proximity to the railroad, water communication with Charleston via Georgetown and the abundance of ash, oak and pine lumber.

C.S.S. Pee Dee was a 150-foot Macon class gunboat that was built at Mars Bluff and outfitted with two Brooke rifled cannon and a Union Dahlgren cannon and launched in January 1865. The Pee Dee's career was short-lived. Fearing that the gunboat might fall into enemy hands as Gen. William T. Sherman's Union troops moved from Columbia northward to advance on North Carolina, commanders ordered the cannons thrown overboard into the Pee Dee River before the ship was scuttled on March 15, set ablaze and blown up.

The project of the S.C. Institute for Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of South Carolina is funded in part by a $200,000 grant from the Drs. Bruce and Lee Foundation in Florence. Plans call for the cannon and artifacts recovered from the Mars Bluff Naval Yard and associated with the C.S.S. Pee Dee to be preserved at conservation laboratories at Francis Marion University under the supervision of Leader. They will then be exhibited at the Florence County Museum.

The project includes collaboration with East Carolina University and Francis Marion University. ECU's Program in Maritime Studies is conducting a field school on the site through June 19, providing support to the SCIAA team's research and excavation work.

Amer said researchers have been aided greatly by the Pee Dee Research and Recovery Team, which conducted an underwater survey of the site in the 1990s under an intensive survey license from SCIAA, and by the owners of the property on which the site is located. The owners have allowed the university and ECU archaeologists to stage the underwater operations on their property and conduct terrestrial archaeology.
Interracial Roommates Can Reduce Prejudice, Campus Studies Find...

July 8, 2009

Interracial Roommates Can Reduce Prejudice

By TAMAR LEWIN

As a freshman at Ohio State University, and the only black student on his floor, Sam Boakye was determined to get good grades—in part to make sure his white roommate had no basis for negative racial views.

“If you’re surrounded by whites, you have something to prove,” said Mr. Boakye, now a rising senior who was born in Ghana. “You’re pushed to do better, to challenge the stereotype that black people are not that smart.”

Several recent studies, at Ohio State and elsewhere, have found that having a roommate of a different race can reduce prejudice, diversify friendships and even boost black students’ academic performance. But, the research found, such relationships are more stressful and more likely to break up than same-race pairings.

As universities have grown more diverse, and interracial roommate assignments are more common, social scientists have looked to them as natural field experiments that can provide insights on race relations.

“From a scientific standpoint, when these roommates are paired, you have a natural experiment going on, in an area that’s very difficult to test empirically,” said Thomas E. Trail, a graduate student in psychology at Princeton University who has studied interracial roommates. “You couldn’t very well set up an experiment assigning people to spend several months living with someone of a different race.”

Russell H. Fazio, an Ohio State psychology professor who has studied interracial roommates there and at Indiana University, discovered an intriguing academic effect. In a study analyzing data on thousands of Ohio State freshmen who lived in dorms, he found that black freshmen who came to college with high standardized test scores earned better grades if they had a white roommate—even if the roommate’s test scores were low. The roommate’s race had no effect on the grades of white students or low-scoring black students. Perhaps, the study speculated, having a white roommate helps academically prepared black students adjust to a predominantly white university.

That same study found that randomly assigned interracial roommates at Ohio State broke up before the end of the quarter about twice as often as same-race roommates.

Because interracial roommate relationships are often problematic, Dr. Fazio said, many students would like to move out, but university housing policies may make it hard to leave.

“At Indiana University, where housing was not so tight, more interracial roommates split up,” he said. “Here at Ohio State, where there was a housing crunch, they were told to work it out. The most interesting thing we found was that if the relationship managed to continue for just 10 weeks, we could see an improvement in racial attitudes.”
Dr. Fazio’s Indiana study found that three times as many randomly assigned interracial roommates were no longer living together at the end of the semester, compared with white roommates. The interracial roommates spent less time together, had fewer joint activities and were less involved with each other’s friends than the white pairs. And, the study found, whites’ pre-existing negative racial attitudes predicted which roommate arrangements would break up.

Several studies have shown that living with a roommate of a different race changes students’ attitudes. One, from the University of California at Los Angeles, generally found decreased prejudice among students with different-race roommates — but those who roomed with Asian-Americans, the group that scored the highest on measures of prejudice, became more prejudiced themselves.

Professionals who watch over roommate relationships say that interracial roommate assignments are an important part of campus diversity.

“Most of them do fine, and I think it can be more interesting, because they have more to learn from each other,” said Phil Badaszewski, a hall director at Ohio State. “When there are conflicts, it’s usually different ideas about property sharing, or music, or cleanliness, or coming in late at night — the same things that can be problems for same-race roommates.”

Sometimes, such disputes mask underlying racial issues.

“I had one student who chose to move out, who said they just didn’t like the roommate’s friends, who were too loud,” Mr. Badaszewski said. “I thought there was a racial piece to it, but I didn’t bring it up and name it. It’s one of those topics — race, religion and politics — your parents tell you not to talk about at dinner because it can be explosive. And in this case, I knew it wouldn’t make things better.”

Occasionally, there are explicit racial problems.

“I had a black student who heard racist remarks being made in her quad,” said Gina Kozlowski, another Ohio State hall director. “She said she didn’t want it being made into a spectacle, and she didn’t want to be the person who had to educate her roommates about race.”

One new study of Princeton students, used daily questionnaires to monitor roommate interactions and perceptions.

“In the earliest weeks of the relationship, the positive emotions declined for minority students with white roommates,” said Mr. Trail, an author of the study. “It wasn’t that the white students started being mean or negative. Instead, it was a drop-off in positive behaviors, like smiling or making eye contact, that led the minority students to feel worse.”

A study of students at Duke University, using lists of their close friends before college and at the end of freshman year, found that white students, the least likely to have had close friends of a different race, were the most likely to develop more diverse friendships as freshmen — while black students, who came in with more interracial friendships, had a decline in cross-race friendship freshman year. The study found little change freshman year in the diversity of Asian and Hispanic students’ friendships.
Freshmen with roommates of a different race — or those who lived alone in a dorm — were the most likely to diversify their friendships.

“Just having diversity in classrooms doesn’t do anything to increase interracial friendships,” said Claudia Buchmann, an associate professor of sociology at Ohio State and an author of the Duke study. “But the intimacy of living together in residence halls, with no roommate, or a different-race roommate, does lead to more interracial friendships.”

Minority students in a predominantly white environment, she said, often cocoon themselves by clustering together. Both black and white resident advisers at Ohio State said it was common for black freshmen to seek out other black students.

“There are organizations on campus specifically designed to help minority students, and oftentimes minority students try to find their friends through those groups,” said Ellen Speicher, an Ohio State resident adviser who is white and a rising junior. “It makes sense, on a predominantly white campus.”

Mr. Boakye, a resident adviser for two years, said there was comfort in clustering.

“Being a minority at Ohio State, we try to stay together, to build ourselves as a community,” Mr. Boakye said. “It’s different for white guys.

“A lot of them come here without much exposure to diversity,” he said, “so when their first experience with a black guy isn’t so bad, they go and make more black friends. I think I made a good impression on my freshman roommate. When I saw him this year, he said, ‘Hey dude, you’re not the only black friend I have.’ That felt good.”
July 7, 2009

WNC takes first step toward big plans with new medical school

By Nanci Bompey

Like their classmates around the state, four UNC School of Medicine students spent the first day of their third year of medical school taking a tour of the hospital they'll be working in and getting their identification badges.

But unlike their classmates, the four women who sat practicing suturing on pig's feet Monday afternoon are the first to receive their training at the medical school's newest branch in Western North Carolina and among the first in the country to participate in a new way of educating medical students.

The pilot program that started this week establishes a branch of UNC School of Medicine in WNC for the first time, bringing the four third-year medical school students to the mountains for two years to learn clinical skills.

The program is a collaboration among the UNC School of Medicine, UNC Health Care System, Mission Hospital, the Mountain Area Health Education Center, the Western North Carolina Health Network and local physicians.

Unlike traditional programs, the pilot program, which is based at Mission Hospital, will use a new model of teaching that educates students from the perspective of the patient, allowing students to follow patients throughout the course of their medical care.

"This is our beginning," said Dr. Jeffery Heck, a local family medicine physician and acting associate dean of the regional campus. "I hope in 10 years we look at this as the first day of an academic center in Asheville."

A smaller scale

The pilot program that started this week is a smaller version of a regional medical campus that the medical school had originally intended to build in WNC, along with another satellite campus in Charlotte, to educate third- and fourth-year medical students.

The $450 million expansion project, which would increase enrollment in Chapel Hill and East Carolina University's Brody School of Medicine, was approved by the UNC Board of Governors in March. The project would have brought 20 third-year and 20 fourth-year students to WNC starting in 2011.

But the plan, which was intended to increase the number of physicians in the state, was put on hold when it became clear that funding for the project would not be in this year's tight state budget.

Local project leaders decided to pursue a smaller pilot program in its place that focuses on a new
way of teaching medical students. Using $200,000 of state money and a $50,000 grant from the Mission Healthcare Foundation, they created the program to bring four students to WNC for their third and fourth years of medical school.

“When the state’s resources faltered, we decided that the budget is going to improve eventually, but until then we can use this opportunity to develop the curriculum, develop our faculty here and increase our relationship with UNC School of Medicine,” Heck said.

He hopes that this year’s pilot will lead to another group of students coming to WNC next year and eventually to the full-scale project when funding is available.

“We’re laying down a great foundation,” Heck said. “As soon as the economy turns around, we’re going to be ready.”

**A new curriculum**

As part of the pilot program, students will learn clinical skills using a longitudinal approach, where they will meet a patient in their doctor’s office, see the patient when they return for care and go with their patients to procedures, rather than just see patients one time as they do in traditional rotations.

The Cambridge Model was developed and tested at Harvard Medical School and is the first significant change in American medical education in nearly 100 years, according to Heck. He said that only about 1 percent of medical schools in the country now employ the model.

“It helps the students to see medicine through the eyes of their patients,” Heck said.

Amy Marietta said the nontraditional curriculum is the reason she chose to come to Asheville for her third and fourth years of medical school. She said the doctor-patient relationship approach is something that is rare in medical school.

“I’m looking forward to developing a relationship with patients,” Marietta said.

If it is successful, the method of teaching could be implemented in medical schools across the state, said Dr. Warren Newton, executive associate dean for medical education at UNC School of Medicine.

Newton said the smaller pilot project allows the medical school to learn how best to implement both the new curriculum and a satellite campus.

“I am very disappointed that we’re not going through with it (the full-scale project), but I think this (the pilot project) is a good step forward,” Newton said. “If you were going to expand, this is the way you’d do it.”

**Increasing medical education**

Newton said that while legislators are interested in increasing medical education and the number of physicians in the state, he does not know how long it could be before the funding for the project will be available.

“I think everything depends on the state of the economy,” Newton said.

Heck hopes that once the economy rebounds, the regional medical school campus will lead to even greater medical education in the area, including more residency programs or education in other areas like pharmacy.
"I would say the general impression by the public is certainly that a hospital that has a medical education mission is generally a high-quality institution," he said.

More regional medical education could also benefit WNC by exposing students to practicing medicine in a rural setting in hopes that they will return to these underserved areas. The pilot program requires that students do some of their rotations outside Buncombe County.

Heck said that being a teaching hospital also benefits physicians and staff. About 20 local physicians are serving as faculty for the regional campus, with others who will help educate the students as they rotate through surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, neurology and cardiology.

Dr. Randall Johnson, a general surgeon and one of nine course directors, said not only does he get the chance to educate a new generation of doctors, but he expects to learn from the students as well.

"I hope to learn a little more of what they're learning in medical school and continue my education to help me to stay more up-to-date," he said.

Heck said that while the full-scale project that WNC was originally hoping for would have been more beneficial for the community, having a smaller group allows the faculty to develop a closer relationship with the students, including monthly dinners with faculty to discuss how to deal with the death of a patient and other aspects of medical education that are sometimes lost on big groups.

He said that because Asheville has fewer medical students, residents and fellows, the students may also get more opportunity to interact with patients as well as physicians.

"One of the things that medical students complain about in larger institutions is that they don't feel like anyone really evaluates them with an accurate knowledge of their ability," Heck said. "Our students won't be able to hide, and that will be to their benefit."
New interim head at Risk Management

W. Kendall Chalk, former senior executive vice president and chief credit officer of BB&T, a large regional bank based in Winston-Salem, N.C., has been appointed interim president and CEO of the Risk Management Association (RMA) beginning Tuesday.

Chalk replaces Kevin M. Blakely, who said last month that he would leave RMA to become chief risk officer of Huntington Bancshares in Columbus, Ohio.

RMA board chair Sonny B. Lyles, executive vice president and chief risk officer of Sterling Bank in Houston, said the board wanted to ensure that RMA has a continuity of leadership while it searches for a permanent CEO.

"We asked Ken to take a short break from his retirement to guide RMA as it addresses risk issues during these challenging times," Lyles said.

"As we re-examine the risk management practices of the last several years, it is vital to the financial services industry that we learn from our successes and failures," Chalk said.

Chalk has been an active member of RMA throughout his career. He joined RMA’s Carolinas-Virginias Chapter in 1976 and later served as its president. On the national level, he served as board chair in 2005, following four years as a board member. He also chaired the Credit Risk Management Council from 1995-1997.

After having served as chief credit officer of BB&T for 25 years, Chalk retired last September. He played a role in BB&T’s transformation from a one-time eastern North Carolina farm bank into the nation’s 10th largest financial holding company.

He is immediate past chairman of the East Carolina University Foundation and is co-chair of the BB&T Center for Leadership Development at ECU.

Chalk earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from East Carolina University. He also is a graduate of the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers University.

Founded in 1914, Philadelphia-based Risk Management Association is a nonprofit, member-driven professional association whose sole purpose is to advance the use of sound risk principles in the financial services industry. RMA has 3,000 institutional members that include banks of all sizes as well as nonbank financial institutions.
Researchers delve below ground for clues

East Carolina University uses latest technology to locate Bath graves

By KEVIN SCOTT CUTLER
Lifestyles & Features Editor
Published: Wednesday, July 1, 2009 2:23 AM EDT

BATH — Today's technology is helping researchers answer a few questions about life — and death — from centuries ago in the Beaufort County town of Bath.

Researchers from East Carolina University recently spent two days walking the grounds outside the historic Palmer-Marsh House trying to determine if the property is the final resting place of town residents long deceased.

Among the researchers was Mike O'Driscoll, an associate professor with ECU's geology department. Strapped to what he called an "OhmMapper," a meter that measures the electrical properties of soil, he walked a grid outside the historic building, passing over each area four times to obtain proper readings.

"Sometimes it's hard to see changes in the topography, so this can indicate where old graves are, based on air pockets, which resist electricity," O'Driscoll said as he paced the Palmer-Marsh grounds. "It takes a measurement every half second."

O'Driscoll said he's used the device several times when searching for older graves, but it is also helpful in other applications. For example, the meter can search up to 50 feet into the earth's surface and is often used for locating groundwater.

Assisting O'Driscoll was Robert Mills, an ECU graduate student studying anthropology. He is using technology utilized in the project as background for his master's thesis.

"I've identified a couple of promising technologies," Mills said. "Another uses lasers to see the surface in 3-D, to get surface data. And ground penetrating radar identifies anomalies by using radio waves underground."
The data compiled in Bath is being studied, and Mills will interpret the findings. Bea Latham, assistant site manager and historical interpreter for Historic Bath, is looking forward to learning the project’s results.

“The new, sophisticated opportunity allows us to be precise in possibly locating graves that we know should be on the property, according to Marsh family Bibles and records," Latham said. “While we can’t identify who is buried there, it just substantiates things we think to be there.”

ECU anthropology Professor Charles R. Ewen led the Bath project, which also included the excavation of an 18th century merchant’s cellar nearby.

“There is a historical agenda: We know there are more people buried here than there are tombstones," Ewen said. “This will be useful for the historic-site folks. They’ll be able to tell people who may come to do utility work, ‘Oh no, you can’t dig here, there are graves.’”

Similar research has been done at St. Peter’s Episcopal Church and Beebe Memorial Park in Washington, as well as St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Bath and Tryon Palace in New Bern.