THE DAILY CLIPS

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About 15,000 people crowded downtown Greenville's club district Sunday to celebrate Halloween without major incident, police said.

The annual celebration capped three days of costumed partying downtown and elsewhere in the Greenville area. Police on Sunday blocked Fifth, Cotanche, Evans and other streets downtown as East Carolina University students and thousands of other visitors filled clubs, sidewalks and the roadways.

Police searched people for drugs, alcohol and weapons as they entered the area. About 200 officers from the Greenville Police Department and other agencies were on patrol. The crowd posed very few problems, Greenville police spokesman Kip Gaskins said on Monday. Officers made a couple of arrests for fighting outside of the downtown area, he said.

With Halloween falling on Sunday, the downtown area drew large crowds Friday and Saturday nights as well, police said. About 50 officers stationed downtown Saturday encountered a crowd equal to Sunday's, Gaskins said. Officers responded to a couple of assaults and fights in which pepper spray was utilized.

Gaskins said Sunday the chemical is used to break up fights so officers don't have to use physical force. It protects citizens and law enforcement, he said.

Overall, it was nothing police didn't expect “anytime you put a big crowd together and get alcohol involved,” he said.

Police early Sunday did respond to a shooting just east of the downtown district. The incident occurred after an argument between two groups about 2 a.m.
Two men and a woman were walking on East Third Street near South Jarvis Street when an argument started began with a group of four men.

One of the four pulled a handgun and fired multiple shots. The woman and one of her companions were shot, and the other man was beaten. All three were hospitalized. Sunday night, Greenville police were assisted by 25 officers from the Pitt County Sheriff's Office, East Carolina University, Winterville, Ayden and Kinston.

Most officers were clustered downtown as the parties picked up speed and lines grew outside of nightclubs. Officers checked bags and patted down each person entering through three designated entrances.

Throngs of students trickled from the neighborhoods around ECU dressed as Where's Waldo or Lady Gaga. Ladybugs, bees and butterflies flitted into bars and clubs or house parties, shouted with the sidewalk preachers and stopped for photos.

Fire and rescue workers watched and waited to be called on — not to be confused with the firefighters, nurses and policewomen in modified leotard and mini-skirt uniforms. There were additional patrols in neighborhoods throughout Greenville and conducting a busy DWI checkpoint where Fifth Street splits off from 10th Street.

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Pirates need short memory

By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector
Tuesday, November 2, 2010

Practicing what you preach can often be easier said than done, and East Carolina football coach Ruffin McNeill admits he's had a tough time with a certain team rule in the wake of his team's key Conference USA loss to Central Florida last Saturday.

Like many teams across the country, the Pirates are asked by their coach to adhere to the 24-hour rule — win or lose, the team gets 24 hours to either celebrate or stew and then turn all of its focus to the next opponent on the schedule.

The Pirates were run over by UCF, 49-35, in a game that decided who had the momentum in the race for the C-USA East Division title. The Knights are in the driver's seat now, and McNeill said it's been a tough pill to swallow early this week.

"The 24-hour rule was there, but it probably went to about 36, maybe even 48," McNeill admitted at Monday's weekly press conference.

The Pirates (5-3 overall, 4-1 C-USA) must once again back out of the conference to take on Navy this Saturday, but now they must also begin the uncomfortable process of waiting and seeing what happens to UCF.

By the time the Pirates square off with the Midshipmen at 3:30 p.m., they'll already be mindful of the result of the Knights' Friday night clash with Houston. In essence, the Pirates need UCF to lose at least two conference games while remaining perfect in their three remaining league games to have a chance to win the division.

The wait-and-see process is anything but ideal for a coach who is a firm believer in a team only worrying about what it can control.

"If we take care of our business we can control our own destiny, but now we've got to wait for something else to happen, but at the same time, we can't get caught up into that,"
McNeill said. “We have to be totally focused on what we can control, and that is making sure we prepare this week and have total focus on Navy.”

But McNeill is very mindful that his team plays in a league as unpredictable as any. He pointed to C-USA's most recent history as proof, noting this past weekend games that included UAB's shocking, 50-49, overtime winner at Southern Miss and Tulsa's non-conference, 28-27, victory at Notre Dame.

McNeill is also keeping in mind the fact the Pirates have won the East Division and the C-USA crown each of the last two seasons and with at least one blemish on their league record.

“They lost one game last year and won it,” McNeill said of the Pirates. “They lost two games the year before and won it. The glass is more than half-full for me. “I'm learning the 24-hour rule and sometimes my old self gets caught up in it.”

Injuries

While ECU has still been mostly fortunate in terms of injuries this season, a physical game with UCF did not come without a few new casualties.

Sophomore defensive end Marke Powell fell awkwardly along the sideline after making a play last Saturday, injuring his arm. Despite early reports that it might have been much more serious, McNeill said he was questionable for the Navy game.

Joining Powell as questionable are redshirt linebacker Ty Holmes (elbow), sophomore corner Rahkeem Morgan (ankle) and senior corner Travis Simmons (ankle).

Out indefinitely are freshman receiver Justin Hardy (knee), senior safety Dekota Marshall (leg) and sophomore defensive tackle Kemory Mann (shoulder).

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N.C. State University has narrowed its list of candidates for provost to three people, including the current interim provost, Warwick Arden, a former dean of NCSU's College of Veterinary Medicine.

The provost is the university's top academic job.

The other candidates are Robert T. McGrath, who was senior vice president for research at Ohio State University and associate vice president for research at Penn State University, and Cathryn R. Newton, a professor of interdisciplinary sciences, professor of earth sciences and former dean at Syracuse University.

McGrath now works for Battelle Memorial Institute, a private, nonprofit science and technology company based in Columbus, Ohio.

Arden has served as interim provost and executive vice chancellor since May 2009. He had been dean at the veterinary college for five years before that. He also has held academic posts at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; the University of Kentucky; Michigan State University and the University of Sydney.

The provost's job has been vacant since Larry Nielsen stepped down in spring 2009 as part of a wave of resignations over allegations of improper influence related to former state first lady Mary Easley's job at NCSU.

A committee of faculty, staff and students began work on the search May 20 and were charged with developing a list of three to five candidates for Chancellor Randy Woodson to consider.

The university has scheduled times for each finalist to meet with faculty, staff and students this month. For the dates and times of those meetings and further information on the candidates, including their curriculum vitae, go to www.ncsu.edu/provostsearch. jay.price@newsobserver.com or 919-829-4526
New ticket service serves UNC-CH

StubHub, an online ticket market, announced a new partnership with UNC-Chapel Hill that will allow Tar Heel fans to exchange and buy basketball and football tickets.

The deal will start with hoops tickets this year and expand to the football program next season.

Tar Heel ticket holders will be allowed to list season and individual game tickets on StubHub and have the tickets instantly sent to buyers. Sellers type in the tickets' barcodes, and StubHub cancels those tickets and immediately reissues new, electronic tickets to the buyers.

The system is designed to help fans avoid scams, and help UNC-CH keep seats full. UNC-CH has begun promoting StubHub as its new "secondary ticket marketplace."

StubHub doesn't prohibit sellers from selling tickets for prices higher than face value.

StubHub keeps a percentage of each ticket exchange: 15 percent from sellers, and 10 percent from buyers. Financial terms of its deal with UNC-CH weren't disclosed.

Staff writer Alan M. Wolf
New respect for the physical exam

THOR SWIFT - NEW YORK TIMES
Dr. Abraham Verghese of Stanford University teaches a technique for helping to diagnose various brain disorders.

BY DENISE GRADY - New York Times

STANFORD, Calif. At Stanford, a 55-year-old doctor with a bad back and a bum knee from too much tennis is on a mission to bring back something he considers a lost art: the physical exam.

The exam involves old-fashioned touching, looking and listening - the once prized, almost magical skills of the doctor who missed nothing and could swiftly diagnose a sluggish thyroid or leaky heart valve using keen eyes, practiced hands and a stethoscope.

Art and medicine may seem disparate worlds, but Dr. Abraham Verghese (ver-GEESE) insists that for him they are one.

Doctors and writers are both collectors of stories, and he says his two careers have the same joy and the same prerequisite: "infinite curiosity about other people."

Verghese was amazingly limber as he showed a roomful of doctors-in-training a twisting, dancelike walk he had spied in the hospital corridor. He challenged them to diagnose it. Hemiplegia? Sensory ataxia?

It was their introduction to a rollicking workshop on abnormal gaits that soon had them shuffling, staggering and thrashing about, challenging one another. Parkinson's? Neuropathy? Stroke?

Verghese cannot help secretly diagnosing ailments in strangers. "People are endlessly mysterious," he said in an interview.

He is out to save the physical exam because it seems to be wasting away, he says, in an era of CT, ultrasound, MRI, countless lab tests and doctor visits that whip by like speed dates. Some doctors would gladly let the exam go, claiming that much of it has been rendered obsolete by technology. Some admit they do the exam almost as a token gesture, only because patients expect it.

Medical schools in the United States have let the exam slide, Verghese says. He likes to joke that a person could show up at the hospital with a finger missing, and doctors would insist on an MRI, a CT scan and an orthopedic consult to confirm it.

He still believes a thorough exam can yield vital information and help doctors figure out which tests to order and which to skip - surely a worthwhile goal as the United States struggles to control health care costs, he said.

**Medical school, interrupted**

Like Dr. Marion Stone, the main character in "Cutting for Stone," Verghese was born in Ethiopia. His parents were teachers from Kerala, a Christian region in southern India.
The family's expectations were high. "You were a doctor, engineer, lawyer or a failure," Verghese said.

He left Ethiopia at 15 for two years of premedical studies in Madras, India, and then returned to Addis Ababa for medical school. By then his parents, worried about Ethiopia's stability, had moved to the United States. But he had no desire to leave. "I loved that land," he recalled.

The medical training was rigorous. Students spent a year dissecting a cadaver, and then had to pass grueling essay exams.

"It was almost brutal," he said. "But it left us changed in some fundamental way, like formatting a disk."

Civil war broke out in Ethiopia in 1974. As a citizen of India, Verghese knew it was time to get out. He joined his parents in Westfield, N.J. Both were teaching.

America excited him. But he would have to start from scratch, earning a bachelor's degree and then applying to medical schools, even though he already had more than two years of medical training.

He eventually finished medical school in India, and then did his residency in the United States, specializing in internal medicine and infectious disease.

He worked in Tennessee during the early days of the AIDS epidemic, before there were any effective treatments. Before AIDS, he said, "I must have been a conceited ass, full of knowledge; AIDS humbled a whole generation."

He came to know many of his patients and their families. He visited their homes, attended their deaths and their funerals. One patient, near death, awoke when Verghese arrived, and opened his shirt to be examined one last time.

"It was like an offering," Verghese said, with tears in his eyes. "To preside over the bed of a dying man in his last few hours. I listen, I thump, I don't even know what I'm listening for. But doing it says: 'I will never leave you. I will not let you die in pain or alone.'"
Prodding and joking
Making hospital rounds with students, Verghese is in his element. On a morning in August, he peppered four students with rapid-fire questions, mini-lectures on science and the history of medicine, pointers on presenting cases, and jokes that made them roll their eyes or laugh, or both.

"What can alcohol do to the nervous system?" he asked. Damage the cerebellum, said one. Cause seizures, said another. "Come on, I want 10," Verghese said, insistent but not bullying.

"What's the most important part of the stethoscope?" They stared at him. "The part between the earpieces." They moaned.