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BB&T plays to the home crowd

BY MIKE GRIZZARD
The Daily Reflector

BB&T wants college students to take notice of what it has to offer. And it’s dressing up a handful of university branches on the East Coast with local school colors that are sure to grab attention.

The Greenville branch at 523 Evans St. bordering the campus of East Carolina University has been decked out in purple-and-gold paint and signs in an effort to hook new Pirates in town and give them a place to stash their booty — even if it is just a few pieces of eight.

The branch is one of five in to get makeovers in BB&T’s school spirit program — the others are at Western Carolina (also purple and gold), Clemson (orange, purple and white), West Virginia (black and gold), and Georgia (red and black).

Dennis Alexander, city executive for Greenville, said he’s glad ECU was in the mix for the pilot program.

“We’re really happy about the supporting of the effort and supporting of ECU and the Pirates in this fashion,” Alexander said. “I’m glad we have the opportunity to sort of visibly display our support for ECU and the ECU Pirates.”

The new look has a definite buccaneer flavor. Among the changes:

- A new street-side sign with a purple post, white BB&T on a purple background and GO PIRATES! in black letters on a yellow background.
- Purple awnings over windows and building entrances.
- New BB&T signs on three sides of the building — two purple with gold trim, and one white with gold trim on a purple background.

BEAT

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“Many of our employees in that branch are graduates of ECU, and they are very excited about this whole program,” said A.C. McGraw, media relations manager with BB&T Corporate Communications in Winston-Salem.

McGraw said BB&T had been studying university markets for about two years in creating a “student banking initiative.”

“...Above and beyond everything else, we are working to increase an affiliation with students and colleges in the communities they’re in,” she said. “We feel right now it’s a great time for all of this to be happening with the back-to-school rush.

"...We’re partnering with the universities and with the students through a couple of different things. One is the very proximity of the branch.”

Getting noticed is only part of the formula, of course. BB&T hopes its marketing strategy coupled with incentives will bring students needing to establish checking accounts inside the doors.

The bank has established relationships with bookstores in its five university markets — in Greenville students who open checking account and obtain a debit card through BB&T receive a $50 rebate on purchases at University Book Exchange, the bank’s neighbor which also has plenty of purple and gold splashed about inside and out.

“We’re getting great feedback from our clients and from the community around,” said Will Frisbie, marketing segment strategist and senior vice president with BB&T. “We’re getting really good feedback from students as well and a lot of interest in the offer that we’re doing with the University Book Exchange.

“...This is a pilot program. We’re starting to take a look at other schools to see if this is something that we would like to do in other areas.”

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Two former ECU coaches selected for latest Hall class

The Associated Press

A pair of former Pirate coaches will be part of this year’s class for East Carolina’s Athletics Hall of Fame.

Former track coach Bill Carson and late golf coach Howell “Hal” Morrison are joined by baseball standout Wallace “Butch” Davis, track star Brian Irvin and football standout Reggie Pinkney in this year’s class.

The group will be inducted into the Hall of Fame at a ceremony held inside the Murphy Center on Oct. 17 and honored during halftime of the ECU-Memphis football game on Oct. 18.

Carson served as head men’s track and field coach for 40 years. Carson, who retired prior to the start of the 2007-08 season, accepted the top Pirate track position in 1967.

Under his direction, ECU athletes advanced to the NCAA national championships in 18 of the last 19 years. In addition, he produced 70 All-America selections and 40 individual event champions at the IC4A, Colonial Athletic Association (CAA) or Conference USA championships.

Carson also earned his share of coaching honors during his illustrious career, including being named the NCAA District III Coach of the Year in 1988 and Southeast Region Coach of the Year in 2002.

HALL

Continued from C1

also served as the Broad Event Chairman for Sprint Development for USA Track and Field from 1991-97.

Davis was a three-year letterman from 1978-80 under coaches Monte Little and Hal Baird. As a senior, he led the Pirates in batting average (.362), home runs (12) and RBIs (27), while leading his team to an NCAA regional appearance.

He graduated as the school’s all-time leader in home runs (26) and total bases (250), and he still owns the ECU career record for triples with 10.

After completing his collegiate career, Davis played part of eight seasons for five major league teams, including the Kansas City Royals, who selected him in the 11th round of the 1980 MLB Draft.

The most decorated track athlete in ECU history, Irvin was a six-time All-America selection. Irvin earned All-America status in the 400 meter in 1990, ’91, and ’92, while setting the school-record in the event at the ’92 NCAA Outdoor Championships.

A four-year letterman (1989-92), Irvin set six track records during his career with his mark in the 400 meters still standing as the top time in ECU history. He helped the U.S. capture the gold medal at the 1991 World University Games as a member of the 4x400m relay team. He earned a first-place finish in the 400 at both the indoor and outdoor IC4A Championships in ’92.

Morrison served as the Pirates’ head golf coach from 1986-95 and guided ECU to seven CAA championships during his tenure and was named CAA Coach-of-the-Year seven times. His team won back-to-back titles in his first two years, and then claimed five consecutive conference championships from 1990-94.

ECU tallied 13 team titles under Morrison’s watch and earned an invitation to the NCAA East Regional Championships in 1991. Four players claimed individual CAA titles under his guidance with Mike Teague earning a spot in the 1992 NCAA East Regional as an individual.

An All-Southern Conference defensive back as a senior in 1976, Pinkney set the ECU record for interception return yardage with 197. Pinkney intercepted a team-high six passes during the ’76 campaign, including one he returned 98 yards against Richmond.

Pinkney also led the Pirates in interceptions as a freshman in 1973 with three. As a kickoff return specialist, Pinkney averaged 23.1 yards per return, which ranks as the ninth-highest return average in school history.

After concluding his collegiate career, Pinkney was drafted by the Detroit Lions in the sixth round of the 1977 NFL Draft. He played five years professionally.

— ECU Media Relations
Wellness program discontinued

RALEIGH — The state employee health insurance plan is eliminating a wellness incentives program in part to cut costs because the plan is struggling financially.

The North Carolina State Health Plan announced Thursday it's discontinuing the “Blue Points” program at the end of the month. Blue Points allows members who are physically active or participate in wellness activities to earn points they can use toward prizes.

Health Plan officials say less than 10,000 of the plan's 650,000 members participate in the plan.

The State Health Plan is tightening its belt after legislators said the plan's finances fell $115 million short of expectations for the fiscal year ending in June.

— From Associated Press reports
OUR VIEWS

All about heart

Doping scandals have plagued track and field, but many athletes in the Olympics carry on fair and square.

The Olympic games, which begin today, have been commercialized, scandalized and this time criticized for location, location, location — in Beijing, China, where the skies are not cloudy all day, but are often choked with pollution. And where free speech isn’t exactly a cornerstone of the government.

Doping troubles have dogged track and field — former superstar and gold medalist Marion Jones, who trained hereabouts under a coach who’s now banned from the games, even acknowledged her own rule-breaking, along with others. Alas, many a record in many an event is now at the least under suspicion.

Somehow, though, the Olympics will survive. And the main reason is that around the globe, there have been individual athletes who, no matter their backgrounds, have been single-minded in pursuit of Olympic gold. Their spirits will light up these games. And there is much twinkling in North Carolina — more than 40 of the Olympic athletes have ties to this state, either through school or trainers and coaches.

There’s Shalane Flanagan, who ran for UNC-Chapel Hill and holds American records at 3,000, 5,000 and 10,000 meters. She’s a possible gold medalist, and no matter what time her event comes on, the TVs will be flickering in this state. And East Carolina alum LaShawn Merritt is second in the world this year for a time in the 400 meters, an exciting event involving both speed and endurance.

N.C. State will be pulling for its Cullen Jones, who’ll do his part in the 400-meter freestyle swimming relay. Kayaker Heather Corrie has lived and trained in Charlotte. Heather O’Reilly, a UNC grad who was on the gold medal-winning U.S. women’s soccer team four years ago, will be back. Bershawn Jackson, formerly of St. Augustine’s, lives in Raleigh and will run the 400-meter hurdles. Kate Barber, also a Chapel Hill veteran, will play field hockey. Shannon Rowbury ran for Duke and will compete in the 1,500 meters.

And speaking of Duke, Mike Krzyzewski will be head coach of the men’s basketball team.

The sacrifices that most young people make to compete on an Olympic team are astonishing. They push their bodies to the limit, day after day, week after week, year after year. They give up pretty much everything else for their sport. For the vast majority, the dream of a medal does not come true. But there is the satisfaction, the distinction, of having run or paddled, or played basketball at the highest level.

They are remarkable physical specimens, to be sure, but there are bigger, stronger athletes who never make an Olympics team. Because the common trait in winners, in those who stand atop that medal stand and hear their national anthem, is heart. That’s what makes the difference.

And so, as the games begin, we recall Bob Dylan’s “Forever Young,” and the line, “May your feet always be swift…” And your hearts pounding strongly.
Trustee pledges $1 million to NCCU

FROM STAFF REPORTS

DURHAM — N.C. Central University has received a $1 million pledge from one of its trustees.

Eddie Long, a 1976 NCCU graduate and a member of the university's board of trustees since 2002, announced the gift Thursday. It will create a distinguished professorship fund in Long's name.

Long is the pastor at New Birth Missionary Baptist Church, a megachurch in the Atlanta suburbs.

Long has made prior gifts to the university topping $400,000. He is a graduate of NCCU's business school.

"We are very grateful for Bishop Long's continued support and commitment to NCCU," Chancellor Charlie Nelms said.
WELT DES WISSENS

Wie wäre
die Welt
ohne Männer?

INTERVIEW
Star-Forscher
Michio Kaku über
die Physik des
Unmöglichen

BIOLOGIE
Verstehen
Sie Ihren
Herz-Code?

Die gefährlichsten
SEKTEN
der Welt

Wie finden sie ihre Opfer?
Woran kann man sie erkennen?

TECHNIK
High-Tech-Power
für Militär-
Hubschrauber

ETHNOLOGIE
Der große
Krieg um
die Zahlen

NEUE TIERARTEN
Willkommen
auf der Erde!

BelleLux 3,60 € • Frankreich 4,50 € • Griechenland 5,20 € • Italien 4,50 € • Portugal (Cont. 4,50 € • Slowenien 4,50 € • Spanien 4,50 € • Österreich 3,80 € • Schweiz 6,80 sfr
Mühlkoppe

neues Leben: Verblüffend schnell Lebensraum neue Spezies

Neil-Young-Spinne
Diese Unterart der Faltürspinnen wurde von ihrem Entdecker, Professor Jason Bond von der East Carolina University, nach dem Sänger Neil Young benannt: »Welch ein sehr schätze als einen Aktivisten für Frieden und Gerechtigkeit.« Bond entdeckte die neue Spinnennart, als er im Auftrag der US-amerikanischen National Science Foundation die Faltürspinnen klassifizierte.