THE DAILY CLIPS

October 27, 2008

News, commentary, and opinion
compiled by the East Carolina University News Bureau from:

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The New York Times
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USA Today
The Charlotte Observer
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The Greensboro News & Record
Newsweek
U.S. News & World Report
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Candidates make local stump stops

Vice-presidential candidate and U.S. Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) is scheduled to stop at East Carolina University this morning.

BY KATHRYN KENNEDY
AND MICHAEL ABRAMOWITZ
The Daily Reflector

U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Dole described her successes in office and plans for the future to a group of approximately 60 supporters on the Pitt County Courthouse steps Sunday afternoon.

On the heels of Dole's stop, vice-presidential candidate and U.S. Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) is scheduled to stop at East Carolina University this morning, where he'll be holding an Early Vote for Change Rally.

The Republican senator is in the midst of a six-day "Elizabush Tour" during her bid for re-election Nov. 4. Applause and cheers greeted the incumbent as she stepped down from the large, black bus at 1 p.m., spending a few moments shaking hands and thanking people before mounting the steps and addressing those assembled.

Local GOP Chair Kim Hendrix and Ed Farley, the father of a Fort Bragg soldier who is traveling with the politician, preceded Dole's speech. Farley said Dole championed his cause to improve barracks conditions at the base.

"The U.S. needs Senator Dole in Washington," he proclaimed, eliciting applause.

Dole listed other ways she aided American troops while on the Armed Services Committee, including support for legislation to shield military families from predatory lending and grant work leave for relatives of wounded veterans who need care.

Dole added she also served on the Banking Com-
Actor stumps for Obama

Actor Kal Penn made a brief campaign appearance on the East Carolina University campus Saturday in support of Sen. Barack Obama during a weekend statewide tour to encourage early voting.

The star of The Namesake and the TV series House, accompanied by several Obama campaign staffers, met students in front of the Dowdy Student Store in Wright Plaza at 11:20 a.m.

The actor talked with about a dozen students there about the important role they and other young voters will play in the Nov. 4 election. Penn led the group to the dormitories and dining halls where they knocked on doors and urged students to head to the polls.

“I’m enjoying this very much. It’s exciting to see so many folks coming out, especially since this is a battleground state and so many people are undecided,” he said. “I know there was a lot of election fatigue earlier in the year, but it’s exciting to see (the press) coming out and presenting balanced stories on all the candidates who come to town. And it’s exciting to the students to learn about the events going on.”

Penn has been working feverishly on Obama’s behalf for a while now.

“I signed up to volunteer about a year ago, knocking on doors and making phone calls on behalf of Barack and Joe Biden,” Penn said.

He also has worked on Obama’s arts policy committee.

“I’ve never done anything political in my life. I’m a registered independent and have voted for Democrats, Republicans and some third party candidates in the past. But I’ve never seen a movement like this. I’ve never seen so many folks like me, who have never been politically active before but are now coming together.

Penn explained why he thinks so many college-age voters are actively involved on Obama’s behalf.

“One reason that first-time voters are so revved up is Barack’s education plan: a $4,000 tax credit per year for anyone who wants to go to college, a proposed increase in Pell Grant funds and a promise to restructure college loan debts, a big policy difference between himself and McCain,” Penn said.

Penn has been impressed, he said, by the positive behavior of student-aged voters on both sides of the campaign.

“They’ve been overwhelmingly respectful around the country. They are the generation with friends and family fighting in Iraq, and the ones who will inherit the environmental crisis. Though positions and proposed solutions are different, there is a lot of mutual respect as both sides mobilize students to exercise their right to vote.”

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Hospitals ease ER crowding with ward beds in hallways

BY CARLA K. JOHNSON
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — There's no phone and no television. Only a screen offers privacy. But heart patient Edward Gray understands why the hospital put him in a cardiac unit hallway.

"They sent me up here to make room for other emergency patients," Gray, 78, said last week from his bed in the hall of a New York area hospital. "This is the way things are in hospitals."

It may not sound like ideal health care, but hospital officials nationwide are being urged to consider hallway medicine as a way to ease emergency department crowding, and some are trying it.

Leading the way is Stony Brook University Medical Center at Stony Brook, N.Y., where a study found that no harm was caused by moving emergency room patients to upper-floor hallways when they were ready for admission.

The study's lead author says all hospitals should look at the program's success.

"This is yet another battle cry for hospitals to get off their duffs and stop stacking people knee deep in the emergency department," said Dr. Peter Viccellio, who is clinical director of the hospital's emergency department.

He is to present the study's findings Tuesday at a meeting of the American College of Emergency Physicians in Chicago.

Crowding is a hospital-wide problem that has been handed off to emergency departments, Viccellio said. His idea hands the problem back to the entire hospital.

Before the change, when his hospital filled up, patients were admitted but held in the ER in a common practice called boarding. On busy days, "things would grind to a halt and people would want to be seen," Viccellio said. Infected patients would wait in the ER's hallway for isolation rooms to open up elsewhere in the hospital.

Holding patients in ERs can cause deaths, doctors say. In a 2007 survey of nearly 1,500 emergency doctors, 13 percent said they personally experienced a patient dying as a result of boarding in the emergency department. The survey was conducted by the American College of Emergency Physicians.

The new study found slightly fewer deaths and intensive care unit admissions in the hallway patients compared to the standard bed patients. That was no surprise, Viccellio said, because the protocol calls for giving the first available rooms to the sickest patients. Intensive care patients never go to hallways.

The study is based on four years of Stony Brook's experience with more than 2,000 patients admitted to hallways from the ER.

Other hospitals resist the idea, doctors say. Dr. Michael Carius, who heads the emergency department at Norwalk Hospital in Norwalk, Conn., would like it adopted at his hospital. But nurses and government regulators have resisted, citing safety issues, "as though the emergency department hallway is a safer environment," he said in frustration.

"When you're full of admitted patients, you're no longer an emergency department, you're just a holding area," Carius said.

In Texas, all it took to convince nurses at Harris Methodist Fort Worth Hospital was a tour of the ER, said Barbara VanWart, emergency nurse manager.

"They could see the problem and help us make things happen because now it's before their eyes," VanWart said. The hospital started its hallway protocol in 2005.

Dr. Kirk Jensen of the nonprofit Institute for Healthcare Improvement in Cambridge, Mass., said the best reason to adopt the concept is the way it gets the whole hospital involved in finding rooms more quickly for admitted patients.

"It's out of sight, out of mind, even if they know that patients are there in the emergency department," Jensen said. With patients in their own hallways, "they get a lot more creative and aggressive with workflow practices."
PEOPLE IN THE NEWS SPOTLIGHT

Raab joins Division of Hematology/Oncology at ECU’s Brody School of Medicine

Dr. Rachel Raab has joined the Division of Hematology/Oncology at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University.

Her parents, Drs. Spencer and Mary Raab, pioneered advanced cancer care in eastern North Carolina and started the Division of Hematology/Oncology at ECU’s new medical school in 1977.

Raab, her husband, Dr. Francois Archambault, an anesthesiologist, and their 16-month-old son, Julien, arrived in August after Raab completed a cancer fellowship in New York.

Raab has an undergraduate degree from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., and a medical degree from ECU. She completed residency and fellowship training at Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Montefiore Medical Center in Bronx, N.Y.

Like her mother, Raab specializes in breast cancer.

“Even though we’ve come a long way since my parents moved here in the 1970s, there’s still a lot to be done for patients in this area,” Raab said. The opportunity to sub-specialize in breast cancer helped draw her to ECU.

Her mother is revered by many of her patients, and a portrait of Raab’s father, who died of cancer in 1993, hangs in the cancer center. Raab teared up a bit as she remembered him.

“I really can’t even imagine what it was like in 1977,” she said. “I think they realized what the need was here for cancer services. They had a vision.”

Her mother, though retired from the ECU faculty, still sees patients at a Tarboro clinic.
University PC Care taps into new audience

BY MIKE GRIZZARD
The Daily Reflector

Ashton James considers himself lucky. Even before he was a teenager, his choice of a career essentially was planned. He had a knack for working with computers, and friends and family recognized it.

"I was running myself to death doing all this free work," James said. "I was like, 'I need to do this for a living.' I found out at 12 or 13 years old what I wanted to do, and it just hasn’t changed yet, and I don’t see it changing.

"I feel like everybody gets a gift," he said. "It was easier for me to see. But everybody gets a gift, and if you can put it to work for you, that’s what you need to do because you’re going to like it, and you’re going to end up being the best at that."

James has put his talent to work. He and longtime friend Josh Harrison opened University PC Care about three years ago, catering primarily to East Carolina University students. Now they’re looking to tap into a more diverse audience with a move to the Conveniong Shoppes on Fire Tower Road, giving them not only more room to operate but introducing their name to another part of the Greenville community.

"We’re happy about being on this side of town," James said. "We went from a 200-square-foot operation to a 1,200-square-foot operation. ... It’s a really big upgrade from what we had before. We can actually stretch out our arms. If you did that before, you would knock something off the shelves."

The extra office space enables University PC Care to stock more computers to sell to businesses and individuals, as well as keep older models on hand for repair parts. That’s one way of helping customers save, James said.

"You don’t always want to put new parts in a system that they just want to make it another six months," he said. "So we try to offer them used parts at next to nothing and get them going again."

Providing a reasonably-priced service was the premise when James and Harrison started repairing computers in a small space inside University Auto Care, which is owned by James’ father. James already had plenty of experience working in the computer department at Pitt County Memorial Hospital for nearly seven years, some of that time while he was attending D.H. Conley High School.

He earned a degree in business administration with a concentration in management information systems from ECU.

Harrison attended N.C. State University and Pitt Community College before transferring to ECU, where he received a degree in business
administration with concentration in accounting. He is working on a master’s of business administration degree.

They have known each other since first grade, as neighbors in Cherry Oaks, students at Conley and roommates at ECU.

“We get along; we don’t argue,” James said. “We’ve kind of got a mutual understanding. It works out great. It seems to at least.”

James said he and Harrison are capable of handling most any PC issue, from programming to repairs of screens, keyboards and power jacks. University PC Care provides some content management systems that can be updated and edited and offers Web hosting, but James added, “we don’t really like to call ourselves Web creators necessarily.

“We’re a small business aimed toward the home and small business,” James said. “... We’re trying to kind of stay small. We don’t really get into phone systems, servers and too much of all that. We can always help people out, but we just try not to do a whole bunch of big stuff, keep the customer service up.”

Harrison said service is the key.

“The biggest complaint I hear is customer service,” he said. “We really do try to keep an open mind when we talk to anybody and try to help them out as much as we can.”

That’s all James has wanted to do since he was a kid.

“Everybody says you’re going to get tired of it ... you’re going to get burned out,” he said. “I think we were both good in math. I think it comes down to liking math problems and trying to figure out problems. Every day you’ve got a different problem; you’ve got a puzzle to figure out.

“I enjoy coming to work every day,” James said. “I tell my wife, if she doesn’t enjoy her job, then she needs to find another job. I don’t think you should dread going to work every day. As long as you like it, I don’t see why you should go anywhere else or do anything else.”
Norman A. Coulter


A visitation will be held today from 7-9 p.m. at Wilkerson Funeral Home. Burial will be in Bedford, Va. An additional memorial service is being planned in Chapel Hill at a later date.

Dr. Coulter was born in Atlanta, Georgia on Jan. 9, 1920, to the late Norman Arthur and Carabelle Clark Coulter. Norman enjoyed spending time listening to classical music and trying his hand at amateur composition. After receiving his Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Electrical Engineering from Virginia Tech in 1941, he went to Harvard Medical School where he received his Doctor of Medicine in 1950. From 1950 to 1952, he was a Postdoctoral Fellow in Biophysics at Johns Hopkins University. A teacher by nature, he joined the faculty at the Ohio State University School of Medicine in 1952. In 1965, the Coulter family moved to North Carolina, where Dr. Coulter began teaching at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Medicine, and his wife, Dr. Elizabeth Coulter began teaching at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Public Health. There he became professor emeritus in 1990.

As a co-founder of the UNC Biomedical Engineering and Mathematics curriculum, now a department, he served as chairman from 1969 to 1982. Dr. Coulter was a member and valued contributor to many professional organizations, including the Biomedical Engineering Society, the American Medical Association and the Physicians for Social Responsibility.

An accomplished author, he wrote the books Synergetics: An Adventure in Human Development and Tracking: A New Way of Thinking. He also published many articles in "CHANGE: The Journal of the Synergetic Society."

As a member of the Physicians for Social Responsibility, he served on the board of directors from 1987 to 1993 and was president of the North Carolina chapter from 1983 to 1987. Traveling to the Soviet Union in 1985, 1987, and 1988 as a delegate of Physicians for Social Responsibility, he helped organize a sister city committee between Chapel Hill/Carrboro and Saratov, Russia. In 1993, he helped organize a conference on the prevention of violence, and he helped plan a school violence prevention program, which began in 1995. In 1992, Dr. Coulter was awarded the Peacemaker award, and in 1987 he
received the Broad Street Pump Award.

Although he had many professional accomplishments, Dr. Coulter's greatest joy was spending time with his family. Together, they traveled extensively, enjoyed playing sports, and he was always looking for ways to make them laugh. A beloved husband, father and grandfather, he will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Dr. Elizabeth J. Coulter and brother, Judge Jack Coulter.

He is survived by a son, Robert J. Coulter of Greenville; grandson Jim Coulter and wife, Candice, of Greenville; granddaughter Mary Anna Coulter of New York, N.Y.; sister-in-law Jeannie Coulter of Roanoke, Va.; nephews David Coulter of Cary and Philip Coulter of Roanoke, Va.; and niece Kathy Temple of Roanoke, Va.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Biomedical Engineering Department at UNC Chapel Hill for the Coulter Fund for Parkinson's, 152 MacNider Hall, Campus Box 7575, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27599-7575.
Working on the waterworks

Next fountain at East Carolina University to be named for trustees

BY JOSH HUMPHRIES
The Daily Reflector

East Carolina University will soon have a new fountain that will replace the iconic 75-year-old Wright Fountain up and running on campus.

Construction of a new fountain honoring the trustees of East Carolina University is progressing on campus.

Workers began building the Trustees Fountain in mid-September on the site of the former Wright Fountain at Wright Circle.

The old fountain was removed in 2007 when decaying utility lines caused the structure to begin sinking.

"The removal of the fountain was necessitated by failed underground utilities," said Bill Bagnell, executive director of ECU facilities services.

"The utilities failure was causing sink holes to occur around the fountain, as well as causing the fountain to settle to the point that it could no longer operate and maintain water levels."

Officials decided to remove the old fountain that was first dedicated as Wright Fountain in 1932 to honor Robert H. Wright, the first president of ECU, ECU spokesman John Durham said.

After the fountain's structure was removed from the surface, the problems under Wright Circle were repaired, including storm sewer replacement and repair, sanitary sewer relocation, steam tunnel drainage, and a reworking of the utility layout of the area.

The ECU Board of Trustees voted in 2006 to change the name of the fountain to the Trustees Fountain to honor current and past members of the board.

A wall with the names of current and former trustees will wrap around the fountain.

The Trustees Fountain project is expected to be completed in early December, according to information from ECU Facilities and Engineering Services.