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East Carolina University News Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@ecu.edu  Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481 FAX: 252-328-6300
City council members want student input

By Kathryn Kennedy
The Daily Reflector

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

The Greenville City Council asked East Carolina University’s student government members for input on downtown safety measures at a meeting between the two groups Monday.

The meeting was scheduled to discuss public safety and partnerships between ECU students and the community. Greenville Police Chief William Anderson and ECU Police Chief Scott Shelton began the meeting by speaking about the “seamless relationship” between their departments in an effort to keep students safe and law abiding. There were no questions posed about safety downtown at that time, but they cropped up toward the end of the meeting.

SGA President Brad Congleton began by asking what the SGA can do to encourage students to be safe on Halloween. Anderson said helping get the word out is help enough. Later in the meeting, he said students have been asking him if the City Council is trying to get rid of the downtown bar district. Councilman Calvin Mercer responded.

“This council is concerned about safety,” he said. “There was public attention brought to the club district downtown and citizens were concerned. We’ve identified a moderate, responsible move forward. No one on the council has any intent to close the clubs downtown.”

City Attorney Dave Holec gave a summary of each of the proposed ordinances, which would require public and private clubs to hire additional off-duty security and restrict the hiring of bouncers with certain criminal records. Another would maintain existing clubs but not allow for new ones within a 500-foot radius of existing establishments. The city also is seeking an agreement that would link GPD officers with Alcohol Beverage Control law enforcement. All the drafted ordinances return to the City Council for further consideration Oct. 5.

Councilman Max Joyner Jr. said he wants to hear what students think and if they feel safe. He said his complaint is that the ordinances were drafted without asking students or bar owners first. Congleton agreed to gather opinions from his peers and submit a recommendation.

"Without students, Greenville would have a whole lot less money and a whole lot less people," Joyner said.

Students also expressed concerns about penny liquor pricing and whether spreading out the clubs would make anything safer.

Councilwoman Rose Glover repeated her concerns about behavior at ECU fraternity houses in west Greenville — this time providing photos taken by GPD code enforcement of the trash left following parties. She said fraternities don’t keep the house up to city code, and homeowners in the area must constantly see cups and toilet paper in the yards, overgrowth and hear loud music.

"You need to be good neighbors," she said.

Congleton and SGA Vice President Brad Teasley agreed to contact the fraternity in question and refer it to code enforcement for more direction. SGA Chief of Staff Josh Martinovic said it helps if the SGA hears specific concerns rather than generalizations or summaries of events that happened years ago.

Community Development Director Merrill Flood also made a presentation Monday about the Lucille Gorham Intergenerational Center. It was a project purchased by the city but run by ECU.
“It’s an extremely effective model,” he said of the west Greenville outreach facility. “The community has openly
accepted the center and seen what can be done at a grassroots level.”

ECU Volunteer Coordinator Shawn Moore said students volunteer thousands of hours in west Greenville. She
highlighted a number of projects they are involved in regularly, and Glover told her the Intergenerational Center
can certainly use volunteers, too, as they expand programs.

“The students should be commended for that,” Councilman Bryant Kittrell said. “I think sometimes kids get
blamed for things when they’re really adding to our community.”

City Neighborhood Liaison Cori Hines also had a positive review of the relationship between students and the
surrounding area. The Tar River-University Neighborhood Association (TRUNA) is opening its board to a student
representative, he reported. Congleton said the SGA also added a community affairs chair in the student senate.

“We want you to feel like you belong,” Hines said. “This is your community as well. We are one city.”

Throughout the meeting, students were invited to volunteer, attend inclusive community events later in the week,
the crime summit and the North Carolina League of Municipalities host event at Minges Coliseum.

“It’s much better to speak with each other than at each other,” Mayor Pat Dunn said of the joint meeting. “We’ll
have to have some more of these.”

Contact Kathryn Kennedy at k kennedy@coxnc.com or (252) 329-9566.
ECU’s engineering school earns accreditation

Most of graduates working in eastern third of the state

By JONATHAN CLAYBORNE
Daily News Correspondent
Published: Tuesday, September 22, 2009 2:20 AM EDT

Call it a small-scale reversal of the regional "brain drain" — a reversal that's reportedly paying dividends for the area by keeping talented college graduates nearby.

East Carolina University's Department of Engineering recently received accreditation from the national Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology.

"ABET accreditation is assurance that a college or university program meets the quality standards established by the profession for which it prepares its students," ABET's Web site reads.

The honor enhances the credibility of a program that is keeping some professionals in a region that needs their expertise, some area leaders said.

"It's extremely important in today's economy to have well-trained engineers in almost every discipline," said Tom Thompson, director of the Beaufort County Economic Development Commission.

Thompson said he's long been an advocate for more state investment in every higher-education discipline east of Interstate 95.

The majority of North Carolina's impoverished counties are east of that highway, he pointed out.

"I think it's an excellent arrow in the quiver in eastern North Carolina to continue our effort to try to improve the economy," he said.

More than 50 percent of the engineering school's graduates become employed in the eastern third of the state, said Paul Kauffmann, chairman of the department.

"That's a major part of the reason we're here," Kauffmann commented.

Incoming industries are beginning to cite the school as a reason for locating operations in the area, while existing industries are seeking interns through the department, he related.
Kauffmann added that an official with Flanders Filters of Washington recently contacted the school to express an interest in co-operative programs and internships.

ECU was notified Aug. 31 that its engineering school had been approved for accreditation, said Washington resident Jim Hackney.

Hackney, who holds two engineering degrees and is a licensed professional engineer, is vice chairman of the engineering school's external advisory board.

"It is a very broad-based engineering program," he said. "In other words, (students are) exposed to a little bit of all the different disciplines."

Like general practitioners in the medical field, the department's graduates emerge as "generalists," Hackney said, "which really prepares them to be the jack of all trades to eastern North Carolina."

The school also offers four areas of specialization within the general engineering degree, he said.

The relatively new engineering school admitted its first class in 2004, Hackney said.

That first class started with 34 students and produced 22 graduates in 2008, he said, adding that the attrition level is about average in a college of engineering.

Some of the students transferred to other curricula, he said.

"The accreditation process is very involved," Hackney noted.

The school first had to turn out a graduating class then submit an application with "a very, very comprehensive report," he said. "I'm talking about a couple of very thick notebooks with documentation on the program."

After a site visit, the accreditation group issued a report resulting from a review of documentation as well as interviews with graduates and advisory board members, Hackney said.

The report covered the program's strengths and weaknesses and allowed ECU an opportunity to respond to those points, he said.

"Actually, as it turned out there were very few weaknesses that they pointed out in their report," Hackney added. "They were very minor."

Hackney also praised the department for its efforts to encourage a collegial atmosphere.

"There's a great deal of interaction within the faculty and the students," he said.
Governor eyes local flu prevention effort as model

By Brock Letchworth
The Daily Reflector

Monday, September 21, 2009

The effort of Pitt County public health officials to combat the flu virus is one which could be a model for the entire state, Gov. Beverly Perdue said Monday during a visit to the area.

Perdue toured the county’s public health center where she spoke with staff about their plans for preparing the community for potential seasonal and H1N1 flu outbreaks. The governor said she was impressed with vaccination plans in place, particularly the FluMist nasal vaccinations that are scheduled for thousands of Pitt County Schools students next month.

"It is just a really good prototype for prevention and wellness," Perdue said. "I wanted to hear how they were going to link what they have been doing ordinarily with the traditional seasonal flu to H1N1. They've got a real plan here that could be a model for the entire state."

Perdue spoke highly of the health department's overall ability to focus its energy on prevention and wellness rather than treating sickness, noting that it is due in large part to having neighboring medical facilities in the area such as Pitt County Memorial Hospital and East Carolina University's Brody School of Medicine to help with treating the sick.

She said focusing on wellness rather than sick care is the best way for the state to cut costs and help people live better lives.

"I felt like, 'Wow. They do it right,'" Perdue said after her tour. "And that is a great feeling to have for someone who got into public service because of health care. I am a health care person. I think it and live it and breathe it. This is a really sophisticated shop that you see here. It is not like a lot of other health departments in our area that are so stressed to provide acute care. Many health departments provide primary care to hundreds and hundreds of people. Pitt County, because of the environment and other health resources, has been able to focus on well care and that is where it all starts. I am actually very, very impressed and in my mind this is the model that other health departments in the state should try to emulate."

One of Perdue’s stops during her tour was two walk-in coolers the health department has rented to store the nasal FluMist vaccinations it will be providing school-aged kids next month.

Dr. John Morrow, Pitt County public health director, said the county has about 17,000 doses in storage and more than 10,000 students have signed up to take them. The health department will be administering the mists during the first two weeks of October at every public school in the county. It also is providing doses to private schools and some day care facilities, he said.

"I think people need to realize that influenza is not just a mild cold," Morrow said. "It is a serious illness."

The FluMist vaccine consists of a quick spray in each nostril. Morrow said it is approved for children over 2 years old and adults up to 50.

A vaccination for the H1N1 virus is still awaiting federal approval and will not be ready until at least October, Morrow said.

Flu season typically runs from December through the spring, Morrow said, but the H1N1 virus has made flu a threat throughout the year.
The Center for Disease Control and Prevention says about 36,000 people nationwide suffer flu-related deaths each year. It recommends that all children 6 months or older be vaccinated each year.

Contact Brock Letchworth at bletchworth@coxnc.com or (252) 329-9574.

Prevention tips

Everyone should follow standard health precautions as a first line of prevention against the flu, officials say.

• Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

• If you don’t have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.

• Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.

• Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

• Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

• If you have flu-like symptoms, stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from making them sick.

• Get the seasonal flu vaccine now and the H1N1 vaccine when it becomes available.

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ECU children’s series to present musicals

The Daily Reflector

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

The Family Fare series takes the stage at East Carolina University next month for the first of four shows that feature everything from field trips to foreign tales and farm life to fourth-grade angst.

The long-running ECU children’s series is presenting four musicals, two touring productions and two from ECU’s own Storybook Theatre. Here’s a look at what’s in store this season:


ECU’s Wright Auditorium is the second stop on the tour for this new musical from the Kennedy Center Theatre for Young Audiences on Tour. Co-produced and co-commissioned by the Kennedy Center and the White House Historical Association, the show tells the story of some elementary school students who take a field trip to the White House and accidentally knock George Washington out of his portrait and into real life. As they try to get the nation’s first president back into his painting, they encounter other famous White House residents, including Abraham Lincoln, Dolley Madison, and Jacqueline Kennedy.

Nov. 13: All Aboard South America: Mighty Mysteries, Wonder and Mayhem!

Family Fare audiences will remember “All Aboard America,” written by ECU Theatre Education Coordinator Patch Clark and performed in the spring of 2008. Now Clark is teaming up with Linda High of the ECU School of Music for a sequel of sorts, “All Aboard South America.” In the new musical, performed by Storybook Theatre, Professor Pontificator and friends are back and are traveling South America in search of amazing stories. As with the first production, this year’s show will incorporate writing from area students. (See related story.)

Jan. 22: Charlotte’s Web

Storybook Theatre will stage what the Children’s Literature Association has called the “best American children’s book of the past 200 years,” E.B. White’s “Charlotte’s Web.” The celebrated story of friendship follows Wilbur, the young pig finding his way on the farm, and Charlotte, the spider who makes it her mission to save him.

April 16: Nobody’s Perfect

Based on the children’s book by Academy Award-winner Marlee Matlin and Doug Cooney, this new musical from the Kennedy Center Theatre for Young Audiences on Tour is simultaneously performed in spoken English and American Sign Language. “Nobody’s Perfect” tells the story of a fourth-grader named Megan who finds herself at odds with new student Alexis. To Megan, Alexis has it all: beauty, brains, and athletics — she’s practically perfect in every way. Though Megan tries to be nice to her, Alexis is anything but friendly, making Megan wonder, “Does she not like me because I’m deaf?” When they’re forced to collaborate on a science project, Megan discovers Alexis’s secret.

All four shows will be performed at 7 p.m. Fridays in ECU’s Wright Auditorium. Advance tickets are $9 for adults and $6 for children. All tickets at the door are $9. Season passes are $30 for adults and $20 for children. Family passes, which include four tickets to all four shows, are $96. Call 328-4788 or visit www.ecu.edu/csfac/familyfare-artssmart.cfm

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Family Fare writing contest

The Daily Reflector

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

Area students are being invited to come aboard an original stage production.

East Carolina University's Storybook Theatre is sponsoring a writing contest in conjunction with the musical "All Aboard South America: Mighty Mysteries, Wonder and Mayhem!" The contest, open to area third- through sixth-graders in public, private or home schools, calls for students to submit a colorful story (fiction or historical) about a South American personality, mystery or wonder.

Entries must show evidence of research and should include details about the setting and characters. Stories may be no longer than two typed pages and must be structured with a clear beginning, middle and end. Handwritten entries will be accepted. Entries will be judged on quality of writing, grammar and spelling.

All entrants will receive a certificate of participation. Selected stories will be adapted for stage and will become a part of the production. Winners will receive show tickets for classmates, family and friends. Each entry must be original and include the author's name, age, mailing address, school, grade and teacher's name. Stories are due by Oct. 7. Winners will be notified Oct. 12.

Submit entries to Michael Crane, ECU, Mailstop 528, Greenville, NC 27858-4353 or cranemi@ecu.edu. Visit http://author.ecu.edu/cs-lib/trc/bibguid.cfm, or call 328-5386.

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Seniors get help stopping falls

Balance and strength are key

BY THOMAS GOLDSMITH, Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL - Gerta Campen fights fear of falling by bulking up, not freezing up.

At 92, Chapel Hill resident Campen has been in strength training for months. Building strength, balance and confidence is part of the current wisdom for halting a growing epidemic of falls among older people.

"At least when you fall and there's something to hold onto, your arms are strong enough," Campen, a retired medical secretary, said late last week at the Seymour Center in Chapel Hill.

Public health experts, therapists and doctors have been warning for years about the perilous intersection of two trends: the rising percentage of older people and the increasing frequency with which they fall.

Taken together, it's a $27 billion national health-care problem that in many cases can be prevented, say members of a burgeoning North Carolina coalition.

"Oftentimes, folks understand that they need to be careful or change their environment by removing throw rugs, clutter, etc., but they don't think about other risk factors that contribute to falls," said Ellen Schneider, an associate director of the University of North Carolina Institute on Aging and one of the founders of the N.C. Falls Prevention Coalition.

"They may need to have their medications reviewed, have their vision checked or, most importantly, increase their lower body strength and improve their balance."

Reams of statistics point out the pain, inconvenience and medical costs of falls -- on average, a person older than 65 goes to an emergency department every 12 minutes across the country after taking a tumble. Death rates from falls are on a steep upward spike.

But the issue is practical prevention. About 40 groups across North Carolina have joined the falls prevention coalition, starting efforts in towns across the state to drive down the rate of elderly spills.

"We're trying to get more places to identify people who are at risk before they fall," said Carol Giuliani, a researcher and physical therapy professor at UNC-Chapel Hill. "That could be done by physical therapists, nurses in the community, people who do exercise classes for the well seniors, people who work in long-term care."

North Carolina is one of only a handful of states that has a statewide group working on the problem. The year-old group's successes are as symbolic as Gov. Beverly Perdue's designation of this first week of fall as "fall prevention awareness week," and as concrete as the research-
tested balance classes getting started across the state.

Real success will come, members said, when networks are able to identify many more of those likely to fall and to come up with appropriate ways to address each person's risk.

"There is a frightening lack of resources to address falls, given the scope of the problem and increasing aging population," Jane Painter, an associate professor of occupational therapy at East Carolina University, said last week at a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention forum on healthy aging.

Solutions should involve better education and the involvement of home health workers, county departments on aging, hospitals, doctors, emergency workers and therapists statewide, Painter said at the Chapel Hill event.

Packed classes

In highly educated Orange County, seniors are already maxing out the balance classes offered by the county Department on Aging in Chapel Hill and Hillsborough.

"They are really hard to get into because people are so concerned about it; they are concerned about not being able to do the things they want to do because of fear of falling," said Myra Austin, wellness coordinator for the Department on Aging.

On Friday and today, fitness instructors from across Wake County are getting training from Be Active North Carolina in a research-tested program called A Matter of Balance.

In addition to strength and balance training, people taking the classes, developed at Boston University, will learn to see falls as controllable, set goals for being more active and make changes in their homes to cut out environmental risks.

If balance-specific classes aren't available, any exercise that improves strength for older people can be helpful.

"I noticed my balance wasn't as good as it had been," said Campen, the Chapel Hill retiree.

Using a treadmill, step training and lifting five-pound weights has improved Campen's balance, she said.

"If I do start to fall, I can usually prevent it," she said.

thomas.goldsmith@newsobserver.com or 919-829-8929

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Retired professors offer aid to UNC

UNC: Thanks, but it's not that simple

BY ERIC FERRERI, Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL - In February, an association of retired UNC-Chapel Hill professors sought to help ease daunting budget cuts by offering to jump back into teaching, free of charge.

The response from the university, they say, has been underwhelming.

"It was more than a gesture; it was a well-thought-out offer to the university," said Andrew Dobelstein, a retired professor of social welfare policy and the group's president. "I'm quite frankly surprised we haven't gotten much response."

This year, UNC has had to pare its operating budget by more than $60 million, a 10 percent cut. While most of the reductions have to come in nonacademic areas, students are seeing the effects in classrooms, which have become more crowded this fall.

So to Dobelstein, it seemed a great time for UNC to tap this vast pool of retired faculty, many still active in their scholarly fields. There are about 600 retired professors in the Chapel Hill area, Dobelstein said. They could have taught classes, helped write grants, supervise dissertations and mentor students, he said.

"Some of these people have national and international reputations in their fields," said Dobelstein, who retired five years ago but is working part time at N.C. Central University and recently published a new text on social welfare policy. "It's not as if we're just holed up in the coffee shops around town."

But for university officials, the offer isn't quite that simple.

While budget cuts have strained many academic departments, university leaders are leery of plugging retired faculty members into roles that may not fit them perfectly.

"This really has to be one of those things where matches get made," said Ron Strauss, executive associate provost. "We don't want to bring back people who ended their academic careers several years ago and aren't keeping on the cutting edge of their disciplines, just as a stopgap measure."

Despite budget cuts this year, UNC is offering more class sections this fall -- many with more students -- than it did a year ago, Strauss said.

Still, Strauss concedes that if professors are a good match, department heads would be wise to use them.

There is no university mechanism for connecting retired faculty members with teaching slots or other academic roles, Strauss said, adding that those connections are best made within each
department. The UNC system has no formal program concerning retired faculty members, either.

Karen Gil, the new dean of UNC's College of Arts & Sciences, said one of her priorities is to find new ways for retired faculty members to help. And the university's Faculty Council, with representatives from across the campus, is also discussing the issue this year, said McKay Coble, a drama professor and chairwoman of the faculty.

Evelyn Huber has found a way to tap those resources. Huber chairs the political science department, where budget cuts would have forced her to eliminate an honors seminar on European politics because she didn't have the $7,500 to pay an instructor.

She found an answer in Jurg Steiner, who spent 40 years on the UNC faculty before retiring in 2000. He has taught on a part-time basis since and was happy to do so without pay this semester. If anything, Steiner is a better teacher now than he used to be when he balanced a full teaching load with research and administrative responsibilities, he said. And he spends at least half of each year in Europe conducting research that he incorporates into his politics seminar.

"I am very active in research and am also publishing a textbook that we use in the class," said Steiner, who turns 74 Thursday. "The main thing is to continue to be an active researcher. If I had given that up, maybe the department would be less interested in me."

Steiner is one of two retired professors Huber is counting on this year to teach courses for free.

"It's of tremendous value," she said. "They are some of our best teachers."

eric.ferreri@newsobserver.com or 919-932-2008

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Story of little girl buried in rum told over and over

By Kim Grizzard
The Daily Reflector

Tuesday, September 22, 2009

In Beaufort's Old Burying Ground lie Union soldiers and Confederates, slaves and free men. In the cemetery is a British soldier buried upright and facing England and a grave marker dated 1756. But perhaps the most visited grave is not the oldest, nor one of the most heroic. It is that of an unnamed girl entombed in an unorthodox manner.

The headstone tells all that is certain of her story: “LITTLE GIRL BURIED IN RUM KEG 1800.”

“Of course, it attracts attention,” said Janet Grainge, event director for Beaufort's 300th anniversary. “The legend is pretty well renowned. This story is told many times per day as tour guides take folks through the Old Burying Ground.”

For more than 30 years, visitors to the site have brought trinkets and childish treasures to place on headstone No. 24, a marker that references the grave in a self-guided tour pamphlet. Some bring seashells and flowers, others leave toys and teddy bears.

“Mainly it's the children,” said Patricia Suggs, executive director of the Beaufort Historic Site. “Because it is a little girl, they leave things on her grave... like little Barbie dolls, little ponies, Troll dolls, anything for a little girl... Just the story about it being a little girl, that's what appeals to everybody.”

The story, as it is told, is that of a little girl growing up in Beaufort who longed to visit her English homeland. Her mother agreed to let her take the journey with her father, so long as he promised to bring her back. But the little girl died on the return voyage.

“Normally they would do a burial at sea,” Suggs said. “But since the father promised the mother that he would bring her back, he purchased a keg of rum from the captain on the ship and had her basically embalmed in the keg of rum... It's just one of those stories that's been handed down over the years.”

It has been told to school groups and senior citizens, area natives and tourists who have visited the Old Burying Ground, which is designated as a National Historic Site.

East Carolina University graduate Lynn Allred heard the girl's story when she moved to Beaufort more than a decade ago. Allred, a former employee of The Daily Reflector, began researching Beaufort's background in her spare time while working with the Newspapers In Education program at the Carteret County News-Times.

As she pieced together history and hearsay, Allred began to imagine what life had been like for the unknown girl who was a curiosity in the cemetery. She created a story that would help children focus on the life, not the death, of a child growing up in this harbor town in the late 1700s.

The result is “Molly's Beaufort-town,” a serialized story released to coincide with the 300th anniversary of the founding of Beaufort. The 10-chapter serial, which begins Sept. 29 in The Daily Reflector, gives the girl in the grave a life-story, complete with family and friends, activity and adventure.

“I've always wanted to write,” said Allred, who recently moved to her native Oxford. “I kept seeing all these serial stories coming out, and I said, ‘I can do that.’

“I've been wanting to write one for quite some time,” she said. “I was interested in the little girl, in the history of
Beaufort. ... When I sat down to do it, it all just kind of came together."

Though Allred said the writing took only two weeks, she has spent considerable time studying local history to make the story educational as well as entertaining. Allred researched the period and added details, including the kinds of toys and games children might have played with and the kinds of chores that were part of their daily lives.

Though the title character's name is fictional, Allred took some of the surnames in the story straight from the town's historical records. Both Suggs and Grainge consulted with Allred on the fictional story to ensure historical accuracy.

Suggs hopes the story will create interest in the state's third oldest town.

“We hope that it will pique the interest of the teachers and they'll bring their school classrooms down (to the Old Burying Ground),” she said.

“It is a national treasure.”

Tourist season brings thousands of visitors to the site each year to share the story that Grainge calls a "mixture of mystery and tragedy."

“(For) a father to want so badly to preserve his daughter that he comes up with this rather eccentric way to preserve (her) until he can properly bury her in his hometown,” she said, “others feel that sense of family and want to recognize it.”

Allred hopes the story will focus attention on the lives of children in Beaufort's history, instead of one girl's death.

"It is a happy story,” she said. “The way I want kids to look at this story is not that the little girl died but the fact that she had something she really wanted to do. She wanted to go to England and she got to do that. Not very many kids get to have a dream fulfilled at such a young age. ... That's what I would rather the kids concentrate on than that the little girl died."

"Molly's Beaufort-town" is sponsored by Pitt Community College and the newspaper's NIE program. Lesson plans will be available for teachers. Contact Eban Kea at ekea@coxnc.com or call 329-9630.

Events

Beaufort continues its 300th anniversary celebration:

FRIDAY

4:30-11 p.m.: Free outdoor concerts on Front Street with Big Drink and The Embers

6 p.m.: Community blessing

Beaufort Outdoor Picnic By-the-Sea and 300th birthday cake

SATURDAY

Noon: “The Carteret Chords” performing patriotic songs

1-6 p.m.: Concerts presented by Beaufort churches & choirs

6 p.m.: Closing ceremonies: Be a part of history as Beaufort receives high honors.

6 p.m.: Shrimp Boat Parade from Taylors Creek to Gallant's Channel.

6:30-10 p.m.: Free concerts on Historic Beaufort Waterfront, Front Street

8:30-9 p.m.: Fireworks display, Gallants Channel

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Opening doors

Letting students who are illegal immigrants attend community colleges is a good move for North Carolina.

The state's community colleges are changing for the better, to give more students a chance.

You might think such a move would be easy and popular, but it wasn't easy and this particular change may not be widely supported, at least right away. Opposition to admitting illegal immigrants to community colleges has become a flashpoint issue in North Carolina, and Republican officials, joined by Democratic Gov. Beverly Perdue and Lt. Gov. Walter Dalton, immediately criticized the 18-member State Board of Community Colleges for its near-unanimous decision. (Dalton, who has a seat on the board, was the lone "no" vote.)

Here's hoping, however, that the logic of the board's action and its carefully crafted nature will cool the most overheated of the opposition. North Carolinians are fair-minded people, and the decision the community college board has taken is fair to all. If anything, it is tougher on the young people involved than are the policies of most states.

Board members voted Friday to admit illegal immigrants who have graduated from high school in this country only if they pay out-of-state tuition rates. Furthermore, the new students will be enrolled in classes only after all legal residents get seats. So they won't be getting a "free ride" -- not by a long shot -- and they won't be depriving other students of a place.

All they'll be getting is a chance to better themselves.

This policy change clarifies years of confusion over what the community college system's policies should be for students who graduate from high school here and then want to go on to learn the job skills that community colleges offer. The change will end a ban on illegal immigrants' admissions that was imposed last year, when anti-illegal immigrant sentiment overflowed nationwide and, in particular, in North Carolina, which had experienced an exceptional surge in such immigrants during the boom years of the past two decades.

Taking the opposition's arguments into account, the move is structured so it will not harm any legal North Carolina residents. By imposing high, out-of-state tuition rates, about $7,700 per year, the board assures that relatively few illegal immigrants will be able to take advantage of the courses being offered. The system determined, contrary to critics' charges, that out-of-state tuition more than compensates it for the cost of instruction -- does anyone seriously propose charging students more than that?

Among the states, only South Carolina bars illegal immigrants entirely from its two-year colleges. Are we really to take our cue from South Carolina rather than the other 48 states? The question answers itself.

What's really at issue here is clearing out an illogical roadblock between high school -- yes,
youths who are in this country illegally are entitled to attend the public schools -- and higher education (the UNC system, for example, admits such students). When it comes to the two-year colleges in-between, nearly every state has opted to offer a chance for betterment to young people who typically had no say in their parents' decision to bring them here. In making this modest but good-hearted change, North Carolina is joining the rest of the nation, as well it should.

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UNC frat gets penalty for year

Leader died following party

BY ERIC FERRERI, Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL - The UNC-Chapel Hill fraternity that hosted a party the night its president was shot to death by police in Randolph County has been sanctioned.

The university's Greek Judicial Board placed the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity on one year of social probation -- which means it can't hold mixers or cocktail parties -- and shortened its pledge period from eight to four weeks. DKE ran afoul of the judicial board in part for violating policies prohibiting having alcohol present at recruiting events. The fraternity pleaded guilty to the violation.

In a three-page decision, the student judicial board said that although a one-semester sanction was first proposed, it put the fraternity on a year of probation because of previous violations.

The report did not specify the fraternity's prior problems but said one concerned a fire violation.

The board accepted other sanctions volunteered by the fraternity. They include a mandatory information session each semester on rules and regulations, the creation of three new fraternity vice presidents to create more members in leadership positions, and the sponsorship of a Habitat for Humanity house in the name of Courtland Smith.

Smith, 21, had attended the Aug. 22 party before leaving about 12:30 a.m. He was shot by an Archdale police officer after being stopped on Interstate 85 just before 5 a.m. He had dialed 911 as he drove west at a high speed. He told a dispatcher that he was trying to kill himself, that he had been drinking and that he had a 9 mm handgun.

After Smith's death, UNC-CH Chancellor Holden Thorp ordered the investigation into the fraternity party.

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eric.ferreri@newsobserver

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One Shot of Vaccine Can Protect Most Children

By DONALD G. McNEIL JR.

A single shot of swine flu vaccine appears to protect most children and teenagers nearly as well as it protects adults, federal health officials said Monday.

Young children who have never had the flu or a flu shot, however, need two doses, they said. So, to fully protect them against both swine and seasonal flu this year, those children will need four shots.

“I’m pleased to bring you more good news,” Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, told reporters on Monday in a telephone news conference about the trials of the new vaccine his agency is overseeing. On Sept. 10, he reported that adults were protected by a single shot, rather than the two that many experts had predicted; the announcement effectively doubled the nation’s supply of swine flu vaccine and halved the paperwork.

Preliminary results of the next round of trials, in pregnant women, are expected next month.

The latest trials, done in about 600 children and teenagers, ages 10 to 17, found that they received a “robust immune response” from a single dose, Dr. Fauci said. (Specifically, after 10 days, 76 percent had enough antibodies in their blood to be considered immune to swine flu. While that is not 100 percent protection, some could be expected to develop more antibodies after 10 days, and 76 percent is considered “not bad at all” for flu vaccine, Dr. Fauci added.)

Children 6 months to 9 years old received some protection from one shot, but not enough, so health officials will recommend that they get two shots 21 days apart.

“This is not an unexpected finding and is in accordance with what we find with seasonal flu vaccine,” Dr. Fauci said.

Because young children have immature immune systems, pediatricians usually give them two shots the first time they administer flu vaccine. After that, annual shots act as boosters.

Doctors can give both the swine and seasonal flu shots in a single visit and then the two together again 21 days later, said Dr. Anne Schuchat, director of the flu division of the Centers for Disease Control and Protection. But they should not give more than a single dose of either vaccine in nasal spray form at one time, she added.

Nasal spray vaccine, known as FluMist, uses a weakened live virus, which gives more protection but carries slightly more risk and so is not recommended for children under 2 or children with asthma or who wheeze.
Seasonal flu vaccine has already been shipped, and health officials are urging Americans to get it right away. The first doses of swine flu vaccine are expected to become available in early October. The initial 3.4 million doses will be in nasal spray form, but the injectable versions are expected one to two weeks later.

There were no serious reactions to the vaccine among the 600 children tested, Dr. Fauci said. Some complained of sore arms or mild fevers, he said, but that is typical for flu shots.
Peace president to step down

Bingham oversaw years of growth at the Raleigh women's college

BY ANNE BLYTHE, Staff writer

RALEIGH - Laura Carpenter Bingham, the Peace College president who on Monday announced her plans to retire, describes herself as a builder -- not a maintainer -- of education programs.

Under Bingham's oversight, Peace has expanded its campus and facilities, and increased enrollment.

The school began offering four-year baccalaureate degrees in 1995 after a long history as a two-year college.

After 12 years at the helm of Peace, Bingham is ready for someone else to take over management of the women's college in downtown Raleigh.

"I'm a forward-moving person," Bingham, 52, said Monday. "I'm not as good at the status quo or moving sidesteps."

Established in 1857, Peace was one of the earliest schools in the South for the "thorough education of girls."

The college had eight years of record enrollments during Bingham's tenure and is expected to reach 750 in the coming semester from a low of 419 when the college moved to baccalaureate status.

"President Bingham is a dynamic leader for Peace College who immersed herself in its life and
mission," said Todd Robinson, chairman of the Peace board of trustees. "She has firmly established the college as a baccalaureate institution of choice for young women and has attracted an outstanding team of faculty and administrators who will keep the college moving forward in the years to come."

Bingham made the public announcement Monday afternoon to faculty and staff. She then called trustees.

A search process will soon begin for a replacement.

Bingham plans to leave during the summer, but a precise date has not been scheduled.

"Twelve years is a long time in college presidencies these days," Bingham said in a prepared statement. "And, the way I've done it, I've given my all. There comes a time when family and personal renewal beckon -- and when leadership change can be healthy for an institution. Plus, I'm young enough to have yet another fulfilling career in my future."

Staff writer Eric Ferreri contributed to this report.

anne.blythe@newsobserver.com or 919-932-8741

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Swanky housing meant to lure undergrads

BY SARA OLKON, Chicago Tribune

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. - In a pricey new residence hall, Purdue University students enjoy maid service and private bathrooms. Each room has a climate-control panel, and students don't even have to confer about the settings, because there are no roommates.

The communal lounges -- two on every floor -- have 47-inch flat-screen TVs, entertainment centers custom-designed by Amish carpenters, free Wi-Fi and kitchenettes with ceramic tile.

For these amenities and more, students or their parents pay a premium of $5,000 per year above typical room-and-board costs. Yet in the depths of a recession, the 356 spots at First Street Towers residential hall sold out in two days, in part because of generational changes in parenting and in young adults' expectations about privacy and privation.

Increasingly, colleges are building their own luxury accommodations to keep students on campus, said James Baumann, a spokesman for the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International.

For the millennial generation -- born between 1982 and 2003 -- sharing space doesn't always come easy. Privacy isn't negotiable.

"They didn't grow up sharing a bedroom, maybe even sharing a bathroom," Baumann said. "When it comes time for college, they anticipate a continuation of that."

Ashley Hendzell, 19, a sophomore, takes advantage of her autonomy at First Street Towers by liberally spraying her room with the eau de cologne Ralph Hot, keeping 30 pairs of shoes at the ready and jamming the bookshelf with every episode of "The O.C." and "Dawson's Creek."

"I've never had to worry about anyone else," said Hendzell, whose two siblings are several years older. "I've always been alone."

Tom Cheesman, architect of Purdue's $52 million First Street Towers, said the residence hall is
"essentially a hotel." He said it is especially attractive to "helicopter parents who want to send their son or daughter to college campus but give them all the luxuries of home."

The demand for more posh undergraduate housing is growing across college campuses, contradicting general economic trends toward simplifying and cutting back.

This fall, Boston University unveiled a 960-bed luxury dorm overlooking the Charles River that comes with walk-in closets, large private bathrooms and washers and dryers programmed to alert students via computer when their sheets are dry. Rooms in the elegant tower also run about $5,000 more than traditional rooms.

At Arizona State University, nonfreshmen can apply for spots at Vista Del Sol, an on-campus, 1,841-bed facility run in partnership with a private developer. Billed as a first-class resort, the complex has a heated pool, a hot tub, a sand volleyball court and four tanning booths. Units come with "lavishly appointed" kitchens, washer and dryers, cable and Internet access. Rent for a one-person efficiency is about $1,000 a month and requires a 12-month lease -- well above the $6,500 per academic year for a traditional one-bedroom on campus.

"Schools recognize that [nicer] residence halls are part of the recruitment process," Baumann said. "This led to what we call, tongue-in-cheek, 'the amenities war,'" he said. "'Dorm' is a four-letter word."

Hotel living comes at a price. At First Street Towers, the rooms start at about $13,800 per academic year, including at least 10 dining-hall meals a week. The same room-and-board arrangement in a standard double room is about $5,000 less.

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