Pirates gearing up for Va. Tech game

BY JANE WELBORN HUDSON
The Daily Reflector

When East Carolina University opens its football season with a noon "home" game Saturday, the local members of the Pirate Nation won't be able to just hop in their cars and head down Greenville Boulevard to Dowdy Ficklen Stadium.

This "home" game — a much-anticipated match-up with Virginia Tech — is being played 250 miles away, in Charlotte's Bank of America Stadium.

Many Pirate faithful will unfurl their skull-and-crossbones car flags and drive south on Interstate 85 for the game. Others will board chartered buses to travel across the state.

"Our car flags are going great," said Don Edwards, owner of downtown university-merchandise retailer UBE. The most popular design is the purple car flag with the Pirate head logo.

"I will definitely be heading See PIRATES, A9
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westward this weekend to see the battle," said ECU student Daniel J. Fussell, president of the Student Pirate Club. "I am traveling to Charlotte on Friday morning, but I am first making a trip home (one-and-a-half hours south of Greenville to Rose Hill) in order to catch a free ride with my cousins. With gas the way it is, it will be cheaper for me to take that route."

The Pirate football team will be leaving for Charlotte today, boarding buses at noon outside the Ward Sports Medicine Building.

Mary Ann Ellerbe of AAA Carolinas in Raleigh, the Pirate Club's official travel partner, said three full chartered buses — carrying 160 fans — will depart from Dowdy Ficklen Stadium's Gold Parking Lot at 6 a.m. sharp Saturday. "We are sold out, but people are still calling this week about riding the buses," she said.

Pirate Club Executive Director Mark Wharton said he's also heard that buses full of Pirate fans will be traveling to Charlotte from Ahoskie and Goldsboro.

Greenville businessman Grant Jarman gassed up his "Pirate Express" bus with $185 of fuel and said he plans to drive 11 other Pirate supporters to the Queen City for the game.

The "Pirate Express," an airport shuttle bus Jarman purchased and adorned with purple-and-gold graphics and photographs of the team and coaches, was scheduled to depart Greenville at 8 a.m. today.

"An airport shuttle bus, with its luggage racks, is great to just throw coolers and lawn chairs in," Jarman said. "We'll have snacks and Pirate beverages. It's perfect for going to games."

The ECU supporters in the Charlotte area — the ones who are used to driving 250 miles to see the Pirates play — are waiting for the armada to arrive.

Brent Blakely, president of the 340-member Charlotte-area Pirate Club chapter, said, "Everybody's very excited. It's a great opportunity to get together in Charlotte.

"We like going to Dowdy Ficklen, but it's really neat to be able to see the Pirates here in Charlotte. We feel fortunate to be able to have the game in our backyard."
An East Carolina University graduate is poised to step into the top executive position at BB&T Corp.

The BB&T board on Tuesday voted unanimously to promote Kelly S. King, the bank's chief operating officer, and the No. 2-ranking executive manager at BB&T since 2004, to chief executive officer. King succeeds CEO John A. Allison, who will retire Dec. 31.

Allison, who has an honorary doctorate from ECU, will continue as chairman of the BB&T Corp. board of directors until Dec. 31, 2009.

BB&T will name King's successor at a later date.

"I respect and appreciate the phenomenal job that John Allison has done in leading our company for past 20 years." King said in a news release. "I have mixed feelings because we've worked so closely together for so many years, and I've truly enjoyed our relationship."

King, 59, will assume the helm at BB&T as the last remaining member of the "original five" executives — along with Allison, retired COO Henry Williamson, outgoing Chief Credit Officer Ken Chalk, and retired Chief Financial Officer Scott Reed — credited for transforming BB&T from one-time farm bank to one of the largest financial institutions in the country.

"Kelly has been involved in every significant strategic decision we've made at BB&T for over 25 years," Allison said. "He is a proven leader and firmly committed to BB&T's culture and vision and the corporate values that have made us successful. He will do an outstanding job as CEO."

King, a Raleigh native, joined BB&T in 1972 and has been a member of the executive management team since 1983. After completing BB&T's Leadership Development Program, King served in management positions in Statesville, Charlotte, Wilson and Raleigh.

After stints as manager of branch administration and, later, of the BB&T Banking Network, he was named president of BB&T Corp. in 1996. He succeeded Williamson as chief operating officer in 2004.

He said BB&T will continue in the same "strategic direction" after he's CEO.

"There is no reason to change course," he said. "Our mission, service culture, operating strategy and values have only been reaffirmed during the current down cycle in the economy. BB&T's bond analysts have always been ahead of the curve. We will continue to execute our vision of creating the best financial institution possible."

King is a member of several professional organizations and board as well as the ECU Board of Visitors.

He earned bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from ECU. He is a graduate of the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at Rutgers University.

Allison's decision to step down as chief executive, a position he has held since 1989, is the latest step in a five-year executive management transition plan at BB&T. Since the plan began in 2003, six new executive managers have joined the executive team, and four have retired or announced pending retirements, including W. Kendall Chalk, whose last day at BB&T is Friday. Chalk also has bachelor and master's degrees from ECU.
Suspect in assault at ECU residence hall is a 2004 graduate

A Tennessee man was in Greenville for a business trip when incident took place in the lobby of Fletcher Hall.

BY JOSH HUMPHRIES
The Daily Reflector

The Tennessee man arrested Wednesday in the assault of an East Carolina University student is a 2004 graduate of ECU.

ECU Police Chief Scott Shelton said Michael Mewborn, 27, of 184 Sugar Plum Lane, Telford, Tenn., was in Greenville for a business trip when the assault occurred in the lobby of Fletcher Residence Hall.

Shelton said the victim, a female ECU student, and Mewborn do not know each other and Mewborn has been living in Tennessee for at least seven months.

"Fletcher Hall was a very unusual incident," Shelton said. "It was not predictable. I believe that the person who did this — had he not attacked the victim — would have picked someone else."

Shelton said that police cannot determine a motive for the attack.

Mewborn allegedly entered the residence hall located on the west end of main campus off East Fifth Street and attacked the female student.

Police say Mewborn was stopped by three students who heard a commotion and came to the victim’s aid. The students physically subdued the suspect and held him for police. The victim was treated for injuries received during the assault.

Mewborn was charged with one count each of assault with a deadly weapon with the intent to kill, assault by strangulation, kidnapping and trespassing. He is in the Pitt County Detention Center on a $750,000 bond.

ECU officials say that assaults on campus are very rare. This is the first incident of assault at ECU in at least two years, Shelton said. But officials are stressing campus safety with students this week.

Todd Johnson, associate vice chancellor for campus living, dining and transit at ECU, said the university uses a variety of methods to educate students on safety.

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"The crime prevention unit does a number of programs throughout the year, especially at the beginning of the fall semester," Shelton said. "When these types of incidents happen, we make a real effort to get the word out."

Emphasis is put on closing exit doors and not allowing others into the building without a pass or a key. In addition to the police officers that patrol campus, there is a group of trained students who patrol the residence halls at night, making sure doors are locked.

Shelton said that random violent crimes are hard to prevent and student safety is largely reliant on the students watching out for themselves.

"At some point, people have to take responsibility for their actions," he said in reference to students leaving doors propped open and allowing strangers into residence halls.

There are 16 residence halls on campus with multiple entrances. About 5,000 students live in the halls. The campus has more than 200 cameras and recording devices in residence halls, Johnson said.

ECU spokesman John Durham said that campus safety is very important to administrators and efforts will increase as the student population increases.

"We are never going to be risk-free," Durham said. "But we have to do all we can to enhance the safe way we do business."

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Musical offerings

Now that school's back in full swing, it's time for some music.

And the Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival begins its season at 7 p.m. Thursday and 8 p.m. Sept. 5 in A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall.

Four Seasons is now in its ninth season and was founded by artistic director Ara Gregorian, who is a professor at East Carolina University's School of Music.

This year there will be five residencies that will include two concerts each, master classes, open rehearsals and children's concerts.

Four Seasons will also present three educational projects: "Children's Residency II," "Four Seasons Teachers & Students" and the newly created "Four Seasons Master Teachers" program.

The "Season Opening Extravaganza" will include a reception following each performance.

Music at the first residency will include Leos Janacek's Sonata for Violin and Piano, Ludwig van Beethoven's Piano Trio in D Major, Opus 70, No. 1, "Ghost," and Cesar Franck's Sonata for Violin and Piano in A Major.

Performing these works will be Robert McDonald on the piano, Gregorian on violin and Emanuel Gruber on cello.

McDonald has performed internationally as a solo recitalist and a recital partner to Midori and Isaac Stern. He has appeared with the San Francisco, Baltimore, Milwaukee and Curtis symphony orchestras.

Gregorian debuted with the Boston Pops Orchestra in 1997 and at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall in 1996. A member of the chamber music ensemble Concertante, he has performed throughout the United States, Canada and China, and at the El Paso, Santa Fe, Cactus Pear, Strings in the Mountains, and Skaneateles festivals.

Gruber is the former principal cellist of the Israel Chamber Orchestra. He was awarded the Pablo Casals prize by the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra and was the winner of the Concert Arts Guild Auditions in New York. He teaches at East Carolina University.

IF YOU GO!

What: Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival

When: 7 p.m. Thursday and 8 p.m. Sept. 5

Where: A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall, East Carolina University

Cost: $10-$25

Call: 328-4788
1st look at Carolina North

Innovation Center drawing revealed

BY LEAH FRIEDMAN
STAFF WRITER

CHAPEL HILL — The first building on UNC-Chapel Hill's Carolina North campus will have three-story glass facades, solar panels and metal curtain walls with vertical sun shades to reduce energy costs.

The planned $20 million Innovation Center will also have a touch of the traditional, historic Chapel Hill campus with a brick entrance.

The UNC-CH Board of Trustees unanimously approved the design at a special meeting Thursday. It had rejected an earlier

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INSIDE

AIRPORT: UNC Board of Governors will establish Airport Authority. > 4B
Airport authority planned

UNC system will lead the effort

BY MARK SCHULTZ
STAFF WRITER

CHAPEL HILL — The Board of Governors of the UNC system will establish an airport authority to replace Horace Williams Airport in Orange County.

Officials had initially chosen the UNC Health Care System to lead the effort, system CEO Bill Roper said in an interview earlier this month.

But after more discussion, officials decided to have the Board of Governors take the lead, with equal representation from UNC Health Care and UNC-Chapel Hill, said Kevin Fitzgerald, executive associate dean at the School of Medicine.

The 15 member authority will include:

- Four members each from the university and health care system.
- One member appointed by the state House speaker.
- One member appointed by the Senate president pro tem.
- Three members appointed by the Orange County Board of Commissioners.
- One member appointed by the Chapel Hill Town Council.

- One member appointed on a rotating basis by the Carrboro Board of Aldermen and Hillsborough Town Board.

The airport authority will have the power of eminent domain, the acquisition of private land for public purposes.

Barry Jacobs, chairman of the Orange County commissioners, said county leaders had hoped for more discussion before state lawmakers passed the bill authorizing an airport authority.

But Jacobs said he's glad the Board of Governors and not UNC Health Care will be in charge of establishing the authority.

"I think that's better," he said. "The university system people may have a broader view of what the priorities of the community are."

Fitzgerald said the university is in the "very early stages" of considering the authority.

The bill limits the authority to Orange County, and he said he didn't know whether that precluded the possibility of an airport going in nearby Chatham or Alamance. In the past, doctors at the university's Area Health Education Centers program have said they needed an airport within 20 minutes of campus.

He did say the university sees the airport being used by the broader community.

"We recognize general aviation is very important in Orange County," he said. "A facility like this would be utilized by many small planes and pilots."

UNC-Chapel Hill officials have said they need to close the airport to make room for the Carolina North research campus. The university is building a hangar at Raleigh-Durham International Airport to temporarily house its fleet.

At a hearing in Raleigh last year, AHEC doctors said closing the airport would hurt poor, sick children in remote parts of the state. But only a handful out of approximately 30 take-offs or landings per day transport doctors to and from medical clinics.

Fewer than one in four of the airport's flights are for medical purposes, according to statistics from the UNC-Chapel Hill medical school and the Federal Aviation Administration.

Three-quarters of all flights involve private planes, most of those for private purposes.

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