THE DAILY CLIPS

August 4, 2011

News, commentary, and opinion
compiled by the East Carolina University News Bureau from:

The Greenville Daily Reflector
The Raleigh News & Observer
The New York Times
The Wall Street Journal
USA Today
The Charlotte Observer
The Fayetteville Observer
The Greensboro News & Record
Newsweek
U.S. News & World Report
Business Week
Time

East Carolina University News Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@.ecu.edu Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481
Teachers and faculty members from Pitt County Schools participate in a dropout prevention campaign event to get businesses, churches and other organizations together to support the schools at PCC on Wednesday. (Rhett Butler/The Daily Reflector)

**Support up, dropout rate down**

By **Jackie Drake**  
The Daily Reflector  
Thursday, August 4, 2011

Pitt County's high school dropout rate is going down thanks to successful programs and community support, but more work is needed to match or beat the state.

At the Pitt County Dropout Prevention Campaign kickoff Wednesday morning at Pitt Community College, educators rallied businesses, churches and other organizations to assist the task force and support after-school initiatives to keep students in school and on track to graduate.

“We still have work to do,” Superintendent Beverly Reep said.

While the district made a huge leap forward last year with a 25 percent reduction in the dropout rate, the equivalent of two students per day walked out of Pitt County schools. The total of 361 dropouts was reduced from 482 the year before.

“We can't lose any kids, losing one is too many,” said keynote speaker Ruffin McNeill, head football coach at East Carolina University. “You can talk about problems or be a problem solver, and what we're doing now is problem solving.”

The Twilight Academy, an evening online credit recovery program in school computer labs started in 2008, enabled 141 more students to graduate this year, according to Reep.

The number of out-of-school suspensions decreased 30 percent due to Project Equal, which keeps students in school by allowing them to do community service on campus after school instead. Pitt County is the only district with the cutting-edge Read3D program for all K-3 classrooms to ensure students stay on grade level from the beginning.
Other programs like the Student Success Academy, Link Crew and Fast Track support students throughout their academic careers.

While these initiatives were started with state funding and grant money, those sources won't last and continued community support is needed.

“We have some better outcomes,” Reep said. “People realize that (the dropout rate) is a real problem and we can't thank them enough for their support.” The district's goal is to reduce the dropout rate by 50 percent in five years, and it has two years and 20 percent to go, according to Reep.

“We are going to meet that goal,” Reep said. “These programs will go on. The challenge belongs to all of us.”

McNeill, who also spoke Tuesday at a Communities In Schools luncheon, is an avid supporter of education.

“I have a pedestal I can speak from, but we all have opportunities to reach out; it's very important we all do things to help our young people,” he said. He told educators, “Keep doing what you're doing, keep fighting.”

The dropout rate is not just an educational issue and affects the whole community, participants emphasized.

“It's tempting to say dropouts are the school's problem, but we all own this problem,” said attorney H.L. Stephenson, chairman of the Pitt County Educational Foundation. “Dropping out leads to crime and a poorly educated workforce and strikes at the heart of the economy.”

Pastor Sidney Locks of Cornerstone Missionary Baptist Church said, “We must come together to break the cycle of ignorance, poverty and crime.”

Contact Jackie Drake at jdrake@reflector.com or 252-329-9567.
East Carolina plans dental center in Spruce Pine
Aug 3, 8:57 AM EDT
AP

SPRUCE PINE, N.C. (AP) -- East Carolina University has chosen Spruce Pine in western North Carolina as the site for a new dental center.

East Carolina officials said Tuesday the school will build a community service learning center in Spruce Pine and provide care to residents in Mitchell, Avery and Yancey counties.

The town of about 2,200 is fifth of 10 sites that the school plans to build. Others are planned for Ahoskie, Elizabeth City, Lillington and Sylva. Construction should begin next year.

The federal Institute of Medicine says North Carolina averages about four dentists for every 10,000 people, below the national average of 58 dentists for every 10,000 people.
Catherine "Kitty" Joyner

Catherine "Kitty" Lorah Smith Joyner passed away in Pitt County Memorial Hospital on Tuesday, August 2, 2011 surrounded by her family after a long illness. Funeral will be at 11 a.m. on Friday at the First Presbyterian Church, 1400 S. Elm St., Greenville.

Kitty was born June 4, 1932 in Greenville. She was a loving and devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. They all loved and adored her.

On April 8, 1955, Kitty married her high school sweetheart Max Ray Joyner. Kitty attended the Greenville City Schools and graduated from Greenville High School in 1950. She received her A.B. Degree in Education from Duke University in 1954, where she was a member of the Phi Mu Sorority, Gamma Epsilon Chapter. Kitty was presented in 1951 at the Terpsichorean Club Debutante Ball in Raleigh. She obtained her Master's Degree in Education from East Carolina College in 1959. She was a teacher in Pinehurst for one year and in New Bern for three months, retiring in 1955 to be a homemaker. Kitty and Max had three wonderful children, Catherine Harris, Max Ray Jr., and Julia Smith.

Kitty served in many leadership roles in her community. During her public school days of her three children, Kitty was active in the Parent Teacher Association work and served as President of the Elmhurst P.T.A in 1965. She was active in the Girl Scout Program, serving as Brownie Leader and as a Girl Scout Leader. Kitty continued to demonstrate her love for her hometown by active and enthusiastic participation in the Jaycettes and by serving on the Board of Directors of the Greenville Art Center. She was also one of the founders of the Rose High Booster Club in 1974. She and Max were founders of The Oakwood School where a building was named in their honor. She was active in the Women for Women Power of the Purse and one of the founding members.

Kitty served in many leadership roles at East Carolina University. She was one of the founders of the Friends of the School of Music and served on the board. As a member of the Four Seasons Chamber Music she served on the advisory committee. She was also one of the founders of the Friend of the Summer Theatre and served as Vice President. Kitty and Max helped many students at East Carolina University by endowing Scholarships. They were one of the first that endowed a University Honors Scholarship and endowed several scholarships in the School of Nursing. The first Chair at the Brody School of Medicine is named the Catherine and Max Joyner Distinguished Professorship in Primary Care Medicine and it was endowed in 1992. They were also members of the Chancellor's Society and the order of the Cupola at East Carolina University. As one of the founders of the Women's Round Table Committee she served as a Director on the first board. Kitty served on Friends of the Joyner Library Board from 1993-1996 and was President in 1995-1996. A study room in the library is named in her honor.
Kitty is survived by her loving husband of 56 years, Max Ray Joyner, and their children. Catherine married William Randolph "Randy" Hoft and lives in Raleigh, Max Ray married Kelly Jordan and lives in Greenville, and Julia married Roy Lee Fulcher and resides in Wilson. Kitty is the proud grandmother of Catherine Lorah Henry and husband, Jon Henry, Jennifer Randolph Hoft, Caroline Elizabeth Hoft, Max Ray Joyner III, Larkins Elizabeth Joyner, Roy Lee Fulcher III, William Smith Fulcher, and Jayson Zachary Fulcher. She also was honored to see the first great-grandchild born to the Joyner family, Catherine "Cate" Lorah Henry in June, 2011. Survivors also include her brother Guy B. Smith, Jr. and wife Glenda and many nieces and nephews.

Since her infant baptism, Kitty has remained loyal to the First Presbyterian Church for 79 years and was probably the senior member. She served in many areas of the church which include Treasurer for Women of the Church, taught Sunday School, helped with Bible School, accompanied Jr. Choir, member of the Church Circle. Kitty and Max co-chaired the building committee campaign to raise money to build the fellowship hall. She was given a life membership in 2007 in the Women of the Church. Kitty claimed to sit in the same seat location for worship as she did as a child. Kitty would fill in for her Mother at the organ when her Mother could not attend service.

Kitty enjoyed people and participated in several groups. She was a Charter Member of Chicora Book Club and served as President soon after it was organized in 1957. She was an enthusiastic member in the Dig-N-Delve Garden Club and served as President in 1969, 1977, and 1989. She was a member of the Junior German Club and served as President in 1974; and then "gracefully" advanced to the Senior German Club and served as President 1995-1996. She enjoyed her membership in the Lenoir-Pitt Committee of Colonial Dames of America. With her love of needle pointing, she was a member in the North Carolina Embroiderer's Guild. She always had a project underway and was very eager to share her knowledge with anyone. Her two handmade heirlooms are a crocheted tobacco twine bedspread and a set of tatted placemats. She also loved needle pointing and made a canvas created by Annabelle Sugg for the First Presbyterian Church.

Kitty was a person of many interests and hobbies. She loved being with her family and taking family vacations with them. She also loved flowers and working in her garden. Kitty was an avid traveler and she and Max traveled to over thirty countries and most of the states. Her passions were, needlework, astronomy - she built a telescope - studying the skies with her telescope, playing the organ, piano, and accordion, reading, working crossword puzzles, sailing, playing bridge, genealogy and riding horses.

Visitation will be tonight from 6-8.

The family would like to thank Dr. Mark Warren of Physician's East and Dr. Rachel Raab of the Brody School of Medicine, as well as their many friends, for their kindness and caring during her illness.
In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society, 930-B Wellness Dr., Greenville, NC 27858 or the Mary B. Smith Music Fund at First Presbyterian Church, 1400 S. Elm St., Greenville, NC 27858.

Online condolences at www.wilkersonfuneralhome.com

Published in The Daily Reflector on August 4, 2011
Ruffin McNeill is no stranger to success.

On the cusp of his second season as the head football coach at East Carolina, McNeill has already guided his team to its fifth consecutive bowl game, has successfully constructed an offensive juggernaut with coordinator Lincoln Riley and senior quarterback Dominique Davis, and he's even conquered multiple surgeries in the offseason that trimmed his frame in half and gave him drastically improved mobility.

But when it comes to the Pirates' reconfigured, rethought and retooled defense, even a McNeill miracle won't happen overnight.

“It's not going to be a magical, Harry Potter wand-waving, where it will automatically be done like, ‘Voila,’” McNeill said Wednesday of his team's continued work on the 3-4 defense heading into the 2011 season. “But I expect improvement from our defense. There will be some tough times like there always are. With the schedule we have in nonconference and conference, there are going to be some tough opponents.”

The 3-4 should help to highlight the team's strengths up front and at linebacker. Three key components have returned from injuries and will likely become main cogs in the new scheme. Junior nose tackle Michael Brooks and outside linebackers Marke Powell, a junior, and Justin Dixon, a sophomore, give ECU a solid foundation in the front seven.

“The 3-4 fits the personnel we have here on campus and gives us speed and the chance to have some blitz potential, both outside and inside. But it also gives us a chance to help the run defense,” McNeill said.
The Pirates finished 6-7 last season, culminating with a loss to Maryland at the Military Bowl and including forgettable defensive performances in blowout losses to Navy and Rice.

While he expects exponential growth defensively, McNeill also has the luxury of being able defend with a great offense. Davis is not only coming off a record-breaking first season at ECU, but despite the loss of all-time receiving leader Dwayne Harris, he's still got nearly a dozen reliable sets of hands with which to build on last season's gaudy numbers.

“I want him to feel like he can get out of them what he needs to get out of them, and that's definitely one of the gifts he has, leading the guys and inspiring them to maybe do a little more than they would on their own,” Riley, also entering his second season at ECU, said of the relationship between Davis and his many receivers.

On Friday, the Pirates will start writing the second chapter of the McNeill coaching era when they open August camp in advance of their season opener Sept. 3 in Charlotte against South Carolina. Year two promises to be characterized by how well handfuls of younger players make the transition from the background to the spotlight on a team with established leaders like Davis on offense and senior safety Bradley Jacobs on defense.

The Pirates will stage 21 preseason practice sessions, including three scheduled two-a-days, prior to opening the season. After the Gamecocks, ECU will play three straight home games at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium — Sept. 10 against Virginia Tech, Sept. 24 against UAB and Oct. 1 against North Carolina — before hitting the road to take on Houston Oct. 8.

Following is a positional breakdown of who is expected in camp beginning Friday and who will battle for playing time, beginning with the defense:

**Defensive line**

Brooks will man the middle after returning from a long-term knee injury, but will face constant pressure from senior Antonio Allison. Also in the mix on the interior are sophomore Jimmy Booth and redshirt freshmen Terry Williams and Chrishon Rose. Juniors Robert Jones and Kemory Mann are also in camp. Freshman Terrell Stanley will be a late arrival, and transfer Leroy Vick is out for the season with an injury sustained in the spring.

Sophomore starting ends Derrell Johnson and Matt Milner are both back. Behind them, redshirt Lee Pegues and Terry Biles have made progress, and JUCO John Lattimore and freshman Jeton Beavers promise to challenge for playing time when they arrive Aug. 12.

Also expected in camp are former transfer Diavolo Simpson, freshman Jonathan White and former walk-ons Robert Huckabee, Ryan Mahoney and Alex Leonard.

**Linebacker**

Outside, Dixon and Powell are the favorites to start, but they will face pressure from senior Cliff Perryman, JUCO Chris Baker and redshirt Maurice Falls. Also in camp are
redshirt Jacob Geary, invited walk-on Demetrious McKelvie and former walk-ons like James Craig and Brandon Carr.

The inside spots are led by potential first-time starters in sophomore Ty Holmes and redshirt Jeremy Grove, but both will have competition from the likes of sophomore Kyle Tudor and junior transfer Daniel Drake. Signee Joseph Blanks did not qualify, but McNeill said he won't hesitate to play freshmen Montese Overton and Zeek Bigger if needed. Also in camp are invited walk-on Brandon Williams and walk-on Greg Robinson.

**Defensive back**
The starters are set with Jacobs returning at strong safety, sophomore Damon Magazu taking over at free safety and seniors Derek Blacknall and Emanuel Davis manning the corners, though Davis will serve a one-game suspension against the Gamecocks. Behind them, junior Jacobi Jenkins is the top man behind Blacknall at the field spot and junior Leonard Paulk is behind Davis on the boundary, with redshirt Lamar Ivey and junior Justin Venable the top backups at strong and free safety, respectively. Also in camp are junior Rahkeem Morgan, redshirts Detric Allen and Desi Brown, freshmen Glen Hilliard, Domonique Lennon and Rocco Scarfone, transfers Cody Lyon and Kristopher Sykes, invited walk-on Josh Hawkins and former walk-ons Desmond Lawrence, Bill Wallace and Doug Mayo-Tapp.

**Offensive line**
A new generation is forming after the loss of three long-term starters. The elder of the group will be senior and first-time starter Doug Polochak, who will likely play left guard but who can also play center. At right tackle, sophomore Grant Harner is the only returning starter. A trio of new starters includes sophomores Jordan Davis at left tackle, Will Simmons at right guard and senior Hugh Parker getting the nod over redshirt Mack Helms at center.

Top backups include senior tackle Steven Baker, transfer guard/tackle Adhem Elsawi and redshirts Taylor Hudson and Drew Gentry. Also expected in camp are junior tackle Josh Clark, JUCO transfer Anthony Garrett, freshmen Stewart Hinson, Tre Robertson and Chaz Lowery and walk-ons Jonathan Powers and Michael Jenkins. Freshman Isaac Harris is on the 120-man roster but not the 105.

**Quarterback**
After setting a slew of new ECU records, Dominique Davis is the surest thing the Pirates have. Backing him directly will likely be redshirt Shane Carden, who could be the odds-on-favorite to replace Davis next season. Also in the mix under center are sophomore Rio Johnson, junior Brad Wornick and freshman Cody Keith.

**Running back**
National JUCO rushing leader Reggie Bullock appears poised to take over the Pirate ground attack, though sophomores Torrance Hunt, Michael Dobson and Damonte Terry and redshirt Alex Owah return hoping for a share of carries. Also in camp are former
walk-on John Barnes-Smith and freshman Chris Hairston. Promising signee Chevelle Buie did not qualify.

**Wide receiver**
Lance Lewis made a major impact at the X position last season, and promises to be the go-to man again, ahead of junior Dayon Arrington and Reese Wiggins, who Riley said had a great spring along with senior Z Joe Womack. Junior Andrew Bodenheimer will likely reclaim the starting post at Z ahead of sophomore Mike Price, who Riley called the most explosive receiver.

On the inside, senior Michael Bowman will serve a one-game suspension before likely returning to starter status at the H spot, though freshman Danny Webster and junior transfer Derrick Harris could both see playing time. Sophomore Justin Jones looks to become a game-changer at the Y spot ahead of junior Jeremy Davis and redshirt Justin Hardy.

Also expected in camp are sophomores Zico Pasut and Gray Mazzone, redshirt Torian Richardson, freshmen Antonio Cannon and Donte Sumpter, walk-on Cedric Thompson and former walk-ons Carter Gagnon and Brandon Weymann.

**Special teams**
Senior Michael Barbour will try to keep his spot at placekicker ahead of walk-on Warren Harvey and sophomore Matt Millisor. Senior Ben Ryan will punt and man kickoffs, sophomore Trent Tignor figures to be the holder and senior deep snapper William Smith is back from an injury.
Frasure wins Highland Games title
By Jordan Anders
The Daily Reflector
Thursday, August 4, 2011

There is a certain group of things that most people would expect an 11-year-old to be doing.

Riding bikes, playing sports or watching movies are things that usually come to mind. Eric Frasure wasn't one of those kids.

“I was doing all that stuff that they say 11-year-olds shouldn't do,” Frasure said. “I was lifting and doing weight training and all that stuff they say stunts your growth. “And I'm 6-4,” he added, chuckling, “so that sort of shoots that down.”

Indeed, the Charlotte native grew as he was supposed to, and grew into a world class athlete as evidenced by his overall victory in heavyweight athletics at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games on July 9.

The victory was the second overall at the Highland Games for the 26-year-old Frasure, with the first coming in 2008. Last year, he broke the world record in the sheaf toss, an event in which he flung a 20.4-pound sack of hay over a bar 36 feet, 2 inches in the air.

“It was a great feeling,” Frasure said of his recent victory. “It's always nice to win. Around here, the Highland Games are about as big as it gets.”

But before competing professionally and breaking world records, Frasure was an All-American thrower at East Carolina from 2003-2006. He still holds ECU's varsity records in the 35-pound weight throw (21.62 meters), discus throw (55.59) and hammer throw (64.34), all of which were set in 2006. He earned All-America honors in the 2006 outdoor hammer throw, and the 2006 and '07 indoor weight throw.

Frasure still maintains contacts in Greenville. Among them are Thor and Johann Gyfason, co-owners of East Carolina Barbell, who he credits heavily for “really pushing” him and helping him achieve the success that he has.
Throwing is something that Frasure has been a part of for more than half of his life. He said he first showed an interest in the sport around age 11, and he said he appreciates the unique process of the competition and the physical prowess required to excel.

“It's one of those things where it's very individualized,” he said. “It's on you whether or not you do well. It's not like there's anyone standing in front of you to hold you back.

“You don't just lift weights to be good at this. You have to be strong, but you have to be athletic, also. There's a technique to throwing that is more than just being strong. That's what makes it challenging.”

Frasure seems to have the technique pretty much mastered. In his victory at the Highland Games last month, he threw a 56-pound weight 42 feet, 10 inches.

Competing in heavyweight throwing has taken Frasure all over the United States, and even as far as Scotland. Nowadays, he works a day job, and does not compete full time.

He said he usually takes part in about eight competitions per year, and that with where he is in his life now, throwing is “really just an excuse for me to keep training.”

That may be, but Frasure said that he has no plans on slowing down any time soon.

“As long as I can do it, I will,” he said. “As long as my knees aren't falling apart, and I'm not falling apart, I'll be training and competing.”
Productions showcase students of all ages

By VIKKI BROUGHTON HODGES
The Dispatch

More than 50 students from around the county will showcase their talents this month as the Davidson County Youth Summer Theater Program opens its third season with two popular musicals, "Godspell" and "Disney's Jungle Book."

The two shows will be performed at the Edward C. Smith Civic Center. "Godspell" will be at 7 p.m. Aug. 12-14, and "Disney's Jungle Book" will be at 2 p.m. Aug. 13-14. Tickets are $5 for "Jungle Book" and $10 for "Godspell" and can be purchased at the civic center box office by calling 242-2783, by calling director Bob Dye at 596-2006 or from cast members.

The summer youth theater program is open to students in all three local school systems as well as home-schoolers, said Dye, Ledford High School's theater arts teacher and director of the summer program, as well as a frequent director of Lexington Youth Theatre productions. Students performed "Joseph and the
Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" last summer and "Jesus Christ Superstar" in the first season of the summer theater program.

Dye said, for the first time, he decided to do two summer productions, one aimed at older students, "Godspell," and the other geared for younger participants, "Disney's Jungle Book."

Dye said he wanted to give young aspiring actors more of an opportunity to learn about theater than simply being in a chorus in a big production. He said "Disney's Jungle Book" calls for about 30 characters, none of them gender-specific since they are playing animals, which allowed for flexible casting among the children ranging in age from 5 to 14.

"It's perfect for the little kids — and they all know the songs from the Disney movie," he said, noting the show runs about an hour without an intermission.

"Godspell," a musical presented as a series of parables based on the Gospel of Matthew, has 16 songs, including "Day by Day," performed by a dozen high school students in an ensemble cast.

"It's actually one of my favorite shows," Dye said. "The music is beautiful, and the kids are doing a great job — they're doing some awesome harmonies."

Dye said he also chose these two shows because they both require minimal sets, which helps with logistics and cost.

"It's easy to strike the sets between the matinees and evening performances," he said, adding "Godspell" is about two hours with an intermission.

Dye noted two students are also working as assistant directors on the shows, Jacob Yeager and Devin Gray. Wes Richardson, a former Ledford theater arts student who is now a Teaching Fellow in the music education program at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, is the musical director for both productions.

The students in the two casts said they are enjoying the productions and learning more about theater arts in the process.

During a break from a recent rehearsal of "Disney's Jungle Book," the musical's lead, 11-year-old Alec Gallazzi, said he's having a great time singing and acting on stage this summer. A six-year veteran of Lexington Youth Theatre productions, including playing Tiny Tim in "A Christmas Carol," Gallazzi said he's happy to play the orphaned child Mowgli raised by wolves in the jungle from the book of the same name by Rudyard Kipling.

"It's a real pleasure to be the lead — it's fun," he said, noting he was also in last summer's youth theater production.

"I enjoy singing 'The Bare Necessities,'" he said, when asked about his favorite song. He said he becomes more nervous singing in front of two or three people than a group.
"I'm fine with a crowd," he noted. "I just get into my own little world. I just have a real passion for theater."

Jesse Herndon, who graduated in June from Central Davidson High School and is a veteran of about 20 shows between Ledford school productions, Lexington Youth Theatre shows and past summer youth theater musicals, many in leading roles, plays Jesus in "Godspell." Herndon took theater arts classes at Ledford and chorus at Lexington Senior High.

"The music is what made me want to do this show," said Herndon, who will study theater arts at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in the fall. "It's just the whole story and the music. And the end is breathtaking."

Rebecca Essick, who graduated in June from North Davidson High School, said she has also enjoyed working on "Godspell," noting she was in last summer's youth production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat."

"I wanted to make time for it this summer because I enjoyed it last year," Essick said, noting band practice during the school year kept her too busy to be in more productions. She will study graphic design and advertising at Guilford Technical Community College this fall.

Daniel Cavenaugh, a rising sophomore at Ledford, said he took his first course in theater arts this past spring and was an extra in the school's spring production of "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum." But as one of the members of the ensemble cast of "Godspell," he's on the stage for the whole show and takes his turn singing a solo number as well as with the group.

"This is basically my whole summer," Cavenaugh said of play rehearsals. "It's some work, learning lines and songs, but it's fun for me — I love it. And I love meeting new people."

Janie Spencer, a rising senior at Ledford, is another one of the ensemble cast members of "Godspell." She started taking theater arts classes in her freshman year, and this will be the sixth production in which she has appeared. She will take theater arts four this coming year.

"I just fell in love with it," Spencer said, noting she plans to pursue a technical career in theater lighting and sound and study at East Carolina University. She hopes to learn more about the technical aspects of theater in her senior year and possibly do some job shadowing.

For now, however, Spencer said she's enjoying being on stage again and working with her fellow cast members.

"I love the show," she said. "It's an ensemble cast, and we're on stage together the whole time, so we basically become like a family. I've never been in another show quite like it."
Spencer said she believes the audience will enjoy the show, too. "Kids love it, adults love it," she said. "There's a lot of interaction with the audience. We break the fourth wall, that's the term used, to talk to the audience and dance in the aisles."

Discounted ticket packages for both shows and free dessert coupons with the purchase of meals at uptown restaurants are also available, Dye said. Participating restaurants are Village Grill, Café 35, Noah's Kitchen and Southern Lunch.

In addition, there will be silent auctions in the civic center lobby at the productions to help defray the cost of putting on the shows.

• • •

The cast members of "Godspell" are Herndon, Spencer, Cavennaugh, Jared Carroll, Shannon Marshall, Carson Everhart, Marissa Drake, Andrew Duggins, Rebecca Essick, Allan Wagner, Sarah Essick and Hannah Hedrick.

• • •


Vikki Broughton Hodges can be reached at 249-3981, ext. 214, or at vikki.hodges@the-dispatch.com.

Copyright © 2011 The-Dispatch.com
Editorial

Fewer Fellows

The damage from the General Assembly's budget decisions will spool out over the coming years as thousands more schoolchildren move through the classrooms where their success, or lack of success, will influence the future course of their lives.

If cutbacks in education spending - which include gutting programs to boost the quantity and quality of the state's teacher corps - sound worrisome, then that's an impression widely shared among those who've led efforts to bring North Carolina's public schools up to respectable levels of performance. So why would the N.C. Teaching Fellows Program have wound up on the legislative chopping block?

When legislators had to balance a new budget in the teeth of a $2.5 billion shortfall, it was a given that plenty of worthwhile initiatives would be downsized.

But here's where ideology reared its head. First, the Republican majority was committed to enacting a budget that in essence cut taxes by close to $1 billion, on the hope-and-a-prayer theory that it would create jobs. Keeping that revenue could have eased the pain of spending cuts in education and elsewhere.

Fellows' friends

Second, the Teaching Fellows Program apparently was tainted in the eyes of some legislators because of their hostility toward teachers who have organized under the banner of the N.C. Association of Educators. After all, how dare teachers band together to seek better pay, better working conditions, more support for the public school enterprise? It's almost as if they had actually formed a (gasp) public employee union - under North Carolina law, basically a futile gesture anyway.

As The N&O's Rob Christensen reported Sunday, the chain of guilt by association goes like this, as strung together by the libertarian-conservative Civitas Institute, one of Raleigh retail executive Art Pope's stable of advocacy groups: The Teaching Fellows Program is administered by the
N.C. Public School Forum. The forum has ties to the NCAE. Oh no - that has to mean Teaching Fellows are being primed to become NCAE activists!

Believe it or not, that line of thinking seems to have gotten some traction when legislators were pondering where to apply the budget knife. Of course, it's wacky. The Public School Forum is a mainstream education advocacy group with deep corporate support besides any alignment with the teachers' group. But conservatives who distrust "government schools" evidently wouldn't mind seeing those schools struggle to provide something they need - a supply of enthusiastic and talented newcomers to the teaching ranks.

**Program has worked**

The Teaching Fellows Program, which dates to 1986, offers full undergraduate scholarships to students who then commit to teaching in the state's public schools for four years. If a scholarship recipient doesn't fulfill that commitment, the state support must be repaid with 10 percent interest. Over two years, the program's $13.5 million in annual funding is slated to be phased out.

As a measure of the program's success, consider that 60 percent of participants who began their teaching careers 20 years ago are reported still to be working in North Carolina's schools. That means Teaching Fellows are well-equipped to counter the familiar pattern of teacher burnout. What's more, according to The N&O's report, students enrolled in the program this year had SAT scores 200 points higher than the state average.

Legislators also zapped the N.C. Teacher Academy and halved funding for the N.C. Center for the Advancement of Teaching - backsliding on progress made to improve the teaching profession. Civitas had criticized both. If good teachers are the lifeblood of public schools, it seems that the critics and budget-cutters would just as soon disrupt that flow. Students, especially, will feel it.
Booster shots at Thorp

BY ERIC JOHNSON

CHAPEL HILL The emails that flooded Chancellor Holden Thorp's inbox last week following his firing of football coach Butch Davis offer a revealing look at the intense and contradictory pressures university administrators face in dealing with big-time sports.

For all the embarrassment public records requests have caused UNC-Chapel Hill this past year - revealing the football team's epic pile of parking citations and former assistant coach John Blake's chatty relationship with a sports agent - last week's trove of emails offered a valuable window into the perverse thinking of many football boosters.

"We will hold out further financial support until we are satisfied with the decisions the administration has made with regards to a full-time replacement!" wrote one, helpfully adding that he has already purchased season tickets for the Upper Club section of Kenan Stadium.

For this booster, as for many others, donations to the ol' alma mater apparently are contingent not on academic excellence but on athletic dominance.

Another, before signing off as "Thoroughly Disgusted Alumnus," suggests the chancellor ought to run with a better crowd. "Perhaps you should have spent some time talking to someone other than the academic elite with whom you seem to spend most of your time."

Imagine the nerve of college administrators, cavorting around with a bunch of professors when there's a football program to be run!

And give the emailer credit; his suspicions about Thorp are well-founded. As an alumnus, I have personally witnessed the chancellor devoting precious time and energy to peripheral matters like teaching, research and faculty governance.

One almost suspects the man of valuing the university's core academic mission above its football glory! Clearly, he can't be trusted with the sacred responsibility of sports.
Of course, it is perfectly possible to have a football program that doesn't weaken the university's academic standing. We could have student athletes who truly are, to borrow the NCAA's favorite phrase, students first and athletes second.

To do so, UNC-Chapel Hill would have to end the practice of special committee admissions, which, it's been reported in The N&O, allowed about half of all football recruits in recent years to enroll with SAT scores below 900 or a class rank in the bottom half of their high schools.

Administrators would have to demand a more sane practice and game schedule so that student athletes might enjoy some semblance of normal student life.

And fans would have to put up with a football team that loses. A lot.

Because unless fundamental reform comes to the NCAA - forcing all Division I schools to end the athletic arms race - you simply cannot build a powerhouse football team without compromising academics. When fans and donors demand athletic victory as the price for institutional support, holding their donations hostage to bowl invitations, they're pushing the institution in a dangerous direction.

Athletics are a legitimate source of pride to college alumni and supporters, but a good team should never come at the expense of a good university.

So to every fan who tithes only to touchdowns, to every born-and-bred Tar Heel whose support for the classroom is tied to success on the field - this is your scandal.

Wade Hargrove, the new chair of the university's Board of Trustees, noted last week, "After all is said and done, this is an educational institution, not an entertainment institution."

I wonder if there's room to chisel that above the new entrance to Kenan.

Eric Johnson is a 2008 UNC-Chapel Hill graduate.
Students could be required to take ACT tests next year

BY LYNNE BONNER - Staff Writer

North Carolina's 11th-graders would be required to take the ACT college-admissions test next spring under a new testing regimen the State Board of Education discussed Wednesday.

A final decision is at least a month away. The legislature this year authorized the SBOE to administer the ACT, but did not budget any money for it. Part of the state Department of Public Instruction's challenge is finding money to give the tests.

The board has been talking for more than a year about requiring the ACT and associated high school tests as a way to measure school fitness and student readiness for work or academic life after graduation. It would cost about $6 million to give the ACT, a precursor called PLAN to 10th-graders, and a test called WorkKeys 25 percent of seniors.

The ACT is a standardized test that includes multiple-choice questions in English, math, reading and science, plus an optional writing test.

Initiating the ACT plan is one of the pivotal testing decisions the board plans to make in the coming months.

On the eve of the release of statewide standardized test results, the SBOE discussed seeking a waiver from the federal No Child Left Behind program. Under the law, schools' progress is measured by the academic gains of subgroups of students. Schools fail to make adequate yearly progress if not all subgroups hit academic goals, which education officials criticize as an "all or nothing" standard.

The law is criticized for labeling some successful schools as failures. The state released individual school districts' adequate yearly progress results last month. Few Wake schools met the standard. Statewide results will be released today.

"'All or nothing' doesn't reflect the progress and proficiency of our students," said June Atkinson, state superintendent of public instruction.

The U.S. Department of Education could use North Carolina's plan as an example for other states, she said.
The federal law was signed in 2001 and most states expected it to be rewritten by now. Several states, including South Dakota and Montana, have said they are going to defy provisions of the law and at least one other state, Kentucky, is seeking a waiver.

North Carolina would propose to replace the federal law with the state ABC accountability program, and use the ACT results, five-year-graduation rates and other measures as indicators of student readiness for college and jobs.

"We're not moving away from accountability," Atkinson said.

A decision on applying for a waiver won't come for a month or two.

No matter what they decide, changes are coming to the state's testing scheme, some forced by the legislature. The legislature eliminated state end-of-course tests for Algebra II, U.S. history, physical science, and civics and economics while endorsing the ACT plan.

Legislators were receptive to the idea of having a national test where North Carolina students scores could be compared to students in other states.

The SBOE says it wants to use the ACT because it measures what students learn in their classes. Students scores on the test predict students' grades in college courses in their first year.

The board talked about putting the cost of the ACT and related tests in its next state budget request.

In the meantime, the state Department of Public Instruction will ask the state budget office if it can use $6 million in "reversions," unspent money that gets turned back in, to pay for the tests.

lynn.bonner@newsobserver.com or 919-829-4821
If you thought getting into a prestigious college was tough, just try getting accepted into Teach for America, which was yet again a top employer for graduates at many top universities.

Teach for America places recent graduates, grad students and professionals in underserved urban or rural public schools for two-year teaching stints, and it received a record number of 48,000 applications for this fall. The organization selected 5,200 applicants to be teachers — 77 percent graduated this spring, 6 percent of them graduate students and 17 percent professionals.

Last year, the organization received 46,000 applications and had an acceptance rate of 12 percent. In 2008, it was just over 24,700 applications with an acceptance rate of nearly 15 percent.

Since 2008, Teach for America has compiled a “top contributors list” to rank schools of similar size by the number of students who are accepted into the program. This year, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor had the highest number of students selected, with 119. For medium-sized schools, Harvard led the pack with 66 placements. And for small schools with fewer than 2,999 undergraduates, Spelman College had 36 placements.

Several Washington-area schools were also near the top of the lists: University of Virginia with 66, University of Maryland with 56, Georgetown University with 54, Johns Hopkins and Howard universities with 25 each, and American University with 22.

The incoming teachers have an average GPA of 3.6 and all of them have held some sort of leadership position in college, according to Teach for America. Twenty-two percent are the first in their family to earn a college degree, nearly a third received Pell Grants and more than a third are racial minorities.

Here are the full rankings:

**Large universities with more than 10,000 undergraduates**

University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, 119
University of California-Berkeley, 89
University of Texas at Austin, 87
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, 80
University of Florida, 75
University of Southern California, 75
University of Wisconsin-Madison, 70
University of Virginia, 66
University of Washington-Seattle, 62
University of California-Los Angeles, 61
University of Maryland-College Park, 56
Pennsylvania State University-University Park, 55
The Ohio State University, 54
University of Pennsylvania, 53
University of Georgia, 50
Cornell University, 49
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 48
Boston University, 46
University of California-Santa Barbara, 42
Syracuse University, 41

Medium-size schools with 3,000 to 9,999 undergrads
Harvard University, 66
Boston College, 56
Georgetown University, 54
Duke University, 53
Brown University, 49
Northwestern University, 49
Vanderbilt University, 47
Yale University, 41
Stanford University, 39
Emory University, 37
Columbia University in the City of New York, 36
Dartmouth College, 29
Tulane University, 28
Howard University, 25
Johns Hopkins University, 25
Tufts University, 25
University of Chicago, 24
Princeton University, 23
American University, 22
Washington University in St. Louis, 22

Small schools with fewer than 2,999 undergrads
Spelman College, 36
Wellesley College, 24
Barnard College, 21
Amherst College, 18
Claremont McKenna College, 17
College of the Holy Cross, 17
DePauw University, 16
Colby College, 15
Trinity College (Connecticut), 15
Wesleyan University, 15
Colorado College, 14
Morehouse College, 14
Mount Holyoke College, 14
Pomona College, 14
Smith College, 14
Williams College, 14
Bates College, 13
University of Puget Sound, 13