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Scott Maxwell, top, Kim Lichtenberg, left, and Pauline Hwang test how to get Spirit out of a Martian "sand trap."

**His other car is on Mars**

By Elizabeth Landau, CNN

Pasadena, California (CNN) -- On Earth, Scott Maxwell drives his red Prius without paying much attention to the San Gabriel Mountains in the distance. He's lived in the same neighborhood of Pasadena for 18 years, after all.

When he's driving on Mars, though, every rock he encounters is a new discovery, a step toward humanity's knowledge of the planet he hopes to visit some day.

Maxwell has the dream job of driving rovers on Mars, and he's gearing up to take control of the biggest and most sophisticated one yet: Curiosity. He's
wrong, the whole effort will have been "all for nothing" for the many people who've sacrificing family time and vacations to pour their hearts into it. "That seven minutes tells you whether the last seven years of your life had a point," Maxwell says.

**A voyage to break down the wall**

Maxwell's eyes widen with joy when he talks about the parts of life he thinks are "awesome": His girlfriend. His other NASA team members. The Independent Shakespeare Company (@IndyShakes). His first lemon drop cocktail. The Cotswolds.

Something about Maxwell's thin frame, boyish features and the way he gets giddy over esoteric things resembles Jim Parsons' character on "The Big Bang Theory," although Maxwell is more jovial and socially gracious than Sheldon Cooper. His arms seem almost impossibly long as they move about while he explains the rover driving process.

With a youthful complexion and hair that finishes in a short tail on the back of his neck, it's impossible to guess Maxwell is 41. The first time he ever had lunch with Lichtenberg, she thought, "Aw man, he's way too young for me. Way too young for me." Later she found out she's about six years his junior.

Lichtenberg, fair and blond, grew up with the space program close at hand: Her father is astronaut Byron Lichtenberg, a NASA payload specialist who's flown on two shuttle missions. She has a Ph.D. in planetary spectroscopy, which deals with the interaction of matter and radiation in planetary environments.

Maxwell, on the other hand, had long assumed that a career in space was out of reach.

He was raised in an economically depressed rural area of eastern North Carolina, although his accent could just as well place him from the Midwest. His parents divorced when he was 7; after his mother moved to Florida, he spent time bouncing between the two states until college.

His father was a railroad engineer for most of his career, although he previously worked as a dean at various colleges.

Carl Sagan was Maxwell's childhood hero. He adored watching the 13-part TV series Sagan hosted called "Cosmos: A Personal Voyage," first broadcast in 1980 on PBS.
one of about a dozen people at NASA tasked with steering the $2.6 billion vehicle from more than 100 million miles away.

"It's a priceless national asset that happens to be sitting on the surface of another planet," Maxwell says of the rover, which is set to land on Mars at 1:31 a.m. ET Monday. "You better take that damn seriously."

Maxwell loves to talk about how much he loves his job, and his effervescence is infectious, say colleagues at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, home to Curiosity's mission control.

"The thing that always impressed me about Scott was just the passion that he has for what we're doing. He just loves being a rover driver," says Steve Squyers, a Mars expert who's worked closely with Maxwell. "He thinks he's got the coolest job on the planet, and he's right, I think."

The names of the rovers Maxwell has driven so far -- Spirit and Opportunity -- speak to his upbeat attitude and thirst for immersing himself in what he enjoys doing.

Through his blog and Twitter account @marsroverdriver, Maxwell interacts with all sorts of self-professed "rover-huggers" -- people who really love rovers.

Earlier this week Maxwell tweeted, "VIP seats for opening night of @IndyShakes's Comedy of Errors! Last chance to see a play before the baby comes Sunday."

The baby, of course, is the SUV-sized Curiosity, coming to Mars after years of planning and preparation. It's been more than eight months since it left Earth, and no one can be sure exactly how it will behave, says Maxwell.

Over dinner in Old Pasadena this week, Maxwell and his girlfriend, Kim Lichtenberg -- a planetary scientist also working on the rover mission -- playfully compared it to having a child, though neither has had children.

"We're all going to be kind of like new parents," Lichtenberg says.

"Watch it take its first steps," Maxwell adds.

Landing Curiosity will be such an amazing feat of engineering that NASA is billing the process "seven minutes of terror."

Like anxious parents, scientists at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena are eager to see the rover arrive safely, and so are the reporters who have flooded the NASA campus.

Maxwell says he has confidence in the JPL team responsible for the entry, descent and landing of the spacecraft. But if the amazing maneuver goes
In one episode, the scientist talked about what it would be like to go to Mars. Only last year, Maxwell watched the episode again and remembered it mentioned a prototype Mars rover, which at that time seemed a futuristic idea.

"I realized in that moment that that's where I get this sense that I've grown up and stepped into this fantasy world that I had when I was a kid, because I have," he says with excited emphasis.

As a child, Maxwell loved imagining what it would be like to go to other planets. But as an older teen, he assumed he would study hard and end up in a career that seemed more common and attainable than space exploration, such as banking.

"This kind of thing always seemed to me like the kind of thing other people do," he said. "There's me. And there's this big invisible glass wall. And there are people who are doing stuff like that."

Maxwell believed he could never cross over to the other side of glass wall. It wasn't until he got hired by NASA, after completing his master's degree in computer science, that he realized the wall never existed.

Maxwell is living his fantasy now, but he hasn't always had such luck. At age 20, while double-majoring in English and computer science at East Carolina University, he learned that his swollen lymph nodes were a symptom of stage 2 Hodgkin's lymphoma. The cancer had spread in his neck and chest. He went through nine weeks of radiation treatments and has been cancer-free ever since.

Just days after the treatments ended, he left for graduate school at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Going from a state school to a prestigious engineering institution, he was floored on the first day when a professor expected everyone to have already learned the material in the first six chapters of an algorithms textbook. Maxwell had to quickly catch up on his own but says he loved learning so much at once.

And though he feared he couldn't afford his master's degree, he found work with the research and development arm of the U.S. Army and left school debt-free.

He had intended to go to Illinois to work toward a Ph.D., but ultimately the cancer changed his priorities.

"I was interested in going out and making tools for people to use," he says.
JPL came to recruit at his school in fall 1993, and he remembers telling the recruiter how he was fascinated by NASA's Voyager mission -- twin spacecraft that had photographed Jupiter in unprecedented detail. His excitement apparently made an impression: He landed an interview at JPL in January 1994, and started his job that June.

Today, he lives on a quiet Pasadena street, in a cozy house that boasts some of his nerdy treasures, including an extensive collection of science fiction books. "But then my life became science fiction," he said, explaining why he's reading more Shakespeare and Dickens these days. As he shows off his collection, his cat Molly purrs, demanding his attention. The brown and black marbling on her otherwise white fur looks somewhat like the Martian landscape, although that's not why he adopted her.

A glass-paneled cabinet hosts metallic "Star Wars" and Mars rover lunch boxes. There's a vial of a substance he calls KimSim, a material his girlfriend helped create to figure out how to rescue the Spirit rover after it got stuck in a "sand trap" of alien soil on Mars in 2009.

And there are stones from the Cotswolds, an area in England he bubbles with excitement over. He says, "Wait, wait," like a child about to demonstrate a new toy, and runs to get a book filled with images of the region. He likes the views from the ground better than the aerial shots -- ground-level is more like what a rover would see, he explains.

The wider, well-manicured street perpendicular to his own, with larger houses and roses growing on front lawns, is the sort of place where he'd always wanted to live, but he says the houses are "wicked, ridiculous, crazy expensive." Still, he loves the house he bought, with the added bonus of a lemon tree growing at its side.

It's a bit like how he loves his job driving a vehicle on Mars, even though he dreamed of becoming an astronaut.

"Things in my life aren't quite how I pictured them," he said, "but they rhyme."

**At NASA, not just a sojourner**

It's been 18 years, but Maxwell still occasionally interrupts himself to say things like "I can't get over that I work at a place called the Spacecraft Assembly Facility" when he mentions that building at JPL.

For the first couple of months there, Maxwell felt like he was in a foreign country where he didn't speak the language. He says it was fun to be clueless about the acronyms his colleagues were throwing around. "Now, I'll use 10
acronyms in a sentence and won't think twice about it," he says, "but you kind of have to pick up the culture."

He started out working on software to decode data from spacecraft. He also wrote software to help coordinate various teams working around the world to get commands to spacecraft.

In the mid-1990s, Maxwell was asked if he wanted to work on a mission called Mars Pathfinder. Maxwell had no idea what that was, and working on the team didn't appeal to him.

What he didn't know was that Mars Pathfinder would mark the first time NASA had sent an untethered robotic device to another planet. The 90-day mission was carried out by a rover named Sojourner.

"I just thought that was super cool, that really just captured my imagination, that you could go for a walk on another planet," he says. "Not with your squishy, frail, human body, but you could design a robot body that would go to Mars for you."

Although he passed up that opportunity, another chance came in 1999 when Brian Cooper, who'd driven Sojourner, approached Maxwell about developing rover-driving software for the next Mars mission.

"More or less before the words were out of his mouth -- like, 'Do you want to come work on this project?' -- I was like, "YES! Yes! I'd like to come work on this project, that'd be the coolest thing in the world, yes!"

That mission was eventually scrapped, but their efforts were put toward a different endeavor that did take off: Spirit and Opportunity, the twin Mars exploration rovers that launched in the summer of 2003.

Maxwell helped write the software that rover drivers would use for the pair, as well as for Curiosity. He would soon move from writing software to using it to command -- and ultimately drive -- the rovers.

His first time commanding a rover was on his 33rd birthday, in 2004. Spirit hadn't started moving across the Mars surface yet, but Maxwell and his colleague were checking out the instruments. Maxwell told the rover to ignore the state of a switch on one of the instruments -- not exactly driving, he said, "but by golly, I commanded a Mars rover that day."

The real drama came about three weeks later when he got behind the wheel, so to speak. He remembers obsessing over what he had to do, checking everything multiple times, before sending the driving instructions.
He remembers going home afterwards: "I'm lying there, looking at the ceiling, realizing there's a robot on another planet doing what I told it to. And that notion of, 'I'm getting to do this. I'm not dreaming about this anymore. It's real for me now.'

"I reach out across 100 million miles of emptiness and move something on the surface of another planet. That feeling has never left me."

**The opportunity to drive**

You might think a rover driver would control the vehicle using a joystick and virtual reality interface, much like a video game. That's not how it works. The reason for that: Signals take at least four minutes to travel from Earth to Mars (it could take up to 20 minutes, depending on where the planets are in their orbits), and then the same amount of time for confirmation data to come back.

So rover drivers don't tell the vehicle to move forward and then wait several minutes for confirmation that it happened before sending the next command. Instead, drivers spend their days writing directions for what the rover will do the next day, sometimes even a few days if it's a holiday weekend.

Maxwell and colleagues spend the Martian night generating a single batch of commands, which they send to the rover after the vehicle sees sunrise. Drivers work in overlapping 8- to 10-hour shifts preparing the rover for the day ahead. "It's as if we're e-mailing the rover its to-do list for the entire day," Maxwell explains. And at the end of its day, the rover sends information back saying what it did. During the Martian night, the rover goes to sleep.

That might sound risky, letting a vehicle roam around on a planet for several hours without someone guiding its every move in real time. But safety checks are built in. Curiosity will know how far its wheels are moving up and down, so it will stop if it heads into something deeper or higher than the drivers had planned. In that sense, the rover is more like a boat than a plane -- stopping is a fine course of action if additional direction is needed, Maxwell explains.

Curiosity can travel up to about 2.5 meters (8.2 feet) per minute, says rover driver John Wright, but in practice it will go a lot slower because the science team will want it to stop and examine its surroundings. A rover may stop and take photos, or -- as will be the case with Curiosity -- the scientists will want it to stop to perform chemical analyses.
Photos the rover takes of its surroundings help the drivers determine where to send it next. The drivers use a 3-D simulation created from the photos to visualize what the rover is seeing. The virtual model of Mars lets drivers work out which commands to transmit each day. Video games have helped several rover drivers hone their skills, including Maxwell, since driving on Mars requires planning and multidimensional thinking. Any game that shows a large open world, such as "World of Warcraft," can hone these skills, says Cooper, the first rover driver and the only person to have driven all three rovers NASA has landed on Mars.

"You're essentially driving a robot with a keyboard 100 million miles away," says Maxwell. "You can't always believe what the simulator tells you. If anything does go wrong, there's no one there to hit the panic switch."

Besides being manually controlled, the rover also has the capability to drive by itself, detecting hazards through cameras and driving around them. This autonomous mode takes more time, however, so it's employed less often.

Curiosity is landing in Gale Crater, where it may find evidence the area once was a lake. It will take at least a year to drive Curiosity to its ultimate destination, Mount Sharp, where the rover will examine layers of sediment for organic molecules, which would be signs -- but still not proof -- that life may have existed on the planet.

**Where the rover is going**

Maxwell will see some of the images Curiosity takes before anyone else does, but he loves that the public will get to view them soon after on NASA's website. "I get to take everybody in the world along in the backseat," he said.

Beyond rover driving, Maxwell genuinely loves the science of Mars. The rover science team has its own busy agenda, but during the mission involving Spirit and Opportunity, Maxwell would point out rocks that might be interesting to examine further, or suggest photographing the sunset on a given day. Sometimes the science team would take him up on his ideas.

"He's always looking to try to get as much out of the vehicles as possible," says Squyres, lead scientist of the Mars Exploration Rover mission, which involved Spirit and Opportunity. "Scott is, within the bounds of safety, one of the most enthusiastic rover drivers there is."

The spirit of his first car
There's a special love that Maxwell has for Spirit, the first rover he ever drove. Spirit was only supposed to last about 90 days, but the rover kept operating for more than five years.

When Spirit got stuck in May 2009, Maxwell felt like he was in an Indiana Jones movie, trying to rescue the vehicle. The rover's wheels broke through a crust and the vehicle fell into a sandy trap called Troy, like a car driving into a pool of flour. Even before the accident, one of its six wheels had quit working.

Maxwell and his colleagues were almost able to pull Spirit out, but not quite. They had figured out a technique, but with the Martian winter coming, the solar panels were tilted away from the sun. Plus a second wheel malfunctioned during escape tactics. Over the winter, something broke -- Maxwell says humanity may never know what.

The Opportunity rover, which Maxwell has also had a hand in driving, is still operating. Still, he is nostalgic about the Spirit.

"It's very much the way you feel about your first car," Maxwell says. "Spirit was my first car. She was just on Mars. That was the emotional closeness that I felt to her."

Even after it stopped moving, Spirit was able to continue scientific operations until March 2010, when NASA lost communication with it. The place it got stuck turned out to be extremely interesting -- while trying to escape, the rover found soil rich in minerals called sulfates, a component of steam, suggesting that there may have once been conditions on Mars able to support life.

It -- or rather "she," says Maxwell -- accomplished this with an attitude of "persistence and determination and never say die."

Scientists kept trying to communicate until May 2011, when they gave up.

"Spirit will be there for a million years, but I sure hope that there are Martian cities surrounding her," Maxwell says. He envisions trails commemorating the rovers' paths and hopes people someday will be "walking the Spirit trail."

**Loving to be curious**

Given the busy schedule and odd hours, it helps to be in love with someone who works on Mars, too.

Maxwell and Lichtenberg had been hearing each other as disembodied voices on NASA conference calls for years, while Lichtenberg was a graduate student at the University of Washington in St. Louis. She visited
JPL with her adviser on the five-year anniversary of the Spirit and Opportunity mission.

They met in person at a group lunch; each thought the other was attractive. Maxwell spent a couple days working up the nerve to ask her out and finally did on the day beloved science fiction author Ray Bradbury gave a surprise speech at NASA. Maxwell began by asking her, "Is anybody doing anything tonight?" She said a group was going out; he replied that he wanted to go out with a cute girl he'd just met. After she realized he meant her, she said yes -- much to Maxwell's astonishment.

This week, just days before the Curiosity landing, the couple had dinner with me at a quaint Mediterranean restaurant in Pasadena's Old Town. When they weren't holding hands, Maxwell was putting his arm around the back of her chair. As they said goodnight for the evening, they kissed three times -- and both said they planned to stay up late and sleep in to practice shifting to Mars time.

Part of the fun of working on Curiosity will be living on Mars time for about the first 90 days, Maxwell says. The days on Mars are 40 minutes longer than on Earth. That means Maxwell might start at 8 a.m. Monday, 8:40 a.m. Tuesday, 9:20 a.m. Wednesday and so on. Before long, he'll be working overnights.

"I like to say I sleep 40 minutes more, I actually work 40 minutes [more]," he said.

Lichtenberg is the co-lead on the science planning team for the Curiosity mission. That means she helps other scientists decide what they will do with the rover every day, given how much power and time the tasks will take and how much data will be required.

On their first date about three and half years ago, Lichtenberg was sold when Maxwell told her that while healing from a martial arts-induced shoulder injury, he decided he would read all of Shakespeare's plays. And he did.

"He really sticks to his convictions, and I really, really like that about him," Lichtenberg says. "Being around him makes me want to be a better person."

Maxwell insists that Lichtenberg did not move to Southern California for him. She agrees that she wanted to work at JPL anyway, but Maxwell was at least "a small bit" of the decision. These days they work down the hall from each other, and although they are on the same operations team, they are assigned to different shifts.
The affectionate, happy partners share a love of Mars and, if possible, would both like to go some day.

"If NASA set up a flight tomorrow, I'd be the first one. They wouldn't have to bring me back," Maxwell says.

He'd be gone in a snap, even if there were just one seat. Lichtenberg, although she likes the idea of visiting Mars, is not sure she'd just pack up and go by herself.

"I totally understand that you would," she tells him. "It's OK, I accept that. Totally."

"It's not that I like Mars better than I like you," he assures her. They peck each other on the lips.

But there is something powerful that draws Maxwell to Mars. It's partly the idea of being on the surface of another world. There's also his own mortality. He believes the radiation treatments he had in his 20s will ultimately lead to a different form of cancer (he actually had a possible thyroid cancer a few years ago, which turned out to be benign). Maxwell estimates -- without a hint of regret in his voice -- that he has about 20 years left to live.

"I've only got so long anyway, you might as well make it something really good. Right? You might as well make it count," he tells me and Lichtenberg. "And what am I going to do that's going to be better than actually going to Mars? Go on, name three things I'm going to do that are better than that."

"Drive a Mars rover," says Lichtenberg.

Maxwell agrees his job is "awesome" but says going to Mars would be "even better."

With that level of passion and spirit, Maxwell may one day indeed follow his Curiosity.

Scott Maxwell wears 3-D glasses to simulate driving a Mars rover at JPL's Mission Operations area.
Bethel, medical groups discuss clinic
By Ginger Livingston
Saturday, August 4, 2012

Bethel town officials have met with four medical groups in an attempt to continue medical care in the community once its East Carolina University-operated clinic closes next week.

The town’s Board of Commissioners is scheduled to review the groups’ proposals during a closed session following its regular 7 p.m. meeting on Tuesday.

Brody School of Medicine leaders said last week they want to turn the 62-year-old building at 7439 Main St. over to the town, but the decision must be approved by ECU’s Board of Trustees and several other organizations.

Medical school officials announced in June that the 32-year-old clinic will close on Sept. 1 because of a drop in patients and financial losses. The announcement sparked protests from Bethel residents and patients from nearby communities who said the clinic stopped accepting new patients.

The protests prompted further discussions between Bethel and medical school officials, including a July 26 town hall meeting with Dr. Paul R.G. Cunningham, dean and senior associate vice chancellor for medical affairs at Brody, and Dr. Ken Steinweg, professor and chairman of the Department of Family Medicine.

Cunningham said the university wants to turn the building over to the town, but the transaction is subject to approval by the ECU board of trustees, the UNC General Administration and the N.C. Council of State. If approved, the goal is to sell the building for $1, university spokesman Doug Boyd said.

The Bethel Board of Commissioners on July 27 decided to accept the university’s offer, pending its approval, Mayor Mike Whitehurst said.

“We appreciate the Brody School of Medicine for their generous offer to us,” he said.

The university’s trustees are scheduled to meet on Aug. 22, Whitehurst said. The approval process should be completed in December, if no obstacles
come up, he said. It is possible the town could lease the building starting on Sept. 1 so it can renovate the facilities, Whitehurst said.

Along with finalizing the transfer, several other issues must be resolved, Whitehurst said, including having an engineer evaluate its structural soundness.

A 2007 assessment by the State Construction Office stated the building needed more than $200,000 in upgrades, including a new roof, weatherproofing the foundation walls, installing a sprinkler system and cosmetic upgrades. Some of the suggested improvements, such as installation of an emergency generator, may not be necessary depending on the building’s future use.

All the medical equipment and furniture belongs to the university, so negotiations with the medical groups will include discussions about whether the town or the group will be responsible for those purchases, Whitehurst said.

Bethel officials have agreed the town will not try to make a profit off the building, Whitehurst said.

“This challenge has pulled the town together. We had a common theme, a common challenge that has pulled us together,” Whitehurst said. “The reality of any rural town is that it is difficult to survive in this fiscal time, but Bethel is doing fine.”

Contact Ginger Livingston at glivingston@reflector.com or 252-329-9570.
Diver John McCord of UNC's Coastal Studies Institute in 2011 videos the remains of the tanker Dixie Arrow, sunk in 1942 by a German U-boat. (Joe Hoyt - NOAA)

Scientists hunt for WWII shipwrecks off the Outer Banks

By Jack Horan - Correspondent

Seventy years ago last month, a convoy of 19 merchant ships guarded by five armed naval escorts sailed south along the Outer Banks, making its way toward Key West, Fla.

The United States had entered World War II eight months earlier and shipping along the Atlantic coast from New York to New Orleans was under attack by German submarines. The targets of the U-boats were tankers and freighters that potentially carried fuel and supplies for the Allied war effort.

After Convoy KS-520 swung around Cape Hatteras on July 15, 1942, a German sub stalking it fired four torpedoes. They hit three merchant ships, sinking a tanker and damaging two others. When the sub surfaced, two U.S. aircraft and gunfire from an escort sank it. A Navy tug sent to tow the damaged ships sank when it hit a mine in a defensive U.S. minefield.

Today, the ship, Bluefields, a Nicaraguan tanker, and the sub, U-576, repose on the seabed. Their exact location isn’t known. Both shipwrecks are the focus of a research project, now in its fifth year, to locate and document with photos and videos ships that sank off North Carolina during the war.
The project is called the Battle of the Atlantic Expedition. The expedition is a collaboration between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Coastal Studies Institute of the University of North Carolina, East Carolina University and other federal and state partners.

Co-principal investigator Joe Hoyt of NOAA said many people don’t know that the Battle of the Atlantic not only was fought in the north Atlantic, where convoys carried supplies to Britain, but also in U.S. waters along the East Coast.

The greatest concentration of the submarine-warfare battles took place near Cape Hatteras and Cape Lookout, claiming hundreds of lives. Expedition data indicate the remains of 50 to 60 ships, friend and former foe, lie within 100 miles of the coast.

“When people think about World War II, they think it happened in the Pacific, it happened in Europe. That it wasn’t here, it was someplace else,” said Hoyt, maritime archaeologist for the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary off Cape Hatteras.

“This is the closest place (of combat engagements) in the continental United States. This happened right here. We had ships sinking off our shores, bodies washing up on our beaches.

“It’s just as significant to the American story,” said Hoyt, as Pearl Harbor.

Hunting by night

The submarine warfare spread to the East Coast, and later into the Gulf of Mexico, soon after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. Within a month, Germany sent the first five U-boats, including U-123.

The captain of U-123, Reinhard Hardegen, sank a tanker off New York and then steered toward the sea off the Outer Banks. Once there, he waited for merchant ships to pass around the capes to pick them off. He didn’t have to wait long.


Hardegen, in a 1991 Observer interview from Germany, said he sat on the bottom during the day and surfaced at night to hunt passing ships, silhouetted by the glow from coastal towns. He said the U-boat tuned in WBT in Charlotte for swing music and news.
Hardegen said he was astonished that he met almost no opposition from the Navy or Coast Guard. The military was unprepared for the U-boat invasion and slow to respond, leaving the East Coast wide open. “I was very surprised,” he said, then 78. “There was no defense on the coast of the United States ... No blackouts, no dimming, nothing.”

For seven months, until the U.S. began to drive out the U-boats, the waters around Cape Hatteras became a shooting gallery. The area was so dangerous and deadly that sailors dubbed it “Torpedo Junction,” a play on the popular 1939 song, “Tuxedo Junction.”

Residents of Ocracoke Island got a front-row seat to the growing disaster. They heard loud explosions at night, saw orange fireballs and smoke from burning ships and came upon bodies of sailors and debris on their beaches. When the tanker Dixie Arrow was torpedoed on March 26, 1942 near Ocracoke, 4 million gallons of crude oil caught fire, according to the 1989 book, “Torpedo Junction,” by Homer H. Hickam Jr.

The expedition’s survey of the shipwrecks began in 2008. That year, researchers photographed sunken subs U-85, U-701 and U-352, the last of which rests in 115 feet of water south of Morehead City.

In 1992, Morehead City hosted eight surviving U-352 crew members who paid homage to their entombed shipmates. The elderly Germans went on a dive boat to the sub’s site, where divers placed a wreath on the conning tower. At the same time 30 miles away, a Coast Guard cutter laid a wreath off Cape Lookout to memorialize Americans and others who lost their lives.

In 2009, researchers documented two U-boat victims, the Bedfordshire, sunk March 11, 1942, and YP 389, a Navy patrol boat sunk June 19, 1942. The Bedfordshire was one of 24 sub-chasing ships Britain sent over. Four dead Bedfordshire crewmen who washed ashore on Ocracoke Island lie in the British Cemetery where the Union Jack flutters above their graves.

The hunt continues

During 2011 and this year, the expedition team has been searching for the Bluefields and U-576 from the Battle of Convoy KS-520. To locate them, researchers aboard an 85-foot-long NOAA ship use a self-guided submersible vehicle to make sonar sweeps of the ocean floor. Hoyt said they won’t know whether they’ve found the wrecks until data have been analyzed. The team on Friday wound up this summer’s work at sea.

(Overall, in the first six months of 1942, German subs sank 397 ships and with the loss of nearly 5,000 lives in U.S.-protected waters along the East
and Gulf coasts and through the Caribbean to Panama, historian Michael Gannon wrote in his 1990 book, “Operation Drumbeat.”

So far, 27 N.C. shipwrecks have been documented by Hoyt, 30, and his team. Most have been known to scuba divers. Research divers filmed those marine-life-encrusted wrecks in 300 feet or water or less with 3-D cameras.

Hoyt said the divers explore the exterior of the ships but typically don’t enter them because they’re deemed war graves – and because they’re unsafe.

Modern imagery has resurrected parts of the battlefield. Photomosaics and videos can be seen at the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum in Hatteras and the N.C. Aquarium on Roanoke Island at Manteo as well as at http://vimeo.com/unccsi/videos.

Monitor sanctuary research coordinator Lauren Heesemann, in Manteo, said NOAA is creating a web-based “Outer Banks Maritime Heritage Trail” consisting of 10 videos, three of which pertain to the Battle of the Atlantic. By fall, she said, tourists can download the narrated videos into a smart phone and, as they drive beside the ocean from Nags Head to Hatteras, watch the video nearest its coastal location.
Remains found deep in Martin County woods

WILLIAMSTON, N.C. -- Deputies say skeletal remains have been found in woods in Martin County.

Investigators said they received a tip about the bones on Friday, and gathered the remains Saturday with help from the East Carolina University Department of Anthropology.

Authorities say they don't know how long the remains may have been in the woods, or whether they were male or female. They are trying to identify the person and determine the cause of death.

Deputies say the bones were found so deep in the woods that all-terrain vehicles were needed to get to them.
A couple get into their automobile in the crowded parking lot at the corner of Evans and Fifth Street after having lunch at a downtown restaurant on Friday afternoon. (Rhett Butler/The Daily Reflector)

Parking woes stall downtown
By Wesley Brown
Monday, August 6, 2012

Michelle Jenkins marveled at Chattanooga’s scenic views, fell in love with Knoxville’s Antebellum charm and was swept away by Greenville, S.C.’s street-side gardens and waterfalls.

But when she returned home to Greenville after her summer tour through the Southeast, it was her stories of large concrete buildings not usually known for their architectural value that interested downtown businesses.

“Parking decks,” said Jenkins, owner of The Sojourner, a downtown supplier of whole-earth provisions. “We are way overdue.”

Burdened with one of the densest downtowns in the east and a love of moving vehicles among college students, parking complaints in Greenville, on the rise since 2010, have reached an all-time high.

While downtown employees have adapted through the years — learning the routines of enforcement officers and keeping secret their hidden spots to evade traffic tickets — consumers have taken to the convenience of drive-up parking at Greenville’s strip malls.

Four potential sites for a downtown parking garage will be presented to the City Council on Monday, but the project is expected to take two years and, at the moment, is nothing more than one of the council’s “strategic goals.”

For now, city leaders cling to two projects: narrowing First Street from four lanes to two to install angled spaces and gradually moving away from leased parking to a more-efficient employee-tag system, Greenville Economic Development Officer Carl Rees said.
The measures, though, will only buy the city time. More than 90 percent of retailers downtown are in favor of a parking deck and close to 66 percent oppose leased parking, according to a survey by Uptown Greenville, the nonprofit chartered to revitalize downtown.

“How can we compete with any kind of city anywhere in America without a parking deck?” asked Jenkins, a merchant of Uptown Greenville since 2009.

“We can’t,” she said.

**Going in circles**

On a busy afternoon last week in downtown Greenville, Leslie Coward rounded Evans Street and headed east on Fourth Street, passing Felicia’s Fashions, the dress shop where she is employed.

It was her second time around the block since returning from the post office to pick up a package.

“Parking is terrible,” Coward said. “Once you give up your spot, chances are, you’re not getting it back.”

Coward’s frustration is a widespread problem downtown.

In the past decade, the number of bars and restaurants in the area have tripled, a surge in business that has outstripped the supply of surrounding public parking spaces on city streets and in city lots.

“When you drive downtown it appears that we have seas of parking — lot after lot of parking,” said Rees, who in January authored the first independent review in eight years on downtown public parking.

“But when you look at it more closely, you come to realize that much of it is not public parking.”

Rees’ study, a 30-page report including more than a year of analysis, began in the fall of 2010. Rees volunteered to tackle what may be the greatest barrier to downtown growth — lack of parking.

He formed a task force of police officers, traffic engineers and city planners on a mission to bring a “positive parking experience” to any and all downtown visitors, including employees, merchants and residents.

The group fanned out across the city to take inventory and observe, over a three-day period, parking trends in each of the city’s 10 lots. They found:
Minus the 10 lots reserved for county and federal courthouses and East Carolina University, 900 spaces are available to the public — 400 on the street and 500 in city lots.

On average, public parking downtown is at about 65 percent of capacity with certain lots — Five Points Plaza and the popular Georgetown lot — accounting for much of the traffic.

Close to 50 spots in the Greene Street and Moseley lots routinely go unused. Less than half of the employees in downtown Greenville polled said they would rather not walk more than a block to get to work.

“In a time when we are trying to do as much or more with smaller government, we have to be more efficient,” Rees said.

**Making a plan**

The crux of the problem, findings showed, centered on one issue: An abundance of leased parking has left employees, mostly college students strapped for cash, taking to two- and one-hour parking spaces on the street.

As the clock ticked, employees hurried to move their car to a different lot, as required by city law.

“We need our own parking spaces,” said former ECU student Kayla Cole, who in her three years in Greenville, has worked at Jimmy John’s, The Tipsy Teapot and The Sojourner.

“Or at least a piece of paper that says, ‘Hey, we work here, we don’t have time to move our car,’” Cole, 21, said.

Cole’s request is one of the cornerstones of Rees’ plan, which should help lessen both her’s and Coward’s parking woes.

Rees has proposed a gradual shift from leased lots — combining them when at all possible — to an employee tag or “E-Tag” system.

Merchants and employees will be able to buy a sticker to display on their rear bumper, giving them clearance — on a first-come-first-serve basis — to park in designated lots for longer than two hours.

The program is expected to start in December with the sale of 200 tags that will be prorated and are renewable for the year.

**Fighting court**
While the E-Tag plan is a start, it does not address downtown’s greatest parking killer of all downtown — the federal and county courthouses, said Jef Glenn, co-owner of Jefferson’s, a popular florist on Evans Street.

In May of 2005, renovations to the historic Blount Harvey Building lured Glenn, her husband Ed and son Michael to return their family’s iconic shop downtown.

With more than 6,000 square-feet of display and design space, the building’s downstairs showroom was a perfect fit for the company. It could come “full circle,” making its way back from the south side of the city near where it opened 64 years ago on 3rd Street, Glenn said.

But the move has not been all roses.

On any given weekday, the business finds itself at the mercy of the courthouse. If a major trial is in session, there is not a spot in sight.

“It’s been challenging,” Glenn said. “We are seeing traffic downtown, business is active and brisk during the week, but we are always competing for spots with the courthouse.”

The answer to Glenns’ problems lies two blocks away on a quiet First Street — a four-lane downtown thoroughfare built nearly 20 years ago as an east-west connector to the hospital.

Although, a car passes every couple of minutes, new interest will be generated in the abandoned highway project seen by Rees as “excess capacity” in the next two weeks.

A four-month study will begin on ways to shrink the street to make way for between 100 and 200 more spaces by next spring.

The move is part of a “phased approach” to free up parking around the county and federal courthouses. Also part of the plan: high-tech meters on nearby streets.

Stacking the deck

Glenn applauded the city’s innovation, but she said “it’s time” for a parking deck.

“It’s critical for growth,” she said. “You look at any downtown anywhere, parking decks are what really help traffic flow.”
On Monday, Rees will suggest to the City Council four city lots off Cotanche, Evans, Pitt and Third streets that have enough space to fit a 64-by-260 foot “two-bay” parking garage.

One parking deck, according to Rees’ report, will cost the city about $3.5 million, provide up to 250 additional spaces and generate more than $200,000 in annual revenue.

Jenkins, though, projects the effect to be much higher.

For example, she said downtown Greenville could attract a larger crowd to its promotional events — such as the Umbrella Market and Freeboot Friday. Instead of taking up valuable parking in Five Points Plaza, the event could be held on Evans Street. Merchants would not have to haul merchandise two or three blocks and patrons could become better acquainted with downtown and its shops.

“It only makes sense,” Jenkins said.

Contact Wesley Brown at wbrown@reflector.com or 252-329-9579. Follow him on Twitter @CityWatchdog.
An East Carolina University alert early Saturday said a student was the victim of an attempted strong-arm robbery near Fourth and Eastern streets.

About 2:35 a.m. Saturday, a male ECU student reportedly was approached by four or five men from across the street who yelled at him, “Stop right there!” and “Give me what you got!” The student ran, and the suspects did not follow.

The men were described as being dark-skinned males wearing dark clothes. At least one wore a black hooded sweatshirt. They were seen running north toward Third Street.

No items were taken, and no injuries were reported. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call the Greenville Police Department at 329-4315.
On April 13, the ECU Physicians Board voted to close the Clinical Cytogenetics Laboratory. In its 31-year history, the laboratory performed testing on more than 20,000 patients (more than 100,000 tests in all) with an age range from the unborn to people in their 90s. The laboratory was accredited by all national agencies and had the distinction of being a Children’s Oncology Group accredited lab.

Since the late 1980s, the laboratory has participated in clinical studies that resulted in a greater than 90 percent cure rate for childhood leukemias. Close to 500 high school, undergraduate, graduate and physician students have rotated through the laboratory resulting in 12 master’s degrees and one doctoral degree. At least 50 professional publications have resulted from our patient studies over the years the lab has been in operation.

The highly trained staff, a supervisor and four technologists, had more than 90 combined years of experience. One of the technologists was let go in December, and the supervisor and remaining technologists were subjected to a reduction in force.

On July 31, they walked out the door, never to return. The Division of Medical Genetics will continue to see patients, but the laboratory testing will be outsourced.

It has been our privilege to serve the citizens of eastern North Carolina for the past 31 years. We thank you for your trust.

JOHN E. WILEY
Former Director
Clinical Cytogenetics Laboratory
Interim Division Chief
Medical Genetics
Brody School of Medicine
ECU Notes: Video fights smoking
Sunday, August 5, 2012

Four East Carolina University graduate students transformed an ordinary class assignment into a boy band music video with a message.

Sean Russell of Raleigh, Joe Bartholomew of Rolesville, Justin Adams of Fayetteville and Adam Rhodes of Jacksonville, classmates in the physician assistant studies program, formed BOY BANDemia to warn others about the dangers of smoking.

Their title song “I’ll Quit But Not Today” is a parody of the 1990s Backstreet Boys’ “I Want It That Way.” The video is at www.youtube.com/watch?v=yPbilZxHfxY.

“It’s cheeky and hilarious but great, and actually gets the message across,” said Julie Daniel-Yount, clinical supervisor in physician assistant studies.

“Rather than a quick and dry skit, they outdid themselves and took a different approach.”

The band is on Facebook and has been featured on several sites, including the American Heart Association.

“We wanted to be very creative,” Bartholomew said. “We had had the idea for a boy band. We just hadn’t been able to find an excuse to implement it.”
An assignment to create an anti-smoking campaign for their health promotion/disease prevention course provided the opportunity.

With a target population of adolescent teenagers, the group believed a “fear factor” approach, while popular among anti-tobacco groups, wouldn’t lead to true behavior modification by savvy youngsters.

Their goal was to promote healthy behavior and prevent disease through the use of media.

“We discussed what we remembered to be the most influential media of our adolescence,” according to the group’s Facebook page. “We kept bringing up the topic of ‘music.’ That’s when the light bulb went off in the room. We could be a boy band!”

They shared the idea with Laupus Library’s Michelle Messer, who shot photographs for their video.

They met Messer at their favorite study spot outside her fourth floor office where she works as collection development coordinator, handling acquisitions and other duties for the library.

“We call her our manager,” Russell said. “She’s done a lot of work for us.”

Messer does not mind the description. She has helped get the group on several blogs, Facebook and Twitter pages. She checks the YouTube site daily; the video has broken 6,500 hits.

“I’ve tried to spread the word. We did have a viewing (of the video) here at the library,” she said. “Everything has been positive. It’s a good message and they are already working on a second song.”

The group’s name “bandemia” is a medical term that describes an increased number of white blood cells in the body. White blood cells are the body’s “infection fighters” produced in bone marrow. The band hopes their message will be infectious, they said.

The students spent about three weeks on the assignment working around family obligations, regular course work and attendance.

“These guys study all the time. Three of the guys are married and two have children,” Messer said. “To maintain a family, marriage and grades, and to have fun making a video in a boy band, I have a lot of respect for them.”

The work has been worth it, band members said.

“We didn’t want our outreach to be limited to one single presentation for a letter grade in a classroom,” their Facebook page said. “Realizing that
smoking is the No. 1 risk factor for the leading causes of death in this country, we wanted to truly make an impact.”

While many allied health students are creative and passionate about improving the health of their patients, Daniel-Yount said the group surprised her with their effort and ability to entertain and educate. Their fellow students loved it, she added.

Bartholomew, Rhodes and Russell all received bachelor’s degrees from ECU. Adams graduated from Brigham Young University — Idaho. They expect to graduate in December 2013.

“The only one of us who can really sing is Adam,” Bartholomew said of Rhodes, who has been in a band for five years.

A quote on the group’s Facebook page sums up their goal, Russell said.

“If this video makes you laugh, then it has done its job. If it makes you quit smoking, then we’ve done ours.”

**Library gets gift from ‘The Mini Page’**

Joyner Library recognized a gift from the creator of “The Mini Page” during an event July 11. The gift of $100,000 to the Betty Debnam Hunt and Richard M. Hunt Endowment will be used in the library’s Teaching Resources Center.

ECU faculty, family, and other guests gathered to dedicate the Betty Debnam Hunt Instructional Technology Classroom. Betty Debnam Hunt, who created “The Mini Page” in 1969, was on hand for the dedication; her husband is deceased.

Funds from the endowment will be used to provide opportunities for current and future teachers to discover and use cutting-edge technology and resources.

Additionally, the endowment will allow further development of the Debnam Resource Center for Family Literacy, established in March 2004.

“It is evident that education remains a strong theme in Ms. Hunt’s life with the establishment of this endowment to the TRC,” said Linda Teel, head of service for the Teaching Resources Center.

Hunt, of Raleigh, hailed from a family of journalists in eastern North Carolina and devoted her career to education as a schoolteacher, children’s author and creator of “The Mini-Page,” a syndicated newspaper supplement for children which appears in 500 newspapers weekly.
Bica joins Brody School of Medicine
Monday, August 6, 2012

Dr. David Bica, a specialist in sports medicine, has joined the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University and its group medical practice, ECU Physicians.

Bica is a clinical assistant professor and assistant residency director in the Department of Family Medicine. He has a medical degree from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed residency training in family medicine and a fellowship in sports medicine at ECU.

Bica’s clinical interests are sports medicine, osteopathic manipulative medicine, musculoskeletal ultrasound and exercise medicine. He is board-certified in family medicine.

Bica sees patients at the ECU Family Medicine Center at 101 Heart Drive in Greenville. Call 744-4611.
I am a young professional living in Greenville and trying to fight the uphill battle of starting a small, local business. My office and staff are based in the downtown area of Greenville, as well as a portion of my customers.

While searching for a home to purchase, I found a wonderful house in the university area that really caught my eye. I thought this would be a great location and keep me close to my new business, which occupies most of my time. However, I was unable to justify the expense of purchasing and updating the home without being able to rent out a portion of it.

I found it very surprising that the city has restrictions on utilizing these larger homes as they were originally intended to house more than three people. This rule should be closely examined, because students are not the sole individuals who are choosing to rent in this area. I would think the neighborhood would be interested in having more young professionals move in and help with revitalization of the area and boost the viability of the neighborhood. However, while starting new businesses or jobs, these people are financially limited as to how much can be spent for living expenses.

With such bleak outlooks for recent college graduates and available jobs, help aspiring entrepreneurs and young professionals by easing the three-person unrelated rule.

NEEDHAM CHEELY
Greenville
This letter addresses the possible change in the three-unrelated rule. It’s a mistaken belief that folks opposed to this change are anti-landlord and anti-renter. This is not true. There are responsible landlords and considerate, respectful renters. Sadly, there are also landlords, often absentee, who are irresponsible and renters who are inconsiderate and disrespectful.

I’ve lived in the university neighborhood for 29 years. I moved here to be close to my job at the university and because I wanted to live in a safe residential neighborhood. In my section of the neighborhood, there are folks who’ve lived in their homes for 35-40 years. There are some renters, primarily stable families or single professionals. I do not want my neighborhood of mainly owner-occupied homes to become transient and lose its stability. And I fear it would if the three-unrelated rule is changed.

It’s my understanding that a major force behind this possible change is investors who’ve bought houses, particularly in the university neighborhood, and want to see a return on their investment by renting to more than three persons. They knew about the three-unrelated rule when they bought these properties but now they seek to change the code to maximize their investments.

I own my house and I also need to see a return on my investment. I believe that a more transient neighborhood will negatively affect my property value, thus my investment will decrease. And it’s possible that this change could affect every residential neighborhood in the city and thus, every homeowner.

The question is whose interests is the city going serve? I believe the City Council and the zoning code should serve the majority of citizens — in this case, homeowners — and not a smaller minority with special interests.

ELIZABETH KNOTT
Greenville
In his English homeland, the salacious side of UNC-Chapel Hill professor Paul Frampton’s dilemma has become the stuff of tabloid legend: Retirement-age international physics genius with three Oxford degrees flies to South America to woo the ludicrously busty Miss Bikini World 2007 and instead is arrested at an Argentine airport with nearly four and a half pounds of cocaine.

The problems Frampton’s arrest are causing in Chapel Hill, meanwhile, are less lurid but snowballing. Alarmed that university leaders stopped Frampton’s pay without using standard disciplinary procedures, nearly 75 academics – mostly UNC-CH faculty members – signed an open letter this week condemning the act.

“It’s not just about Paul,” said mathematics professor Mark Williams, who started the letter. “Our main point is that it’s inhumane treatment of him, but it’s also a threat to tenure. And everyone in the faculty needs to be aware of that.”

The letter cites university policy about due process for severe sanctions against faculty. It says Frampton was not properly notified about sanctions and that Provost Bruce Carney’s decision to place him on unpaid personal leave was improper, because that is only supposed to be done at the request of the faculty member taking the leave.
“We are all capable of making mistakes that can cause trouble serious enough to prevent us from performing all or part of our University duties for a time,” the letter says. “Imagine that this happens to you after you have taught for years at UNC as a tenured faculty member. Given the precedent being set by the Frampton case, heaven help you.”

Also this week, Frampton’s Chapel Hill attorney, Barry Nakell, filed a formal grievance against the administration with a faculty committee empowered to hear such disputes.

Nakell was already pursing a lawsuit in Orange County courts to force the university to restore Frampton’s pay.

A university spokeswoman declined via email Friday to make Chancellor Holden Thorp available for comment on the faculty letter, citing the ongoing litigation with Frampton. But the spokeswoman wrote that the university is not trying to undermine the protections offered by tenure.

“Without discussing details of Professor Frampton’s case, we do not see this case as a threat to tenure,” wrote Karen Moon. “We remain committed to tenure.”

Frampton, 68, said in a telephone interview Friday that he is bankrupt and that without pay, he will lose his car and Chapel Hill apartment Sept. 1.

“People somehow have this idea I’m rich,” he said. “Well, it’s not true.”

**The lingerie model**

Frampton said he was lured to South America to meet a woman he thought he had been chatting with on the Internet, Czech-born lingerie model Denise Milani.

He never met her, and there has been no hint that Milani was actually involved. Her photos are all over the Internet, and it would be easy, Frampton said, for someone to use them in a scam.

Frampton was given a suitcase to carry by someone claiming to be an intermediary for Milani. The suitcase contained drugs.

Frampton – the Louis D. Rubin Jr. Distinguished Professor of physics and astronomy – has written hundreds of research papers and is credited with several important discoveries in theoretical physics.

His attorneys had him evaluated twice in prison by a psychiatrist. Frampton said he was diagnosed with a personality disorder that prevents him from making normal social connections and renders him unusually gullible.
Several friends and supporters have said in interviews that the diagnosis fits. His ex-wife, Anne-Marie Frampton of Durham, described him as an extraordinary and dedicated physicist but like a small child in matters unrelated to science.

Frampton’s arrest left university administrators in a tough position:

• For one thing, it’s far from clear that he is guilty of intentionally smuggling the drugs. Dozens of people who know him says it’s impossible.

• For another, it’s not simple to precisely pin down what constitutes full-time work for someone like Frampton or to even say where he must be to perform it. His work in high-end physics requires him to do more research than teaching. He must teach just two classes per year, and in theory could be back to do that for the fall semester.

So far, Frampton contends that he has been performing his duties by advising graduate students by phone and writing research papers. Therefore, he said, he should be paid.

University officials have consistently declined to comment on Frampton’s case. One filing said that UNC is not pursuing a standard disciplinary procedure because it is unclear yet whether Frampton committed a crime.

**Can he fulfill duties?**

An attorney for UNC wrote that Frampton clearly can’t perform his full duties, so he was placed on unpaid personal leave.

Nakell said the university can suspend, demote or fire Frampton if he is proven to have done something wrong. But it must use due process, and even if he was suspended, university policy states that it must be with full pay.

The university says in its filings that Frampton can’t teach classes, participate in faculty committees or hold office hours, and that his inability to log onto the Internet hinders his ability to do research.

But his supporters say they have worked out a system to deliver the latest research on his areas of physics to him. Someone at UNC puts the papers online, and a friend in Argentina puts them on CDs and brings them to Frampton regularly.

Frampton said he can freely reach his students by telephone, and one student he is advising confirmed that in an interview.
University policy refers to personal leave as something that faculty request. Nakell said that if administrators can force it on faculty against their wishes, then practically anyone with tenure can essentially be fired without due process.

Frampton faces up to 16 years in prison, and it could take months for him to reach trial.

**Not very sympathetic**

Many of his supporters agree that Frampton is scarcely a sympathetic figure. But, they say, his naiveté and online pursuit of young women are not offenses that warrant a prison sentence.

Even the university officials who stopped Frampton’s pay have sent letters to Argentine officials in his support.

UNC’s court filings “reflect UNC’s position that Professor Frampton remains a valued member of the faculty and we hope he can and will return to campus to resume his duties when his personal circumstances permit,” wrote Moon, the spokeswoman.

She also attached a copy of an email from Thorp to Argentina’s minister of science on behalf of Frampton.

Frampton said this week that he thinks the university’s main motivation is tamping down a huge public relations problem at a time when it’s coping with the effects of state budget cuts and needs to appear responsible and sympathetic to a public audience that includes a new conservative majority in the state legislature.

“I think the provost heard the word drugs and ran screaming, which is perfectly understandable,” Frampton said.

In addition to the open letter and an email appeal for donations to help pay for Frampton’s legal costs and for decent food in prison, Williams also has started a website, www.helppaulframpton.org.

Among those who signed the faculty letter are distinguished professors, department heads and endowed chairs from UNC.

Frampton said he is grateful for the letter, and that it shows that many among the faculty aren’t afraid of repercussions.

The very thing that the letter is aimed at protecting, Williams said, allowed them to sign it and him to write it.
“Tenure protects our ability to speak freely without fear,” Williams said. “Without it, I couldn’t do this.”

Price: 919-829-4526

Life behind bars

Paul Frampton is incarcerated in Villa Devoto prison in Buenos Aires. He is in a “pavilion” with 79 other men, most of them charged with drug crimes.

It’s winter in Argentina, and Frampton’s wing is frigid at night. But he has thick blankets, and a friend on the outside has brought him long underwear.

He said he has a growing pulmonary problem, and in successive interviews, his coughing has worsened.

Tedium is one of the worst parts, Frampton said. “There’s no set schedule at all,” he said. “That might sound nice, but it’s very depressing. Each day seems like a week. There is nothing happening whatsoever.”

The prison food, he said, is terrible, and the prisoners form groups they call “ranchos” that pay perhaps $500 a month to buy groceries from outside, then cook for themselves.

Frampton’s rancho has two other Americans and an Italian. The Italian, luckily, is a good pasta chef.

“I mainly lay the table, so I come out ahead, I guess,” Frampton said.

Staff writer Jay Price
NCCU / Former NCCU Chancellor Charlie Nelms

**Nelms to leave with two months’ severance**

By Jane Stancill - jstancill@newsobserver.com

DURHAM–Charlie Nelms, the departing chancellor at N.C. Central University, will receive a severance worth a little more than two months’ salary, or nearly $57,000, according to a UNC system official.

On July 26, Nelms, 65, abruptly announced his retirement as chancellor, effective Monday. Charles Becton – a Durham attorney, law professor and former state Court of Appeals judge – will take NCCU’s helm as interim chancellor next week.

Nelms agreed to help with the transition through the end of August, said Laura Fjeld, vice president and general counsel of the UNC system’s General Administration. Nelms will receive any accrued leave balance plus two months’ and six days’ salary, covering the period from Sept. 1 to Nov. 6. That comes to $56,972.

Fjeld said she could not comment on the reasons behind the terms of the payout.

“I’m not permitted to comment on what could be confidential personnel information,” she said.

Nelms’ announcement, weeks before the start of a new semester, stunned the campus. Earlier this week, Fjeld and UNC President Tom Ross met behind closed doors with the NCCU trustees to discuss a personnel matter. Ross said he could not talk about the personnel matter, but when asked if it involved Nelms, he responded, “in part.”
Nelms emailed the campus about his retirement, saying he wanted to spend the rest of his career ensuring the success of students at historically black universities. He did not specify his plans. He said now was “an excellent time to pass the baton to a new chancellor” who could carry out his strategy for raising academic standards. But he didn’t leave Ross and the trustees enough time to put a permanent successor in place.

The chancellor, who received high marks for his emphasis on quality service and tougher academics, canceled a gathering to speak with reporters earlier this week.

The UNC system’s policy on administration separation of presidents and chancellors provides that those who serve in the position for at least five years be entitled to a one-year leave with full salary if the leader plans to return to the faculty.

That’s what occurred last year with the departure of John Bardo, longtime chancellor of Western Carolina University. He received his so-called research leave of almost $280,000. But Bardo did not return to the classroom; earlier this year, he went on to become president of Wichita State University.

Also last year, Rosemary DePaolo, chancellor of UNC Wilmington, retired without intent to return to the faculty. She took only accrued leave balances without a payout, Fjeld said.

Besides the provision for research leave, the policy describes a chancellor’s separation from the university.

It says: “In some cases, a chancellor or a president may not be assuming a faculty position. It may be in the best interest of the University and a chancellor for the University to negotiate a severance agreement with a chancellor. In these circumstances, the president may, at the president’s discretion, determine that the circumstances justify providing severance pay in the amount of the chancellor’s full administrative pay for up to 90 days.”

Stancill: 919-829-4559
If you’re still a little angry at your mom for selling your 1972 college yearbook at a garage sale, you can finally let go of the grudge.

Thanks to an impressive digitization project at the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, hundreds of old yearbooks from 51 North Carolina colleges are all now available to peruse online.

With just a few clicks, you can be browsing the “Yackety Yack” – UNC-CH’s yearbook – from ’72, reliving the wide ties and mustaches, the war protests, that epic John Denver concert and of course, dressing up in a fancy gown to have your picture taken in the woods. Oh, look. There’s Rigdon Dees III (later known as Disco Duckin’ Rick Dees) with his brothers at Pi Kappa Alpha.
Or pop over to Western Carolina University’s “Catamount” yearbook and look at writer David Sedaris in all his bearded, bespectacled 1976 glory. Really. Marvel at that for a moment.

You can even find a super serious class photo of PBS and CBS newsman Charlie Rose (aka Charles Peete Rose) in Duke’s 1964 “Chanticleer.”

From the same year, there’s student government president Jesse Jackson at North Carolina A&T State University. Or travel back a ways and see Charles Kuralt as the 1955 Daily Tar Heel editor in Chapel Hill or Andy Griffith as president of the 1947 UNC Glee Club.

Though looking for gawky photos of famous people is a fun way to kill an hour (or three), spotting long-gone loved ones or reminiscing about days spent with old friends at various libraries, brickyards and ball fields is the heart of the project. That and research, naturally. The searchable digital collection, managed by UNC’s Wilson Special Collections Library, is a treasure trove of information for historians, genealogists and nostalgics.

Nick Graham, program coordinator of the Digital Heritage Center, said there is a strong demand for these types of online resources. Response to the collection has been great, he said.

“I think people are increasingly looking to online sources to connect with other people,” Graham said. “The yearbooks give people a great opportunity to connect with their past.”

Graham said he recently heard from a woman who had found grandmother’s yearbook photo from Saint Augustine’s College.

“And she was touched and surprised to see how much her grandmother looked like her,” Graham said.

**Grandma’s yearbook**

The center has so far scanned more than 800,000 pages of yearbooks, the oldest being the 1890 “Hellenian” from Chapel Hill (which became the “Yackety Yack” in 1901). Davidson College’s “Quips and Cranks” is chronicled from 1895, and Wake Forest University’s “The Howler” begins in 1903.

Officials are now expanding the collection to include yearbooks from community colleges, and they soon hope to begin digitizing campus and community newspapers. The yearbook website also has a section for high school yearbooks, but so far only a few schools are represented there. High school yearbooks must be 50 years old or older to be posted on the site.
The project is supported by grant funds distributed by the State Library of North Carolina.

**Who is missing?**

The three UNC system schools missing from this collection are the UNC School of the Arts, the N.C. School of Science and Math and N.C. State University.

N.C. State previously digitized its yearbooks independently and that site is also searchable. “The Agromeck” at N.C. State goes back to 1903 (some volumes are missing), but the site also archives old course catalogs going back to 1918 and a historical photograph collection going back to the mid-1800s.

Thanks to those “Agromeck” yearbook archives, the adorable 1940 class photo of a fresh-faced Bill Friday and the 1959 senior photo of former Gov. Jim Hunt (and his trademark hairstyle) will be around to enjoy forever.

Cain: 919-829-4579

**Take a look back**

- North Carolina Digital Yearbook Project
  www.digitalnc.org/exhibits/college-yearbooks
- N.C. State University Yearbooks
  More information
  historicalstate.lib.ncsu.edu/