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Writers gather for Literary Homecoming
Friday, September 21, 2012

East Carolina University will honor the region’s literary traditions today and Saturday during the ninth annual Eastern North Carolina Literary Homecoming, presented by Joyner Library and the North Carolina Literary Review. The event will offer interactive workshops in addition to panel presentations.

Seven North Carolina writers and two filmmakers will discuss the translation of the written word into film during the event at Joyner Library which has the theme “Litflix: Adapting North Carolina Literature into Film.”

Each year, the Literary Homecoming kicks off with the presentation of the Roberts Award for Literary Inspiration. This year the award will be presented at 7 p.m. today to eastern North Carolina poet James Applewhite for his significant influence upon the literature of the state. The event will be held in the Mendenhall Student Center Great Rooms.

“The Roberts Award, named in honor of B.W.C. and Snow Roberts of Durham, is a fitting way to honor James Applewhite,” said Maury York, Joyner Library’s assistant director for special collections. York described
Applewhite as an outstanding poet with deep roots in eastern North Carolina.

Also during today’s event, Timothy B. Tyson will speak about the film adaptation of his book “Blood Done Sign My Name” in a lecture on “Civil Rights Meets Silver Screen.”

On Saturday, several North Carolina writers whose literary works have been adapted into film will explore how film can both enhance and distract from the meaning of the written word.

The luncheon Saturday will feature a reading by Daniel Wallace, author of “Big Fish,” which was adapted into a 2003 feature film directed by Tim Burton and starring Ewan McGregor.

Award-winning author Charles Frazier will deliver the keynote session at 4 p.m. Saturday. Frazier’s first novel, “Cold Mountain,” winner of the 1997 National Book Award, the 1997 W.D. Weatherford Award, and the 1998 Boeke Prize, was adapted in 2003 into a major motion picture that was nominated for seven Academy Awards. Frazier’s second novel, “Thirteen Moons,” was selected as the first literary work to be translated into the Cherokee language. His most recent novel is “Nightwoods.”

All events, except for the author’s luncheon ($15) are free and open to the public. For a complete schedule of events, visit www.ecu.edu/lithomecoming. Call 328-6514 for more information.
Our Views

Reading, writing given attention on special weekend

Possessing the skill to read and write are absolutely critical to not only navigating a very complex modern society but, in most cases, to earning a living. The illiterate population faces an uphill climb in most aspects of their lives, from compiling a resume or filling out a job application, to even routine tasks like the weekly trip to a grocery store.

This weekend, Greenville will put focus on both those who lack the ability to read and several men and women from this state who have distinguished themselves through writing. Rare is the occasion when both ends of that spectrum receive that level of attention, but it is a fitting way for this city to mark September’s Literacy Awareness Month.

While the eyes of many in eastern North Carolina will be fixed on Chapel Hill and the Pirates’ football game on Saturday against the University of North Carolina, the East Carolina University community should not overlook a more important event taking place in Greenville. This weekend’s annual Eastern North Carolina Literary Homecoming will present a discussion focused on state-based writers.

Now in its ninth year, the literary homecoming brings some of the most well known and successful writers to town for discussions, workshops and a keynote luncheon, much of which is free and all of which is open to the public. The theme of the weekend is “Adapting North Carolina Literature Into Film,” and the caliber of those scheduled to speak is impressive indeed.

Of course, writers would find themselves out of work were it not for readers to consume their words. Compulsory education laws in the United States successfully raised the
literacy rate to the point that only a fraction of the nation's population lacks the ability to read, but those men and women — many of whom slipped through the cracks — should not be abandoned by society.

Helping them is the purpose of Saturday's Run For Literacy, starting at 8 a.m. at the Greenville Hilton. Sponsored by The DailyReflector's Newspapers In Education Program and Literacy Volunteers-Pitt County, the money raised will go toward providing adult literacy programs and supplying newspapers to the community's student population.

Reading and writing should not be taken for granted, and a weekend like this is important to giving both deserved attention. As the city celebrates those who have made the craft of writing their vocation, it should also move to help the men and women who lack those valuable skills.
American Red Cross staffer Annette Cutler prepared East Carolina University employee Bryan Edge for his regular blood donation Tuesday at the blood donation center on Red Banks Road in Greenville.

**Businesses boost blood drive**

By Michael Abramowitz  
Friday, September 21, 2012

Local businesses and organizations have a new way to give the gift of life through blood donation with a promotional program unveiled this week by the American Red Cross Blood Services office in Greenville.

The program, an original concept developed by Greenville native and regional Red Cross donor recruitment representative Kaitlyn Brooks, allows businesses and other organizations to pledge blood donation at several levels of achievement during each calendar quarter. The bronze level represents five pledged donors, the silver represents eight donors, the gold represents 10 donors and platinum represents 15 pledged donors.

“We’re reaching out with this program because we know there are a lot of businesses that would love to participate in blood donation but might have too few employees to host their own blood drive,” Brooks said. “We understand that in today’s economy, donating money might not always be an option. This is a way for them to reach out and get their employees involved with their community.”

The key to increased donations is education about the need for blood, the process of donation and what blood donation does for people in a community, Brooks said.
Another important part of the education equation is aimed at getting people comfortable with the idea of donating their blood regularly. Brooks and her staff help people understand just how easy it is to be a donor.

“A normally healthy person can donate blood every 56 days without hurting their body,” she said. “That’s how frequently blood regenerates itself, but we operate the donation program on a quarterly basis so businesses will not be overburdened.”

Businesses that do not feel they can compete on a quarterly basis can sponsor a “Donor Days” blood drive for their employees by scheduling a Friday for that purpose with the center, Brooks said. Several businesses already have chosen that path to donation, Brooks said. There also is a big push to bring people in for donations during the holiday period as “Holiday Heroes.”

The new business sponsorship program launches in October, Brooks said, but two businesses already have signed up: Greenville Toyota and Cox Floral, getting the competition off to a healthy start.

The donor center also is strengthening its ties with East Carolina University and businesses that support the university population through development of a new “Bleed Purple and Gold” theme. The center was repainted purple and gold and decorated with Pirate sports art and memorabilia to give it a cozier atmosphere and less of a hospital-like environment.

“Competition is great for businesses and for people,” Brooks said. “It’s a great way to get the word out that we need regular donation now in the middle of a nationwide low in our blood supply.”

“What better way for a business to give back to its community than to help save lives?”

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Performing a Pulitzer Prize-winning play is usually the pinnacle to which a college theater group aspires — unless, of course, the award-winning playwright attends the performance.

That is the plan for next Thursday’s opening of Beth Henley’s dark comedy, “Crimes of the Heart,” to be performed by the School of Theatre and Dance at McGinnis Theatre on the East Carolina University campus. Henley is scheduled to meet with the cast and sit in the audience during their performance, a rare and somewhat intimidating opportunity made possible through the effort of English Department professor Tom Douglass.

Henley’s “Crimes” plot centers on the 1974 reunion of three sisters, Babe, Lenny and Meg Magrath in post-Hurricane Camille Mississippi after Babe shoots her abusive husband. Each of the sisters has a distinct personality and a different bag of emotional rocks to carry.

Henley’s use of humor as a fulcrum to move through very serious issues and events in “Crimes,” including the shooting of a spouse, the romantic affair between a white woman and a black man and romantic unfulfillment, comes from her world view, partly the result of her upbringing in Mississippi.

“Things there could be so dark, there was basically no way to survive it unless you added some irony or humor. You had to objectivize things at
least a little because the sadness ran too deep. The pain can’t be too precious; you have to move back from it sometimes,” Henley said during a phone interview this week with The Daily Reflector.

Henley’s dialogue flows seamlessly throughout, with alternately tragic and comic expression and a style of character interaction with which Southern women so easily identify.

“I love when Southerners perform this play. There’s a certain essence of it that they just know about; it’s in their blood. I especially like when young people play it, because the play is written with young characters, and it’s about moving from childhood to adulthood, with the oldest sister turning 30,” Henley said.

Faculty director Gergory Funaro described the very personal character-driven craftsmanship of the dialogue as the right stuff for his group of student performers.

“One of the things that is so wonderful about Henley’s work is that it is so accessible and inviting to young performers, giving them an opportunity to explore such a wide range of human behavior in a limited amount of time,” Funaro said.

Henley doesn’t give much advice to actors preparing to play her characters, she said.

“I just tell them to try and be as specific and clear as they can, and stay in the moment ... and don’t get too kooky and make it a caricature,” Henley said.

Watching performers play her creations is also a learning experience for the author, she said.

“A play is an act in progress until the actors perform it. I learn so much about my characters while actors portray them because they have to go through the character with a fine-toothed comb and think about how every word is said,” Henley said.

Cast members Emily Weber and Nicky Jasper, both seniors, talked during a rehearsal break about their connection with the dialogue and their impending meeting with Henley.

“No pressure, right?” Weber said of Henley’s visit. “I’m so excited about this visit. I’ve never had any interaction with a playwright, and now we get to meet this Pulitzer winner. I expect to learn a lot. I can’t wait.”

Jasper said she was thrilled that she would get to talk with Henley and ask specific questions about her work on “Crimes.”
“It’s so cool that we get to talk to her and pick her brain about the details of the characters she created. Knowing that she wants to meet us too and wants to learn from us and not judging us is awesome,” Jasper said.

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East Carolina quarterback Shane Carden will be making his second career start when the Pirates take on UNC on Saturday. (Aileen Devlin/The Daily Reflector)

Plenty at stake in ECU-UNC rivalry
By Nathan Summers
Friday, September 21, 2012

Shane Carden’s first-ever college football game as a kid was USC-UCLA at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif., so he had early exposure to great rivalry. When the Newport Beach, Calif., native moved to Texas, it was Longhorns-Aggies. Now that he’s the starting quarterback at East Carolina, however, it’s Pirates-Tar Heels.

“I definitely understand the rivalry,” Carden said of Saturday’s showdown between ECU and UNC in Chapel Hill, which will be the sophomore passer’s second start. “I’ve been around a couple of years and know what it means to this university and their university. I’m really excited to start playing in this thing. They’re a good team, but so are we, and I’m excited to get up there and show them what we’ve got.”

Carden has athletics in every branch of his family tree — dad played baseball in the Mets, Braves and Expos organizations, mom played volleyball and ran track in college, one brother pitched at Rhodes College, one pitched at UC Davis, and then there was Uncle Gordon, a quarterback for the USC Trojans.

“I grew up watching USC,” Carden said. “My uncle went there and my mom’s whole side of the family went there, so that was my first college game I ever went to. So I got to see a little of the USC-UCLA (rivalry) and obviously when I moved to Texas, I got big into the Texas-Texas A&M rivalry which is huge, and a big deal to a lot of people.”
Without question, the Pirates, under the direction of third-year head coach Ruffin McNeill, have a Texas flavor.

In addition to Carden, most of McNeill’s staff came with him from Texas Tech for the 2010 season and most have stayed.

In some of those coaches, an upbringing on the famous rivalries of the Lone Star State lends unique perspective to in-state games like Saturday’s 3:30 p.m. kickoff inside Kenan Stadium.

“There’s just something about in-state games, and that’s one of the things to me that sets college football apart, and that’s one of the things that hopefully as people try to make decisions about the future of college football that they don’t lose sight of,” said ECU offensive coordinator Lincoln Riley, a Lubbock native. “That’s one of the most awesome things about college football, playing these in-state games whether you’re in the same conference or not. That’s special.”

While with McNeill at Texas Tech under former head coach Mike Leach, Riley reveled in playing all of the primary Texas foes in conference and out, and in his words, “Those were always heated.”

When he first coached for ECU against the Tar Heels, Riley said he got a similar feeling.

“As we got going at Texas Tech, we had some great games with Texas and with A&M and TCU and SMU,” he said. “I love that we were able to play all those guys, and we’ve had a great one here with N.C. State and been able to play Carolina every year, and I wish we could play a couple more of them honestly. They’re just flat out fun.”

Crossing paths

As always, Saturday’s game will be littered with former high school stars who were sought by both programs. UNC transfer running back Hunter Furr, in fact, is very likely spoiling for carries for the Pirates against his former team.

But there are also plenty of Tar Heels who were tailed by the Pirates on the recruiting trail, including a couple of running backs who will feature prominently in Saturday’s game.

“Romar Morris was a kid that we recruited really, really hard and at one point we probably thought we had a shot at him,” ECU wide receivers coach and recruiting coordinator Donnie Kirkpatrick said of the UNC redshirt freshman. “A.J. Blue was a teammate of (ECU offensive lineman) Josh
Clark at North Gaston High School. We got Josh, we didn’t get A.J. (who went to Hargrave Military and then UNC).”

Kirkpatrick said the ECU staff has often lamented not recruiting harder UNC wide receiver Erik Highsmith when he was a West Craven High School teammate of ECU star receiver Justin Hardy.

Other notable former ECU recruits on the UNC roster include New Bern linebacker Kevin Reddick, Durham wide receiver T.J. Thorpe, Wilmington kicker Casey Barth and Bertie offensive lineman Travis Bond.

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Debt and income concerns deter medical students from primary care careers

September 21st, 2012 in Health

(Medical Xpress)—Primary care physicians—America's front line healthcare practitioners—are usually the first to diagnose illness, refer patients to specialists and coordinate care. Yet, despite that critical role, primary care physicians remain among the lowest paid of all doctors at a time when there's an acute primary care shortage.

A unique longitudinal study of medical students by researchers at Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University, the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, and North Carolina State University shows how significantly both student debt and income expectations impact the decision of medical students to enter a high-paying specialty rather than primary care.

The study, published online on September 19 in Medical Education, surveyed more than 2,500 medical students attending either New York Medical College or the Brody School of Medicine. Over an 18-year period from 1992 to 2010, students were surveyed in their first and fourth years about the area of medicine they planned to enter, their anticipated debt upon graduation, the annual income they anticipated five years after completing residency, and the importance they placed on income in general.

The study indicates that medical students who anticipated high levels of debt upon graduation and placed a premium on high income were more likely to enter a high-paying medical specialty—such as radiology, anesthesiology or dermatology—than to enter primary care, which consists of internal medicine, pediatrics and family practice.

According to a 2010 Medical Group Management Association income survey, primary care physicians earned nearly $200,000 per year and those in 12 high-paying specialties selected by the researchers earned double that, with an average of just under $400,000 per year.
"The income gap between primary care and specialty physicians started growing in earnest in 1979, and now we're seeing the consequences of that ongoing trend," noted Martha Grayson, M.D., senior associate dean of medical education at Einstein and the study's lead author. (Dr. Grayson was at New York Medical College at the time of the study.)

Among those surveyed in the study, 30 percent of students who entered medical school intending to become a primary care physician switched their preference to a high-paying specialty by the time they graduated. Compared to classmates who didn't change their minds about entering primary care, the switching group placed a significantly higher value on income and expected a debt load that was 11 percent greater than those who ultimately chose a primary care career.

Based on an Association of American Medical Colleges survey of residents and fellows taken in 2010, 86 percent of medical students graduated with some education debt in 2010. The average debt was $158,000. Thirty percent of graduates had debt exceeding $200,000. "While the amount of debt medical students take on is well-known, there hasn't been much research to assess how students respond to this pressure," said Dr. Grayson.

The study suggests that measures should be explored to encourage primary care careers such as incentive pay, debt forgiveness, additional scholarships and higher reimbursement for primary care services, in order to meet the growing need.

The study's findings come as the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) projects a shortage of 63,000 physicians by 2015, the vast majority of those in primary care.

The paper is titled "Payback Time: The Association of Debt and Income with Medical Student Career Choice." In addition to Dr. Grayson, the other authors are Dale Newton, M.D., at East Carolina University, and Lori Foster Thompson, Ph.D., at North Carolina State University. The authors report no conflicts of interest.

Provided by Albert Einstein College of Medicine

Michelle Obama, praising husband, urges young people in N.C. to vote

By NBC's Andrew Rafferty

Sept. 21, 2012

GREENVILLE, N.C. – First Lady Michelle Obama continued to embrace her role as President Barack Obama's chief character witness on Wednesday, telling thousands of young North Carolinians that her husband is an inclusive leader with compassion for all Americans.

"As president, you have to be driven by the struggles, hopes and dreams of all the people you serve," Michelle Obama told the 3,100 gathered at a rally in Durham, emphasizing the word "all."

"As president, you truly need a strong inner compass, you know, a core commitment to your fellow citizens," she said. "That's how you make the right decisions for this country."

She went on to tell the crowd that the president "has been struggling with us. And together, slowly but surely, we have been pulling ourselves out of that hole we started in."

The first lady did not mention GOP presidential nominee Mitt Romney or Republicans during two rallies on college campuses in North Carolina. But her message drew a noticeable contrast with the recently-unearthed video of Romney telling supporters at a fundraiser that 47 percent of Americans do not "take personal responsibility" and "who believe that they are victims." Romney conceded in the video that he is not reaching out to those voters because he cannot win their vote.

The Obama campaign jumped on the comments in a fundraising email. And Tuesday night, President Obama told David Letterman, "If you want to be president, work for everyone, not just for some." Vice President Joe Biden declined to answer questions about the former Massachusetts governor's remarks earlier this week.

Michelle Obama spoke to predominantly young and African American crowds at North Carolina Central University and East Carolina University.
She remained optimistic that the president could win the Tar Heel State in November, as he did four years ago, although polling shows him trailing behind Romney.

Not only did Obama encourage the college-aged crowd to vote, but she urged them to take advantage of the state's early voting that begins next month.

"Vote early. You know how you all are," she said, joking that young people have a habit of oversleeping or forgetting Election Day. A win in North Carolina, she said, would put the president on track to reelection.

"We cannot turn back now," the first lady said in Greenville. "We have come so far, but we have so much more work to do."
Vanceboro native’s bluegrass hit is national No. 1

Sue Book
2012-09-20 21:09:20

VANCEBORO — Lorraine Jordan is a Vanceboro native and is coming ‘Back to My Roots’ Saturday with a national number one bluegrass hit by that name.

A hometown fan reception is flying banners across town entrances to announce the concert.

Coming home Jordan is bringing her Carolina Road band with her for a 7:30 p.m. free concert at Vanceboro-Farm Life Elementary School to entertain friends and unveil the video for band’s new ‘Back to My Roots’ album which features Vanceboro prominently.

“At least 80 percent of the video was shot in Vanceboro,” Jordan said, with the other 20 percent in the Raleigh and Garner area where she now lives.

“It shows Vanceboro as a kind of neat little town, with Vera’s Diner, the ‘College of Knowledge,’ the soda shop,” she said, and scenes that include her father, former Coastal Carolina Regional Airport Authority Director Royce Jordan, at a local lumber mill, and mother Janice Jordan rocking on the porch.

Saturday, Mayor Chad Braxton will present Lorraine Jordan a ceremonial ‘Key to the City’ she has been in an out of all her life.

“We are very proud of Lorraine for the success she has had, getting to number one on the charts. It is really good she put Vanceboro in the mix with the video, that she is proud of where she came from. She comes from a great family who has lived here all their lives.”

Folks in Craven County know the Jordan family, her parents and Lorraine who is an East Carolina University graduate and former teacher as well as a business woman with one of the largest driver education companies in the state; husband Tom Langdon, a former teacher at West Craven; brothers coach Clay Jordan and Vanceboro driving school owner Eddie Jordan; sister Cheryl, an Apex accountant.
The honor means a lot to them all, Jordan said in a recent interview as her phone rang off the hook with congratulators and interview requests. “The town has really gotten behind the video, promoted it, and that’s what is great about coming home.”

Jordan said the 12-song release by Rural Rhythm Records also has the music group “coming back to my roots of traditional bluegrass. We started out with hard core bluegrass music but after 12 years on the road we went on to contemporary and a little country.”

Jordan grew up playing bluegrass music.

“Theodore Morris started me in bluegrass,” Jordan said. “He used to take me around to old country stores where they had little jams. I was playing the kind of music everybody was playing then — classic rock, playing the base at the time. I fell in love with it.”

“While others in high school were going to clubs and the skating rink, I went to the jam sessions out with the older people playing bluegrass,” she said.

Jordan was doing more than playing music at night. She was also running a driving school business that now has more than 150 teachers and 187 vehicles, is a wife and mother of children now grown or in college.

Now, Jordan leaves every Thursday on the road as far as New York or Maine and gets back home on Sunday and she produces two festivals a year — Christmas in the Smokies in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., and Bluegrass in Cherokee.

“I had to learn the music business hands on,” she said, “and I do the band just like the driving business as Jordan Entertainment.” Her band plays their own music and some of other well known artists in the genre, and she books big bands.

“Carolina Road used to take about any job we could get but they’re asking us to play now instead of us asking them,” Jordan said. She is using that to the advantage of the music she loves and respects.

“It’s 21 years playing bluegrass for me as a professional full time on the road and a band leader before I got a No. 1,” she said.

What’s next?

“Singing Saturday night for the folks at home,” she said, “and I’d love to hit number one again. Why not?”

More about Jordan and Carolina Road is on their website CarolinaRoadBand.com.
UNC report finds troublesome behavior by former housekeeping director

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By Tammy Grubb - tgrubb@newsobserver.com

CHAPEL HILL An investigation did not find evidence of sexual harassment but did find inappropriate actions and comments directed at a UNC-Chapel Hill housekeeper, an investigator says.

Ann Penn, an Equal Employment Opportunity Institute coordinator, said she didn’t find enough evidence to support housekeeper Maria Isabel Prudencio-Arias’ claims of sexual harassment.

Penn did find that former Housekeeping Services director Bill Burston acted inappropriately. Burston resigned from the university last September.

Penn testified Thursday at an administrative hearing at the UNC School of Law Moot Courtroom to determine if the university violated the N.C. Whistleblower Act in handling Prudencio-Arias’ complaint.

Housekeeper Irene Ramirez also reported Burston’s actions but didn’t name other witnesses, Penn said. Ramirez, who was in the courtroom Thursday, said she plans to share that when the hearing reconvenes. No date has been set.

Prudencio-Arias’ attorney Al McSurely is seeking to prove she was sexually harassed, suffered retaliation when she filed a complaint, and was wrongfully discharged in April 2011. She has since been rehired, McSurely said, so she can only seek damages for violations of the Whistleblower Act.

Penn said it was difficult to investigate Prudencio-Arias’ case because she confused incidents allegedly involving Burston with earlier incidents involving former zone manager Dallas Burnette.

Burnette was disciplined in a 2009 sexual harassment case also involving Prudencio-Arias.

In that case, she taped conversations with Burnette that corroborated her claims, Penn said.

Penn also found evidence that Prudencio-Arias did her job poorly at the School of Government after an injury restricted her ability to work.

Burston was not retaliating when he transferred her to other positions to address those issues, Penn said.
Scrolling through Facebook posts, listening to talking heads, cringing at anonymous online commenters can lead to pretty easily identifiable instances of disrespectful or unkind discourse.

But is asking for civility just another act of censorship?

Derek Spicer of Apex thinks so. And anything that dampens debate on a college campus in particular is just downright dangerous to the N.C. State graduate.

Spicer, 22, spent three years as a resident adviser at NCSU, graduating in May with a degree in political science. In fall 2011, the university instituted a civility statement requiring residents to “speak to each other in a civil manner” and prohibiting the display of items that might be “disrespectful” or “hurtful.”

Spicer objected to a policy he considered ridiculously broad and impossible to enforce, especially given that, as an RA, he was the law.

“What if someone puts an Obama poster on the door? Do they have to take it down because conservatives might be offended?” Spicer asked. “How about a Bible verse? Does he have to take it down because it might offend someone?”

Spicer turned to the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, a nonprofit that fights for individual rights, due process and freedom of expression at U.S. colleges and universities.

A letter from FIRE persuaded the university to alter the statement this fall to include: “The University Housing Civility Statement is not intended to interfere in any way with an individual’s academic or personal freedoms. We hope that individuals will voluntarily endorse the expectations outlined below.”

Spicer, an intern at the Pope Center for Higher Education Policy, is satisfied with the change. It’s not that he’s against civility, but he thinks people need to feel free to be passionate.
“ Trying to shut down things because it might be ‘uncivil’ is ridiculous,” he said.
“ It hinders discussion. It hinders debate. If college is supposed to be the
marketplace of ideas, that’s the opposite message.”

The best disinfectant

The youngest of five children of conservative parents, Spicer grew up watching the
news and talking politics at the table. He credits Ron Paul with influencing his turn
to libertarianism. At NCSU, he was president of the school’s Young Americans for
Liberty chapter.

“I’ve always been about constitutional rights,” said Spicer, who described himself
as a fairly reclusive geek in high school. “Free speech issues just appeal to me,
particularly being on a college campus where conservative libertarian ideals are not
encouraged, to use a nice term.”

The university instituted the civility policy after someone painted racially charged
obscenities and derogatory comments directed at gays and President Obama inside
the school’s Free Expression Tunnel.

“That would offend me just as a decent human being, but we shouldn’t use our
own disgust or disapproval to punish others because of perceived incivility,”
Spicer said. “The way to defeat hate speech is not with censorship, it’s with more
free speech. Sunlight is the best disinfectant.”

On our college campuses, we should want our kids to see how the collective power
of decent people, rather than a directive, can bring irrelevance to the uncivil and
how the individual power of one motivated 22-year-old can bring change.

“I’m just one person standing up for what I believe and fighting for what I think is
right and trying to uphold my own rights and the rights of other students,” Spicer
said. “Free speech isn’t important just to me. It’s important to everyone. It’s
something worth standing up for.

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A primer on gap years

Posted at 04:00 AM ET, 09/21/2012

By Valerie Strauss

It’s the season when high school seniors are frantically filling out college applications and trying to figure out where they will be and what they will be doing next fall.

There is some evidence that a growing number of U.S. high school graduates are taking a year off before going to college. But there are questions about how gap years work, and who they benefit and what colleges think about them.

To get some answers, I talked with Laura R. Hosid, an expert on gap years at the Vinik Educational Placement Services, Inc. in Bethesda, and you can read the Q & below. Hosid can be reached at laura@vinikeps.com.

Q) What exactly is a gap year and when do students take one? Is it always right after high school?

A gap year typically describes a year off between high school and college. While gap years have long been a common practice in England and other countries, they have only recently gained popularity in the United States. Gap years offer an opportunity to travel, explore different interests, and gain experience and maturity before beginning college.

Q) How many kids do this in the United States? How different is this than in England?

There are no official statistics on how many U.S. students take gap years, but many colleges and guidance counselors have noticed a recent upward trend. According to a 2010 Time Magazine article, "[t]he number of Americans taking gap years through Projects Abroad, a U.K. company that coordinates volunteer programs around the world, has nearly quadrupled since 2005."

While gap years are gaining popularity in the United States, they remain more popular in England, where the Universities and Colleges Admissions Services found that 7% of all British students deferred admission to take a gap year in 2007. According to the Higher Education Research Institute, an estimated 1.2 percent of first-time college freshmen in the United States deferred admission to take a gap year in 2011. Neither of these numbers include students who may have applied to college after taking a gap year.
Q) Why do kids usually take a gap year? Are they exhausted from high school? Looking for a way to boost their resumes to get into college?

Many students choose to take a gap year because they see it as an opportunity to try something new and take a break from formal schooling, while also realizing that the perspective, maturity and experience they gain can benefit them in their college careers. A gap year can be an excellent opportunity to actively pursue an interest or passion and thereby gain experience that will be attractive to employers after graduation.

Some students take a gap year because they feel that they need the time off because they are not academically or emotionally ready for college, and still others want a second chance to reapply to colleges the following year.

Regardless of their reason for taking a gap year, these students often return to school with renewed vigor and focus — in fact, a New York Times article cites a study by the Dean of Admissions at Middlebury College who observed that the average GPA for Middlebury students who had taken a gap year was consistently higher than those who had not.

Q) Would a new high school graduate who wants to take a gap year apply to college and get in first before declaring they want to take a gap year and ask for a deferment, or should they wait to apply? Are college/university admissions officers generally open to requests for a deferment for the purpose of taking a gap year?

The majority of students apply to college and secure a spot by placing an enrollment deposit, and then ask for a deferral. Almost all colleges will approve a gap year if presented with a reasonable plan — in other words, one that does not involve lounging on the beach for a year! In fact, Harvard University's acceptance letter actually encourages students to consider deferring admission to take a gap year. According to Harvard's website, each year 50-70 students take advantage of this option. Other schools have also formally encouraged gap years -- for example, Princeton University's Bridge Year Program, and the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill's Global Gap Year Fellowship Program.

Q) If a student is looking to improve their chances of getting into college, what sorts of things do colleges like to see done during a gap year?

While a gap year can certainly enhance your admissions profile, it cannot compensate for deficiencies in your high school record. While colleges support and encourage gap years, admissions officers rarely see gap year experiences have a dramatic effect on a student's chances of admission.
With this in mind, the most valuable experiences are often those that delve deeper into a student's demonstrated interests, or otherwise reflect maturity and purpose. For example, a college is likely to view more favorably a prospective international relations major who completes a language immersion program while also interning or volunteering in a foreign country, compared to a student who backpacks and parties his way through Europe without a plan.

Q) What kinds of things do students do on their gap years?

Many students choose to spend their gap year in structured programs volunteering abroad or in the United States. There are also many opportunities to explore interests in the environment, arts, and other cultures. Taking courses to improve academic skills is another option. Within these broad categories, there are a myriad of options ranging from studying at the International Culinary Center in New York, to performing musical stage performances in multiple countries while living with host families with Up With People, to building trails in state parks with the Student Conservation Association.

One thing to keep in mind is that gap years need not be expensive or involve international travel. City Year, part of AmeriCorps, provides a stipend and scholarship for 10 months of service in inner city schools. World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms offers offer meals and housing in exchange for farming work.

A gap year also does not need to be one full-year program. Students often piece together different options to explore a range of interests, or can work for a few months to fund a shorter opportunity. Short-term options can range from three weeks at a wildlife sanctuary in South Africa with BroadReach to a month studying French at Concordia Language Villages in Minnesota.

Q) How do families get help planning one?

There are several good books available, including "The Complete Guide to the Gap Year" by Kristin M. White and "The Gap-Year Advantage" by Karl Haigler and Rae Nelson. Websites such as Teen Life offer listings of gap year programs by type - many private high schools and colleges also have lists available online. In addition, USA Gap Year Fairs offer over thirty different fairs throughout the country (fares are scheduled for Feb. 26, 2013 in Rockville, MD and Feb. 27, 2013 in Fairfax, VA). Finally, there are a small number of educational consultants who focus on gap year advising and can help students figure out what they want to do and help identify specific programs that would be a good match.
Joshua Morse III, Law School Dean Who Defied Segregation, Dies at 89

September 19, 2012

By DOUGLAS MARTIN

Joshua Morse III, who as dean of the University of Mississippi School of Law in the 1960s defied segregationist tradition by admitting the school’s first black students, a move that led to the desegregation of Mississippi’s legal profession and judiciary, died last Friday at his home in Tallahassee, Fla. He was 89.

His family announced the death.

In a time of civil rights marches and often violent racial strife in the Deep South, Mr. Morse challenged prejudice and parochialism by fostering a markedly progressive period at the school. He used Ford Foundation money to recruit minority students, promoted a student legal assistance program for the poor, exposed students to liberal ideas and hired Ivy League professors from the North.

But his efforts lasted only six years. Pitted against the state’s legal establishment, he stepped down in 1969, and the school reverted to more conservative leadership.

Mr. Morse admitted Ole Miss’s first black law students in 1963, a year after James Meredith became the first black to enroll at the university, a watershed event in the civil rights struggle. By 1967 black enrollment at the law school had expanded to about 20 in a student body of 360.

Black graduates were soon admitted to the state bar, joining a legal fraternity defined by alumni of Ole Miss, which Time magazine called the “prep school for political power in Mississippi.”

Reuben Anderson, the first black graduate of the school, in 1968, went on to become the first black appointee to the State Supreme Court and the first black president of the Mississippi bar. The school’s first black woman to graduate, Constance Slaughter-Harvey, in 1970, became the first black woman to be named a judge in Mississippi.

Mr. Morse’s achievements remain legend in legal education circles. John Egerton, in his 1991 book, “Shades of Gray: Dispatches From the Modern South,” wrote: “The Ole Miss Law School’s six-year orbit into activism was a spectacular aberration, a reversal of form that briefly turned a conservative institution into one of the most progressive and experimental in the nation.”
Joshua Marion Morse III was born on March 1, 1923, in Poplarville, Miss., a sawmill town. He was a graduate of Ole Miss and its law school and served in the Army during World War II.

After law school he joined his father’s law practice in Poplarville, where he defended 23 people accused of murder and won not-guilty verdicts for 22. (The 23rd was convicted of a lesser charge.) He successfully defended several black men who had violent altercations with the police.

Mr. Morse joined the Ole Miss faculty as an associate professor in 1962 and was named dean in 1963. Instead of starting immediately, however, he attended Yale on a one-year graduate fellowship. But before he left, he helped orchestrate admission offers to several black students.

When he returned, he brought two Yale graduates with him to teach. The next year he hired another and received a $437,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to recruit minorities. In 1965, he invited eight Yale professors to teach two-week courses on individual rights. The next semester, he brought a group of Harvard professors to lecture on federalism. Professors from Columbia and New York University came later.

He ended up hiring new graduates of Yale Law School to fill 8 of 21 positions. Besides teaching, they prepared federal lawsuits on voting rights and civil liberties and recruited students for a legal assistance program for the poor.

In 1966, when state education officials sought to rescind an invitation to the liberal Democratic senator Robert F. Kennedy to speak at the law school, Mr. Morse threatened to resign. Mr. Kennedy spoke to an appreciative audience.

Mississippi’s legal and political establishment began to see the school as a hotbed of revolution, where students were brainwashed by liberal “one-worlders.” The Mobile Press, in neighboring Alabama, said the school had chosen to “smugly point the finger of scorn” at the entire South.

Mr. Morse answered that he was trying to make students aware of a world beyond Mississippi — to let them know “that there were places to look other than across the street or at the courthouse.”

The state bar association made its feelings clear in 1968 when he was not invited to speak at its annual meeting, though the speech by the Ole Miss law dean was historically a high point of the program. He was also denied a salary increase, though all his underlings received one.

In 1969, the university chancellor responded to mounting political pressures by ordering professors to choose between teaching and helping the poor. Mr. Morse
left — whether he resigned or was fired was never clear — and moved to Florida State University, where he was dean of the College of Law until 1980 and a professor until 2003.

After Mr. Morse left, the Ole Miss law school “reverted to form,” Mr. Egergon wrote, with the “patricians” back in control of the faculty. The school continued to admit minorities but curtailed its social activism, as did many law schools after the 1960s.

Mr. Morse is survived by his wife of 66 years, the former Nell Hartzog; his son, Joshua; his daughters, Anne Morse Burris and Mary Jeanne Morse Lykes; and six grandchildren.

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: September 20, 2012

An earlier version of this obituary misstated the name of Mr. Morse’s wife. She is the former Nell Hartzog, not Eva Triplett, which was his mother’s name. It also referred incorrectly to the University of Mississippi School of Law. It was not the state’s only law school.