Elizabeth C. Duncan

Elizabeth C. Duncan, 95, died at Cypress Glen Retirement Center in Greenville on Thursday, August 20, 2009. Following a private burial, a celebration of her life will be held at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Greenville on Sunday at 2:30 p.m. The family will greet friends following the service at Cypress Glen. Mrs. Duncan was born to James Bullock and Nena Ballard Cheatham on Feb. 4, 1914. She attended the public schools in Franklinton and in 1934 graduated from Duke University. In 1936 she married Fitzhugh Durham Duncan and they moved to Greenville where she lived until the time of her death. She worked as a mother and homemaker until her children completed their educations. At that time she obtained a masters degree in psychology from East Carolina University and worked as a clinical psychologist with the Rehabilitation Center of Pitt County Memorial Hospital and The Developmental Evaluation Clinic of East Carolina University School of Medicine. She was a woman of keen intellect who possessed a marvelous sense of humor and who never met a stranger. She had an open mindedness and social conscience which in many ways put her ahead of her time. She treated everyone with dignity and respect and expected others to do the same. Until her later years, she was extremely active and loved to travel, walking the Stations of the Cross in Jerusalem while in her eighties. Her greatest loves, though, were her family, her many friends and her church, where she was a member for over seventy years and where she served on the vestry and in many other capacities. She was a member of the Greenville Service League and was a longtime member of the Inter Se Book Club. She volunteered with Hospice, Meals on Wheels and other community organizations. Mrs. Duncan was predeceased by her husband, Fitzhugh Duncan, and by her brother, Ballard Cheatham. She is survived by her son, the Rev. Hugh Duncan and his wife, Beverly, of Phoenix, Ariz.; her daughter, Nena D. Harris, of San Diego, Calif., and Greenville; her son, Tom Duncan, and his wife, Carolyn, of Greensboro; four grandchildren, John Duncan of Boise, Idaho, Jeff Duncan and wife, Monique, of Boise, Idaho, Mary Cheatham and husband, Chip, of Morehead City, and Catherine Duncan of Charlotte, and two great-grandchildren, Greer Duncan and Sally King. The family requests that in lieu of flowers memorials be made to St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 411 East Fourth Street, Greenville, North Carolina 27858, the Cypress Glen Benevolent Fund, 100 Hickory Street, Greenville, North Carolina 27858 or to a charity of one’s choice. The family would like to thank the staff of Cypress Glen and her caregivers, Billie Morris, Mamie Robinson and Dorothy Anthony, for their years of dedicated service. Online condolences at www.wilkersonfuneralhome.com.

Published in The Daily Reflector on August 22, 2009.
Family relives loss in effort to prevent another tragedy

By Michael Abramowitz
The Daily Reflector
Friday, August 21, 2009

As students return to college campuses, Pam and Ivey Pilkington of Grifton are once again sharing the painful memories of their son’s death, especially with parents of college students.

They are determined that their loss must save other lives, Pam Pilkington said.

Cody Pilkington was a sophomore at N.C. State University on Oct. 7, 2005, when he and another student died in a fire at a duplex across from the Raleigh campus that was used as fraternity housing.

The Pilkingtons take the painful step of publicly reliving the circumstances of Cody’s death each September because they know this is when parents across the state are bringing their children to universities and colleges and turning their precious commodities over to strangers for temporary safekeeping. They want every one of the students to graduate and go home to their parents, they said.

“Cody was always so shy and kept to himself,” Pilkington said. “This was the first time he really wanted to step out of his comfort zone to be a part of something, so I let him live in his frat house.”

His parents were so pleased to see him overcoming his shyness that they did not question the safety of Cody’s housing choice.

“You want to do the best for your child so he or she will be happy and productive,” Pilkington said. “I think we assumed there would be someone there who was in charge and responsible for their safety. Looking back, we learned that it’s ultimately the parents’ responsibility to be sure their child is living safely at school.”

Following their son’s death, the Pilkingtons established the Cody Blue Foundation and the Cody Blue Pilkington Memorial Scholarship. The “blue” in the foundation’s name is a reference to the nickname his grandmother gave Cody when she first saw his eyes.

The foundation uses its funds to educate students and their families about fire safety in the places they live on and off campus, whether dormitories, apartments or Greek housing, Pilkington said.

They also support programs that place smoke alarms and fire detectors where there are none, preventing what Pilkington calls the needless loss of lives. Pilkington does not dance around the issue.

“I don’t want another kid to die because of a stupid five-dollar mistake,” she said. “That’s all it would have taken to put up a smoke alarm in Cody’s house. Every kid going to college is packing underwear, sheets and pillow cases. Has anyone packed them a smoke alarm, and do they even know whether they need one?”

The fourth CBF Charity Golf Tournament is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 10, at Indian Trails Golf Club in Grifton. The $300 team entry fee and $75 individual entry fee will go to the scholarship and foundation funds to raise awareness and provide smoke alarms where needed.

National Campus Fire Safety Month is observed in 32 states each September since 2005. The Pilkingtons plan to join the Campus Firewatch organization on Sept. 17 on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C., to promote National
Campus Fire Safety Month. The organization urges schools across the country to provide fire safety courses for students each September, Pilkinson said.

For more information about campus fire safety, Pilkinson recommended a visit to www.campus-firewatch.com.

For more information about the CBF golf tournament, call 524-6915 or visit the Cody Blue Foundation at www.codyblue.org.

Contact Michael Abramowitz at mabramowitz@coxnc.com or (252) 329-9571.

Students are converging on the East Carolina University campus this week for the Fall 2009 semester. Here are some items on the Campus Fire Safety organization's checklist for every student and parent.

On-Campus Housing: All colleges and universities must comply with local fire codes.

Make sure your residence has a fire escape plan and practices it regularly.

Make sure your room has a working UL-listed smoke alarm.

Keep a UL-rated multipurpose fire extinguisher within reach.

If your residence hall has fuel-burning appliances, check to ensure it also has a carbon monoxide alarm installed.

Off-Campus Housing: All residential dwellings must comply with local fire codes.

Make sure there are working UL-listed smoke alarms in every room, hallway and stairway.

Test smoke alarms monthly and replace batteries at least twice each year.

Keep a UL-rated fire extinguisher in rooms where fires are most likely to start.

Know two ways out of every room; if you live on a second or third floor, have an escape ladder.

Never use candles and never overload extension cords.

Install a carbon monoxide alarm on each floor and near sleeping areas.

TIPS FOR SAFETY

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COX NEWSPAPERS
Appearance by Steinem on lecture series lineup

The Daily Reflector

Friday, August 21, 2009

Feminist icon Gloria Steinem will appear at East Carolina University in November.

East Carolina University's Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences announced the lineup for this year's Voyages of Discovery Lecture Series which includes an appearance by Steinem on Nov. 6.

The founder of New York magazine, Steinem gained national attention in the 1960s with her feminist views and investigations of Playboy magazine. She is strongly associated with the women's rights movement of the 1960s and '70s.

Her lecture, which is cosponsored by the ECU Women's Studies Program, is titled "Reflections on Feminism: A Voyage of Discovery with Gloria Steinem."

The third year of the lecture series will include six speakers beginning with Marcus Rediker, chairman of the Department of History at the University of Pittsburgh and world-renowned scholar of maritime history, with the Lawrence F. Brewster Lecture in History on Sept. 10, co-sponsored by the ECU Department of History.

Rediker will present a lecture titled "Black Pirates: The Curious Early History of the Amistad Rebellion."

The North Carolina Lecture on Oct. 6, the second in the series, co-sponsored by the ECU Asian Studies Program, will be given by Mark Ravina, associate professor of history and director of the East Asian Studies Program at Emory University. Ravina is slated to discuss "Reflections on the Last Samurai." He is internationally recognized for his research on early-modern samurai history and culture.

Following the Steinem lecture, Walter Bruggemann, professor emeritus at Columbia Theological Seminary, will present "Recovery from the Long Nightmare of Amnesia." Bruggemann will be featured in the Lecture on Christianity and Culture on Jan. 26, co-sponsored by the ECU Religious Studies Program and Jarvis Memorial United Methodist Church.

The Sallie Southall Cotten Lecture on Feb. 17 will be given by Trudier Harris, a prominent scholar of African-American literature and culture at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Harris will discuss "Little Old Ladies and the Last World: An Exploration of Sassiness and Risqué Behavior in African American Folklore."

The Thomas Harriot Lecture, the final in the series, will be March 18 with Theda Perdue, Atlanta distinguished term professor of Southern culture at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, leading a discussion on "Native Americans of North Carolina."

All lectures are open to the public and are held in Wright Auditorium. Complimentary tickets are available to ECU students, faculty and staff. Tickets are $10 for the general public, with the exception of the Jarvis Lecture, which is free to all attendees.

Tickets are available through the ECU Central Ticket Office by calling 328-4788 or (800) ECU-ARTS.

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Renovated Sigma Phi Epsilon house opens

By Michael Abramowitz
The Daily Reflector

Friday, August 21, 2009

The doors at Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity were reopened to loud cheers Friday, almost seven months after a Jan. 30 fire completely destroyed the fraternity’s “back house” at the corner of Fifth and Summit streets, across from the East Carolina University campus.

Mayor Pat Dunn joined university officials, including Chancellor Steve Ballard, fraternity alumni, classmates, families and the general public to welcome returning student fraternity members.

Sigma Phi Epsilon President Ryan Harris offered thanks on behalf of his fraternity brothers to all those responsible for rebuilding the house in time for the fall semester.

"Looking back over those months, I think all the brothers have learned just how quickly things can change — for the good and the bad," Harris told the gathering.

"We learned just how easily fires can occur in these historic houses and how quickly they can spread. The new sprinkler system and other safety features that have been installed here have given us a whole new outlook."

Congratulations for the rebuilding were spread widely among the diverse group that had a hand in the effort. The smiles all around reflected the satisfaction of those who took on the daunting task that lay before them that first week in February after 13 students barely escaped with their lives by jumping from second-floor windows and crawling off the porch roof.

Alumni property manager Matt Chance walked through the house and showed off its design and safety features, including an estimated 150 sprinkler heads, with some rooms containing as many as five. There also are several alarms that will sound throughout the house if a fire should erupt. The alarm system is connected directly to the city system and will automatically notify Greenville Fire-Rescue if it goes off, Chance said.

In addition, there are dozens of new outlets spread through the building, precluding the likelihood of overloaded circuits, a probable contributor to the fire, according to fire inspectors’ reports.

All of the features in the new Sig Ep house conform to the city’s building codes, Chance said.

"The hardest part of the whole experience was seeing the house go up in flames in January," Chance said. "A lot of memories went up in them."

Local contractor Charles Lewis had his crew follow the plans of architect Richard King, who in turn had to simultaneously meet the stringent design and construction guidelines of the Greenville Historic Preservation Commission and requirements of the state and local fire codes.

Sig Ep’s Kappa chapter adviser, Benjie Minton, shouldered the responsibility of bringing all those gears together and making sure they turned smoothly while at the same time seeing after the needs of his student charges, who now found themselves homeless and without possessions in the middle of a school semester.

"Benjie was fully engaged with us and the others during the whole time this rebuilding went on," Harris said. "His guidance and leadership really stuck out through the whole process."
Minton deflected the praise and attributed the project's success to the tight network of caring alumni, government agencies and private business people who pooled their talents and resources to get the job completed correctly and on time.

"This has been a labor of love," Minton said. "We have always had a very close-knit fraternity group at Sig Ep that has been active and involved since 1984. That made it easy to gather the people and expertise we needed when the fire occurred, because we already were involved."

Jimmy Freudenberg, an ECU junior, is among students moving back into the Sig Ep house.

"I woke up at 6 a.m. to Ryan's yells that the house was on fire," Freudenberg recalled. "I opened up my door and saw a red wall of flame. When I looked through a space where a window to the back house used to be, all I saw was a fireball."

After the fire, Freudenberg had to adjust to the fact that the fraternity house was gone, he said. He did not think he would be going back to the house seven months later, he said.

"I thought we were crippled then," he said. "Now I look around, and it's awesome. I can't wait for the semester to start again."

The lessons of the fire experience were not lost on ECU Student Government Association President Brad Congleton.

"It's very easy to point the finger (of blame)," Congleton said. "I challenge all students to learn the lessons this fire taught. I'd like to see a forum established to teach students how to be responsible in their fraternity and sorority houses, as well as in apartments. A lot of people think it had to be from alcohol consumption, but alcohol doesn't have to be involved to start a fire. A stupid little mistake can send a house up in flames."

Contact Michael Abramowitz at mabramowitz@coxnc.com or (252) 329-9571.

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Cox newspapers
UNC student shot, killed by police

FROM STAFF REPORTS

CHAPEL HILL - A 20-year-old man shot by police in Randolph County Sunday morning has been identified as Courtland Smith, a junior biology major and fraternity president at UNC Chapel Hill from Texas, The Daily Tar Heel reports.

Smith was pronounced dead at 6:03 a.m. after being admitted to High Point Regional Hospital, according to the campus newspaper.

Smith, president of the UNC chapter of the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity, reportedly was shot and killed by an Archdale police officer after a confrontation on Interstate 85 in Randolph County.

The Archdale Police Department released a statement that says officers made a traffic stop on the interstate about 4:54 a.m. Sunday after getting a call from a man who said he was suicidal.

"Once the vehicle came to a stop, a confrontation ensued and an Archdale Police Officer shot the subject," the statement said. The release did not say whether the man, identified only as white and his early 20s, had a weapon.

The Police Department has not released the name of the man who was shot. The N.C. State Bureau of Investigation is reviewing the incident.

In a statement, UNC-CH officials acknowledged learning of the death of the student but said they had no additional details.

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UNC system mandates health insurance

It will offer its own plan. 'We're able to offer far better coverage,' Bowles says.

BY ERIC FERRERI, Staff Writer

For four years, Alisa Eanes chose textbooks over Pap smears.

As one of the thousands of UNC system students without health insurance, Eanes went without annual physicals or regular gynecological checkups.

"Do I buy my books, or do I go to the doctor?" said Eanes, a 2008 UNC-Chapel Hill graduate now working a temporary job -- without insurance -- at UNC Hospitals. "I had to buy my books."

Starting in fall 2010, public university students in North Carolina will no longer face that decision. A new health insurance policy kicks in then, mandating that all students at UNC system campuses, about 215,000 people, have health insurance. Students must either prove they have their own, or buy insurance through a new plan designed to leverage the system's buying power to offer reasonable premiums and better coverage than most campuses do now on their own.

On campuses, health officials say that with the new mandate, students will no longer have to forgo care.

"Every day there are students who walk away from lab work and prescriptions they need because they don't have money," said Jerry Barker, who directs N.C. State University's
student health services. "Students have to pinch pennies. That's not good for continuity of care."

Students who receive financial aid won't incur a new up-front cost with the insurance because the premiums are factored into their aid package, but the added costs will be reflected in later student loan payments.

Campuses currently offer varying plans at varying rates. Eleven, including N.C. Central University, already require students to be insured. Five others, including UNC-Chapel Hill, N.C. State University and East Carolina University, do not, and experts estimate that 10 percent to 20 percent of students at those institutions go without coverage.

Nationwide, about 20 percent of college students are uninsured. In North Carolina, 16 percent were uninsured in 2006-2007, the most recent year for which data are available, according to the N.C. Institute of Medicine, an initiative within the Sheps Center for Health Services Research at UNC-CH. This year, that number may be higher, experts say, the result of students losing coverage as their parents have lost jobs.

Premiums rise or fall

Under the new plan, students at each school would pay $549 to $679 annually for $100,000 coverage with a $300 deductible. That means insurance costs would increase a bit for students at many campuses, but premiums would drop for students at UNC-CH, NCSU and five others, and the overall benefits package would improve, officials say.

For example, students at Elizabeth City State University now are required to pay $456 a year for health insurance, with a $6,000 maximum benefit. Under the UNC system plan, that student's premium would rise $100 to $200 a year, and the maximum benefit would rise to $100,000.

By contrast, NCSU currently does not require students to have insurance, but offers it for $1,161 annually with a $100,000 maximum benefit. So NCSU students who buy the coverage now would save about $500 a year through the UNC system plan.

One comparison: A comprehensive insurance plan a 19-year-old male could buy from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina would cost $1,587 a year with a $2,500 deductible, according that company's Web site.

The UNC system plan's numbers are predictions gleaned from an experimental program officials conducted last fall. They could change a bit depending on actual bids from insurance companies, but aren't expected to be far different, said Bruce Mallette, the UNC system's senior associate vice president for academic and student affairs.

The potential effect of President Obama's national health care overhaul proposal isn't yet known, Mallette said.

Insured or not, all UNC system students receive some regular doctor visits on campus funded by their student fees. Still, those without are wary.

As an uninsured undergrad at NCSU, Greg Doucette went lunging for fluids at the first sign of illness.

"I definitely tried to be more observant about my health," said Doucette, now a law student at
NCCU. "Every time I felt the slightest bit sick, I started guzzling orange juice. You definitely become more acutely aware."

James Daigle had knee surgery several years ago. He was insured then, but isn't now, so as he heads into his last semester at UNC-CH, he's being careful.

"I'm always cautious about what I do; I know if I injure myself, it would be a financial disaster," said Daigle, who is from Hendersonville. "If you don't have insurance, and you get sick, you don't go to the doctor because of what it will cost."

Mary Covington still thinks often about the young UNC-CH student who had appendicitis but refused surgery because she had no insurance. The appendix ruptured, and the student was hospitalized with complications, said Covington, UNC-CH's campus health services director.

Often, uninsured students who are rarely ill or injured are shocked at the costs of care. For those without coverage, surgery and follow-up care for a torn knee ligament -- not uncommon for students who like to play pickup basketball or football on the quad -- could run $45,000, Covington said.

"Medical care should be medical care, without having to factor in the financial price," she said.

'Market muscle'

This new policy represents the UNC system's first attempt to standardize health insurance while using its size to get better rates than campuses could get individually.

"We're finally using our market muscle as a system," UNC President Erskine Bowles said.

But he acknowledges not all students will be pleased, particularly those whose rates will rise.

"It's a mandate and not an option, and some people won't like that," Bowles said. "On a few rare occasions, it will cost a teeny bit more. But by and large, we're able to offer far better coverage."

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The change and effects

Next fall all students on the UNC system campuses will be required to have health insurance.

What changes: Now 11 campuses, including N.C. Central University, require health insurance. Next year, the other five -- UNC-CH, NCSU, Appalachian State, UNC Wilmington and East Carolina University -- will do so as well.

What that means: If you have health insurance through your parents, nothing changes. If you don't, you can buy coverage through a new plan designed to leverage the UNC system's buying power. Students at some campuses may see costs go up slightly but coverage caps will also increase.

The cost: Premiums are expected to be $549 to $679 annually. The price depends on the bids placed by insurance companies but are based on a experimental program. Students will buy
coverage by the semester and it will be factored into financial aid packages.

Coverage: Students will have a $300 deductible and be covered for up to $100,000. Over that amount, they are responsible for all costs.

Who’s exempt? The system mandate will not apply to graduate or postdoctoral students at UNC-CH and NCSU who receive insurance through a graduate student support plan.

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Under the Dome:
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**Perdue offers rewards for money-saving ideas**

Gov. Beverly Perdue is asking state employees to think of ways to save the state money.

In a YouTube video posted last week, Perdue said she is serious about wanting to hear ways the state could be more efficient.

"I want to learn from you," Perdue said. "That's what I mean when I talk about being a hands-on governor."

Sounding just a bit like a game-show host, Perdue said money-saving tips could mean "cash prizes" or more time off for state employees.

Perdue said one state employee received $3,000 for an idea to put state phone directories on a disk, rather than printing them. The idea saved $16,000, she said.

She also took credit for leading the fight to save the state from devastating cuts in the recently adopted state budget.

"Although some employee positions are being eliminated," she said, "I know and you know that things could have been far worse without all of our efforts."

See it at tinyurl.com/17zy2
Wary Pirates will prepare for Edwards

BY CAULTON TUDOR, Staff Writer

Virginia Tech's surprising quarterback strategy worked out famously for East Carolina in the opening game of 2008.

Having expected to see option threat Tyrod Taylor get most of the snaps in the game at Charlotte, the Pirates instead confronted passing specialist Sean Glennon.

ECU's defense, engineered by coordinator Greg Hudson, picked off two passes, held the Hokies to 243 yards and shocked much of the college football world with a 27-22 upset.

With the '09 opener against Appalachian State approaching, the possibility of a quarterback surprise exists again.

Armanti Edwards, the Mountaineers' resident magician and undisputed ruler of the NCAA Championship Subdivision (formerly I-AA), is recovering from a preseason accident with a lawn mower that has fans on both sides wondering about his status for the Sept. 5 game in Greenville.

Hudson, however, is not among those guessing.

"He'll play, and he'll play well," Hudson says.

Current trends seem to support that theory. More than 30 stitches were removed from Edwards' foot on Tuesday, 13 days after the frightening mishap in Boone. Mountaineers coach Jerry Moore and his staff haven't set a specific schedule for Edwards' workout schedule, but no one would be surprised to see him back in drills this week.

In Edwards' absence, sophomore Travaris Cadet has done much of the quarterbacking with the No. 1 offense. A transfer from Toledo by way of Pearl River (Miss.) Junior College, the 6-foot-1, 210-pound Cadet was highly rated as a high school star in Miami. But there's not a lot of recent film for the Pirates to gather on Cadet, who hasn't yet played in a game for the Mountaineers.

"But," Hudson said, "if we had a lot of information on him, I don't believe it would change our thinking much. We have to prepare for the offense we think we'll see, which means trying to prepare for Edwards."

The Pirates defenders are covering familiar ground on that front, too.

"Edwards, Tyrod Taylor, Pat White [former West Virginia star] -- they're all three basically just alike," Hudson said. "On one hand, it's scary what they're capable of doing to you. But on the
other hand, it's at least something our guys are used to trying to get ready to face."

With most of the defensive regulars back from a unit that easily ranked as the Conference USA statistical leader in 2008, Hudson and Pirates head coach Skip Holtz have made it clear in preseason that they expect the unit to have a second straight productive early season against another difficult schedule that includes trips to West Virginia and North Carolina after the Appalachian State game.

The first four '08 opponents were the Hokies, West Virginia, Tulane and N.C. State, with only the West Virginia game in Greenville. Hudson's unit was dominant in the first two and above average at Tulane before slipping into a three-game slump that resulted in losses against the Wolfpack (30-24), Houston (41-24) and Virginia (35-20).

From the game at Virginia on -- including a 25-19 Liberty Bowl loss to Kentucky -- the defense was consistently impressive in a league where the football teams regularly outscore their basketball cohorts.

Hudson says the defense's key to improving in the second half of '08 starts with the guy in the mirror.

"You can create a lot of self-inflicted wounds in this business just by trying to get too smart for your own good," Hudson said. "We've got the right players with the right skills here this season to be a good defense. That's part of it.

"The other part is it's going to take a good defense against this schedule, and the last thing we need is to stumble out of the chute. That's one reason don't want to try to make the Appalachian quarterback situation too complicated. We've just got to try to be ready for anybody and everybody."

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