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Cannon raised from ship that may have been Blackbeard's

The Associated Press

MOREHEAD CITY — State underwater archaeologists on Monday raised a cannon from a sunken ship that could have belonged to the pirate Blackbeard.

The roughly 8-foot-long cannon weighs about 2,500 pounds and was pulled from an ongoing excavation at the presumed site of the Queen Anne's Revenge. Fay Mitchell, a spokeswoman for the state Department of Cultural Resources, said the crew finished bringing it to the surface early Monday afternoon.

The cannon will be on display Wednesday at the N.C. Maritime Museum expansion site in Beaufort.

Historians believe Blackbeard's ship ran aground in Beaufort Inlet in June 1718.
Chancellors’ raises will help state, Bowles says

The 15.7 percent raises last month for UNC-Chapel Hill Chancellor James Moeser and N.C. State University Chancellor James Oblinger were approved by the UNC Board of Governors 2½ weeks before Moeser announced his intention to step down from the position.

That was no accident, UNC President Erskine Bowles says.

The $53,035 raises were given, in part, to raise the UNC-CH chancellor’s salary to a more competitive level as the search begins for Moeser’s replacement.

“The other part was, they deserve it,” Bowles said. “If you look at where the median and where the 80th percentile is for people who run institutions like N.C. State and Chapel Hill, they’re significantly higher.”

The salaries were raised to $390,835.

Bowles gave a similar rationale for UNC Health Care System CEO Dr. William Roper’s salary bump, which was reported as a 7.2 percent increase to $690,000. That wasn’t just an increase over his base salary but was calculated based on his total compensation the previous year (the base salary plus a $110,000 bonus he received in 2006-07).

Roper also received a mid-year salary adjustment in February, a raise of $44,502, “to partially offset the loss of future performance-based bonuses,” UNC spokeswoman Joni Worthington said.

So while the UNC Health Care’s board eliminated bonuses for its executives this year, Roper ended up with a bigger paycheck.

Roper’s bonus had been criticized by people who complained about the health care system’s aggressive collection practices toward patients.
Among bees, the looser win

Queen bees need many, varied partners, researchers say

BY JOSH SHAFFER
STAFF WRITER

RALEIGH — In the pitless world of honey bees, it pays to be a floozy.

Research at N.C. State University shows that the happiest, most productive bee colonies are ruled by queens with roving eyes and a taste for insect whoopee.

For a beekeeper, this means that a honey harvest's success can be tied to the variety and number of the queen's partners.

It also spells good news for bee health in a perilous time for the insects. Nationally, colonies are getting wiped out by a mysterious collapse, and North Carolina has seen hives hit hard by parasitic mites.

The NCSU study shows a link between queen quality and healthy colonies. But in a larger sense, the professors' work spells validation for promiscuity in at least one corner of the animal kingdom.

The queen bee is born into a world that closely resembles the British monarchy circa 1600.

One question — who shall be queen? — dominates bee life, with workers always ready to kill off an unproductive monarch.

A queen gives off pheromones that block the urge to kill and create new queens, said Christina Grozingher, professor of insect genomics and co-author of the study.

The idea that spawned the study suggested that the more partners the queen had, and the more variety in her mates, the

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more compelling the pheromone. So to the test, which took about
two years in an artificial bee colony at Lake Wheeler.

Half of about 60 bees in the study got a microliter of semen from a single drone. The others

got 10 times as much from 10 times as many.

Inseminating the bees was a specialty of David Tarpy, assistant professor of entomology and co-author of the study. To do it, the bees were knocked out using carbon dioxide and probed with a
tiny needle. "You have to maneuver it in there and kind of wiggle it until it's in the right position," Grozinger said.

The results: Queens with multiple mates drew crowds that were
1 1/2 times as large. So if a single-mate queen drew 10 bees, a more libertine bee attracted 15.

The results repeated themselves when the researchers placed an extract from the bee's pheromone glands on a slide. Pheromones with variety proved most popular, evidence of the queen's history.

"You'd think the bee would want control no matter what and not let on how many times she mated," Grozinger said. "But she does. The workers seem to know that it's better."

The upshot is better bee colonies, said Freddie-Jeanne Richard, a post-doctoral research associate in the Department of Entomology, also involved in the study.

Fighting mites

A pair of parasitic mites have caused the number of managed hives in North Carolina to drop from 180,000 to 100,000 since the mid-1980s.

Beekeepers complain that their queens last just a year, Richard said. But with happy workers not bent on regicide, they can last three. And if a queen mates more freely, she has a better chance at picking up mite-resistant traits that neighboring bees could carry.

It's hard for a beekeeper to know a queen's mating history in advance, said Charles Heatherly, president of the N.C. Beekeepers Association. But if a colony starts
drawing all manner of bees, both black and yellow, it's a good chance there's some variety in the
queen's mix.

To really select a queen with a good history, Grozinger said, you'd need to inseminate her.

It's the kind of science that can draw giggles from the professors whose work appeared this month in the online science journal PLoS One. Talking about their work, it was hard for them not to notice parallels to the human world.

The scarlet letter of the insect kingdom isn't A, it would seem. It's B.

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MAKE THAT FRAME COUNT

Chapel Hill filmmakers took this challenge: Create a short film in 24 hours — with a few twists.

They'd been at it 21 hours.

Their eyes carried that all-nighter look —
tired-but-wired.

Caribou and Starbucks paper coffee cups, along
with Tostitos bags, filled trash cans to the brim. The
college students and twentysomethings belted out
Justin Timberlake's "What Goes Around ... Comes
Around" off-sync — just because.

Then, they hunched over their computer screens
again, racing the clock to edit their short films by
a tight deadline — 24 hours from when the movi-
es were launched.

The Carolina Production Guild, a UNC-Chapel Hill stu-
dent group, organized the 24-hour film challenge — its
first one — on the final weekend of September. After the
furor of production, the three short films were screened at
Chapel Hill's Jack Sprat Café.

The 25 or so participants knew things would go wrong.

One team missed deadline. One team lost some footage.
But nobody counted on the cops showing up.

The opening scene

The aspiring actors, producers and directors strolled
into UNC-CH's Swain Hall on Saturday, Sept. 29, in
their New Balance sneakers, Von Dutch caps and snug,
half-zipped hoodies.

They looked around at one another apprehensively. What
would the next 24 hours bring?

Garrett Kemble, vice president for the guild, said he
had seen this kind of filmmaking challenge done before,
and he wanted to try it at Carolina. Except the chal len-
ges he had seen spanned 48 hours instead of 24.

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Kemble, a senior majoring in communications and history, played the role of one of the executive producers.

Just before the challenge began, he assigned the participants — a mix of students, graduates and area residents — to three teams. Then, the teams were handed one of three different genres: action/drama, horror and romance/comedy.

The guild tried to make everything reflect filmmaking in the real world: meetings with studio executives, sponsors' demands, last-minute changes and "diva" attitudes on the set.

The rising climax.

At 2:30 p.m., each team's line producer had a meeting with the executive producers of the "studio," where they had to pitch their team's storylines and negotiate for equipment.

Members of team "The Misunderestimated," who had the horror genre, were first. Their plot? A janitor named Sebastian is obsessed with gum and with a young woman who likes to chew it.

Participant Alex Taylor pitched the story to the execs, who tried to look intimidating.

"So, gum's sort of the evil force?" Kemble asked Taylor in all seriousness.

Now, the surprise: "One of the main actors is a diva — they prefer that you shoot only the left side of their face," Kemble told the participants. And this actor also had to be on the screen for at least two scenes, Kemble said, to ensure that the actor was not just an extra.

Next was team "Gonzo 7," the romance/comedy group.

"This is the surreal saga of a nerdy academic who falls for a sicko hit woman with a heart of gold," Tiffany Dixon told the producers.

Their surprise?

"We are having problems with the union. Every member of your crew has to be in the film at some point," Kemble said.

Last was team "Caffeinated Woodchucks." Their genre was action/drama.

"We started the story with a guy following a girl, and the audience doesn't quite understand said team member James Taylor, who is a correspondent for The Chapel Hill News. "We're sort of in the girl's shoes."

"In the last interaction, he grabs her and asks her, 'Where's your brother?' " Taylor said. "We're not even going to include why he's looking for her brother.

Their twist was that The Gap was sponsoring the film, and to promote its line of red clothing, Taylor's team had to use the color red in almost every scene.

As night fell, the cops entered the picture. Someone had complained to campus police about people being on Swain Hall's roof. Gonzo 7 was trying to meet two of the required elements on its list. They were filming a chase scene on the roof.

In the end, no one was charged.

Later, the team realized it lost because of the red color.
THE RULES

The three groups of six or seven had to write a script and produce a short film in 24 hours. Each film could run no more than seven minutes.

Each group was given a “budget” of 20 points to be spent on equipment such as dollies, lights, microphones, tripods and cameras. Items were worth one to four points each.

The groups’ films had to have five of 10 elements. One element had to appear in the film’s first 30 seconds and last 60 seconds.

- a character named Sebastian
- a character in uniform
- a knight in shining armor
- the UNC-Chapel Hill Bell Tower
- something being broken
- pollution
- a rule being broken without getting caught (no felonies)
- a sign of things to come
- a scene being shot at the top of a building
- a chase

THE TEAMS

The Misunderestimated:
Film was "Something Being Broken," horror genre

Caffeinated Woodchucks:
Film was "Flinch," action/drama genre

Gonzo 7: Film was "Nerd," romance/comedy genre

The finale

Twelve hours later, at 10 a.m. Sunday, Dixon lay sprawled on a couch. Her teammate, Victor Olivera, leaned back in a recliner.

Others were editing their shorts or filming last-minute scenes.

At one point, Graham Toben challenged teammate Olivera to a “rap battle” — a welcomed distraction, it seemed.

Toben bust out his best Justin Timberlake voice. Some delirious, caffeine-induced giggles at first. Then, others decided to sing along.

Three more hours to go till deadline.

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Financial aid files stolen, UNCC says

KAREN CIMINO

A UNC Charlotte student employee is accused of stealing the personal financial information of more than 140 people from the Office of Student Financial Aid, then obtaining credit cards using that information, according to the university.

No charges have been filed yet, university officials said.

UNCC sent certified letters Friday to the 148 people whose information is believed to have been taken.

The theft was uncovered after campus police investigated several reports of fraudulent credit-card activity, according to university officials.

The investigation led to the discovery that a student employee had stolen several files that contained the financial records. No electronically stored information was involved in the theft.

The letter advised the potential victims to place a fraud alert on their credit files. Such an alert tells creditors to contact the individual before opening new accounts or making changes to existing accounts.

The student employee suspected in the theft is cooperating with law enforcement officials, university officials said. It is believed that all of the stolen files have been accounted for and that the risk of additional fraudulent activity is low.

The university has taken precautionary measures to protect confidential information, but university officials would not discuss the details of those measures. They also declined to discuss what type of screening process the university uses for student employees, particularly those who handle sensitive material.

"UNC Charlotte takes this matter very seriously and will continue to investigate it in conjunction with the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's office," David Dunn, vice chancellor for university relations and community affairs, said Monday in a statement.
Medical Schools Stop Using Dogs and Pigs in Teaching

Training of future doctors now largely depends on new technologies rather than lab animals

By KATHERINE MANGAN

Medical students who have qualms about practicing their surgical skills on dogs and pigs no longer have to worry that refusing to participate will hurt their grades. In most cases today, the medical schools themselves are opting out of live-animal teaching labs.

Although animals are still widely used in research, only a dozen of the nation's 125 accredited medical schools still use live animals to teach skills in physiology, pharmacology, and surgery. That number is dropping fast: nine school stopped in the past year alone.

Medical educators say three main factors have prompted the shift: the increasing availability of realistic alternatives, such as interactive computer simulations, cadavers, and lifelike mannequins; students' ethical concerns about using live animals; and the expense of staffing and maintaining animal labs.

One of the leading advocates of the change is John J. Pippin, a cardiologist and a former medical researcher at the Medical College of Virginia and the University of Oklahoma, who now works with a group called the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. He has been writing to medical schools that use animals and urging them to stop.

Medical students can test drug interactions, for example, on mannequins with anatomically correct airways, pupils that constrict and dilate, and heart and lung sounds. The devices are programmed to show human responses to dozen of drugs.

"You can correct your mistakes as you go along, rather than giving two to three drugs to a dog, recording what happens to the heart rate, and then killing the dog," he says.

What's more, Dr. Pippin argues, animals' responses don't necessarily mirror those of humans, and simulated humans and even cadavers provide more-reliable measures of results. Surgical trainees can practice on mannequins equipped with fake blood and simulated tissue layers.

Those options weren't available to Dr. Pippin in the late 1980s, when he was a graduate student at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. He says he had a grant from the American Heart Association to conduct a study in which he induced heart attacks in dogs and monitored their responses using imaging technology.

When he realized that he was scaring and hurting the animals without learning anything that directly translated to humans, "it was a real epiphany for me," Dr. Pippin said in a telephone interview punctuated by barking from one of
his nine rescued dogs. "I felt my career was a fraud."

**Defending the Use of Animals**

Some medical professors, taking issue with the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, say its name is misleading. Far from being an impartial advisory group, they say, it is an animal-rights advocacy group with ties to the controversial group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, a connection that Dr. Pippin denies.

"Only about 5 percent of their members are physicians, and I refuse to respond to them until they change their name," says Robert G. Carroll, a professor of physiology at East Carolina University's Brody School of Medicine.

Dr. Carroll, who leads the committee that oversees the use of animals at the school, challenges the estimate that only a dozen schools still use animals for teaching. He believes that at least half of them do so in at least one lab, but that many are reluctant to divulge that for fear of angering animal-rights activists.

At East Carolina, fourth-year medical students practice life-support skills on pigs in an advanced trauma lab. No matter how realistic a computer simulation, Dr. Carroll says, it won't give a student hands-on practice inserting an endotracheal tube when a patient's airway closes, or staunching severe and potentially fatal hemorrhages.

"I don't agree with the argument that it is morally reprehensible to use animals for teaching purposes," as long as the animals are well cared for and properly anesthetized during surgical procedures, he says. "I believe faculty members should have the option to use animals if it meets their educational goals."

That's the same stance taken by the Association of American Medical Colleges, says a spokeswoman, Retha Sherroć

**Labs Without Pigs**

Among medical schools that have recently given up the use of animals in training, the St. Louis University School of Medicine has discontinued a cardiovascular teaching lab that had used live pigs, and a teaching hospital affiliated with the State University of New York at Stony Brook has dropped its last animal teaching lab.

It did so after receiving a letter from the Association of the Bar of the City of New York warning that the hospital might be violating the federal Animal Welfare Act, which requires medical schools that use live animals in teaching labs to demonstrate that they have adequately explored nonanimal alternatives.

The Stony Brook affiliate, Winthrop-University Hospital, used live pigs in a surgery lab geared toward medical residents but open for observation by fourth-year students. The trainees practiced performing laparoscopic surgery on the pigs, making small incisions in the abdomen and inserting surgical tools to repair injuries.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture cited the program in March for failing to adequately document its efforts to find acceptable nonanimal alternatives, a problem the hospital corrected by turning over additional records.

But in July pressure on the medical school escalated with a letter, not from students or animal-rights groups, but from two officers of the bar association: Jane E. Hoffman, chair of its Committee on Legal Issues Pertaining to Animals, and Joyce Tichy, chair of its Committee on Health Law.

"We strongly urge you to discontinue the use of live pigs in your physiology and surgery laboratories on legal, scientific, and ethical grounds," the lawyers wrote. They described how other medical schools used simulators in surgical training, and interactive computer models to show students how to measure heart rates, blood pressure, and the effect of medications on patients.
Continuing an outmoded practice that results in "the suffering of sentient beings" could also violate the Animal Welfare Act, the letter stated.

A similar letter was sent in June to New York Medical College, the other medical school in the state that still uses live animals in the curriculum.

Officials there declined to comment but said a committee had been assigned to evaluate the school's use of live animals in physiology and surgery labs.

The letter writers relied heavily on statistics provided by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, Ms. Hoffman said in an interview.

'Not a Veterinarian'

As advances in technology make alternatives more educationally sound, the pressure to drop animal labs is increasing. An article last month in Academic Medicine, the journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges, said animal use in the undergraduate medical curriculum had "dropped dramatically."

In March the American Medical Student Association approved a resolution that "strongly encourages the replacement of animal laboratories with non-animal alternatives in undergraduate medical education."

For years students have had the option of skipping animal labs if they objected to them, and a small percentage of students have done so.

Jeffrey Tomasini, a second-year student at the Medical College of Wisconsin, says he opted out of a physiology lab in which students opened an anesthetized dog's chest, placed catheters in the heart, and injected it with drugs to see how the dog reacted. Aside from his ethical objections to the exercise, "I don't care what a dog's heart looks like," he says. "I'm not going to school to be a veterinarian. I'm interested in human hearts."

But some educators wonder whether a computer model or a rubberized mannequin can adequately prepare would-be doctors for the first time they are responsible for the life of a living, breathing human patient. As distasteful as the prospect might be, these professors and students believe that animal labs deserve a place in the curriculum.