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ECU investigating incidents

Witnesses claim officers used excessive force

BY KATHRYN KENNEDY
The Daily Reflector

The East Carolina University Police Department is investigating accounts of police brutality and excessive use of force Saturday following the Pirates' win over West Virginia University at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium.

The Daily Reflector and University Police Chief Scott Shelton said in a news release.

E-mails sent to ECU and The Daily Reflector describe officers punching or assaulting fans and throwing others to the ground.

Footage shot by ESPN cameras also has raised many eyebrows. Videos on YouTube show fans storming the field, and in the bottom right-hand corner of the screen, captured a law enforcement officer in a brown uniform hitting someone on the ground repeatedly with a closed fist.

"Obviously, the safety of the students, fans and athletes at the game is our first concern," Shelton said in the release. "It is simply unacceptable that anyone at the game is the victim of excessive force."

Shelton said in the release that he hoped to have at least a preliminary report within a day or two.

Pitt County Sheriff Mac Manning said that though his deputies were staffing the game in brown uniforms, it was not one of his men caught on tape.

"As far as what happened, or if there was excessive force used, I have no idea," Manning said.

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Manning said, "My supervisor at the game saw the video, and what he had seen did not involve a Pitt County deputy."

Other agencies providing assistance to ECU police at the game included the State Highway Patrol, the Greenville Police Department, Kinston Police and the Lenoir County Sheriff's Office.

The university press release noted that officers were briefed before the game. The release said that Shelton said all officers were told that if ECU won the game and fans attempted to come onto the field, officers should try to deter them by making themselves visible. But if that failed, he said in the release, officers were instructed to step back and focus on making sure that those on the field stayed safe.

Matt Ottinger, a 27-year-old alum living in Goldsboro, said he was treated roughly — and arrested — by a Kinston officer on duty at the game.

Ottinger said he and several of his friends hopped the fence onto the field following the big win, but he was the only one taken into custody.

"It all happened really quickly," he said. "The officer told me he tried to grab a hold of me and I knocked him down."

Ottinger said he doesn't remember that happening, but if it did, he said, it was accidental. He was running in the middle of a pack, he said, when he was tackled in the end zone and pinned down by three officers. They cuffed him and took him to jail with blue lights running the whole way, he said.

"I was just running like everybody else," Ottinger said. "I apologized a bunch of times. The report says ... I struck the guy. That's utterly not true."

His father, Don Ottinger, also of Goldsboro, said he called ECU police this afternoon but that they "sloughed me right off," saying no one could talk with him on a Sunday.

After his release from the Pitt County Detention Center, the younger Ottinger said he went to a doctor for a knee injury he thinks occurred during the arrest.

Many others attending the home game expressed outrage and disappointment over what they saw in person, and later relived through video.

"It was the most repulsive thing I've ever seen," said New Bern resident Michael Jones. "Those kids weren't doing anything wrong."

Two of Jones' children attend ECU, and he said he saw many officers using excessive force from his seat over the goalpost.

"I'm just grateful my son didn't run out on the field," he said. "These guys were getting the crap kicked out of them."

"It's really sad," said Rachelle Friedman, another ECU graduate who attended the game. "This was a huge win for ECU. No one was being dangerous. All [law enforcement] needed to do was organize it."

Friedman said she saw a student tackled by three police officers firsthand, and though he wasn't struck, she said there was a knee to his back and his face was in the grass. Ottinger thinks that may have been him.

"Whoever did this, I don't think they should be allowed back on ECU property," she concluded.

Shelton said he plans to meet with Greenville Police Chief William Anderson today to ask his assistance in the ongoing investigation.

Kathryn Kennedy can be reached at kkennedy@coxnc.com or 329-9566.
Researcher studies critical protein

Findings could lead to new treatments for people with kidney disease.

ECU NEWS BUREAU
Special to The Daily Reflector

Funded by a $1.6 million grant, an East Carolina University researcher is studying a protein that might hold a key to reducing high blood pressure and improving kidney function in people with kidney disease.

Dr. Yan-Hua Chen, an associate professor of anatomy and cell biology at ECU's Brody School of Medicine, has received the five-year grant from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, to study the function of claudin-7, a protein that makes up part of the barrier that controls the flow of molecules between cells.

Chen's preliminary research has shown that claudin-7 interacts with an enzyme called WNK-4 kinase and forms a pathway for chloride ions to enter the bloodstream. Interaction of claudin-7 with a mutated version of WNK-4 may lead to high blood pressure.

Understanding the role of claudin-7 in these intercellular barriers and pathways could lead to medicines that could help people with high blood pressure as well as kidney disease, Chen said. It could also help people whose blood pressure is too low.

"We need to find out the mechanism of this claudin-7 in the control of ionic balance in the body," Chen said. "The next five years will be very exciting for us."

Chen began her research with grants last year from the ECU Division of Research and Graduate Studies and the N.C. Biotechnology Center, which allowed her to collect necessary data to revise and resubmit her federal grant request.

Chen is working with fellow ECU scientists Dr. Qun Lu of the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology and Dr. Abdel Abdel-Rahman of the Department of Pharmacol-

See ECU, B3
Continued from B1

ogy and Toxicology on the claudin-7 study. In another
study involving the protein, she is working with Dr. Kath-
eryn Verbanac, a scientist in the ECU Department of Sur-
ergy, to discover how claudin-7 might suppress tumors
in lung cancer. That research is funded by a $143,271 grant
from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sci-
ences of NIH.

Chitwood giving first
Voyages lecture

Dr. W. Randolph Chitwood, Jr., cardiothoracic surgeon and
senior associate vice chancellor of health sciences at ECU, will
deliver the inaugural North Carolina Lecture in the 2008-09
Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences' Voyages of
Discovery Lecture Series.

The event is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Sept. 24 in Wright Au-
ditorium. Chitwood's lecture, entitled "Medical Discoveries
and Innovations of the Twenti-
thieth Century," will be the first
of six lectures in the series that
honors the broad intellectual
accomplishments of Thomas Harriot.

The lectures "celebrate the
spirit of exploration and dis-
covery that characterized all
aspects of Thomas Harriot's
work as an ethnographer, an
astronomer, a linguist, a math-
ematician and a student of
literature," said John A. Tucker,
director of the Voyages of Dis-
coveries.

Alan White, dean of the
Harriot College of Arts and
Sciences, said, "We are excep-
tionally fortunate to have Dr.
Chitwood deliver the opening
lecture of the 2008-09 Voy-
gages of Discovery Series. His
innovations in robotic cardiac surgery and work with the da
Vinci Surgical System make
him an outstanding choice
as the inaugural lecturer, one
whose professional accom-
plishments epitomize the mis-

sion of the Voyages of Discov-
ery Lecture Series."

Chitwood led the develop-
ment of the cardiac surgery program at ECU's Brody
School of Medicine and made headlines internationally in
2000 when he performed the first total heart valve repair
surgery using robotic technology. Earlier this year, he com-
pleted the 400th procedure using that technology.

Following Chitwood, the
lectures will be:

Oct. 8: Walter Isaacson,
CEO of the Aspen Institute
and former CEO of CNN, will
deliver the Premier Lecture,
speaking on "Creative Leaders
Who Have Shaped Our World." The Premier Lecture is
sponsored by the David Julian and Virginia Suther
Whichard Fund.

Nov. 18: Marcus Borg, a
leading scholar on the histori-
ical Jesus and emeritus pro-
fessor of religion and culture
at Oregon State University,
will present, "Christians in

The Voyages of Discover-
lecture series is made possi-
ble by contributions from the
Dean's Advancement Council
for the Thomas Harriot Col-
lege of Arts and Sciences, the
East Carolina Alumni Asso-
ciation and friends of the Har-
riot College, as well as private

Space' display in library

An exhibit entitled "Space
Intersects Life" is on display in
Joyner Library's second floor
gallery through Sept. 25.
The exhibit features the work of ECU interior design
students and focuses attention
to the true nature of the inter-
ior design field and the way
interior design impacts our
lives every day. The exhibit is
sponsored by the Department
of Interior Design and Mer-
chandising in the College of
Human Ecology.

Free prostate exams

ECU Physicians and East-
ern Urological Associates will
offer a free prostate cancer
screening event from 8:30 a.m.
Sept. 20 at the Leo W. Jenkins
Cancer Center. Men interested
in this free prostate exam and
PSA blood test should call
744-4929 to schedule an
appointment. Men must be at
least 50 years old and have an
appointment to be seen.
Pirates storm into Top 25

After pair of upset wins over ranked opponents, ECU vaults up to No. 14 in latest AP poll.

BY RALPH D. RUSSO
The Associated Press

East Carolina can’t play the underdog role anymore. After opening the season by upsetting two ranked teams, the Pirates earned themselves a place in the AP Top 25 for the first time in nine years.

East Carolina was No. 14 in the media poll released Sunday. Southern California remained No. 1 and Georgia was No. 2. Ohio State’s sluggish 26-14 victory against Ohio, without star tailback Chris Wells, on Saturday cost the Buckeyes two spots in the rankings. They fell to No. 5 behind No. 3 Oklahoma and No. 4 Florida.

USC received 33 of a possible 65 first-place votes and 1,577 points. Georgia got 23 first-place votes and 1,525 points. Oklahoma (two), Florida (four), Ohio State (one), No. 6 Missouri (one) and No. 7 LSU (one) also received first-place votes. The Buckeyes had 15 first-place votes last week.

Texas, Auburn and Wisconsin round out the top 10. East Carolina’s latest big win was its third straight against a ranked opponent, dating to last season’s Hawai’i Bowl victory against Boise State.

“I think it went a long way toward rebuilding confidence in this team,” coach Skip Holtz said before a conference call. “Two years ago the main goal the team wanted to accomplish was to get to a bowl game. Last season, they not only wanted to get to a bowl game, but win one. Now we want to build on that.”

East Carolina manhandled previously No. 8 West Virginia 24-3 Saturday, shutting down Pat White and the Mountaineers’ speedy spread offense. That came a week after the Pirates took out Virginia Tech.

West Virginia dropped all the way to No. 25.

The last time East Carolina was on a roll like this was 1999, when the Pirates were ranked most of the season before falling out on the final poll of the season. East Carolina hasn’t been ranked this highly since 1991, when the Pirates finished the season at No. 9.

ECU now shifts to being the favorite instead of the underdog. The Pirates open Conference USA play at Tulane this week, then travel to rebuilding North Carolina State. Their next home game is against Houston before they have a week off.

“We made a pact with our players before the season started ... we are going to talk about the goals we were going to try to accomplish,” Holtz said, “but once the season started we were only going to talk about going 1-0 (each week).

“You have to learn how to win and then learn how to handle winning; the media attention, the speculation. The battle cry has been we’re going to have to try to go 1-0 (each week).”

For the latest on East Carolina sports, log on to reflector.com

See POLL, C3
The real ECU grabs national spotlight

Maybe the infamous reign of a mythical university called "Eastern Carolina" finally ended Saturday night.

It is a place almost everyone in Greenville, N.C., has heard of but never seen. The mere mention of its name usually draws gasps of despair from people all across the eastern half of the state.

On my college football travels both in North Carolina and across the country, I have often heard it being referenced by fans of other college teams and have even heard its name blasted across stadiums through public address systems.

Last week in Charlotte, a referee even announced randomly to Bank of America Stadium that Eastern Carolina had committed an infraction and would be moved back 10 yards.

What a lunatic. Eastern Carolina wasn't even playing that day. I checked the schedule.

It was East Carolina University's football team that stamped itself first onto No. 17 Virginia Tech two weekends ago, then onto No. 8 West Virginia last Saturday, easily the biggest upset swing across the nation to open the season and the biggest one in Pirate history.

Now the word is out nationally.

Strangely, there was no word on Eastern Carolina and how its game went last Saturday. Only East Carolina, over and over again on every national sports TV and radio broadcast.

So it really was East Carolina, then, and not some other purple team — LSU, TCU, the Minnesota Vikings, Eastern Carolina — that dominated the highlight reels and post game rants of television sports crews across the country Saturday night. The Pirates were the ones who became a national TV darling last week and consummated that affection by delivering another national knockout punch, this time on the Mountaineers, who offered a mere field goal in defense of their lofty ranking.
And it was, in fact, East Carolina fans who sent a chant of "Overrated ... overrated" cascading through Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium in honor of ECU's 24-3 drilling of WVU. East Carolina really did, for the second week in row, steal the national spotlight and perhaps muddle into mystery forever the notion of a place here called Eastern.

The ECU defensive line at times threw Mountaineer quarterback Pat White around like a team of bouncers on a downtown drunk. The senior WVU passer who likely believed Saturday would be his fourth and final big day at the expense of ECU — and an important statistical day in his Heisman Trophy race — likely didn't want any part of the late Saturday television highlights of which he's grown accustomed to authoring.

Had he watched them, he would have seen the nation's other Pat at quarterback, senior Patrick Pinkney. While the Pirate defense blackened the eye of the WVU offense, the lesser-known Pat marched his offense down the field all day against a defense that might have stopped Eastern Carolina, but not East Carolina.

In the face of the nation, the Pirates swabbed the deck with a national powerhouse. In doing so, they radiated not only athletic swagger, but true personality. The same lovable bunch previously known only to North Carolinians and alums are suddenly lovable to all of America. Perhaps now, the nation will forget all of this Eastern Carolina hoodoo that's always served as an unintended yet meaningful slap at ECU backers.

Although it's Eastern Carolina that died, it's East Carolina that's in a better place now. In two weeks, ECU has done more than most of those other "ern" schools ever did, more than the Easterns or the Westerns. Now, ECU is in the company of those programs generally named after states or big cities, not regions.

It has further endeared itself to its own region, its state and, apparently, its nation too. This Pirate football team has proven itself a major player on a big stage, but now the real test will be grinding it out on Conference USA's small stages.

The last moral victory for head coach Skip Holtz and East Carolina is now long in the past, replaced by some real ones, but that only means more will be expected. In order to keep Eastern Carolina off the map for good, the 2-0 Pirates now must win the games they are supposed to win. Until further incident, that means winning all of them, and no one in the ECU locker room would likely call that impossible now.

No, East Carolina is not a state. But right now, it is a state of mind.

Nathan Summers can be reached at nsummers@coxnc.com, or at (252) 329-9595.
ECU upsets 3rd-straight ranked team

BY NATHAN SUMMERS
The Daily Reflector

Ranked opponents are dropping like flies this season for the East Carolina football team, which continues to make the improbable look routine.

The unranked Pirates felled another top 25 opponent Saturday when they hammered No. 8 West Virginia, 24-3, in what was a complete departure from the norm given WVU’s dominant history in the series.

“I told our players, ‘Welcome to big time college football,’” ECU head coach Skip Holtz said of his team’s second major upset in as many weeks to start the season. “This is what we want. This is the arena we desire to be in, this is the stage we want to play on.”

The game was viewed by 43,610 fans, the fourth largest crowd ever inside Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium.

PIRATES
Continued from A1

While the Pirates (2-0) received numerous votes in both the Associated Press and ESPN/USA Today top 25 polls after upsetting Virginia Tech last weekend, the Pirates should have a top 25 ranking next to their name when the new polls come out Monday.

It would be the first time the Pirates earned a top 25 berth since Dec. 5, 1999.

The win over the Hokies had already given ECU a giant boost in media attention, and winning again in front of a national television audience should only add to that as the Pirates prepare to open Conference USA play next weekend at Tulane.

“You’re playing the No. 8 team, so you not only had our attention, but you had West Virginia’s attention, and that created the national attention,” Holtz said.

While quarterback Patrick Pinkney steered the ECU offense, the Pirate defense squeezed the life out of WVU start quarterback Pat White, allowing just 72 pass yards and limiting the impact of the Mountaineers the entire second half.

WVU managed 251 yards of total offense compared with ECU’s 386 yards.

“To give up just three points to an offense with Pat White? Wow,” Pinkney said. “I give the credit to our defense. They gave us the ball when we needed it.”

The Pirates took a 7-0 lead on their first possession of the game, as J.H. Rose product Jonathan Williams drove into the end zone for the first of his two touchdowns.

Before halftime, Pinkney zipped a touchdown pass to Alex Taylor, and the Pirates led 17-3 and never looked back, shutting out the Mountain-eers the entire second half.

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Sheriff Bizzell's remarks about Mexican immigrants were 'inappropriate,' he says.

BY LORENZO PEREZ
STAFF WRITER

Johnston County Sheriff Steve Bizzell apologized Sunday for his portrayal of the Mexican immigrant community in a News & Observer article about his county's growing Hispanic population.

The apology came in a one-paragraph statement e-mailed to the newspaper shortly before 5 p.m. after Sunday morning's newspaper included a front-page article in which Bizzell criticized illegal immigrants for "breeding like rabbits" and declared, "Mexicans are trashy."

Tony Asion, the executive director of the North Carolina nonprofit advocacy group El Pueblo, said he had to stop reading Sunday's article because the sheriff's comments made him so angry. Bizzell's apology was not good enough, he added. "I don't want his apology. I want his badge," said Asion, who was born in Cuba. "As a 20-year veteran of the Delaware State Police force, I resent the fact that he's even a cop."

Bizzell's comments were made in a series of four interviews conducted over a period of more than a month.

In his statement Sunday, Bizzell apologized for making "broad statements that reflected on the legal and law-abiding Hispanic population — that was never my intention."

Bizzell said the statements he made...

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SHERIFF CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

during the interviews were influenced by a fatal wreck involving a drunken driver last year that dramatically changed his focus. The driver, who had previously been repeatedly charged with drunken driving, struck and killed a Selma boy in April.

"I obviously let my anger over this crime flash during the N&O interview. Since then I have worked with Federal authorities to deport illegal immigrants that commit crimes because these criminals ultimately have a negative impact on all the good law-abiding residents in Johnston County," Bizzell said in the statement. "This is not a reflection on all immigrants as legal immigration is both wanted and needed. I always have and always will carry out the duties of the Office of Sheriff to protect all the people in Johnston County without regard to where someone is from or their citizenship status."

Bizzell could not be reached for further comment. A man answering the phone at the sheriff's home Sunday said Bizzell had gone to church.

Until he gave up the post in July, Bizzell was the president of the N.C. Sheriffs' Association. During his term, he helped make North Carolina one of the most aggressive states in the nation for deporting illegal immigrants.

Efforts to reach Craven County Sheriff Jerry G. Monette, current president of the N.C. Sheriffs' Association, and other association officers were unsuccessful Sunday.

Speaking Sunday from the N.C. State Fairgrounds, where El Pueblo was celebrating its 15th annual Fiesta del Pueblo, Asion said Bizzell's statement of apology does not make up for the prejudice and bigotry revealed in the sheriff's concern over Johnston County's changing demographic.

Bizzell had said, "Everywhere you look it's like little Mexico around here."

"A person elected to represent the entire community should be ashamed of making statements like this," Asion said.
ECU wins the hearts of fans with big victories on the field

BY A.J. CARR
STAFF WRITER

In 1970, when coach Mike McGee was trying to promote East Carolina football, he coined the term "Purple Pride" as a rallying cry.

It might have become a forgotten phrase at times, but passionate, spirited Pirate fans are brimming with that old "Purple Pride" today — and for good reason.

East Carolina, after beating No. 17-ranked Virginia Tech and No. 8 West Virginia on consecutive Saturdays, is back in the national rankings for the first time since 1999. The Pirates are 14th in The Associated Press poll and 20th in the USA Today coaches poll, both of which were announced Sunday.

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ECU takes the field Saturday to play No. 8 West Virginia. The Pirates' 24-3 win gave them a place in the national rankings.

STAFF PHOTO BY CHRIS SEWARD
That leap into the limelight caused the Pirate Nation—from the students who swarmed the field at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium on Saturday to longtime loyalists—to bounce with more pep in their step.

"This town is rabid; it really is," said Grant Jarman, 60, president of the Pirate Club and a Greenville car dealer. "Everybody is just so proud of the program. [Coach] Skip Holtz is doing such a good job."

"I don't know if anybody saw us winning the first two ball games. If you're a realist, you were probably picking the Pirates to be 0-2. But it's all types of excitement."

Though there was jubilation after East Carolina defeated West Virginia on Saturday, the euphoria increased when fans found out about the national ranking Sunday. Jarman, who said he hasn't missed an East Carolina game in 40 years, saw the excitement while having lunch Sunday at Chico's restaurant in Greenville. Later he fielded phone calls after the AP rankings came out.

There have been times, not long ago, when Jarman doubted East Carolina could turn its football program around.

The Pirates had gone 3-20 before Holtz arrived four years ago, and they are not in a conference that receives an automatic bid for the Bowl Championship Series.

"It just goes to show what good coaching can do," said Jarman, who saw purple flags flapping on cars around town all day Sunday. "This is a proud Pirate nation right now."

Staff writer Lorenzo Perez contributed to this report.
Students get fuzzy details on voting

Registration raises controversies

BY TAMAR LEWIN
THE NEW YORK TIMES

The widespread practice of students registering to vote at their college address has set off a fracas in Virginia, a battleground state in the presidential election.

Late last month, as a voter-registration drive by supporters of Sen. Barack Obama was signing up thousands of students at Virginia Tech, the local registrar of elections issued two releases incorrectly suggesting a range of dire possibilities for students who registered to vote at their college.

The releases warned that such students could no longer be claimed as dependents on their parents' tax returns — a statement the Internal Revenue Service says is incorrect — and could lose scholarships or coverage under their parents' car and health insurance. After some inquiries from students and parents, and more pointed questions from civil rights lawyers, the state Board of Elections said Friday that it was "modifying and clarifying" the state guidelines on which the county registrar had based his releases.

Student-registration controversies have been a recurring problem since 1971, when the 26th Amendment lowered the voting age to 18 from 21, and despite a 1979 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that students have the right to register at their college address.

Virginia is not the only state with murky guidelines. South Carolina's voter-registration site, for example, says students who want to register to vote at their college address must demonstrate "a present intention to remain in the community."

"There's no issue for snowbirds who live in Iowa but fly to Florida for the winter," said Sujatha Ja-hagirdar, program director of the Student Public Interest Research Group's New Voters Project. "One demographic group, like students,
Voters
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A
shouldn’t have to overcome a special hurdle to vote. We impose all the responsibilities of citizenship on students, and we have to provide them with the privileges of citizenship, too.”

Jahagirdar said Virginia’s warnings were profoundly misleading. “We’ve been registering young voters for 25 years,” she said. “We registered 500,000 young voters in 2004, the majority on college campuses, and we’ve never heard of a single one who lost health insurance, scholarship or tax status because of where they registered to vote.”

In Virginia, the county registrar first issued an alarming release Aug. 25, and two days later a slightly toned-down version using language taken from the state Board of Elections’ Web site.

That site says students can determine their legal residence but advises them to consider certain questions. “Are you claimed as a dependent on your parents’ income tax return?” the site asks. “If you are, then their address is probably your legal residence.”

The site also tells students to check whether their coverage under their parents’ health or automobile insurance, or their scholarship, will be affected by changing their residence.

Civil rights lawyers say these guidelines are problematic and could infringe on students’ voting rights.

“What the state Board of Elections has on its Web site, to me, sounds like it is discouraging students from registering at their school address,” said Jon Greenbaum, director of the Voting Rights Project at the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

Indeed, the Montgomery County registrar, E. Randall Wertz, said several students had canceled their local registration over their worry about the possible consequences. Wertz said he had issued the release to try to dispel confusion and explain what he believed to be the consequences of choosing a college address as a primary residence.

“My understanding of state law has been that by declaring you’re voting here, you’re saying this is your primary residence, your domicile, and that while you can have many abodes or residences, you can only have one domicile,” Wertz said. “And if this is your primary residence, you have to register your vehicle here, change your driver’s license to here and so on. That’s been the interpretation at state training sessions.”

No ulterior motives

Kevin Griffis, the Obama campaign’s Virginia spokesman, said the release appeared to be a good-faith effort to convey the state guidelines, not a politically motivated effort to stop students from voting.

Wertz said the initial release was written by an intern whom he asked to summarize the state’s guidelines. Although the second release used the state’s precise language, he said, it still left room for confusion. In other counties, registrars have refused to accept dormitory addresses as residences.

“Different registrars around the state interpret it differently,” he said. “We’ve asked for more guidance from the state legislature, but they haven’t wanted to deal with it.”

Greenbaum’s Voting Rights Project has been involved in other student-registration cases. Last fall, in Statesboro, Ga., in a hotly contested city council race, there were challenges to the registration of about 1,000 Georgia Southern University students who had used dormitory addresses. “We threatened suit, but the issue went away when they figured out that the challenges weren’t going to affect the results of the election,” Greenbaum said.

In 2003, in Waller County, Texas, the district attorney wrote a column in a local newspaper threatening to prosecute students at Prairie View A&M, a historically black university, for illegal voting. The project sued, and the district attorney backed down.
Obese teens suffer from liver damage

BY LINDA A. JOHNSON
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TRENTON, N.J. — In a new and disturbing twist on the obesity epidemic, some overweight teenagers have severe liver damage caused by too much body fat, and a handful have needed liver transplants.

Many more may need a new liver by their 30s or 40s, say experts warning that pediatricians need to be more vigilant. The condition, which can lead to cirrhosis and liver failure or liver cancer, is being seen in kids in the United States, Europe, Australia and even some developing countries, according to a surge of recent medical studies and doctors interviewed by The Associated Press.

The American Liver Foundation and other experts estimate 2 percent to 5 percent of American children older than 5, nearly all of them obese or overweight, have the condition, called nonalcoholic fatty liver disease.

"It's clearly the most common cause of liver disease," said Dr. Ronald Sokol, head of public policy at the liver foundation and a liver specialist at Children's Hospital and University of Colorado Denver.

As fat builds up, the liver can become inflamed and then scarred over time, leading to cirrhosis, a serious condition, which in years past was mostly caused by hepatitis or drinking too much alcohol. Liver failure or liver cancer can follow, but if cirrhosis has not yet developed, fatty liver disease can be reversed through weight loss.

Genetics, diet and exercise level all play a role. It is most prevalent among Hispanics, relatively rare among African-Americans, and more common among boys than girls.

Experts blame obesity, with about two-thirds of all Americans overweight. With fatty liver disease becoming more common in adults, many experts predict it will become the top cause of liver transplants by 2020.

"There aren't enough livers to go around," says Dr. Philip Rosenthal of the University of California-San Francisco Children's Hospital.

Weight hard to lose

Rosenthal's patient, Irving Shaffino, a 15-year-old Mexican-American who lives outside Lubbock, Texas, was lucky to get a transplant a year ago. He was in end-stage cirrhosis and, at 5-feet-4½, weighed 180 pounds.

Irving had been fat since age 6, thanks to a high-sugar, high-fat diet of Mexican food, pizza and burgers, said his mother, Guadalupe Shaffino. At age 8, she said, he had a distended stomach and by his early teens, breathing problems kept him tethered to an oxygen tank at home.

"He was in bad shape," Rosenthal said.

Within a couple of months of his July 26, 2007, operation, Irving had weaned himself from the oxygen tank and could go on walks, although he became winded quickly.

Now, his medications are down from 11 to four, and Irving said he has replaced soda and fast food with fruit and vegetables and whole grains.

Sadly, however, Irving has made little progress in losing weight. While he's grown an inch and a half since his operation, he's still obese, and his weight was up to 219 last month.

Specialists say many kids diagnosed with fatty liver disease come to subsequent checkups heavier, and at best, just one in four loses significant weight, the only treatment known to stop and even reverse the disease.

"My patients that are successful, the whole family has bought in," increasing exercise and changing diet, said Dr. Stephanie Abrams, a liver and obesity specialist at Texas Children's Hospital. "The problem is that we aren't changing society in favor of becoming lean."

SYMPTOMS

Nonalcoholic fatty liver disease often has no early symptoms in children or adults, but a fat belly is one signal. And diabetes, high cholesterol, high triglycerides or heart problems often accompany the disease.

As fatty liver disease worsens, these symptoms can appear:

- Chronic fatigue or weakness.
- Abdominal discomfort, such as cramping or nausea.
- Confusion or difficulty thinking.
- Bruising or bleeding easily, including nosebleeds.
- Reduced appetite and weight loss.

Concerned parents can request a blood test for liver enzyme levels. Also, a doctor can check the abdomen to see whether the liver is enlarged or order a scan or ultrasound.

PREVENTION

To stop or prevent fatty liver disease, patients should:

- Exercise and eat a balanced diet to lose weight slowly but steadily.
- Control diabetes and cholesterol with medication and diet.
- Avoid alcohol, drugs and supplements that can damage the liver.

SOURCES: AMERICAN LIVER FOUNDATION, INDIANA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Right field

UNC-Chapel Hill didn't have a home football game scheduled Saturday, so there could be no instant replay of the previous weekend's aerial follies. That's when a pair of skydivers from Virginia-based Aerial Adventures, contracted to parachute onto the Kenan Stadium field with the game ball, missed their target by, oh, 8 miles or so, and wound up in Wallace Wade Stadium instead.

For all you aspiring game-ball-delivering skydivers, that's Duke University's Wallace Wade Stadium, the old one on the Duke campus, in Durham.

Perhaps the Aerial Adventurists were confused by the crowd of 30,000 plus at Wallace Wade — this couldn't be Duke! But it was, with a new coach and new hope for the long-suffering faithful.

The Blue Devils recovered from their pregame surprise and went on to a season-opening win. And Aerial Adventures apologized for its mistake, properly attributing it not to the parachutists but to a wee bit of piloting error on a day when the weather was dicey.

As for UNC, here's a suggestion. Next time you want parachutists to drop in, go with the U.S. Army's Golden Knights.
LATINOS FEEL A TUG ON WELCOME MAT

Changing attitudes noted at celebration

BY MARTI MAGUIRE
STAFF WRITER

The traditional quinceañera is an elaborate party honoring a frilly-dressed Latina on her 15th birthday.

But the 15th Fiesta del Pueblo — billed as the quinceañera for the annual celebration of Latino culture — comes as few Hispanic North Carolinians are feeling honored.

Deportations, once reserved for a handful of hardened criminals, are becoming common after minor offenses. A recent move barring illegal immigrants from community colleges won praise from state politicians of both parties. And in counties such as Beaufort, in the eastern part of the state, local laws are increasingly targeting illegal immigrants.

The changing sentiment wasn’t lost on Latinos who attended this weekend’s event at the State Fairgrounds.

“People say they are against illegal immigration, but sometimes I think they’re against all immigrants,” said Serafin Meza, 29, of Henderson, a legal resident from southern Mexico who was at the event with his wife and 2-year-old triplets.

Public education booths at the event offered legal advice about deportations alongside health and safety information. Some had special information kits for deportees detailing how to do everything from transferring the power of attorney for a small business to making sure someone else can pick up their children from school in their absence.

At one booth, manned by students from UNC-Chapel Hill, people were asked to sign a petition seeking to overturn the ban on illegal immigrants at community colleges.

An American Civil Liberties Union representative at the event said there was an increase in calls about run-ins between immigrants and police.

Jorgelina Araneda, an immigration lawyer representing the N.C. Academy of Trial Lawyers at the event, said more and more immigrants are feeling squeezed.

“There is a sense of fear, of insecurity,” Araneda said. “People are deciding if it’s better to stay here illegally or go back home.”

Tony Aton, director of El Pueblo, the Hispanic advocacy group that sponsors the event, said he went on Spanish radio and television to reassure the community that immigration authorities would not be present. He said the group had gotten calls from people concerned about coming.

But the fear didn’t dampen attendance. He estimated that about 40,000 showed up for the two-day party, eas-

Jezzette Rivera, left, an NCSU junior, helps Wanda Rivera (no relation) of Wake Forest register to vote at La Fiesta del Pueblo.

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<th>GROWTH OF HISPANIC POPULATION</th>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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SOURCE: CENSUS BUREAU

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ily more than last year, despite a rainy Saturday caused by the passing of Tropical Storm Hanna.

Asion also advertised the event to a wider audience this year in hopes of getting more native North Carolinians to mingle with their Latino neighbors.

“We want to show people in North Carolina that there is a lot to unite us,” said Asion. “We want them to see us here with our families and know that we are not some scary group.”

Concerns over policy were largely lost on the thousands who came to eat tacos and tortas, watch dancers from different countries or listen to the tunes of a mariachi band.

This year's event featured a court in honor of the quinceañera, with teenage couples dressed in tuxedos and lace representing different Latin American countries. One couple represented the United States.

Some of these teenagers were born in the United States, Asion said. But even those who weren't would feel totally out of place if they were to return to their home countries.

“They're all Americans,” Asion said.
Bradley to open NCSU seminars

Ex-senator to discuss Russian role

BY LORENZO PEREZ
STAFF WRITER

RALEIGH - Long before ESPN's hero-making hype machine had been invented for Michael Jordan, Brett Favre and other 20th-century athletic icons, Bill Bradley had his own schoolboy legend cultivated on the literary pages of The New Yorker.

The Missouri native spurned a basketball scholarship offer to Kentucky and turned down a chance to come to Duke University. Instead he went to Princeton, which he thought would offer his best academic chance at landing a Rhodes Scholarship four years later.

An admireing John McPhee was there in 1962 to chronicle his routine of working through a series of set shots, hook shots and jump shots in warm-ups. The writer's fascination with the two-time All American's gift for passing led him to take Bradley to a Princeton ophthalmologist to measure his peripheral vision.

It turned out that looking straight ahead, Bradley could see a full 195 degrees around, about 15 degrees more than those limited by mere perfect vision could see. Bradley later put that same broad perspective to use in three terms as a Democratic U.S. Senator for New Jersey; tonight, Bradley lands at N.C. State's Stewart Theatre to discuss Russia's place in international affairs and the con-

SEE BRADLEY, PAGE 4B
lict in Georgia.

After he graduated with honors and a 30.2 point-per-game scoring average — and after a brief detour to Oxford for that Rhodes Scholarship — Bradley had a 10-year tenure with a New York Knicks club that won two NBA championships in the early 1970s. Short shorts aside, "Dollar Bill" was a steady, if not flashy, contributor on a club stocked with Walt Frazier, Earl Monroe and other oversized, Hall of Fame personalities.

In some respects, the same could be said of his political career, which culminated in a run against incumbent Vice President Al Gore for the Democratic Party's 2000 presidential nomination. In politics and basketball, the dunk triumphs over the discreet, but crucial, assist. Bradley's work on the tax reform act of 1986 helped simplify the tax code but couldn't match the C-Span sizzle of other candidates.

During Bradley's presidential run in 2000, the late columnist Molly Ivins once praised him as a class act. She also believed, however, that a successful candidate on the national stage needed "some Elvis to him."

"Bradley has zip in the Elvis department," she wrote.

No one ever accused Elvis of understanding all the complexities of Russia's role in the 21st century, however.

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UNCC’s ‘corpse flower’ is reborn

By David Perlmutt
The Charlotte Observer

All winter and spring, Larry Mellichamp and his staff paced UNCC-Charlotte’s greenhouse like expectant parents, keeping a large container of potting soil warm and moist in hopes a bud would poke through the surface.

Then in early July, there it was: the start of an emerald-green, splotched leaf from UNCC’s rare titan arum.

As of last week, its stalk had grown 8 feet tall, and branched into squidlike tentacles with smaller leaflets.

Bella was back — or at least her leaf is.

You might remember Bella, the plant born in the tropical rainforests of Sumatra, Indonesia, that bloomed a year ago and stunk to high heaven.

More than 4,000 people lined up to see that bloom and catch a whiff of itsrotting-flesh aroma. Thus the nickname: the corpse flower.

Now you’re invited for the encore — minus the stench — to view what’s billed as the world’s largest solitary, free-standing leaf.

Completely unfurled, her canopy of leaflets will be roughly the size and shape of a large beach umbrella.

“The leaf is as impressive as... the flower,” said biology professor Mellichamp, director of the campus botanical gardens.

“It is very pretty and has a very symmetrical, attractive pattern. Everyone who sees it wants to touch it and take one home for their patio.”

Yet UNCC is only the 20th U.S. institution to have cultivated a bloom of the Amorphophallus titania...
Pirates may be headed for special season

GREENVILLE — The door to big-time opportunity opened Saturday for East Carolina’s football program and its thousands of screaming fans.

Well, that’s not exactly the most correct way to phrase it.

What actually happened before a full house — a completely mad house — in Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium was that the Pirates kicked down that door, stampeded en masse through it, smothered No. 8-ranked West Virginia in its tracks and recorded one of the most impressive victories in school history — or at least since the previous weekend’s 27-22 win over No. 17-ranked Virginia Tech in Charlotte.

The resounding 24-3 victory over West Virginia means, short term, that Skip Holtz’ fourth team is virtually certain to gain a spot in next week’s national top 25 rankings. Entering the weekend, ECU was technically No. 27 in The Associated Press poll.

But based on Saturday’s performance, it’s a mortal lock there.

SEE TUDOR, PAGE 14C
aren't 26 better teams in the nation at this point — a fact poll voters cannot possibly overlook. Against Heisman Trophy-candidate Pat White and a Mountaineers team favored to win the Big East Conference championship, the Pirates looked a heck of a lot more like No. 7 than No. 27.

And if things fall the right way, ECU could get a chance to prove it on paper and, more important, on turf.

There's a lot of work ahead, but if you have to pick a long shot to qualify for a Bowl Championship Series cameo this season, the Pirates are where Hawaii was in 2007, Boise State in '06 and Utah in '04. Two of those "little guys" won — Boise over Oklahoma and Utah over Pittsburgh, both in Arizona's Fiesta Bowl.

If history holds, the Pirates down the line will have a good deal more trouble defeating N.C. State (Sept. 20 in Raleigh), Marshall (Nov. 8 in Greenville) and, by all means, Southern Miss (Nov. 15 in Hattiesburg) than was the case against Virginia Tech and West Virginia.

Some of the very best teams in ECU history have knocked off big names with regularity only to get knocked down in return by their Conference USA counterparts.

East Carolina coach Skip Holtz, right, walks off the field with defensive coordinator Greg Hudson after the Pirates' big win.

But if the Bucs can work their way around the challenges ahead, this team is in an excellent position to upset the 1991 team, which finished 11-1 and No. 9 in the final polls, as the most impressive in school history. The way the stupid BCS process works, the Conference USA champion qualifies for a BCS bid basically if it finishes ranked in the top 12 of the final BCS stand-

ings. The fine print makes it all more complicated than a cereal box sweepstakes, but that's the short version.

There is a proviso that could keep an undefeated ECU team out of the BCS mix, but that's putting the plow in front of the mule. If there's any real justice out there, the Pirates and, say, Utah would finish something like Nos. 4 and 5 in the final standings. Then, the lords of the BCS would have to come up with a solution that they couldn't even explain.

For now, let it just suffice that ECU is better than any team around these parts. It doesn't stop there, either. Until someone proves otherwise, ECU's Patrick Pinkney is the best quarterback in the state and the rushing combo of Jon Williams and Brandon Simmons is at least the equal.

But the real surprise of Saturday's win was an ECU defense that held White to a harmless 169 yards of offense.

The Pirates, last season, finished 8-5 with a 41-38 win over Boise State in the Hawai'i Bowl primarily as the result of a potent offense. The defense played well at times, but not consistently well. Through two games in '08, that defense has been better than the Pinkney-led offense.

That's big time.
September 8, 2008

When the Little Guy Starts to Play Better Than the Big Guys

By PETE THAMEL

In three of the last four college football seasons, teams from outside Bowl Championship Series conferences have crashed college football’s hierarchy. Utah, Boise State and Hawaii each ran through their regular seasons undefeated, reached a B.C.S. bowl and provided compelling underdog story lines.

But in those surprising runs, none of the teams had a pair of wins better than East Carolina has already this season. None really came close.

With its one-two knockout punches of Virginia Tech, the defending Atlantic Coast Conference champion, and West Virginia, the Big East champion, East Carolina has positioned itself to become the season’s non-B.C.S. darling.

“It’s the biggest story of the year,” said Tulsa Coach Todd Graham, whose team plays in Conference USA with East Carolina.

East Carolina Coach Skip Holtz has built a program so stout that any faint claims of favoritism because of his famous father, the former Notre Dame coach Lou Holtz, have become laughable. Holtz’s Pirates have an athletic and efficient quarterback in Patrick Pinkney, who ranks second nationally with an 80.4 percent completion rate. They have a physical front seven on defense that rendered the Mountaineers’ offense impotent and damaged the Heisman Trophy prospects of quarterback Patrick White in a 24-3 victory on Saturday.

The Pirates have enough depth and athleticism that if there had been no logos on the uniforms the last two weekends, one could not tell which team came from the power conference.

Holtz, who inherited his father’s gift for lauding opponents and playing down expectations, realizes that crashing the B.C.S. requires navigating a grueling 11-game gauntlet.

“It is very difficult to go undefeated,” Holtz said. “I don’t think you try to go undefeated, it’s not something that as a football team we address. We’re finding a way to go 1-0 every week.”

Still, the schedule falls well for the Pirates for the rest of the season. They avoid playing the Conference USA
power Tulsa in the regular season because of a scheduling quirk. They will also remain in the spotlight, with games against the A.C.C.’s North Carolina State and Virginia. If they win those games convincingly, they could make an argument that a Conference USA team deserves a spot in the A.C.C. championship game. The A.C.C.’s dismal season continued Saturday with Middle Tennessee’s upset of Maryland.

Credit Terry Holland, the athletic director, and Nick Floyd, the executive associate director of athletics, who have made the Pirates one of just three non-B.C.S. programs, along with Hawaii and Middle Tennessee, to schedule four opponents from B.C.S. conferences.

“We want to line up and compete with some of the better programs on the East Coast,” Holtz said. “Is it a gamble? It is. But it’s impossible to compete at that level if you don’t play at that level.”

Perhaps the most impressive part of East Carolina’s start is that it lost tailback Chris Johnson, a first-round N.F.L. draft pick of the Titans, and his replacement, Dominique Lindsay, who sustained a knee injury in preseason camp.

But Holtz took the names off the back of the jerseys for a reason. Aside from Pinkney, who shared quarterback duties last season, the Pirates are a team without stars.

“This is a group of men who have given up individuality for the good of this football team,” Holtz said.

The Pirates have thrived by being efficient, physical and balanced. E.C.U. runs an offense that includes five-receiver formations and more old-fashioned two-back sets, similar to what his father, whom he refers to as Coach Holtz, used at Notre Dame.

The upperclassmen on the team endured hard times before Holtz came to Greenville, N.C. After posting a 3-20 record from 2003 to 2004, John Thompson was fired, and E.C.U. looked foolish nationally because Thompson had replaced Steve Logan, the program’s career leader in victories who was unceremoniously fired.

East Carolina has improved in each season since Holtz arrived, going 5-6 in 2005, 7-6 in 2006 and 8-5 last season, with a bowl victory over Boise State. In that time, the Pirates have increased their average attendance to 41,500 a game from just over 30,000, and the season ticket base has jumped to 22,000 from 15,000.

That jump seemed to justify the firing of Thompson.

“It was how that 3-20 transpired,” Floyd said. “We’d gotten to a point where often times we weren’t competing. In this business, you have to compete every day.”

After this season, E.C.U. will face serious competition to keep Holtz. He has emerged, like Urban Meyer at Utah in 2004, as this season’s hottest young head coach. Rest assured, he will not come cheap. Holtz, 44, is on
the books to make $1.2 million this season and recently agreed to a five-year extension, the terms of which have not been released because they have not been approved by the board of trustees.

While the flirtations and rumors will begin in earnest in the coming months as it becomes apparent which coaches are about to be fired, Holtz is locked in on navigating the travel and the varying styles of Conference USA opponents.

"The tough thing about this conference is that the average margin of victory is less than a touchdown," Graham said. "No one has gone through this league since we've been a part of it the last three years and been undefeated. We wind up beating each other up, and therefore it hurts you nationally because you don't have that team that goes undefeated."

While E.C.U. is a long way from 12-0, its résumé is already flush with potential.

*Thayer Evans contributed reporting.*