THE DAILY CLIPS

September 3, 2010

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252-328-6481
Festival brings international performing musicians to ECU
The Daily Reflector
Friday, September 3, 2010

The Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival brings international performing musicians to Pitt County throughout the year for concerts, master classes and community-outreach events. The festival begins Thursday with the Season Opening Extravaganza concert at 7 p.m. and a second performance at 8 p.m. Sept. 10 in A.J. Fletcher Recital Hall on the East Carolina University Campus.

The concerts will feature Jesse Mills (violin), Hagai Shaham (violin), Xiao-Dong Wang (viola), Edward Arron (cello) and festival founder Ara Gregorian (viola) performing Johannes Brahms' String Quintet in G Major, Op. 111 and Antonín Dvořák's String Quintet in E-Flat Major, Op. 97. Other concerts in the series will be on Dec. 2-3, Jan. 13-14 and April 28-29.

“The 2010-2011 season welcomes musicians from China, England, Finland, Germany, Israel, Japan, Korea, and throughout the United States for concerts and outreach initiatives,” said Gregorian, who also serves as the artistic director.

He began the festival, which presents two concerts during each of the four seasons, in his second year at ECU. That was 11 years ago. His goal was to bring music performances of an international level to Pitt County.

As a musician, 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.

In addition to the concerts, the festival includes master classes and open rehearsals; children's concerts for Pitt County students; Family Night; and the innovative Next Generation concerts that partner current and former ECU music students with distinguished guest artists.

"Family Night is the perfect way for children of all ages to come to a Four Seasons concert, and I think you will be amazed at the quality of the performances and thrilled by the precociousness of the Next Generation," Gregorian said.

Family Night is scheduled for March 2, 2011 and is a free event. The Next Generation Concerts, also free, feature the Daedalus Quartet on Nov. 14 and violinist Elina Vähälä on Feb. 13. The November concert will feature Franz Schubert's String Quartet in D Minor, D. 810, "Death and the Maiden," and the February concert will present J.S. Bach's Double Violin Concerto in D minor.

Season tickets for the Four Seasons Chamber Music Festival are $90 for the general public, $80 for ECU employees, and $35 for students/youth.

Individual ticket prices are $25 for the general public, $20 for ECU employees and $10 for students/youth.

For tickets, call 328-4788 or visit www.ecuarts.com.
OBITUARIES

Jill Hardy Hollis

Mrs. Jill Hardy Hollis died Tuesday, August 31, 2010 at her home after a battle with ALS. A memorial service will be held today at 3 p.m. at Christ Church on Davenport Farm Rd.

Jill Hardy Hollis was born in Bradford, Pa. She grew up there until moving to Wilson and Greenville where she lived until her death. She was a member at Christ's Church in Winterville. She also was involved in raising awareness about the illness of ALS. She worked in the Pitt County Court Systems until ALS forced her to retire six years ago. Jill lost her life to ALS but she won the battle over the illness by the life she lived.

She is survived by her husband, Cliff Hollis; daughter, Megan Bostic, of Raleigh; son, Joel Bostic, of Greenville; father, Thomas Hardy, of Pennsylvania; sisters, Jackie Hardy, of Montana, and Jeri Capps, of Greenville; and a brother, Jeff Hardy, of Pennsylvania.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to The ALS Association, Jim "Catfish" Hunter Chapter, 120-101 Penmarc Drive, Raleigh, NC 27603, or to Christ Church, Mission Fund, 745 Davenport Farm Road, Winterville, NC 28590.

Arrangements by Wilkerson Funeral Home and Crematory, Greenville.

Bracing for Earl: Greenville Fire-Rescue team called into action
By Michael Abramowitz
The Daily Reflector
Friday, September 3, 2010

The Greenville Fire-Rescue Urban Search and Rescue team was called into action Thursday afternoon by state and federal emergency management agencies as part of post Hurricane Earl operations set for this morning, a Fire-Rescue official said.
"The USAR and Swift Water rescue squad will be split into two 'hasty teams' of six rescuers each," interim Chief Sandy Harris said. "One team will be flown by N.C. National Guard helicopter to Cape Hatteras, the other to Ocracoke Island."

Once there, the crews will perform an initial evaluation of damage, then perform any needed search-and-rescue operations for residents who might not have heeded the call for evacuation. Additional personnel, including a search dog unit, will stage at Swan Quarter, ready to ferry to Ocracoke if needed. Deployments farther south of Cape Hatteras on the barrier islands will travel in convoys, Harris said.

"It's a day for action, not planning," FEMA Director Craig Fugate said in a Thursday news conference.

Forecasters at the National Hurricane Center issued a 5 p.m. warning Thursday that Earl, a "dangerous and powerful hurricane," was moving north from about 185 miles south of Cape Hatteras and headed for a brush with the North Carolina coast, packing sustained winds of 115 mph at its center. The hurricane warning extended from Bogue Inlet to the Virginia border and was forecast to pass Hatteras during the night.

The North Carolina National Guard placed 94 personnel on active duty Thursday and another 150 on standby, a Guard official said.

Pitt County opened a shelter at North Pitt High School for evacuees, Emergency Services Director Noel Lee said Thursday.

Many evacuees headed to Greenville area hotels and motels, according to Debbie Vargas, Greenville Convention and Visitors Bureau director.

"Area accommodations were quickly filled with reservations, and we expect that to continue through the day," Vargas said Thursday afternoon.

Accommodations in Greenville were further complicated by other events taking place this weekend, including Labor Day travelers and Sunday's football season opener for East Carolina University.

The Branch family arrived Sunday from Colorado and New Jersey at Duck, where Cathy Branch had found a house to rent in March that would accommodate the nine family members, she said.
"It was a great location," she said. "We usually do the Jersey shore, but some friends suggested Duck to us."

"It was beautiful; the sea and the house were gorgeous," family matriarch Sue Branch said.

From the time of their arrival, though, all the Branches heard on their television was talk of approaching Earl.
"It was all we talked about the whole time," said Katie Zvetzig, Cathy's sister in-law from Golden, Colo. "We said a few prayers that it wouldn't come our way, but it did."

The women made a reservation at the Hampton Inn "just in case" and kept following Earl's progress until they got a call from Currituck County emergency services personnel notifying them of a mandatory evacuation.
"We would have left by then even if they didn't call us," Cathy Branch said. "We heard that the road was prone to getting washed out, and we have kids and didn't want to get stuck out on the island."
The family had never heard of Greenville until this week. They attacked the issue of what to do with the rest of their vacation with scientific precision.
“We had heard of Raleigh, but didn’t want to travel that far inland,” Zwetzig said. “We wanted to be just far enough away from the coast that we wouldn’t be rained out of our vacation and still have plenty of things to do. It had to be a fun place.”
“It’s all we talked about over and over, day after day,” her teenage daughter, Abby, said.
“We’re glad we picked Greenville,” Katie Branch said. “We went downtown first, then hit the mall. We drove to the university, too. We didn’t expect it would be so pretty there.”
Another vacationer, Chris McKee, brought his wife, daughter and their two dogs from their home in Washington, D.C., to a rented oceanfront house on Pine Island, where they had spent nine summers.
“We were here during Tropical Storm Ernesto, but there was not a mandatory evacuation then,” McKee said. “We thought it would be the same this time, but emergency personnel called this morning and told us that there was a mandatory evacuation in effect for Currituck County.”
They also had never heard of Greenville, but when they saw the city on an online map, it seemed to be what they wanted as a retreat from the storm. McKee said.
“It’s convenient, and there are restaurants, hotels and East Carolina University, so it fit the bill,” he said. “I see purple everywhere, so we might stay a couple of days and see what that’s all about.”
Contact Michael Abramowitz at mabramowitz@reflector.com or (252) 329-9571.
Editorial: Continuity, change mark start to ECU football season
Friday, September 3, 2010

At least two significant changes will greet the East Carolina University football team when it takes the field on Sunday afternoon for its season-opening game. The players will be led out of the tunnel by a new head coach, and they will compete for the first time in an expanded and improved Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium following an offseason upgrade.

Much more about the day is likely to recall the long and storied history of Pirate football, especially that the unyielding effort given by those in the jerseys is matched only by the unrelenting support of those in the stands. And that mix — of continuity and change — should make for another exciting year for the East Carolina community.

Some view collegiate athletics as an unnecessary sideshow, a diversion from the university's core mission of academic instruction. In fact, colleges intend to provide health of spirit and body as well as that of mind. And what better way to celebrate both than in the crucible of a stadium, bringing student-athletes together with students and fans.

At East Carolina, the football team acts as more than an instrument of competition. When they take the field against Tulsa in Greenville on Sunday, players represent not only the university but the entire eastern region. There is a devotion to the Pirates alive throughout eastern North Carolina, and an area that earned every hard-won achievement projects its fighting spirit through the purple and gold.

Consider that when eastern North Carolina was at its lowest — overwhelmed by flood waters in the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd — it was the young men in purple who wiped away the suffering, if only for a couple hours. The 1999 game against Miami, played in Raleigh because of the disaster, brought a region together, inspired it and gave it hope.

Times of sorrow are rare, however. The team has more often been a source of pride and celebration lately. Wins against Virginia Tech in Charlotte and against West Virginia in Greenville two years ago put a spring in the collective step as East Carolina was mentioned among the elite teams in the country. Two consecutive championships ensure that Conference USA foes will not take the Pirates lightly.

First-year Head Coach Ruffin McNeill looks to continue that tradition and he will do so with the supporting roar of 50,000, the capacity of the expanded Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium. Those are just the latest changes to the Pirate
Rhett Butler/The Daily Reflector
Peddlin' Pirates rickshaw drivers are Mike Lagow, left, Griffin Coxe, Stephen Robinson, Jimmy Smith, Anthony McDougal, Nick Flowers and Martin Tanski.

Rickshaw rivals ready to roll at Pirate football opener
By Kristin Day
The Daily Reflector
Friday, September 3, 2010

This Sunday, as opponents gather at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium for the home opener of Pirate football, another big competition will be waged — on wheels. The 2010 opener will be the first real face-off between Greenville's two rival rickshaw companies: East Carolina Pedicab and Peddlin' Pirates. The young companies still are learning about their new businesses, but they both have gained fierce fans, loyal employees and a serious drive in healthy competition.
Matt White, founder of East Carolina Pedicab, was first to bring rickshaws to the area. By what seems to be sheer coincidence, the co-owners of Peddlin’ Pirates put a similar plan into action less than a year after White’s first pedicab hit the streets.

“Whenever I really first started doing it this summer, everyone kept saying ‘Peddlin’ Pirates,’” White said. “I was like, ‘What? Yeah, we’re pedaling, and we’re pirates.’ And then I came to find out that the football players had launched this website and came up with the same idea.”

White received his first business license in November 2009. The former Houston resident got the idea from his hometown and put it into action during the last two ECU football games. During the winter and spring, he purchased more rickshaws, hired employees and spent the summer letting them hit the streets and warm up for the rush of students this fall.

Griffin Coxé and former ECU football players Martin Tanski and Mike LaGow and began Peddlin’ Pirates in January. They got backers, purchased rickshaws from China and officially began working in May.

“It was really fun that first week,” Coxé said. “It was the perfect timing for it because there were so many people in town already for graduation. ... I rode on the second night just to see what it was like, and you could see people were really excited to see them.”

The two companies, of course, have their similarities. ECU students, most of them with a history in athletics, pedal bikes pulling customers in cabs around the university area for a cost cheaper than a taxi cab.

It's the differences that have customers choosing sides.

Pedicab uses high-end bikes with gears, and its cabs are specially made, boast a tandem bike end, while it hopes riders tip generously, the trip is free.

While both companies state that they don't encourage their riders to heckle the other business' employees, it inevitably happens — and sometimes leads to pedicab races.

“It's not like we encourage it,” Coxé said. “It's fun for us to see the kind of loyalty we have already. It's cool to know that kind of following already amongst the students here. That's really what we wanted.”

“I don't think it's that big of a deal,” White said about having a rival company. “I think that the competition's good. It's good that there's more of them out there. It makes it more of a familiar thing.”

“It makes me want to work harder,” East Carolina Pedicab manager Ryan Robinette added.

That's not to say that each company never engages in just a bit of smack talk.

“Our pedicabs are a lot faster than their's,” White said, “and we pass them going up hills all the time.”

“He (White) has something that doesn't really appeal to many people,” Martin said. “There's not much flash with his. We designed ours to have a bunch of colors, to jump out at people, to put the lights on them. They look fun, they look interesting, entertaining. We wanted to bring a certain ambiance to the rickshaws that I haven't seen anywhere else.”

Both companies are expanding their hours for Sunday's game and plan to be bringing people to their cars, taking students home or even giving kids a ride around the parking lot from morning to night.

“Sunday's going to be wide open,” Robinette said with a laugh. “I'm going to go as long as I can — until I fall off of the bike.”

“We hope the alumni are real receptive toward it,” Tanski said. “Gameday is an electric atmosphere in this town. I really haven't been in any town where people get so excited for a game, and tailgates are off the hook. It's a good, fun time to be around Greenville.”

To catch a ride from East Carolina Pedicab, call Matt White at (979) 241-8080 or Ryan Robinette at (704) 401-4303. Hours are 11 a.m. to 3 a.m. Monday-Saturday.

Book a pedicab ride online at www.PeddlinPirates.com or call (252) 702-6221. Hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. when ECU classes are in session; 8 p.m. to 3 a.m. Tuesday-Saturday.

Contact Kristin Day at kday@reflector.com or (252) 329-9579.
UNC’s new leader must offer to leave Blue Cross

As a UNC system search committee zeroed in on Tom Ross as its top choice to run the state’s public universities, one influential member was faced with a conflict.

Brad Wilson is president and CEO of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. He was also a member of the UNC search committee by virtue of his emeritus membership on the UNC Board of Governors, which he chaired several years ago.

Ross is also on the Blue Cross board, named to it earlier this year. As such, he would play a role in making employment and compensation decisions that could affect Wilson.

So when Ross’ name popped up during the search committee’s deliberations, Wilson said he stepped out of the room. He declined to participate in Ross’ interviews to avoid a conflict of interest.

Now, Ross must offer to resign from the Blue Cross board. The organization’s bylaws require that members offer to step down if they change jobs; however, the board doesn’t necessarily have to accept that resignation, so Ross may indeed remain on that board, Wilson said last week. The matter has yet to be addressed.

The insurance board is heavy with members familiar with the university system. A second member of the UNC presidential search committee, Walter Davenport, sits on the Blue Cross board as well, but he did not sit out the Ross interviews, according to a UNC system spokeswoman. He is not a Blue Cross employee, as Wilson is, and thus didn’t have the same conflict, the spokeswoman said.

Harold Martin, the chancellor at N.C. A&T State University and a former UNC system vice president, is also on the Blue Cross board. Other members include Jeffrey Houp, the former head of the UNC Health Care system, and Lloyd Hackley, a former chancellor at Fayetteville State University.

Blue Cross hasn’t disclosed what it’s paying Ross for board work. Other board members were paid $33,047 to $51,314 last year, Blue Cross reported in a filing with the N.C. Department of Insurance.

Ross was hired last week as the next UNC system president. He starts work Jan. 1 at an annual salary of $525,000.

Parting words
In a farewell message e-mailed to N.C. Highway Patrol staff this week, former Commander Randy Glover was strident and took aim at the media.

“I will be a trooper for eternity,” Glover wrote. “No one will ever take my pride and the respect I have for this organization. The rich history that those before us have made and for those who gave their lives doing what was expected. All the critics in the world can use their ink by the barrels to tear the organization down, but it will never extinguish the flame that we bear. They don’t get it. The reasons are simple. We do it to protect and serve.”

Glover, who stepped down Tuesday, will return to his home in New Bern, where a retirement party is scheduled for Sept. 24 at a waterfront convention center. The menu for the event, sent out with the invitation, includes smothered and fried chicken, boiled and fried shrimp, string beans and sweet potato casserole.

Hoyer to address N.C. Dems
U.S. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Maryland will be the headliner at the Democrats’ Vance-Aycock Dinner on Oct. 9 in Asheville.

Hoyer, a one-time rival of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, is credited with helping unite the House Democratic caucus. Hoyer is in the middle of a fierce political fight, with some experts predicting that the Republicans will take control of the House in November.

This will be the 50th Vance-Aycock fundraising dinner, which as always is held at the historic Grove Park Inn. But it will be the last one to go by that name. The Democrats have decided to no longer honor former Democratic Gov. Charles Brantley Aycock because of his involvement in the white supremacy campaigns of 1898 and 1900.

By staff writers Eric Ferreri, Michael Biesecker and Rob Christensen

eric.ferreri@newsobserver.com or 919-932-2008
N.C. appears ready to require ACT exam

BY LYNN BONNER - STAFF WRITER

The state is poised to make sweeping changes in the way it evaluates students and high schools by requiring students to take the ACT, a national college entrance exam.

Under the plan that the State Board of Education has been refining for months, most 11th-graders will be required to take the exam. Students will also take pre-tests leading to the ACT in eighth grade and in 10th grade. The state would pay students' registration fees.

The board has two reasons for wanting to require the national tests. First, ACT scores will be used as a factor in determining how well schools are educating students.

Second, schools will be able to identify students who do poorly on the exam - an indication that they're not ready for college work. Those students will be encouraged to attend an academic "boot camp" in the summer after their junior year. The summer schoolwork would be tailored toward getting those students ready to take the ACT Compass, a test that some community colleges use to place students in appropriate courses.

The testing changes reflect a state and national emphasis on making high school graduates ready for college and careers.

The testing plan would also mark a change for college-bound high school students. The ACT is little-used in North Carolina. Most students in the state take the SAT college entrance exam. If the board approves the new testing program, about 80,000 high school juniors - 86 percent - would take the ACT, at a cost of about $3 million.

Preliminary estimates put the cost for requiring the eighth-grade test at $713,000 a year and at $850,000 for mandating the 10th-grade test.

Why the ACT?

The state chose the ACT rather than the SAT because the ACT measures what students have learned in their courses, board Chairman Bill Harrison said. The SAT measures aptitude. Harrison said the ACT better predicts students' grades in college courses in their first year.

"We think it makes perfect sense to use a test that colleges use and that the testing company has determined" is a predictor of college success, he said. As a selling point, state officials emphasize that when applying to college, students can use a test that the state pays for.
10th-graders who take a college entrance exam.

North Carolina would join a handful of states that require high school students to take college entrance exams. Looking at the experiences of other states, some experts warn that there are downsides to using a college entrance exam to assess high school students.

"The ACT and SAT exams are not generally used to diagnose problems," said Cheryl D. Blanco, vice president for special projects at the Southern Regional Education Board. "They're used for admission purposes and to find out whether [students] can do college work."

Course grades are better predictors of college success, Blanco said, which is why some colleges have de-emphasized standardized admissions exams or decided not to require them.

David Rutkowski, a senior research assistant at the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy at Indiana University, said test preparation courses improve scores, which may disadvantage students who don't take test prep.

If states are going to give admissions tests to all students, the concerns about test-prep advantages should be addressed, he said.

End-of-course exams would still be part of the testing array for high school students. Those test results would count as 25 percent of the final course grade, and results would continue to be used to evaluate high schools. End-of-grade tests in math, language arts and science would continue for students in third through eighth grades.

And, why more tests?

Adding more tests raises questions for parents, who are curious about the costs and benefits of increasing the testing load.

"That's adding an awful lot of tests," said Andrea Scheviak of Raleigh, who has two children at Leesville Road High School. Her eldest child, a senior, took the SATs, as do most college-bound North Carolina students. She suggested students should be able to choose which tests they take.

The board intends to vote on the plan next month and will discuss when to implement the changes.

lynn.bonner@newsobserver.com or 919-829-4821
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In Medical School Shift, Meeting Patients on Day 1

By ANEMONA HARTOCOLLIS

For generations, medical students have spent two years in classrooms and laboratories, memorizing body parts and dissecting specimens, eagerly anticipating the triumphant third year when they would be immersed in working with actual people who have actual diseases.

Upending that century-old tradition, the aspiring doctors who started their training at New York University School of Medicine last week got to meet real patients on their very first day. But not to worry — they were armed only with laptop computers, not scalpels.

“I am possibly the worst patient in the world to have,” an H.I.V.-positive tuberculosis patient told the 162 first-year students in a cavernous lecture hall in Midtown Manhattan, as they diligently jotted down notes. “I thought I had the common cold. It went on for months.”

The model of modern medical education was set by the Flexner report of 1910 and has since gone virtually unchanged at many top medical schools: two years of foundational science — gross anatomy, biochemistry, cell biology, virology, pathology and the like — followed by two years of clinical studies.

But in the last few years, medical schools including those at N.Y.U. and Harvard University have been doing some soul-searching about whether this lock-step curriculum creates doctors who lack humanity, who see patients as diseases rather than as whole people and who have what the medical literature calls “ethical erosion” — a loss of idealism, empathy, morality.

The result has been an increasing focus on clinical studies and, in a curriculum introduced by N.Y.U. last week, on fostering from the beginning more personal relationships between medical students and patients.

More than a year in the making, the N.Y.U. curriculum makes connections, professors say, between the relatively abstract science being taught in the classroom and the way it plays out in real life. It brings the progressive “hands-on” approach to education from kindergarten into higher education, said Dr. Steven B. Abramson, the medical school’s vice dean for education:
instead of playing with blocks, the medical students are, with all due respect, learning to play well with patients.

By advancing some of the clinical component into the first two years, the new curriculum also gives students more time in their third and fourth years to study popular public health issues like nutrition and how diseases might affect people differently depending on race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. For a few ambitious students, Dr. Abramson said, the new curriculum might make it possible to earn both an M.D. and a master's degree in public health or administration in four years instead of five.

Many medical schools have experimented with providing earlier clinical experience, but such efforts may be gaining traction now because of incentives to promote primary care in federal health-care reform, said Dr. Atul Grover, chief advocacy officer for the Association of American Medical Colleges.

"This is a good market signal," Dr. Grover said of the N.Y.U. program. "Periodically we go through this phase where people don't want to go into primary care, and we've just seen the worsening of that."

He noted that the last time medical schools aggressively pushed primary care was in the mid-1990s, with the advent of managed care. Students were told, mistakenly, "If you want to be driving a cab, go into anesthesiology and radiology."

Dr. Fitzhugh Mullan, a professor of public health and pediatrics at George Washington University, suggested that N.Y.U. and other universities might be responding to concerns about a lack of what he called "social mission" among their graduates. In a study published in June, Dr. Mullan and his co-authors ranked N.Y.U.'s medical school fifth worst in the nation at promoting socially conscious medicine. (N.Y.U. responded that the study failed to take its relationship with Bellevue Hospital Center, which serves the poor, into account.)

In another effort to connect students with patients sooner, the new medical school at Florida International University will place second-year students in underserved neighborhoods beginning this fall. A team of medical, nursing, social work and perhaps even law students will be assigned to a family, with the goal of understanding how factors like poverty and other stresses may complicate medical care.

At Harvard, the traditional third-year hospital rotations have been revised to foster more personal relationships with patients and to give students a sense of the continuity of care. A dozen students have been paired with faculty members to see their regular patients over an extended period of time at Cambridge Health Alliance, a system of hospitals and clinics.
At N.Y.U. last week, new students were introduced to the “four pillars” of the new curriculum: diabetes, colon cancer, tuberculosis and heart disease, emblematic public health scourges of the 21st century.

Dr. Ann Danoff, an endocrinologist, told the students that the four-pillars concept updated the medical school adage “Know syphilis, know all of medicine.”

Dr. Danoff and her colleagues then proceeded to introduce the students to patients with diabetes, colon cancer and tuberculosis. As the term goes on, the students will visit clinics and hospitals once a week to meet more patients. The goal is for them to learn to listen and communicate, to use a stethoscope and to conduct a basic physical exam, as well as to connect the diseases they see in the patients to the science they are learning in class.

On Day 1, Courtney Butler, 28, a guest patient, said to the students that she had been told at 13 that she had diabetes, but that her symptoms had been missed at first because, as an athlete, losing weight and being thirsty seemed normal. She shared her embarrassment at being the only child who went to the nurse’s office to check her blood sugar.

As she spoke, a student in the front row who seemed perplexed flipped open his MacBook and scanned Wikipedia entries on endocrinology, insulin pumps and finger sticks.

Was N.Y.U. putting the cart before the horse by introducing a patient before teaching students about the basics of a disease? Dr. Abramson said later that he thought the Web surfing meant the student was engaged.

Dr. Craig T. Tenner, an internist, talked to students about the pros and cons of preventive medicine, asking them to imagine they were tied to railroad tracks. Should they be given a pair of binoculars? “Would you want to see the train coming or not?” he said. Would they want to see it when it was two miles away? One mile away?

Then, a gastroenterologist, Dr. Michael Poles, introduced a retired physician, Saverio Senape, with colon cancer who ruefully confessed to having skipped his screenings, despite a family history of the disease.

Dr. Ellie Carmody introduced the tuberculosis pillar, telling the students that TB was not just a disease of underdeveloped countries. She put up a slide of the locked ward at Bellevue Hospital Center, where tuberculosis patients who refuse to take their medications can be involuntarily confined if they are found to be a threat to public safety.

Her patient, a 42-year-old Navy veteran, took the stage to describe how his doctor had notified the city’s health department when he skipped his medication. “They said we’re going to lock
you up, and they were not kidding,” he recalled.

He told the students that when he was hospitalized, the doctors saved his life, but the nurses saved his sanity. It was a chastening remark.

“In traditional medical education,” said a student, Hannah Kirsch, 22, “you don’t have a patient come in the first day and say, ‘Sorry, guys, it was really the nurses who carried me through.’ ”

As Dr. Danoff welcomed the new class, she reminisced about her own first day, in 1976, at the Medical College of Pennsylvania. Her first assignment was to learn all about the sternocleidomastoid, a word that seemed to encompass all the mysteries of medicine in its many syllables. (It is the columnlike muscle on either side of the neck that sticks out when you rotate your head.)

Her first patient was a cadaver.