THE DAILY CLIPS

October 6, 2009

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A century has passed since the first students arrived in Greenville to begin their education at East Carolina Teachers Training School. Classes began on Oct. 5, 1909, with a core of 174 men and women who came to this community in an effort to improve themselves and the world around them.

That remains the cause of East Carolina University, as well as the thousands of students who annually come to this city in search of an education. The school stands at the vibrant center of this community, an invaluable resource committed to serving the city, the state and this nation.

As Greenville voters look toward the municipal election in November, considerable discussion has focused on planning for growth. Managing an influx of new residents, new businesses and new infrastructure poses a daunting challenge for the future of this community, and its leaders must take seriously the responsibility to do so with care and attention to detail.

That must include considering the future of the institution at the heart of the city. Though East Carolina is now home to more than 20,000 students, officials predict the student population will swell to more than 35,000 in coming years.

Such growth threatens to overwhelm this community unless present decision making takes them into account.

A century ago, city officials could not have imagined that the fledgling teachers school would someday become an influential state university with a national reputation. Nor could they have predicted that the first class of a few dozen would ultimately become a few thousand, and later, tens of thousands.

Decisions made now must reflect the inevitable continuation of that growth, preparing for the future of East Carolina even as officials ready for the future of Greenville.

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Hannah F. Daniels

Hannah F. Daniels Hannah Frances Daniels, 81, died Sunday, Oct. 4, 2009. A graveside service will be conducted Wednesday 11 a.m. in Onslow Memorial Park in Jacksonville. Ms. Daniels, a native of Pamlico County, had been a resident of Greenville for over 40 years. She was a graduate of East Carolina Teachers College, where she earned her B.S. and M.A. degrees. In 1956, after teaching business courses in Wallace and Jacksonville High Schools for seven years, she began her career at East Carolina University, teaching courses from the freshman level to graduate level. She earned her doctorate from the University of Tennessee in 1970. In 1988 she retired as Professor Emeritus. During her career she held leadership positions in business education organizations at the local, state, and national levels, receiving the Robert and Lina Mays Award for Teaching Excellence in 1975 - 1976. Ms. Daniels was an active member of Jarvis Memorial United Methodist Church where she had held various positions including serving on the Board of Trustees, Administrative Board and on the Executive Board of United Methodist Women. She was a member and past president of the Beta Alpha of Delta Kappa Gamma, and was a former treasurer for the Salvation Army Women's Auxiliary. She was preceded in death by her parents, Kenneth and Nellie Hardison Daniels. She is survived by her sister, Sue D. Briley, of Mathews; nieces, Lynn B. Hunter and husband, Derrick, of Pinnacle, and Lori B. Hooper and husband, Tom, of Charlotte; great-niece, Molly Hunter; and great-nephews, Ryan Hunter, Zack and Alex Hooper. The family will receive friends tonight from 5 to 7 at Wilkerson Funeral Home. Online condolences at www.wilkersonfuneralhome.com.

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Swine Flu Vaccine Reaches an Anxious Nation

By ANEMONA HARTOCOLLIS

The fear of swine flu is being compounded by new worries, this time among primary care doctors who say that they are swamped by calls from patients seeking the new vaccine, and that they are ill-prepared to cope with the nationwide drive to immunize everyone, particularly children and chronically ill adults.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released the first doses of vaccine on Monday. But many doctors, especially pediatricians, say they know little about the program and have been deluged with questions.

At the same time, the pediatricians are struggling to figure out how to administer perhaps thousands of doses quickly in small offices with limited staff, while still dealing with other illnesses.

Some said they were considering hiring nurses just for the vaccinations and setting aside days when children would be vaccinated in alphabetical order.

At Westchester Pediatrics, an office with 6,000 to 8,000 families in Hartsdale, N.Y., exasperated doctors have added a new choice to the office answering machine: “If you have a question about the flu vaccine, please dial 6.” Pressing 6 produces a further message saying that the swine flu vaccine is not yet available, and to keep checking the CDC.gov Web site for updates.

For those who are not satisfied, a sign in the office waiting room counsels patience.

Kathryn Paterno, the office manager, summed up the situation as “a nightmare.”

“People want it,” Ms. Paterno said of the swine flu vaccine. “When they listen to news reports, they pick out bits and pieces — ‘swine flu, get it’ — but they don’t quite comprehend that we don’t have it yet, and we’re dealing with a quite affluent socioeconomic group here.”

When asked whether his office had received vaccine inquiries, Dr. Herbert Lazarus, a pediatrician on the Upper West Side, said only half-jokingly: “Do you think that’s accounting for two-thirds of our phone calls, or three-quarters?”

In Philadelphia, Dr. Shea Cronley of Advocare Society Hill Pediatrics said she was concerned that emergency rooms were starting to see a rise in flu cases, but she did not know when she would be getting her share of vaccine.

“We’re waiting,” she said.

The Centers for Disease Control has embarked on an extensive immunization drive with a goal of producing
195 million to 250 million doses of vaccine.

The vaccine is being distributed free to local jurisdictions, like city and state health departments, which are responsible for taking orders from doctors, hospitals, school systems and the like. Normally, doctors order vaccines directly from manufacturers.

As of Monday, 62 states or localities had put in orders for a total of more than 1.7 million doses.

Actual delivery will lag, however, adding to the confusion about when doctors will get their share. The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene said Friday that it expected to get only 68,800 doses by early this week, and New York State expected 59,000. Increasing amounts of vaccine are expected to be available in the next few weeks.

Even the city’s public hospitals remained uncertain about the logistics. “We are prepared to provide access to the H1N1 vaccine,” said Ana Marengo, a spokeswoman for the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, “and the piece of information still missing is knowing when it will be available and how much everyone will get.”

Kathleen Sebelius, secretary of Health and Human Services, acknowledged the concerns, but said it was up to local health departments to run interference between doctors, hospitals and the federal government.

“I’ve heard a lot about how much confusion there is about how to get the vaccine,” Ms. Sebelius said Friday.

“We’ll never, from the mother ship, give one national picture,” she added. “It’s going to be many, many local decisions. What we do need to know is, if that information isn’t getting across, then maybe we can do something about it.”

Many school districts, including New York’s, are making plans to immunize children at school. But in interviews over the last few days, doctors said they were confused about whether they were expected to vaccinate their patients, or whether schools would take the lead.

“That’s a critical issue, and I can’t find out,” said Dr. Max Van Gilder, a New York City pediatrician in an office with about 4,800 patients.

In the Chicago suburb of Evanston, Ill., Dr. Irwin Benuck, a pediatrician in a practice of 8,000 patients, said parents were flooding the office with questions about when the vaccine would be available. He has ordered the vaccine from the local health department, but he does not know when he will get it. He is telling families also to look to other sources, like schools and drugstores.

“We’ve heard nothing in terms of timetables,” he said.

Dr. Jane R. Zucker, assistant commissioner of New York City’s bureau of immunization, said the city considered doctors to be the first line of defense, and the schools a backup for children who did not have private doctors.

She said that New York would be splitting its first shipment of vaccine (in the form of a nasal mist unsuitable for pregnant women and people with chronic health conditions) between health care workers in hospitals and clinics, who are required by state law to be immunized, and doctors treating children.
She said the city expected to get the vaccine into its elementary schools by early November and was considering setting up weekend vaccination clinics for older children.

Some doctors wondered whether the vaccination drive was necessary for a flu that has caused only mild symptoms in most cases. They said some of their patients had expressed doubts about whether the vaccine had been sufficiently tested for safety, and they admitted that they were sympathetic to those fears.

Dr. Lazarus, the Upper West Side pediatrician, recalled that as a child, he had lined up for the polio vaccine on a sugar cube. But it was the early 1960s, he said, and by then the science of that vaccine was well established. “You don’t always want to be the first person on line to get the vaccine — do you think?” he said.

Dr. Jessica Sessions, director of pediatrics at the Ryan Center, which treats many poor patients on the Upper West Side, said that she was reassuring patients that she herself was going to get the vaccination, to protect her twins, who are 4 1/2 months old.

Dr. Van Gilder said that when he got his share of vaccine — and he was wondering when that would be — he was planning to conduct a vaccination blitz, immunizing 250 children a day in alphabetical order.

“It’s a logistical nightmare,” he said.

Donald G. McNeil Jr. contributed reporting.
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Weapons Report Upsets a Florida Campus

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — The University of South Florida was locked down on Monday after someone reported a man with a gun and a bomb near the library. The police had one person in custody, charged with making a false report.

No one reported shots being fired or injuries. Students were told to return to their normal routine about three hours after the lockdown began.

Vincent T. McCoy, 23, a student at the university, was arrested and charged in the incident.

The Tampa Police Department's bomb squad examined Mr. McCoy's backpack and determined it was safe, the police said. He had no weapons on him and was cooperative, Lt. Meg Ross of the university police said.

Mr. McCoy was being held on $7,500 bond. He did not yet have a lawyer.

A second person who was reportedly carrying a knife on campus was detained, but the police said they believe it was unrelated to the gun report.

The first call came in at 1:36 p.m. to the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, which transferred it to campus police.

A siren interrupted classes. An announcement over a loud speaker said that there was an intruder and that students should stay inside and lock their doors, said Amanda Barnes, an 18-year-old international studies major.

Administrators also sent text messages to students.

"A lot of people were like, 'O.K., I'm going to go up to my room, and no big deal,'" Ms. Barnes told The Associated Press. "A couple of people were like, 'Oh, my God. I'm so scared.'"

Another student, Hannah Quill, told The St. Petersburg Times what she had seen and heard.

"It sounded like one of those tornado alarms up North," Ms. Quill said. She described classrooms on lockdown and added, "I saw quite a few police cars heading toward the front of campus."

About 3:30 p.m., the police also reported a man on campus wearing a black tank top and a cowboy hat, carrying a black puppy and a large hunting knife.

Lieutenant Ross said that the man was being questioned, but that it did not seem related to the earlier
report of a man carrying a gun and a bomb.
College technology 'catching up' with students

By Kathleen Gray and Robin Erb, USA TODAY

Abilene Christian University freshmen receive more than the usual campus map and lists of required books when they enter the Texas university.

For the past two years, they've also received an iPhone or iPod Touch from the university before they begin classes.

ONLINE EDUCATION: Expanding to fill U.S. degree needs
FACEBOOK: Are social networks making students more narcissistic?

At Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, a select group of freshmen received Kindles, an online book reader, instead of the textbooks.

And at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant, a new $50 million education building has 75 miles of Internet networking cable and 11 miles of phone cable, allowing out-of-town students to link with the classroom.

Today's college classrooms are high-tech marvels, with overhead projectors and grease pencils replaced by document cameras, hand-held clickers and interactive white boards.

"A lot of this is us catching up with the students and what they're bringing to us," says Michael Reuter, 42, director of technology operations at Central Michigan.

Faculty, for the most part, see technology as a way to better connect to students in their interactive, multitasking, apps-ready world.

"A lot of people my age see technology as a tool to check e-mail and do grades. But for kids, the technology is just the environment that they know," says Howard Pfitz, senior director of curriculum and instruction at MoREL, an education research non-profit in Denver. "When I was a middle school principal eight years ago, I taught a class in multimedia and was supposed to be the expert, but every day, kids were teaching me stuff I didn't know. Teachers need to see that everybody in the class is a teacher."

'Wild experimentation' for some

At Abilene Christian, where students and faculty get the Apple devices for free but are responsible for monthly charges, about 2,800 students and 70% of the 250 professors use the Apple technology for instructional purposes. An art teacher has students use an application that allows them to do a draft sketch and send it to the teacher and other students for advice before starting the real art pieces. A drama teacher takes video of the lead dancer in a production and sends that along to other students for rehearsal.

"We're seeing some wild experimentation with these devices," says William Rankin, director of educational innovation and an associate professor of English at Abilene Christian: "We see it as a new platform for learning."

Mike Kenney, a chemistry professor at Case Western, says he has about 350 pounds' worth of books in his Kindle, a wireless reading device from Amazon. The 40 students in his introductory chemistry class chosen for the pilot program traded an eight-pound chemistry book for the two-pound e-reader.

A handful of other universities across the nation — Pace in New York, Princeton in New Jersey, Reed in Oregon, the Darden School at the University of Virginia, and Arizona State — also are participating in the pilot program.

"It is possible to have an entire academic career with you at all times," Kenney says.

There are economic benefits, too. A book on Kindle costs about half as much as the paper textbook, Kenney says.

At the University of Texas-San Antonio, professors are using a $375,000 grant to come up with a curriculum that will transform three-day-a-week classes to allow students to independently connect to lessons online and then have one day for discussion and debate in the classroom.

'Teach naked' (no computers) for others

Jose Bowen, a dean at the Dallas-based Southern Methodist University, recently stripped computers from lecture halls. He challenged staff instead to "teach naked" — without computers in the classroom.

Bowen says his critics dismissed it as "anti-technology." But it's quite the opposite, he argues. Bowen says he uses video games to help teach his jazz history students, and he encourages his classes to explore online research for better understanding of topics.

But technology has its place, he says, and today's faculty should offer podcasted lectures, hyperlinks and online study sessions to prep the students with materials before class — leaving classroom time for discussion and debate.

Worries about cheating and distracted students using Facebook, Twitter or instant messaging instead of listening to lessons, however, may be overblown.

"When I was in school, it was just called writing notes to your friends. The rule is you need an engaging teacher," Rankin says. "This technology gives us the opportunity to have discussions with students about ethical behavior."

Kathleen Gray and Robin Erb report for the Detroit Free Press.