THE DAILY CLIPS

November 16, 2007

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

The Greenville Daily Reflector
The Raleigh News & Observer
    The New York Times
    The Wall Street Journal
    USA Today
    The Charlotte Observer
    The Fayetteville Observer
The Greensboro News & Record
    Newsweek
    U.S. News & World Report
    Business Week
    Time

East Carolina University News Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@.ecu.edu  Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481 FAX: 252-328-6300
'The Underpants'

Staging a wardrobe malfunction

By Kelley Kirk-Swindell
The Daily Reflector

With a title like "The Underpants" you have a vague idea of what the play is about, said Greg Funaro. "It's not 'Snow White.'"

Indeed it isn't.
Carl Sternheim wrote the play in 1910 as a comment on the growing bourgeois population in Germany during the early 20th century.

"The playwright thought they were corrupt in their moral manners and beliefs," Funaro said.

Funaro is directing the ECU/Loeslin Playhouse performances of "The Underpants" today through Tuesday. All performances will be held at ECU's McGinnis Playhouse.

The ECU performances will be based on the 2002 version of the play as adapted by comedic actor and writer Steve Martin.

While the title of the play seems racy, it's still a fairly family-friendly production.

"There are some parts that are definitely rated PG-13," Funaro said. "But nothing worse than you see on 'Desperate Housewives.' There is no real profanity."

Steve Martin's adaptation was to make the work more modern.

The play takes place entirely at the main character's flat. There are six characters and the play runs approximately an hour and a half.

"The set would be considered realistic. The situation is farcical and the acting borders on comedic hyper-realism," Funaro said.

The story begins after Louise and Theo Marcke attend a parade to see
the king, and Louise's undergarments slide to her ankles.

She quickly recovers her undergarments and hopes that nobody witnessed the embarrassing wardrobe malfunction. Louise's stuffy husband is horrified by his wife's indiscretion, and worries about how the event will affect his reputation and his career.

Little do the couple know, but two men saw the underpants incident and are smitten with young Louise. The couple has a room for rent at their flat, giving the men access to romance Louise. Theo is oblivious to his wife's beauty and is concerned instead with renting their spare room to each man, therefore doubling his money.

Through the new admiration of the two men, Louise better understands her circumstances, her worth, and is empowered.

"How that applies to today's society is the idea of appearance versus reality," Funaro said. "One can appear in public to be moral and upstanding and, behind closed doors, it's a different story. You can talk the talk but you don't necessarily have to walk the walk."

The play was banned by the German government when it was first released, as were all of Sternheim's works when the Nazi party took over Germany during World War II.

"Martin's adaptation makes this play as relevant today as when it was written nearly a century ago," Funaro said. "It is a funny play and one that has something to say, which makes for great theater."

Funaro is an assistant professor in the ECU School of Theatre and Dance. He took over the instruction of the two-year professional acting program in the Meisner technique in 2005 following Don Biehn's retirement and made his directorial debut on ECU's main stage with "The Importance of Being Earnest."
New wolf howls in Dance Collective’s ‘Winter Wonder’

By Kelley Kirk-Swindell
The Daily Reflector

The Greenville Civic Ballet’s Dance Collective will present its seventh annual “Winter Wonder” benefit at 7 p.m. Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday at South Central High School’s performing arts center.

The Dance Collective — the nonprofit company of the Greenville Civic Ballet — will present a new piece called “Peter and the Wolf” in addition to its traditional holiday selections. The “Peter and the Wolf” piece was choreographed by rehearsal coaches Cherita Lytle, Anna Whitlow, Shaina Hutson, Tara Showmaker and Kim Saad.

Saad is the owner and artistic director of the Greenville Civic Ballet and the Dance Collective. She founded both the school and the Dance Collective 10 years ago.

To be a part of the Collective, dancers audition in August for the nine-month season. Dancers are cast in their role for the “Winter Wonder” performances during that audition.

“Typically 99 percent of the dancers are from the Greenville Civic Ballet,” Saad said. “But the auditions are open to all dancers, and they must be over 12 years old.”

Those who are accepted into the Dance Collective must commit to performances or rehearsals every weekend during the performance season.

This weekend’s performances will raise money for the Rainbow Services of Pediatric Hematology Oncology at East Carolina’s Brody School of Medicine and collect new, unwrapped toys for the Marine Corps Toys for Tots campaign.

Saad and her students heard about a funding issue for The Rainbow Services summer camps and felt that this was a worthy cause to be this year’s beneficiary of the fundraising performances.

“This touched our hearts,” Saad said. “This is kids giving back to kids.”

Saad said that the Dance Collective will also perform at The Rainbow Services annual Christmas event for families and patients.

The Rainbow Services is a program to help pediatric patients with cancer, sickle cell disease, hemophilia and other chronic blood disorders and their families. Rainbow Services includes a number of activities in two camp-style settings, Camp Rainbow and Camp Hope, to give the children and their families an opportunity to renew their strength while fighting their illness.

“It’s for patients and their families from all over eastern North Carolina,” Saad said. “These children can’t go to just any camp.

“They need to go where they have the appropriate medical services available to them.”

Contact Kelley Kirk-Swindell at 339-9596 or kkirkswindell@coxnc.com.
Nooses spur revival of civil rights fervor

By Kristin Collins
Staff Writer

Early this morning, people across North Carolina will board buses and head for Washington, joining thousands at the Justice Department to rally for harsh prosecution of those who threaten blacks with nooses.

For many of the travelers, it will be the second time in two months that they have made a long journey to speak against what they see as discrimination.

They say it's a sign that blacks, in North Carolina and across the country are mobilizing in a way they haven't seen since the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

Since the arrest of six black teens in Jena, La., angered African-Americans and others nationwide this fall, a new spirit of activism has taken hold, many say. Old groups are re-energized, new groups are forming and col-

SEE RIGHTS, PAGE 7B
College campuses are energized with a fresh spirit of activism.

"The African-American community, it's like we've been walking in the wilderness," said Kevin Williams, who organized the bus trip today. "Now, we've been awakened, and we're asking people, please don't go back in your corners and let this die."

Officially, today's rally is a response to a spate of incidents across the country in which nooses have been left in public places. One was found at N.C. State University last week, and several were also left in a High Point high school.

Al Sharpton, a rally organizer, says he wants the incidents to be investigated as hate crimes.

But black activism today is far less clear-cut than in the 1960s, when discriminatory laws prohibited African-Americans from voting, attending white schools and enjoying other public services.

The Rev. William J. Barber II, president of the North Carolina branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said his mother once told him that her generation of activists had it easier.

"She said, 'At least we had signs up to remind us,' " Barber said. "You all have to study."

Now, the culprits are more subtle. Census figures show that the median income for black families trails that of whites by 40 percent. African-Americans are still sicker than whites, getting less medical care and suffering higher fatality rates for many diseases. Incarceration rates and school suspensions are vastly higher for blacks than for whites. Black students lag in school achievement, and many schools across the state appear to be resegregating.

Williams said he thinks those disparities all have their roots in discrimination. The rally, he said, will send a message that blacks are no longer willing to accept them.

The 'Jena 6'

Many say that this fresh concern over the plight of blacks ignited when a schoolyard fight in Jena, La., became the talk of black radio over the summer.

Six black students are accused of beating a white classmate. The beating came after several weeks of racial unrest at the school, sparked when white students hung nooses in a tree after a black student sat under it.

Those who hung the nooses were suspended but not criminally charged, and white students involved in fights were also spared criminal counts. Meanwhile, the six black students were initially charged with attempted second-degree murder. That prompted a mass demonstration in which the "Jena Six" came to symbolize a justice system that harshly punishes blacks and sweeps aside the transgressions of whites. Charges against five of the teens were later reduced, and the sixth stands accused under sealed charges in juvenile court.

Ever since thousands of blacks and others gathered in the small town to protest the students' treatment in September, nooses have been appearing frequently around the country. Some black see the nooses as threats of violence and tangible proof that they have been silent too long.

Laverne Hayes of Raleigh, who is taking her 12-year-old twins to Washington today, said the Jena incident had made it less taboo to talk about racial discrimination.

"The feeling was, you've got to keep the peace, keep it hush-hush," said Hayes, a nursing student. "Now, with the nooses all around, it brings back the unity."

The current groundswell of activism is in contrast to other recent cases of racial hatred in North Carolina. In 2002, N.C. Department of Transportation employees reported a noose that hung in their workplace for more than a month. And in 2005, three crosses were burned in Durham. The incidents provoked outrage but nothing like the calls to march on Washington.

Jarvis Hall, director of the Institute for Civic Engagement and Social Change at N.C. Central University, said the Jena incident grabbed the attention of young blacks because they could imagine it happening to them. The arrested black students were young athletes, not street criminals, and many felt that white students threatened a right that blacks fought hard to gain.

"The ability to sit where you want, to stand on public property, we thought that battle had been won," Hall said.

At NCSU, where a toilet paper noose was found in a restroom last week, black student leaders are holding meetings and pressing the administration to denounce what they call a hate crime. They submitted a resolution to the Student Senate this week, asking the body to lay out a clear stance against racial intimidation.

Candace Lee, a junior who is a member of N.C. State's chapter of the NAACP, says she hopes this incident will spur a lasting cultural change at the university.

"If we're a community and we care about each other, then what hurts one will hurt us all," Lee said.

But will it last?

It remains to be seen, however, whether the recent surge of activity will continue — especially if the rash of nooses subsides.

JaMees Mangum, a junior at NCCU, said she watched many of her classmates pile onto a bus and head to Jena, but she said she doesn't see them taking the kinds of meaningful steps needed to sustain a movement. Mangum said
UNC-CH tuitions up for some

BY LEAH FRIEDMAN
STAFF WRITER

CHAPEL HILL — Brock Baker, a UNC junior from Nashville, Tenn., stood in the back of the Carolina Inn ballroom dressed like a cow. He held a poster that read “Eat fewer out-of-staters.”

Despite Baker’s silent protest, the UNC-Chapel Hill board of trustees unanimously agreed Thursday to increase tuition for all students except in-state undergraduates.

Chancellor James Moeuser said the tuition increase — $1,250 for out-of-state undergraduates and $800 for out-of-state graduate students — is needed to cover the cost of educating those students.

In-state graduate students will pay an extra $400.

Before the vote, the board heard from several students who asked for a more predictable tuition increase schedule and said they had not budgeted for a tuition hike.

“$1,250 is a fair number, but it’s hard for students to take because they were not expecting it,” said Eve Carson, student body president.

Mike Winters, a senior from Cincinnati, said such an increase might cause hardships for families.

“It’s not fair because we can’t budget for increases that are not easy to predict,” he told the board.

Ronald Bilo, a sophomore from Miami, said his friend can’t afford the tuition and plans to graduate early.

“The easy way to stop this is to make the process transparent,” he said.

Tuition will not increase for in-state undergraduates because of a UNC system Board of Governors policy tying increases for that group to state appropriations. The legislature increased appropriations to UNC-Chapel Hill by 14.7 percent, making the university ineligible for an in-state undergraduate tuition increase next year.

The tuition increase will generate an additional $8.23 million.

Of that, 35 percent will be used for need-based financial aid. The advising program will get $600,000, and the rest will go to faculty positions and increased pay.

Staff writer Cheryl Johnston
Sudgrove contributed to this report.
We won't tolerate nooses

It was little over a week ago that a toilet paper noose was found in a bathroom on the N.C. State University campus. In the days since, we've seen a flurry of official activity, with the police investigating, Chancellor James Oblinger issuing statements of concern and District Attorney Colon Willoughby at the ready, eager to assist.

A part of me cannot help but cheer: Go Jim, go Colon. Round up the creep who produced this thing.

Decisive action from the top inspires public confidence. In a case like this, it is the official utterance of our core belief:

This is not what we're about.

At the same time, it is hard not to look at the official reaction on campus as a bit of overkill that, sadly enough, plays right into the perpetrator's hands.

Whether this was a stupid prank or a racist symbol with intent, the idiot who did it must be gleeeful.

Someone who rigs up a noose and leaves it in a public space is begging for reaction. And this jerk surely got it — just like the makers of the nooses found at other schools across the country, with their own chancellors denouncing and their own media buzzing.

It's the public response that triggers the copycats.

What if we hadn't deigned to respond at all?

The noose was, after all, discovered in a lonesome bathroom, not in the middle of N.C. State's Brickyard.

Rather than being fashioned menacingly of heavy rope, it was made, improbably enough, of the single-ply toilet paper favored by institutions everywhere.

My first instinct: Flush it. But I am brought up short by a quote from writer/philosopher/Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel: "Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

Officialdom has had plenty to say about the noose at N.C. State. Students gathered Thursday night on campus. And busloads of residents from our area are heading to Washington today to rally for a federal intervention.

But what about the rest of us? What about a world, on campus or off, where a noose might be considered a joke?

There is nothing funny about this old racist symbol. Nothing cute. Nothing clever.

In small ways and large, this is a time for the community to make that clear. In individual conversations, in water fountain chats and in community gatherings, we need to reiterate that racism is not tolerated here in any form. There is no audience here for a noose of any sort, even a pathetic one made of toilet paper.

That is not what we're about.

Several years ago, there was a huge furor in the Midwest over a request from the Ku Klux Klan to march in Skokie, Ill., a town with a significant Jewish population.

In the end, the town couldn't shut down the march. The townspeople, aided by friends and supporters from across the country, held a bigger march of their own.

The few dozen Klan losers slunk home — the threatening symbol of the white robe defeated not by official response but by the community itself.

In Raleigh, the symbol of the noose might be powerful, but it is tissue-thin in the face of a community that will not allow it to hold sway.
Queens prof named state’s best

National group bestows honor

BY APRIL BETHEA
THE CHARLOTTE OBSERVER

CHARLOTTE — Queens University professor Reed Perkins has been named the state’s top professor by a national organization.

Perkins, an associate professor and chairman of the environmental sciences department, was presented with the award from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education during a ceremony Thursday in Washington, D.C.

Perkins is the fifth Queens professor to have received the honor — a first among North Carolina schools, the university said. He joined Queens’ faculty in 1998.

Colleagues and students describe Perkins as an energetic, innovative instructor who is able to blend science with philosophy.

Once, after a discussion on ecological relationships, a student proclaimed it reminded her of English poet John Donne, Perkins wrote in a statement for the award.

Now he leads discussions on ecosystems with Donne’s Meditation XVII: “No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.”

Perkins also leads an annual trip to the Pacific island of Yap, where Queens students work with local residents to study environmental conditions there and recommend solutions.

Whitney Wurzel, a 2005 Queens graduate, went on the trip the May before her senior year. She called it the most unique learning experience of her life. Wurzel majored in English at Queens with a concentration in environmental writing. She said she took more of Perkins’ classes than those of any other professor, and she praised his enthusiasm and encouragement of students to think for themselves.

Norris Frederick, director of our Center for Ethics and Religion and past vice president of academic affairs, said Perkins loves teaching and is always looking for new programs.

At Queens, Perkins directs the school’s honors program. He also teaches environmental science programs with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools through a grant from Duke Energy Foundation.
Schools work to get word out

Campuses widen emergency networks

BY MARLON A. WALKER
STAFF WRITER

It wasn't an emergency, but parents of N.C. State University students received e-mail Thursday about how to register to get cell phone text messages in the event there is an emergency on campus.

"We're always looking for ways to communicate in an emergency," university spokesman Keith Nichols said. "No one way of communication gets the word out to everybody. But as we add new communication tools, we increase our opportunity to get the message out as soon as possible."

It's not a unique offering.

Schools across the state are adding the text alerts to their arsenals for making people aware of campus emergencies. The UNC system acquired the services of Public Information Emergency Response Systems Inc., a Washington company that provides an Internet-based communication management operation.

It's one of many things being done on campuses across the state to maintain a safe environment.

Nichols said N.C. State is also setting up a system by which sirens will blare when an emergency occurs. The sirens will also have voice capability. E-mail and a building liaison system — which involves designated people spreading emergency messages by word of mouth — are already in place, he said.

The siren system and the text messages are also being implemented at UNC-CH, spokesman Mike McFarland said Thursday. He said a discussion among several university officials after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 put into motion some of their safety initiatives.

"[Katrina] helped create some impetus for doing more than what had been done in the past," McFarland said.

At Duke University, a group met shortly after shootings at Virginia Tech, where 32 people died last spring. A crisis communication plan was adopted, which includes the acquisition of a new computer server dedicated to sending out emergency e-mail messages, Duke spokesman Paul Grantham said. A Web site that somewhat resembles a blog would provide details during any emergencies.

At East Carolina University in Greenville, officials are allowing students and parents to sign up for the text alerts, ECU police Maj. Frank Knight said. He said Voice over Internet Protocol phones are being installed on campus, which can be preprogrammed with distress codes and function as a public address system.

Marc Mullen, vice president of PIER Systems, said his company's operation will let campuses send quick messages to cell phones, then provide more information at a centralized location.

"The follow-up gives context in terms of what to do [in an emergency]," he said. "If something severe enough happens that requires emergency notification, there's going to be ... additional information needed. That's where PIER comes in handy."

Is there a better way than phones to quickly alert people? Not right now, Mullen said.

marlon.walker@newsobserver.com
or (919) 836-4906

"As we add new communication tools, we increase our opportunity to get the message out as soon as possible."

KEITH NICHOLS
N.C. STATE UNIVERSITY SPOKESMAN