THE DAILY CLIPS

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New design innovations highlight the East Carolina Heart Institute

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

The East Carolina Heart Institute could do as much for nurses' backs as for patients' hearts and arteries.

Something to Say?
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A vertebrae-saving change in the placement of equipment in patient rooms was among design innovations Pitt County Memorial Hospital officials cited during a tour Friday of the new heart tower.

In the hospital's current cardiac rooms, power outlets, medical gas valves and other pieces of essential equipment are loaded onto carts or mounted along walls, said Brian Floyd, PCMH vice president and executive director of the hospital's piece of the heart institute. That leaves a lot of pushing and tugging for nurses.

In each patient and operating room at the new facility, the same equipment will hang from ceiling-mounted booms. To the civilian, it's a small change, but for an aging and undersized nursing work force, saved steps and strain can lengthen careers, Floyd said.

"The nurses, whether they're 60 years old or they're 20 years old, they won't have to reach for anything," he said. "It's all there, hanging from the ceiling."

The booms are among a wealth of major and minor flourishes designed to give PCMH heart patients and their family the best care possible, Floyd said.

Some touches are directly related to patient care. Between each pair of operating rooms, the ceiling is designed to provide multiple light sources for different vision needs. And the nurses' burnout rate is expected to drop, he said.

EAST CAROLINA HEART INSTITUTE TIMELINE

- NOVEMBER 2004: State Division of Facility Services approves PCMH plans for 120-bed heart tower.
- JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2006: ECU and UHS agree to name the center the East Carolina Heart Institute.
- MARCH 2006: Ground broken for both projects.
- APRIL 2006: State officials approve addition of 42 noncardiac beds to PCMH heart tower.
- MARCH 2007: Grady-White Boats owner Eddie Smith gives $1.33 million to ECU research center.
- MAY 2007: Crews host final beam on ECU research center, completing vertical construction.
- OCTOBER 2007: Central utility plant for PCMH tower approved for occupancy, vertical construction largely complete.
- MAY 2008: Construction of ECU research center to be complete.
- SUMMER/FALL 2008: ECU center to open.
- LATE 2008: Construction of PCMH heart tower to be complete.
- EARLY 2009: PCMH center to open.

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for instance, is an alcove with windows on all sides. The room will allow physicians and others to observe surgeries without entering the sterile operating room, Floyd said.

Other design elements aim to make life easier for staff, patients and their families. Each patient room will have a windowside family sitting area. Windows along a hallway behind the operating rooms will give surgeons some sunlight while they prepare to operate.

"They'll be able to see natural light, which is something they don't typically see on a daily basis," said Tim McDonnell, University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina chief design and construction officer.

Carts loaded with medical supplies and linens should be a rare sight in the new hospital, Floyd said. Most of that traffic will move through an 800-foot tunnel connecting the center to a central utility plant across Moye Boulevard.

"One of the reasons there's a lot of noise in hospitals is there are so many people rolling carts around here," Floyd said. "It's very hard to deal with."

For now, the hospital's halls are noisy with the daily work of up to 300 construction workers. While the building's glass and brick facade is largely complete, exposed wires, pipes and insulation are the dominant features inside.

Construction should end in late 2008, with the $160 million heart center opening in early 2009. PCMH's staff will swell with 350 to 400 new positions to accommodate the hospital, Floyd said.

The heart institute's other piece, a $60 million research and teaching facility at East Carolina University, is to open in spring 2008.

Over time, the six-story heart tower will likely become the centerpiece of the PCMH campus, McDonnell said.

It's already become a signature project for McCarthy Building Companies, the St. Louis construction company that's a managing contractor on the project.

McCarthy and Goldsboro-based TA Loving are co-construction managers for the heart tower.

Pairing the two brought national expertise and local knowledge together, McDonnell said.

The heart tower has been a challenge, said Ben Johanneman, project manager for McCarthy. Contractors spent five months working with physicians and PCMH officials on the first operating room, debating details down to the placement of 57 power outlets.

"We build hospitals all over the country, and everybody from my company comes in and says this is huge," Johanneman said.

Jimmy Ryals can be contacted at jryals@coxn.com and 329-9568.
ECU campus safety survey discussion is tonight

The results of a student survey on campus safety will be discussed today in the first of two forums.

The hour-long event, "ECU Unity Safety Forum," is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. in Mendenhall Student Center, Room 244. A second forum will be held Nov. 12 at 6:30 p.m. in the Willis Building.

Tonight's discussion will offer students and the community a chance to talk with East Carolina University and community administrators, public safety and transit officials about efforts under way to increase campus safety since the April 2007 survey.

Michelle Lieberman, director of ECU's Center for Off-Campus and Community Living, said the 3,917 survey responses she received from students last semester demonstrates a keen concern for safety on campus and in the surrounding neighborhood. She hopes the forum will help let students know that ECU has heard their concerns and have made efforts to respond to them.

"Too often, survey responses get put on shelves; no one knows what happens to them," Lieberman said. "We want students to know their concerns have been heard and responded to."

The survey was designed to measure student perceptions about campus safety; how they make themselves safe; and what they know about the campus' safety resources, such as ECU's Transit and Safe Ride, ECU Student Patrol; and parking services.

The results provide campus safety officials, police, and the surrounding community members with a good direction for its future programs and offerings, said Marilyn Sheerer, ECU interim provost and vice chancellor for academic and student affairs.

"Please be assured that there is a decided emphasis being placed on safety and security on the ECU campus. Numerous strategy meetings are being held; police visibility has been increased; text messaging is available; planning around emergency response is ongoing; and off-campus services are being increased," Sheerer said.

Other initiatives include new lights on campus; student parking allowed at 3 p.m. on the main campus; new police hires; and a change of uniform for parking monitors.

Visiting scholar to speak

A Pakistani scholar and lawyer will discuss Islam, politics and human rights during a meeting Thursday.

M. Aslam Khaki, a Fulbright Scholar spending four

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weeks in eastern North Carolina, will deliver his address at 7 p.m. in the Willis Building, Reade and First streets. He will also discuss “Inter-faith Alliance – Muslim-Christian-Jewish Relations” at 7 p.m., Oct. 29 at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, East Fourth Street.

During his trip to Greenville, Khaki, who holds degrees in education and Islamic law, will deliver lectures, consult with educators and participate in cross-cultural discussion on the basic tenets of Islam and the role of religion in the culture and politics of Muslim societies.

Khaki is joined by Yasmin Haider, a lawyer whose practice focuses on domestic violence and the legal rights of women in Islam.

She will present a women’s only talk Nov. 3 at 10:30 a.m. at the Islamic Center, 14th and Evans streets and a public lecture at 7 p.m., Nov. 5, in the Jenkins Fine Arts Auditorium.

Professor presents paper

A Department of Technology Systems professor presented a paper about the ability of students to perform computer laboratory experiments at a conference over the weekend. Professor Philip Lunsford presented the paper entitled "Using VPN Technology to Remove Physical Barriers in Linux Lab Experiments" at the Special Interest Group for Information Technology Education Conference held last week in Destin, Fla.

Professor Lee Toderick was the paper's lead author.

Physical environment has traditionally limited the ability of students to perform computer lab experiments. Toderick and Lunsford recently started using a technology that allow student computers to connect to a private lab network and perform experiments from home or the dorm, at any time.

Tea honors alumnai

The College of Education hosted a Centennial Tea last week to honor the women educators ECU has produced over the last century.

Education students were able to meet guests such as Carolyn J. Breedlove, Judy H. Budacz, Shirley Carraway, Joyce G Cherry, Deborah G. Lamm, Lucy E. Roberts, Mary Rose Stocks and Mary Kirk. Each woman shared their personal teaching experiences and offered advice to the future educators. They talked about the importance of being a good example for students and emphasized how a compassionate teacher can make a difference in children's lives.
Public Forum

Mammograms a key tool in cancer fight

Breast cancer will strike one in eight women. Look around at your friends and family. Who is it or who will it be? Statistics we hear during October — Breast Cancer Awareness Month — are repeated for a reason. You may think it won’t be you, but it may be.

One year ago, I returned to work after a double mastectomy and reconstruction having never thought I’d have breast cancer. Not me. I have no breast cancer in my family. I am the fourth girl in my family. I breast fed my children. I drink a few alcoholic beverages. I don’t smoke and I exercise. I shouldn’t have cancer. Plus, I’m in medicine; I should know when I’m sick, right? That’s why I didn’t have a mammogram until I was 42. But there cancer was, right on that first mammogram. I put off that mammogram a long time, but that picture made it clear in a second. I, like 2.5 million other Americans, am a breast cancer survivor. American women have the highest rate of breast cancer in the world. (Still think it can’t happen to you?) Most women who get breast cancer in fact have no risks. Does my risk profile sound like yours? Know that my colleague, in her 30s, also with no risks, found out the same week as I that she had breast cancer. She, too, is a survivor. And as a survivor, I know how important that simple mammogram is.

If you haven’t had a mammogram, talk to your doctor about it. If you should’ve had one and just haven’t, make and keep the appointment. Men, ask the women you love to get one. You may not be that one of eight, but you might be a survivor like me one day.

CLAUDIA DALY, M.D.
Greenville
Golden Living Center makes donation to ECU Department of Family Medicine

Golden Living Center has donated $107,247 to the Department of Family Medicine at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University to support the department’s nursing home teaching project. The department provides primary medical care for the residents of the Golden Living Center at 527 Moya Blvd. The money will be used to support the instruction of family medicine residents and fellows in geriatrics and to help pay for salaries and teaching materials for the program.

This year is the 26th the center has supported the teaching project.
Since 2000, Greenville's population has grown from 62,000 to more than 72,000, making it the 12-largest city in the state. ECU and PCMH are the major reasons.

By Brock Letchworth
The Daily Reflector

Greenville is among a handful of North Carolina cities that have experienced significant growth in the past decade, but the reasons for that growth make it unique.

Since 2000, Greenville's population has grown from 62,000 to more than 72,000. It is the 12th-largest city in the state.

Unlike Concord, Cary and Morrisville, which City Manager Wayne Bowers says have experienced similar growth, Greenville is more of its own entity—a regional hub for commercial activity.

Cities such as Concord and Cary rely on spillover from the neighboring Charlotte and Raleigh.

Greenville's growth is based largely on being the home of East Carolina University and Pitt County Memorial Hospital, Bowers said.

"Those have been the driving rea-

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sons for why we're different than other cities in this area," Bowers said.

"Concord is comparable to Greenville in terms of its growth since the start of the new millennium," Bowers said. Concord has grown from around 50,000 to more than 66,000 in that time, becoming the 14th largest municipality in the state.

W. Brian Hiatt, Concord city manager, said balancing residential and commercial growth was a key issue for his city during its growing spurt. To limit residential growth, Concord changed developmental ordinances to raise the standards required for residential development, Hiatt said.

"The balance is something we've worked very hard to achieve and we will continue to work at it," said Hiatt, who saw Concord's commercial activity get a boost with the addition of the Concord Mills shopping complex eight years ago.

Maintaining balance in growth has not been an issue for Greenville, Bowers said. Greenville has become a regional commercial center because of its size.

That isn't necessarily the case for cities closer to larger municipalities, he said.

"A lot of people come from outlying areas to shop here,

"A lot of people come from outlying areas to shop here, go to the movie theater, go to the doctor and those types of things."

Wayne Bowers
Greenville city manager

go to the movie theater, go to the doctor and those types of things," Bowers said. "That has kept our commercial growth in line with the residential, and that is important because if you have too much residential growth you tend to not have the resources you would have because of commercial."

Dealing with traffic congestion and providing proper emergency services were among the common issues affecting Greenville and the other cities with similar growth.

Brock Letchworth can be contacted at 339-9574 or bletchworth@coxnc.com.
Emergency nurses a standout force

Each day, more than 200 people come to the Pitt County Memorial Hospital emergency department and MedDirect. Some are more seriously ill than others; all arrive with hope that their ailments can be diagnosed and treatment can begin.

Among the first people each of these patients encounter is an emergency nurse. Emergency nurses are a beacon of hope who shepherd patients through the processes of emergency department evaluation and treatment, implementing many facets of care with technical skill, empathy and compassion. They maintain vigilance for the next needed intervention, patients' safety and patients' comfort.

During my career I have known many nurses who were extraordinary by virtue of their superior expertise, their level of compassion and empathy and their commitment to service. Throughout our medical center, I am in constant awe of nurses and how hard they work to ensure that the care and caring is the best it can be. Their jobs can be both emotionally and intellectually draining. Yes, nurses are special people.

Yet, I know of no nurses who stand out more than emergency nurses. Every day, they are witnesses to the greatest tragedies in our society. And yet, they stay at their posts, always there, never knowing what the next hour, or even 10 minutes, will bring. They ensure a continuous effort to see that our emergency department is the best it can be for the people who need it.

Oct. 7-13 was Emergency Nurses Week. We are a fortunate community to have the dozens of committed emergency nurses we have on guard at all times at Pitt County Memorial Hospital, and certainly at the other hospitals in our region. They are, without a doubt, extraordinary people doing extraordinary things. They deserve our respect, our recognition and our gratitude.

THEODORE DELBRIDGE
MPH chair, department of emergency medicine
Brody School of Medicine
Fan Jam introduces Pirate men’s and women’s teams

By Tony Castleberry
The Daily Reflector

Perhaps the most famous high school principal in television history has graduated and taken his act to college.

Dennis Haskins, who played Mr. Richard Belding on the sitcom “Saved By The Bell,” entertained East Carolina University students, student-athletes and a few hundred Pirate fans and alumni as the emcee of the first ECU basketball Fan Jam Friday night at Minges Coliseum. The event served to introduce the Pirate men’s and women’s hoops teams, but Haskins was probably the biggest star of the night.

East Carolina men’s coach Mack McCarthy has been friends with Haskins since McCarthy’s days as a coach at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga from 1985-97. Haskins, a Chattanooga native, attended and graduated from UTC and even played a year of college basketball with the Moccasins after making the team as a walk-on.

When ECU’s Athletics Department was trying to find a celebrity to host the Fan Jam, several names were mentioned, but many of them either didn’t fit logistically or financially.

When Haskins’ name came up, though, McCarthy knew he could help make it happen.

HASKINS INTRODUCES coach Mack McCarthy on Friday night at Minges Coliseum.

“Somebody mentioned Dennis Haskins and I said, ‘Well, I can call him now,’” McCarthy said. ‘They said, ‘No way!’ We got him on the phone and, he probably gave us a price break, but he was nice enough to work us into his schedule.”

While the original “Saved By The Bell” series went off the air in 1993, McCarthy said most all of his players watched the show and kept up with the exploits of Bayside High students Zack Morris, Kelly Kapowski, A.C. Slater, Screech Powers, Lisa Turtle and Jessie Spano.

ECU senior forward Taylor Gagnon said the show was must-see TV.

“I was a huge fan; I watched it every day after coming home from school,” Gagnon said. “(Haskins) sounds exactly the same. Great personality, just like on the show. He’s obviously made a great career off that show.

“Our whole generation, everybody grew up watching it.”

The series continued with “Saved By The Bell: The New Class” from 1993-2000, but featured, as the name sug-

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gests, a new cast of characters except for Screech, played by Dustin Diamond, and Haskins, who continued to dole out punishment and life lessons as Mr. Belding. “Saved By The Bell: The College Years” had a short run from 1993-94 and followed Zack, Kelly, Slater and Screech after their high school graduation.

While he continues to work in television and film, Haskins has been emceeing events like Friday’s at colleges all over the country, fulfilling his love for collegiate athletics and entertainment. After a trip back to Los Angeles, Haskins will host an event at Purdue’s homecoming next week.

But he made sure to let the Pirate faithful know where at least some his rooting allegiance lies.

“This is a good chance for me to come see Mack and his family; we’d been friends for a long time,” said Haskins, who has made several previous trips to Greenville for the Michael Jordan Golf Tournament. “I wanted to get out here and let everybody know I’m behind this program.

“It’s fun to be back here and I can’t wait to see how the team does.”

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MINI-MED SCHOOL SPREADS BRODY GOSPEL

by Jimmy Kyara
The Daily Reflector

Usually, Brody School of Medicine commencements take place in May and feature 75 students. On Monday night the medical school recognized 100 new alumni, and none of them will be practicing medicine.

Something to Say?
Post your comment about this story at reflector.com

The new "graduates" had just completed the mini-med school, a six-week course designed to expose area residents to information about health and Brody's inner workings. Organizers said they hope it also deputized a new batch of ambassadors for the school.

"We hope that they learned a lot about the medical school in and of itself, but also about what the medical students go through," said Virginia Hardy, senior associate dean of the medical school. "And that they've learned some things that will help them make decisions about themselves, their personal lifestyles."

For six Monday nights starting in September, the "students" gathered at Brody for lectures and demonstrations. Classroom portions featured East Carolina University's medical experts discussing major health issues — Dr. Randolph Chitwood in cardiology, Dr. David Collier in obesity, Dr. Ronald Allison and Adam Asch in oncology and others.

"We wanted to (spotlight) both things that our faculty are known to do well that would be of interest to the community and also match the priorities of Pitt County Memorial Hospital," said Dr. Kathy Kolasa.

DOWNLOAD a list of mini-med school participants at reflector.com.

The health education was a favorite part for participant Sharon McNeill, who works in information technology at ECU.

"It was just phenomenal to learn the areas of concern for eastern North Carolina, like heart disease, diabetes, cancer," she said. "Those were the areas of concern.

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that were so prevalent as far as detriment to our society in this area.”

Brody officials resurrected the mini-med school, last held in 2002, to celebrate ECU’s centennial, Kolasa and Hardy said.

“All over ECU, each of the colleges or schools are trying to decide on some event that would celebrate themselves as well as involve the community,” Kolasa said.

It’s unclear whether the program will return on a yearly basis, Hardy said. Cost — $8,000 this year — is one issue.

Time is another, she said. Medical students and faculty members volunteered three hours a night, six Mondays in a row, she added. Such a commitment may be hard to get every year.

Should the mini-med school return, participant Jo Ann Allen said she’d recommend others go through it.

“I thoroughly enjoyed it,” she said. “It was well worth the time.”

Jimmy Ryals can be contacted at jryals@coxnc.com and 329-9360.
Brain cancer patients’ happy challenge: a rising survival rate

Duke offers new clinic to address quality of life

BY JEAN P. FISHER
STAFF WRITER

Better treatments are helping even patients with the deadliest brain tumors live two, three — even five or more years. Such survivors face a daunting question: What to do with the rest of their lives?

Duke University Medical Center will help find answers with a clinic dedicated to meeting brain cancer survivors’ needs.

Brain tumors and their treatments often cause side effects, such as memory loss, that make it impossible to return to one’s former life. Children face particular challenges, watching peers mark life’s milestones as they remain dependent on parents, often into adulthood.

“They’ve survived, but what quality of life have they survived with?” said Dr. Henry Friedman, a neuro-oncologist and associate director of Duke’s Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center. “When your patients are doing well, you shift your thinking from, ‘Are you going to live?’ to ‘Are you going to live well?’”

The Duke clinic will gather survivors to share support. It will also work to improve follow-up care by giving each patient a plan that includes a list of therapies they have received and possible side effects, both medical and emotional. Social workers will help with practical matters, such as filing disability papers or lining up other resources.

“They are not going to stop treating us just because we are surviving,” said Renee Barnes, 43, of Seagrove. Barnes, who serves on the new clinic’s advisory board, survived glioblastoma multiforme diagnosed seven years ago. Only about 5 per-

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cent of patients with glioblastoma are alive after five years.

Chronic, not terminal

In part, the zeal to help survivors comes because there are so many more. Many doctors now
look at cancer as a chronic condition that even terminal patients may live with for years.

The National Institute of Medicine, which advises the federal government, advanced the issue
in 2005, issuing a report that said patients often are neglected after active treatment.

Jack and Eunice Walder of Cary and their 24-year-old son, Jason, who survived a brain tumor
diagnosed when he was 4, often felt abandoned by doctors.

Jason Walder's treatment for medulloblastoma stunted his growth, slowed his reflexes,
caused memory and hearing loss and, in the end, robbed him of a childhood and the chance for a
normal adulthood.

"My childhood consisted of going to the doctor," Jason Walder said.

The Walders were in a focus group of brain tumor survivors and relatives who helped Duke
design its clinic, which opens early next year.

Walder spent most of his life avoiding cancer patients and causes, not wanting to wallow.
Now he is eager to talk. "I think it can help me to stop being angry with the world," Walder said.

His parents hope the Duke clinic can help others understand the side effects survivors struggle with.

Jack Walder remembers feeling dismissed when Jason's oncologist in New York, where
the family lived before moving to North Carolina in 1995, released his son from care about
six years after his diagnosis.

"The impression we got was 'Well, all right, you're done —

have a nice life,'" Jack Walder said. "We really didn't have any
idea what to look for in terms of side effects."

Jason Walder had to have corrective surgery because of the effects of growth hormones that
helped him grow to five feet. He got hearing aids this year to compensate for hearing loss likely
caused by radiation. And, just recently, the Walders learned that chemotherapy drugs their son
received may harm his heart.

The American Society of Clinical Oncology recently drafted templates to help oncologists
develop survivorship plans for patients. The organization started with checklists for breast and
colorectal cancers. Next, the society will publish a checklist for lung cancer survivors.

UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill opened a clinic for testicular cancer survivors last month and plans
similar ones for breast cancer and bone marrow transplant patients early next year. Duke is also start-

ing a breast cancer program.

Unique approach

Friedman believes Duke is unique in targeting brain cancer.

He thinks fewer cancer centers will follow because survival rates are still meager.

Unlike breast and prostate cancers, which boast survival rates approaching 90 percent five
years after the diagnosis, only about 29 percent of patients with brain or spine tumors are alive after
five years.

Glioblastoma is diagnosed in up to 10,000 patients each year,

making it the most common malignant brain tumor and the most lethal. At Duke, about 30 per-
cent of glioblastoma patients are alive after two years, compared with less than 9 percent nation-
ally. Twenty percent of Duke's glioblastoma patients survive at least three years, Friedman said.

"We don't believe you're dead on diagnosis, he said. "Most places do."

New treatments may increase survival chances. Research published Saturday by Duke scient-
ists showed that the drug Avastin can halt tumor progression and increase survival
among patients with recurrent glioblastoma. Preliminary results from another Duke study suggest that a vaccine targeting a virus inside most glioblastoma tumors can double survival for most patients.

"It's the most exciting time we've had in brain cancer in a long time," said Dr. John Sampson,
a Duke neurosurgeon and principal investigator on the vaccine trial.

Renée Barnes, the glioblastoma survivor, remembers Friedman was upbeat when he saw her after
her orange-sized tumor was removed at Duke,

"He said, 'I've got Plan A. And if that doesn't work, we've got Plan B.' He called Barnes, who
received several experimental therapies, 'He is very positive. That is what pulled me through.'"

Barnes' survival has had its difficulties. Radiation and other treatments have left her with the
brittle bones of a woman twice her 43 years. Much of her vocabulary is gone, and sometimes she
loses her way a few miles from the house she's lived in for 17 years.

Barnes worked part-time in sales after her diagnosis, but she said she struggled even on the
reduced hours. She recently applied for disability benefits and was denied. Barnes is wondering how
she can keep her health insurance and worries what will happen after December, when financial help
from her church runs out.

"I've learned to appreciate small things — going to the grocery store, getting out of bed in the
morning, being able to walk," Barnes said. "I'm not the same person that I was. But this is the
person I am now."
Coastal cleanup

There's a clear need for rules to help clear up the state's coastal waters by slowing down stormwater runoff.

North Carolina's coast, low-lying and laced with sounds and wetlands, doesn't lack for water. But the quality of that water could be better. Too much shellfishing acreage is shut down, permanently or temporarily, due to pollution from stormwater runoff. Chemicals and bacteria flow unfiltered from the land into salt water, threatening shellfishing industry jobs and lowering the supply of native seafood.

Now the state Division of Water Quality is proposing tougher rules on runoff, which should be enacted as quickly as possible. Requiring developers to be more vigilant in controlling runoff along the coast will help turn this particular tide of pollution. Good stewardship of the environment, in turn, will be an economic development benefit for all coastal residents, not just builders.

Currently, development near the shore is subject to rules that simply haven't been effective. Existing controls, dating to 1986, allow developers to build on up to 25 percent of a tract before controls are needed. They require only a 30-foot buffer of vegetation along waterways. Builders usually have to get a stormwater permit only if the development disturbs an acre or more. So house after house can be built on small lots without triggering the permit requirement.

Under such rules, coastal waters permanently closed to shellfishing have increased about 13 percent in the past two decades. That's a blow to an already endangered industry.

According to the shellfish sanitation section of the Division of Water Quality, about 76,000 acres of coastal waters are permanently closed because of pollution levels that make oysters and clams dangerous to eat. An additional 43,000 acres close temporarily because of bacteria after rains of 1 to 2 inches.

Calling stormwater runoff the No. 1 pollution problem, water quality officials have been holding hearings on new rules for the 20 coastal-area counties. The regulations focus on stopping or slowing the flow of contamination into the ocean from hard surfaces such as roads, parking lots and buildings.

Next step for the proposed rules is final consideration by the Environmental Management Commission. After that, they would be subject to legislative review. It will be August before they could take effect.

Among the proposed improvements: when a project within a half-mile of shellfish waters would involve more than 12 percent of a tract, developers would have to incorporate detention ponds and basins to limit runoff. The buffer requirement would increase to 50 feet. And the threshold for having to get a permit would be lowered to a quarter acre.

The new rules drew strong support at recent hearings. Coastal residents can see what's happening to the water, and they aren't happy about it. At the same time, many residents worry about regulations raising the cost of living near the ocean, and developers oppose new restrictions. Too much property, they say, would be put "off limits" to building.

There are costs, to be sure, when we decide not to dump so much of our debris, chemical and otherwise, into the sea. There are benefits too, and some of them are economic. Those closed shellfishing waters are a real cost as well, one that would lessen if pollution did. (And if water pollution from the coastal plain and Piedmont is part of the problem, then yes, tighten the rules for cities upstream. Someday when the drought is a memory, they'll have stormwater runoff to deal with again.)

Wherever it's located, the land being developed may be private, but the waters belong to the public. We're all part owners. In the runoff campaign now under way along the coast, the public, and the environment, needs to win. And, above all, those North Carolinians whose livelihoods hinge on a healthy supply of seafood.
Commission to make UNC 'demand driven'

The listening, for the most part, has been concluded. Over the past month, in 11 sessions spread across the state, thousands of people turned out for public forums to profess what the University of North Carolina system means to them, and what they believe UNC must do for their communities.

Receiving this information gratefully, and at times emotionally, was a blue ribbon collection of university officials, scholars and private-sector leaders comprising the UNC Tomorrow Commission, which was conceived of and managed by UNC President Erskine Bowles and Greensboro attorney Jim Phillips, who chairs.

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the Board of Governors.

There has never been a commission quite like this in the history of UNC, America's oldest university system. And the effort appears to be unique among other university systems nationally as well. It is a novel concept for academia, and it is being pushed by a couple of guys. Bowles and Phillips, known for their business and political acumen.

Both insist that UNC and its 16 constituent institutions must become more responsive to the needs of a fast-growing and faster-changing state. It needs to do more things where it is not, and perhaps fewer things where it is already entrenched. And despite UNC's historical independence and even aloofness, it must become, as Bowles emphasizes, more "demand driven."

"This is a very bold move on the part of the university system," says Tony Caravano, who was hired away from Sen. Marc Basnight's office earlier this year to help direct the UNC Tomorrow Commission from Chapel Hill.

Step one in this process, even before the listening tour of the state began in Greenville on Sept. 10, has been to create a mindset among the Board of Governors that it must be more proactive, instead of its usual position of reacting to events and crises as they arise. In order to accomplish that task, Phillips says, the board needed a long-range planning document to help it set priorities and thus argue more effectively for the state funding it depends on.

That document, to be presented to the board early next year, is in the process of being drawn up. The research is ongoing with input being gleaned from faculty members across the system. But much has been learned already.

"If I didn't appreciate what the University of North Carolina means to the people of North Carolina, I sure do now," says Phillips, a UNC-Chapel Hill alumnus who was once president of the student body. He was stunned by the turnout at the forums, which ranged from 200 to 500 people, far exceeding his expectations.

"People recognize the need for and the impact of higher education on their families and on their communities," he adds. "I also believe they view UNC as a credible change agent. People are proud of, respect and trust the university in ways that they don't feel about other aspects of government."

As the commission traveled from Hendersonville in the mountains to Elizabeth City on the coast, as they went to Rocky Mount and Hickory and Fayetteville, they heard personal stories and testimonies, not to mention more than a few pleas for help in rural locations.

"We had people grow emotional in telling us how their UNC degree changed their lives and the lives of their families," says Keith Debbage, a UNC geographer appointed to the commission's 14-member Scholars Council. "To tour the state like that with Erskine and the others was one of the most profound experiences I've had as a professor."

Many of the comments, carefully recorded and now being evaluated, fell into three broad themes:
• The need to better train teachers, and more of them, for the ever-important responsibility of teaching grades K-12.
• The need to produce more professionals capable of teaching and training more nurses and allied health workers.
• The need to make higher education, through the UNC system, more accessible to rural North Carolinians.

Phillips notes a couple of staggering statistics. In the last 20 years, the 16-campus UNC system has grown by more than 69,000 students and now tops 200,000. In the next 10 years, it will add about 80,000, or the equivalent of five additional UNC-Gs.

"We know this is going to happen, the question is: How are we going to respond?" Phillips says. "Do we look at satellite campuses? Do we expand our learning centers that offer courses with visiting faculty? Do we increase online, distance education, or some combination of all of these?"

Clearly, places such as Rocky Mount and Hickory, far from the closest existing campus, recognize what an academic and economic asset it would be to have their own UNC campus. But Charlotte, the biggest, most dynamic city in the state, can also argue that it has too few UNC assets, particu-