THE DAILY CLIPS

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East Carolina University News Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@ecu.edu Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481 FAX: 252-328-6300
Pedestrian struck by pickup near College Hill Drive

The Daily Reflector

A pedestrian was struck by a small pickup truck at the intersection of 10th Street and College Hill Drive shortly before 6 p.m. Wednesday, East Carolina University police said.

The individual's injuries did not appear to be life-threatening. Officers were investigating the incident Wednesday night.

ECU CAMPUS

The pedestrian, whose name was unavailable, was transported to Pitt County Memorial Hospital for treatment. An officer at the scene
Pedaling past limitations

Triathlete’s chronic kidney disease doesn’t slow him down

By Josh Humphries
The Daily Reflector

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

The challenges of medical disorders sometimes push people to try for the impossible.

Shad Ireland is an ironman triathlete, an astonishing feat considering that he has chronic kidney disease and is on dialysis.

He stopped in Greenville on Wednesday to speak with doctors and patients at the Fresenius Medical Care ECU Dialysis clinic on his “What Inspires You” tour, a 4,000-mile, cross-country bike tour.

The tour began in California in early May and will end next week in Washington, D.C.

“I am an individual who is passionate about life, who is motivated by challenges, and who is committed to the inspiration of my fellow patients,” Ireland said.

He told a group of about 30 patients, doctors and medical students the story of his life Wednesday and how he came to be an athlete after two failed kidney transplants and falling into a coma at age 18, when he weighed only 75 pounds.

“I was the quintessential non-compliant patient,” he said. “I was told at 16 that I would not live past 25, and my first instinct was to ask why.”

At 18, he fell into a coma and was not expected to live. But he came out of the coma and, while recovering on his mother’s couch, he saw an ironman triathlon on television and decided then that he would one day compete in one.

He said he watched as two women helped each other across the finish line, their bodies completely working against them.

An ironman triathlon is made up of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride and a 26-mile run, raced in that order and without a break.

“I decided I wanted what they had,” he said. “Here was someone whose muscles were not working that managed to cross the finish line.”

It was 15 years later before he actually starting working toward the goal of making it into a triathlon. When he began training he could only stay on a treadmill for two minutes and was unable to lift a five-pound weight.

In 2004, he competed in his first race and finished, defying all expectations of his doctors.

Now at age 37, Ireland hopes to inspire others to pursue their dreams and lead energetic, fulfilling lives.

He advocates for longer and more frequent dialysis treatments, which he says makes him feel much better than the normal recommended amounts.
He is planning to unveil a health plan for kidney disease to patients who want more out of their lives.

"You have to keep asking questions until you find the answer you are looking for," he said.

"I don't want great dialysis, I want excellent dialysis. As I stand here today I am still that 10-year-old kid who doesn't want to die."

He said that he has always worked to understand everything that he needs to do to keep living.

"This disease can be beaten, so I set out to do that," he said.

"You have to want your situation to improve, and you have to believe that your situation can improve."

There is no real cure for chronic kidney disease as kidney transplants often fail and put patients back where they started. Ireland wants to show patients all over the world that it is possible to live a productive life with the disease.

Contact Josh Humphries at jhumphries@coxnc.com or (252) 329-9565.

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Input meeting for 10th Street project draws light turnout

By Kathryn Kennedy
The Daily Reflector

Wednesday, July 22, 2009

Only three people offered their input at Wednesday night's meeting for the Stantonsburg Road-10th Street Connector Project, which will link Pitt County Memorial Hospital and East Carolina University with one four-lane thoroughfare.

Business owners insisted upon the chance to speak before the steering committee at an April 29 meeting. The committee is charged with choosing one of three remaining routes — narrowed from 11 — for construction.

City Engineer and Project Manager David Brown said he expected a bigger turnout, but noted that many people's concerns have been stated and recorded at previous meetings.

Four members of the five-man committee were present: Brown, Greenville's Community Development Director Merrill Flood and representatives from the N.C. Department of Transportation and ECU. Brown said the representative from PCMH could not attend due to a family emergency.

About 25 people attended the 15-minute session, including Greenville City Council members Rose Glover and Bryant Kittrell.

Landlord J.T. Williams spoke first, stating that he has tenants who have lived in the area for 15 years. He is concerned that business owners will not be compensated adequately as they'll be forced to move to areas of town where land prices are higher.

Jim Kenney, vice chairman of the city's Environmental Advisory Commission, applauded the project directors for taking environmental and health hazards into consideration. He was particularly concerned about the air quality for children attending nearby Sadie Sauter Elementary School.

"I would like to commend those we've been silently working with over the last nine months," he said. "People from Kimley-Horne, (Public Works Director) Wes Anderson's group and David (Brown). They've been thinking of public health and our kids — the future of our nation. Whatever happens with it the kids are going to be protected, and we thank you for that."

A Tyson Street resident voiced concern that developers have not correctly identified a portion of the property he owns near Farmville Boulevard. Steering committee members took notes and Brown thanked each speaker.

Brown said there still are environmental surveys to be done, among other federal and NCDOT requirements, before a final plan is selected. At that time, the comments made at all informational and input meetings will be presented to the committee for consideration.

Right-of-way acquisition is expected to begin in 2011, with construction starting by 2013.

Contact Kathryn Kennedy at kkennedy@coxnc.com or (252) 329-9566.

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Duke to test pandemic flu vaccine

As cases of H1N1 virus rise, the university plans to recruit up to 200 volunteers.

BY SARAH AVERY, Staff Writer

As many as 200 people in the Triangle may be enlisted to test a vaccine for pandemic flu at Duke University, officials announced Wednesday.

The clinical trials are slated to begin in early August as the federal government sprints to approve a vaccine against the H1N1 strain that emerged earlier this year and quickly spread around the world.

As of Wednesday, North Carolina reported 483 cases of the new flu, with five deaths. Far more people are likely to have contracted the virus, but the state is only counting cases that are detected through clinics in its surveillance system, or are serious enough to warrant hospital care.

Unlike seasonal flu, the virus has not diminished over the summer. Instead, it has shut down youth camps and activities throughout the state.

Most people infected with the virus have mild to moderate symptoms, including fever, headache, body aches and coughs.

No one has immunity to the virus because it is so new. That's why federal officials are working to have a vaccine available by October.

The clinical trials announced Wednesday are designed to answer several questions about the new flu shot, including what dose is necessary to trigger an immune response and when the shot should be given relative to the regular flu vaccine.

Dr. Emmanuel Walter Jr., a pediatrician and director of Duke's Clinical Vaccine Unit, said Duke will enroll up to 50 patients in each of four different sections of clinical trials for the vaccine manufactured by Sanofi Pasteur.

The first and second trials will gauge the dosage, with half the patients getting a smaller amount and the other half getting a larger dose. If all goes well with adults, the same test will be tried among children.

A third and fourth trial will examine when the shot should be given. Because the regular flu vaccine was already in production when the new H1N1 strain erupted worldwide, the new shot will have to be given separately. But it's unknown whether it will be best to do the H1N1 inoculation some time before, during or after the regular seasonal flu shot. This too, will be tested in children.

"Everyone will be monitored very closely," Walter said, noting that patients will be kept for several hours after getting the test shots, then must meet a phone appointment on the third day and return to the clinic a week later.
"They'll have to keep track of any reactions on a diary card, and we'll follow them with
phone calls," he said. Everyone will require a booster shot 21 days later to assure a strong
immune reaction.

"The thought is the body's never seen this, so it might well take two doses to respond,"
Walter said, noting that doctors learned that lesson after testing vaccines for another new flu
virus -- the avian strain that many had worried would become the next pandemic.

Duke is the second site in the Triangle to test H1N1 vaccines. Earlier this summer, Wake
Research Associates of Raleigh was tapped to enroll participants in trials for two undisclosed
manufacturers, both of which are using a new technology that could speed the production
process.

savery@newsobserver.com or 919-829-4882

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The H1N1 virus in North Carolina

- 483 cases have been reported in the state.
- 88 new cases were reported since last week.
- Five people have died, with one new death.
- Seven counties have confirmed their first cases.
Learn more

The vaccine trials at Duke will not start until August, but for more information call 620-5350.

SOURCE: N.C. Division of Public Health

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Flu shuts down Duke summer program

From staff reports

DURHAM - Duke University's Talent Identification Program canceled the second of its two summer sessions on Duke's East Campus on Wednesday after more than 25 of the 260 participating students tested positive for flu or reported flu symptoms over the previous two days.

All of the cases are mild to moderate, consistent with normal seasonal flu, and no student has been hospitalized, according to a news release. The three-week session for academically gifted teenagers had been scheduled to continue until Aug. 1.

"Although none of the students seems to be in any serious danger, we decided to err on the side of caution and cancel the program to reduce the accelerating risk of infection among the other participants," said Martha Putallaz, Duke TIP's executive director.

Duke TIP has asked the families to pick up their children immediately. Families whose children have the flu are being asked to keep them away from public places until they are no longer infectious, following the guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sick students are being kept in isolation and cared for by the program, in coordination with Duke's health system, until their families arrive, the release said.

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UNC-CH may reduce scooter fee

BY ERIC FERRERI, Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL - Scooter riders at UNC-Chapel Hill will likely get a break this week.

Campus trustees appear ready to significantly lower a new fee charged to folks who park scooters on campus.

The change, which comes after months of outcry from the scooter community, would drop the price of a scooter permit to $24. The previous policy, approved earlier this year but not slated to take effect until mid-August, would have charged employees anywhere from $174 to $371 annually, depending on their salary level. Students would have been charged $175, or $44 if they also had a permit to park a car on campus.

According to a UNC-CH memo, the price cut came after campus officials realized many other campuses charged far less for scooter permits.

That's true. One example: At Duke University, scooter permits are $25, or free if you have a car permit.

The audit and finance committee of UNC-CH's Board of Trustees signed off on the change Wednesday. The full board will likely approve it today.

The university says scooter riders, who until now have parked near their buildings and used bike racks or other structures to secure their scooters, will now have to park in lots currently designated for motorcycles.

And officials say they plan to install new metal "U-Racks" that can be used to secure the scooters.

Under the revised policy, the university would institute a warning period through Nov. 1. After that, violators would face a $30 fine.

Repeat violations would net additional $55 fines.

The scooter policy marks the first time UNC-CH has regulated scooters, the small motorized bikes with engines of 50 cubic centimeters or less. University officials say scooters have long been overlooked in parking regulations, but their use has increased in recent years, posing a hazard to pedestrians.

Brian Moynihan, a UNC-CH graduate student who rides a scooter to campus each day, said he has concerns about the logistics of the new regulation, but the price reduction is a "step in the right direction."

eric.ferreri@newsobserver.com or 919-932-2008

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Va. Tech shooter's mental health records surface

BY SUE LINDSEY, Associated Press Writer

BLACKSBURG, Va. - The discovery of missing mental health records of the Virginia Tech gunman has victims' families and the governor questioning the thoroughness of the criminal investigation into the worst mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

The potentially explosive evidence eluded authorities for more than two years until Seung-Hui Cho's files turned up at the home of a former university counseling official, angering families still struggling to understand how the killer fell through the cracks at the university. The development, disclosed in a memo obtained Wednesday by The Associated Press, represents another embarrassing lapse in the case.

"Deception comes to my mind in my first response," said Suzanne Grimes, whose son Kevin Sterne was wounded. "It gives me the impression, 'What else are they hiding?'"

The contents of the file have not been made public, and Gov. Tim Kaine said it is unclear why Dr. Robert C. Miller, former director of the campus clinic where Cho was counseled because of his disturbing behavior, took the records home more than a year before Cho killed 32 people and committed suicide on April 16, 2007.

The governor said he was dismayed that it took so long to find the records.

"That is part of the investigation that I am very interested in and, of course, I'm very concerned about that," Kaine said.

The commission that was appointed by Kaine never interviewed Miller.

Victims' families want to know whether the file contains warning signs that could have prevented the rampage.
"Would things have been different if we had this information? What information is in those records?" asked Lori Haas, whose daughter Emily was wounded in the shootings.

Miller, 54, declined to comment when reached by telephone at his private practice.

State officials said they would release the records publicly as soon as possible, either by getting consent from Cho's estate or through a subpoena. The medical records are protected under state privacy laws.

Miller told his attorney about Cho's file last Thursday, said Mark E. Rubin, the governor's chief legal counsel. According to a university memo shared with victims' families, Miller took the records for Cho and several other students home around the time he left his job at the center in 2006.

After the massacre, the counseling center conducted an exhaustive search for the records in 2007, and Miller told investigators at the time that he didn't know where they were, university spokesman Mark Owczarski said.

Virginia State Police are investigating whether a criminal act was committed, spokeswoman Corinne Geller said. Kaine said it was illegal to remove records from the center.

The families of two of the dead were already claiming that Miller withheld troubling information about Cho. A lawsuit they filed in April claims Miller was told by Cho's English professors about his disturbing behavior and by the school's residential director that Cho had a history of erratic behavior and suicidal thoughts and had "blades" in his room.

The lawsuit claims Miller never passed that information on to either of the therapists from the counseling center who dealt with Cho during three 45-minute triage sessions in 2005.

Notes of the warnings to Miller or those made by the therapists concerning the three meetings were never found by investigators. It is unclear if those are part of the recovered records.

"Why would he take any student mental health records to his home at any time, and why that student?" said Robert T. Hall, an attorney for the two families. "It certainly is a question of whether there is more to the Seung-Hui Cho mental health history than we've been told."

The Virginia Tech Review Panel interviewed more than 200 people. The leader of that investigation, former Virginia State Police Superintendent Gerald Massengill, said investigators interviewed Miller's successor at the clinic, but not Miller.

Massengill said Cho's records could be critical to understanding the rampage and "should give us a better understanding of what actions the university did or did not take."

Associated Press Writers Bob Lewis, Dena Potter and Steve Szkotak in Richmond contributed to this report.

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