THE DAILY CLIPS

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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
ECU adds cardiac specialist

The Daily Reflector

A nationally recognized leader in the psychological care of patients with implantable cardiac devices has joined the Brody School of Medicine faculty.

Sam Sears is director of health psychology and also holds an appointment to the Department of Cardiovascular Sciences.

Sears worked and taught for more than 12 years at the University of Florida before coming to Greenville.

"This university has the potential to grow, and the East Carolina Heart Institute is a fantastic opportunity," said Sears, who will oversee the development of the doctoral program in health psychology.

Sears’ research focuses on implantable cardioverter defibrillators, which are used by cardiologists to treat annually more than 200,000 patients who have potentially life-threatening irregular heart beats.

However, many of these patients have high levels of anxiety about receiving a significant shock, 750 volts, to restore a normal cardiac rhythm.

Sears researches and treats patients who are fearful of the devices.

A significant percentage of implant recipients are at risk for developing psychological problems based on their history or their experience when the devices shock their heart into normal rhythm, Sears said.

Research Sears has conducted showed that patients who reported high levels of optimism long-term showed significantly better functioning in general health, mental health, physical limitations and perception of illness than recipients with low levels of optimism.

Sears said psychological care is needed along with medical care as recipients of ICDs work to return to their day-to-day activities after surviving a heart attack.

Education students teach at Boys & Girls Club

Students majoring in elementary education and special education are bringing the wonders of science to the Boys and Girls Club of Pitt County.

Seventy education students are teaching lessons in earth science, physical science, life science and design technology science during the next couple of weeks in a science
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club setting.
The science club will have served 150 at-risk students when it ends Tuesday. The university students will learn how the science curriculum spirals up from the lower elementary grades to the upper elementary grades. Students at the Boys & Girls Club of Pitt County volunteered to participate in the science camp.

Bingo fundraiser

Zeta Au Alpha sorority is holding a “Bingo for Breast Cancer” fundraiser 7-9 p.m. Monday at Mendenhall Student Center.

Game cards are $2 and cash prizes will be awarded. A 50/50 raffle will take place around 8 p.m. Food and drinks will be available for purchase. The sorority also is selling T-shirts for $12 and beverage cozies for $2.

The money is being donated to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

Laupus Library honors Fuller

Laupus Library recently presented a bronze medallion to Barbara Fuller, a past executive director of the Pitt County Medical Society.

Fuller and her family named the library's fourth floor terrace in memory of her brother, Thomas Darwin Wilson.

Wilson, a native of Asheville, was a Marine pilot in Vietnam. Hit by enemy fire, he landed his plane safely in a rice paddy, saving the crew and four wounded soldiers he was evacuating. He received a presidential unit citation and Purple Heart for heroism.

After military service, Wilson graduated with a degree in psychology from the University of Florida. He worked for the federal government as an undercover agent for the Division of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and later as a plane crash investigator. He

Barbara Fuller of Greenville, left, accepts a Laupus Library bronze medallion from Dorothy Spencer, associate vice chancellor for communication & information resources and director of Laupus Library.

"The generous support of friends like Mrs. Fuller helps ensure that our collections, programs and services will be strong now and in the future and we are very grateful to her."

Symposium on Nov. 29

The possibility of regrowing brain cells following neurological injuries or illnesses will be the topic of the ninth annual Neuroscience Symposium being held Nov. 29.

The daylong event, beginning at 8:30 a.m., is being held at the Willis Building, 300 E. First St. It is free.

Dr. Alex L. Kolodkin, Howard Hughes Investigator and professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, will deliver the keynote address, "Molecular Mechanisms of Neuronal Growth Cone Guidance."

The program is jointly sponsored by the 2007 Grass Traveling Scientist Program, a chapter grant from the Society for Neuroscience and the North Carolina Biotechnology Center. For information, visit http://www.ecu.edu/neurochapter.

Museum open house is Dec. 1

The Country Doctor Museum will host its third Holiday Open House from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Dec. 1.

Admission and activities are free. Several holiday activities will be offered at the museum.

In the library, guests can make free sachets throughout the day. Demonstrations on how to make pomanders and lavender bath salts will be held at 3 p.m. and 3:30 p.m. respectively.
Ferguson, Johnson join ECU’s emergency medicine department

Dr. Jeffrey Ferguson and Dr. Reuben Johnson, both emergency medicine physicians, have joined the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University.

Ferguson has joined the Department of Emergency Medicine as an assistant professor. He comes to ECU from the University of Virginia Health System, where he was a clinical instructor of emergency medicine.

Ferguson has master’s degree and medical degree from the University of Virginia and also completed residency training in emergency medicine and a fellowship in emergency medical services there.

He is certified by the American Board of Emergency Medicine. His clinical and research interests include emergency medical services and care at mass gatherings.

Johnson has also joined the department as an assistant professor. He comes to ECU from Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh, where he was chief emergency medicine resident. He has a medical degree from Howard University in Washington, D.C., and has completed residency training in internal and emergency medicine. He is certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Johnson’s clinical interests include pulmonary diseases, critical care medicine and prehospital/emergency medical services.

Ferguson and Johnson see patients at the Pitt County Memorial Hospital emergency department under the auspices of ECU Physicians, the group practice of the medical school.
Pair of ECU residences to receive sprinklers

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

Fire systems in four East Carolina University dorms are due for upgrades next year.

Two residence halls — Cotten and Fleming — will get sprinkler systems. The University of North Carolina Board of Governors approved the projects last week.

The projects are a response to a UNC System mandate. Installation of the sprinkler systems will start in May 2008, according to UNC documents. Work should be done by the time school starts in the fall, said Todd Johnson, interim vice provost for student affairs.

"It's critical that we are able to complete them in the summer so that we don't have to take any residence halls offline" during the school year, he said.

At a cost of roughly $1 million, the project will replace fire alarms in the two dorms. Two other residences halls — Jones and Garrett — also will get new alarm systems over the summer. Work in Jones and Garrett will continue a six-year project replacing alarms in all ECU dorms, Johnson said.

Fire safety at ECU has drawn attention over the last 18 months. During a meeting

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on the ECU campus in March 2007, the Board of Governors announced it would require UNC System schools to put sprinklers in all dorm rooms by 2010. ECU has more sprinkler-free rooms than any other system university. Eighty-four percent of 2,091 ECU dorm rooms don’t have sprinklers.

Under a plan developed in the spring, each of ECU's dorms would get sprinklers by the summer of 2013. Cotten and Fleming are the first two. Aycock and Jones halls are due to get sprinklers in summer 2009.

Two ECU dorms already have sprinklers. Installing sprinklers in the other 14, plus one with only a few sprinklers, will cost close to $10.7 million, according to university estimates. Much of the funding for the sprinklers would come from housing fees paid by students, according to the university plan.

In March 2006, a fire forced residents of Clement Hall to relocate for a few weeks. ECU student Lataisha Ann Isler, a Clement resident, later pleaded guilty to setting the fire and received probation.

Jimmy Ryals can be contacted at jryals@ecuxnc.com and 329-8366.
UNC study: Still a pay gap

The Herald-Sun, Durham

There were no big surprises in a study of the economic impact of blacks in North Carolina released Tuesday by UNC’s Kenan-Flagler Business School.

In fact, the overall conclusion—that blacks contribute more than they cost the economy—seemed self-evident. But the report was an important reminder of the continuing economic disparity between whites and blacks and that areas of discrimination persist.

The study identified three "areas of opportunity." Public K-12 schools need to emphasize entrepreneurial training so that blacks can enter the workforce primed for success. The state should also help black-owned businesses compete in a global economy and help ex-offenders gain job skills.

It's hard to argue with those priorities. The report may not be a surprise, but it is a reminder that much work remains to be done to provide equal opportunity for all North Carolina citizens.
Capital questions are central elements of school's new plan

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

When East Carolina University undertook its last master growth plan in 1999, the campus had 18,223 students, 160 buildings, 438 acres of real estate.

Things look different now. The student body is 33 percent larger; there are 67 more buildings and the campus covers 736 acres. University officials are working on a master plan for whatever changes the next eight years hold.

Capital questions are central elements of a master plan, said Vice

A LIST of ongoing and upcoming construction projects at East Carolina University.

Chancellor for Administration and Finance Kevin Seitz — how many new buildings will the campus need in the next eight or 10 years? Should they be primarily residential or instructional? What should those buildings look like?

How does ECU's infrastructure — power, Internet connectivity, roads, parking — need to grow to accommodate new construction?

To address the building questions, campus officials will have to answer some instructional ones, Seitz said: How much will the student body grow in the next

See PLAN, B3
University Health Systems will be part of a $400 million initiative to improve hospital telemedicine programs and data-sharing networks.

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

The chairman of the Federal Communications Commission is in town Tuesday to promote an effort to enhance health information sharing.

Chairman Kevin Martin will join University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina officials in heralding a new health information network in eastern North Carolina. Martin will announce grants under the FCC’s Rural Health Care Pilot Program at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday at Pitt County Memorial Hospital, according to an FCC news release.

The pilot program is a $400 million initiative to help hospitals expand telemedicine programs and build data-sharing networks, according to the FCC. Eighty-one health agencies applied for grants, FCC spokesman Robert Kenny said. Most of them have been approved, he added.

The proposal, submitted in May, would link 16 health care centers in 12 eastern North Carolina counties on a broadband network, according to the company’s application.

The UHS project will “improve communication among healthcare providers in eastern North Carolina through increased access and use of a broadband network, thus improving patient care,” the application states.

UHS sought $632,632 to install and operate the network for its first year. All told, first-year costs will reach more than $750,000, according to the UHS application.

FCC officials won’t announce grant amounts until Tuesday, Kenny said. The FCC offers to fund up to 85 percent of the project costs proposed by the applicants, he added.

Joining UHS on the networking project are the N.C. Office of Rural Health and Community Care, the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, Access East and the health care agencies that will join the network.

Also part Tuesday’s announcement will be Elizabeth City-based Albomarle Hospital, which applied for $1.5 million over two years, according to FCC documents.

U.S. Reps. Walter B. Jones, R-N.C., and G.K. Butterfield, D-N.C., will be at the ceremony in the neonatal intensive care unit lobby at the PCMH Children’s Hospital.

Jimmy Ryals can be contacted at jryals@coxnc.com and 329-9568.
‘Terrible’ Ted has toned down the volume

The all-purpose entrepreneur speaks his mind today at UNC-CH

BY MATT EHLERS
STAFF WRITER

Let's discuss: Where did Ted Turner run off to?
It wasn't that long ago that Mr. Superstation appeared regularly in the papers, maybe taking a verbal jab at Jesus, jet-setting with his (now ex-) wife Jane Fonda, or stirring up any number of very public money-making pots, from pro wrestling to CNN to the Atlanta Braves. This is a man who built a TV channel that shows nothing but cartoons, after winning the world's most prestigious yacht race and inventing his own Olympic-style games.

He even traded in philosophy, once crediting his business success to the mantra of "early to bed, early to rise, work like hell and advertise."

Turner has been less noisy in recent years, generally popping up in connection with his philanthropic endeavors. But Turner will be in Chapel Hill today for a public appearance billed as "A Conversation with Ted Turner," a designation that gives him enough latitude to talk himself right back into the news.

IF YOU GO

WHAT: "A Conversation with Ted Turner," with Pat Mitchell, Turner will visit as the Frey Foundation Distinguished Visiting Professor in the College of Arts and Sciences. The event is co-sponsored by the Carolina Entrepreneurial Initiative.

WHEN: 4 p.m today
WHERE: Memorial Hall, UNC-Chapel Hill campus
COST: Free
MORE INFO: 843-3333


Nicknamed "The Mouth of the South," Turner once called Christianity a "religion for losers" and in 1993 gave a commencement address at UNC-Chapel Hill that has come to be regarded as one of the worst in Triangle history. The rambling speech included riffs on marriage counseling and the national debt.

Today, tedturner.com features less controversial fare, such as the fact that his chain of bison-serving restaurants uses low-watt light bulbs. In addition to managing the Ted's Montana Grill mini-empire, Turner campaigns for malaria prevention in Africa and against the threat of nuclear weapons. The Captain Planet Foundation, run by his daughter, provides grants for environmental projects designed to interest young people.

Turner, who celebrates his 69th birthday today, has more time for all

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this because he no longer serves on the board of directors at Time Warner, the company that swallowed his broadcasting business in the '90s.

According to Pat Mitchell, a former president of PBS and longtime associate of Turner's, his lower profile hasn't meant a lowering of the voice. Mitchell will provide the other side of today's conversation.

"I hope he never stops speaking his mind and giving his opinions, however controversial from time to time," she wrote in an e-mail message.

"Ted has never been reticent to say what he thinks and believes and gratefully, as has been observed before, he also 'puts his money and his values behind what he says.'"

In other words, The Mouth hasn't forgotten how to use it.
Tuition games

While I appreciate your defense of the middle class in your Nov. 5 editorial "Tuition: Hold it," the editorial was misguided on what the source of the real problem is regarding tuition increases.

Yes, the General Assembly was very generous to the UNC system, and as a result System President Erskine Bowles already stated that the cap on resident tuition for next year is zero percent. So, instead, the UNC-Chapel Hill Board of Trustees intends to rip nonresident students and graduate students for as much as it can.

I'm not complaining just because I have to pay it. I'm an in-state student. John Ellison, a trustee who serves on the tuition and fee advisory task force, advocated a $1,500 increase across the board for those groups. The trustees falsely believe that if UNC isn't charging as much as its peer institutions, then our quality of education isn't increasing. Just keeping pace with inflation isn't enough for them.

This faulty logic, combined with how utterly out of touch the Board of Trustees is with students, dominates the tuition discussion to the point where if you disagree with the BOT, your idea is shot down immediately.

My hope is that Chancellor James Moeser will intervene before the task force's proposal goes to the board.

Jonathan Tugman
Associate Opinion Editor,
The Daily Tar Heel
Chapel Hill

Defining success

As a professor emeritus, I heartily approve of college education and especially for those who are qualified. Hence, I was generally pleased with the stimulation efforts reported in The N&O item "Advisors give students that extra little nudge" Nov. 6. However, I judge the contribution by UNC-Chapel Hill Chancellor James Moeser to be misleading, deceptive and dysfunctional.

Speaking to a group of local high schoolers who indicated they planned on going to college, Moeser is reported as saying: "I don't have to tell you that's a million-dollar decision you just made. ... To be successful in the 21st century you really need a college education."

Why misleading, deceptive and dysfunctional? First, the "million-dollar" income to which he referred is, I suspect, an average for college grads. Hence, half will make less and some considerably less, etc. Second, and of much greater significance, financial income is not the sole qualifier for life-long success in the 21st century. Wealth is desirable but not necessary. Moeser's "million-dollars more" income is certainly desirable, but it is not essential to a successful life.

I suggest that plenty of Americans lacking college degrees lead happy and successful lives, and, I suspect, plenty with college degrees don't.

Sidney Cohn
Chapel Hill
Duke offers $596M hospital plan

BY JONATHAN B. COX
STAFF WRITER

DURHAM – Duke University Health System has proposed the biggest expansion at its flagship hospital in a quarter century to keep pace with a growing and aging population.

The health system is asking the state for permission to spend $596 million on a 548,420-square-foot, seven-story building that will increase its capacity to serve patients.

It also would serve as an economic catalyst for the region. Duke expects 1,000 new jobs when the facility is complete, likely by 2013.

"We want to be here to meet the needs of this community," said Kevin Sowers, chief operating officer of Duke Hospital. "It's an incredible opportunity to create the next facility that will serve the next generation."

The size and scope of the project underscores a health-care building boom that's taking place here and across the country.

With the planned Duke complex, easily $1.5 billion in upgrades or expansions at Triangle medical facilities have been announced, started or completed this decade.

UNC Hospitals, for instance, is expanding its cancer center in Chapel Hill. WakeMed is adding beds at its

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Community college list is cut to 3

One of the candidates will be selected to replace retiring President Martin Lancaster.

BY BENJAMIN NOLET
STAFF WRITER

RALEIGH – The state Community Colleges board picked three finalists to lead the state system Friday, shutting out a pick pushed by the governor.

Gov. Mike Easley appoints 10 members to the 21-member state board. Easley asked his appointees to urge the full board to give an interview to Dan Gerlach, the governor’s senior fiscal adviser, according to a written statement by a governor’s spokeswoman. Gerlach did not get an interview.

The final three candidates to replace retiring President Martin Lancaster are:

- Kennon Briggs, vice president for business and finance for the N.C. Community College System.
- Philip R. Day Jr., chancellor of City College of San Francisco.
- Scott Ralls, president of Craven Community College.

The state’s community college system is one of the largest in the nation. The system includes 58 public community colleges. Lancaster, who will step down in May 2008, has been the system president for the past decade.

Just before the board’s Friday meeting, Easley replaced two members whose terms had expired five months ago. When asked whether the appointments had anything to do with Easley’s support for Gerlach, his press office wrote, “Their terms expired, so we needed to make new appointments.”

State Senate leader Marc Basnight spoke to three board members about Gerlach, said Schorr Johnson, a spokesman for the senator.

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"This is a process, and it is up to the members of the Community College Board, and he [Basnight] certainly wanted them to know why he thinks Dan Gerlach would be an excellent choice," Johnson said.

At the meeting Friday, the board met in closed session to discuss the choice for president. Board members declined to talk about what happened behind closed doors, but the session was apparently tense at times.

"This could go on for a week," board member Jim Daniels said as he left the closed session for a break. The session lasted about 90 minutes.

The final three candidates will go through another round of interviews before Dec. 6, when the board could announce a decision.

ben.niolet@newsobserver.com
or (919) 829-4521
N.C. State tuition going up $100

Undergrads’ payments will go toward financial aid, faculty salaries and advisers.

BY JOSH SHAFFER
STAFF WRITER

RALEIGH — Tuition at N.C. State University will rise $100 a year next fall, an increase that will boost faculty salaries, hire more faculty advisers and provide for the poorest students.

Out-of-state students will pay another $200, in the decision approved Friday by the Board of Trustees. Graduate students will avoid higher costs.

Chancellor James Oblinger noted that the tuition increase could have been nearly three times as much.

The state’s formula allows universities in the UNC system to raise tuition based on the amount of money divvied up by the General Assembly.

NCSU saw its fortunes drop by 2.2 percent, with roughly $480 million in state money this year, so it was qualified to raise tuition by 6.5 percent — the maximum. The board opted for a lower 2.6 percent increase, which translates to $100 more for in-state students.

“I think most students spend more than $100 a month on beer, so they can afford it,” said Krystal Kachnic, a graduate student seeking a degree in financial math. “When I was an undergraduate, I calculated how much it cost me to go to school by the hour. It was $40.”

UNC-Chapel Hill, by contrast, saw state funding go up by 14 percent and could not request any tuition increase.

Trustees noted that the legislature was generous this year, even though the level it gave permitted higher tuition.

NCSU received $38 million for its new companion animal medical center and $34 million for a new wing on an engineering building, among some of its items.

Tuition for in-state students this year is $3,760, up from $2,955 in the 2003-04 academic year. Enrollment is about 32,000, with the largest-ever freshman class of 4,700 now studying there.

“To maintain the quality that these students want,” Oblinger said, “we feel it will be necessary to ask for a tuition increase.”

Of the new tuition money, about 59 percent will go toward financial aid, of which 17.6 percent will benefit the Pack Promise — a program that guarantees NCSU’s poorest students will receive 100 percent of their needs through scholarships, grants, loans and work-study programs.

Another 25 percent will bump up faculty salaries, and 15.3 percent will go toward adding more faculty advisers.

Those advisers will “help students in their first two years,” Provost Larry Neilsen said. “Having more advisers during the early phase can help them on track to graduation.”

Only one trustee voted against the increase: Student Body President Bobby Mills.

Mills said his “no” vote came partly out of general opposition to tuition increases and partly because he wanted to see more money for Pack Promise.