THE DAILY CLIPS

December 10, 2007

News, commentary, and opinion
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The Greenville Daily Reflector
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Doctors were voted on by other doctors.

The Daily Reflector

More than 30 physicians from the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University have been chosen by their peers for inclusion in the 2007-2008 “Best Doctors” list.

The annual list is compiled by Best Doctors Inc., a Boston-based group that surveys more than 30,000 physicians across the United States who previously have been included in the listing asking whom they would choose to treat themselves or their families. About 5 percent of the physicians who practice in North Carolina make the annual list.

ECU physicians on this year’s list are Dr. Joseph Babb, cardiology; Dr. Paul Bolin, nephrology; Dr. William A. Burke, dermatology; Dr. W. Randolph Chitwood Jr., thoracic surgery; Dr. David N. Collier, general pediatrics; Dr. James J. Cummings, pediatric specialist; Dr. John M. Diamond, psychiatry; Dr. Raymond Dombroski, obstetrics and gynecology; Dr. Irma Fiordalisi, pediatric specialist; Dr. David Goff, general pediatrics; Drs. David Hannon and Glenn Harris, pediatric specialists; Dr. Karin Hillibrand, general pediatrics; Dr. Howard Homesley, obstetrics and gynecology; Dr. Thomas G. Irons, general pediatrics; Dr. Bruce E. Johnson, internal medicine; Dr. Cynda A. Johnson, family medicine; Drs. Yash Kataria and Mani S. Kavuru, pulmonary and critical care medicine; Dr. Kaye McGinty, psychiatry; Dr. Daniel P. Moore, pediatric physical medicine and rehabilitation; Dr. Robert J. Newman, family medicine; Dr. Dale A. Newton, general pediatrics; Dr. Edward R. Newton, obstetrics and gynecology; Dr. Ronald M. Perkin, pediatric specialist; Dr. Charles S. Powell, surgery; Dr. Kathleen V. Previll, general pediatrics; Dr. Keith M. Ramsey, infectious disease; Drs. Michael Reichel and Charlie J. Sang Jr., pediatric specialists; Dr. Kenneth Steinweg, family medicine; Dr. Debra A. Tristram, pediatric specialist; Dr. Ricky Watson, family medicine; Drs. Charles Willson, Judy Wheat Wood and Joseph Zanga, general pediatrics.


Student’s fiction honored

An ECU graduate student, received top honors last in N.C. State University’s annual fiction contest.

Megan Roberts, 25, received honorable mention for the Brenda L. Smart Fiction Prize for her short story, “Corners,” and was one of 10 finalists for the contest’s short fiction prize. Jim Shepard, nominee for the 2007 National Book Award and author of Battling Castro and Project X, was this year’s judge.

Roberts’ fiction has appeared in the online journal, 971Menu, and her poetry is forthcoming in the journal Al—
Obituaries

William Morris Greene

Rear Adm. William Morris Greene, USN (Ret.), 87, died peacefully on Saturday, Dec. 8, 2007, after a period of declining health.

A memorial service will be conducted Tuesday at 11 a.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Interment will be in Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

Bill was a native of Avery County, where he graduated from Crossnore School in 1937. He attended Brevard College and received his undergraduate degree from East Carolina Teacher's College in 1941. He was then commissioned in the U.S. Navy after completing Officer Candidate School at Northwestern University, and his naval career spanned more than 31 years. While serving in the Navy, he received a master's degree in International Affairs from George Washington University and attended the Naval War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. Following his military service, he served as executive director of the N.C. State Ports Authority and was an adjunct professor at East Carolina University. After playing both offensive and defensive end on the 1941 undefeated East Carolina football team, Bill was inducted into the East Carolina University Athletic Hall of Fame in 1992. He was also a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and the Golden K Kiwanis Club of Greenville.

A man of noble character, Bill exemplified integrity. He was a patient and kind person by nature who greatly enjoyed people. His devotion to his family and others brought him much joy especially in his later years. Known as a "gentleman's gentleman," Bill lived every day with dignity, earnestness, and grace. A loving husband, father, grandfather and friend, many will feel the void left by Bill's absence.

Bill was preceded in death by a daughter, Virginia Ruth Greene, in 1955.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Virginia C. Greene; daughter, Carolyn G. Myers and husband William of Greenville; son, William M. Greene, Jr. of Madeira Beach, Fla.; grandson, William H. Ipolk III of Norfolk, Va.; step-grandson, William S. Myers Jr. and wife Jody of Chesapeake, Va.; step-granddaughter, Kathryn M. Lewis and husband Trent of Arcanum, Ohio; and sister-in-law, Ann Greene of Jacksonville, Fla.

The family will receive friends today from 5-30-7:30 p.m. at Wilkerson Funeral Home.

Memorials may be made to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 401 E. Fourth St., Greenville, NC 27858, or East Carolina University School of Music, A.J. Fletcher Music Center, Greenville, NC 27858.

Arrangements by Wilkerson Funeral Home and Crematory, Greenville.
Our Views

At issue

Accountability, transparency needed at ECU

Athletics Director Terry Holland came to East Carolina University with impeccable credentials and a sound record of professional success. The revelation that $25,000 in financial aid and salary was paid to his relative is not likely to diminish those achievements, nor undermine confidence in his leadership of Pirate sports.

However, it does represent a worrisome lapse in judgment from an administrator expected to know the implications of his decisions. It also highlights the need for the university to employ policies that bow more deeply to accountability and transparency as it responds to this episode.

Following a request from The Daily Reflector, the university released an auditor’s report on Dec. 1 stating that $16,639 from the Athletics Department facilities budget was paid to Holland’s relative, later identified in the media as his brother, Jonathan Gregg Holland. The 51-year-old was a student and a part-time employee of the Athletics Department, receiving $8,500 in salary from August 2006 to Sept. 30, when Holland ended the arrangement.

The audit report stated that no policy exists to govern the awarding of aid to students outside the financial aid structure at East Carolina, and that Holland broke no university rules. However, the report called the expenditures an inappropriate use of funds under the university’s policy on the use of special and institutional trust funds.

On Wednesday, the school announced that Holland repaid the $25,000, and had delivered a check with a letter discussing the situation to Chancellor Steve Ballard. The chancellor and the chairman of the board of trustees both indicated their satisfaction with this result.

East Carolina says it now intends to develop and implement policies that will more precisely govern the use of university funds, a clearly necessary step. It will be especially important for these guidelines to aggressively provide for accountability and oversight to deter similarly embarrassing episodes going forward.

In addition, the university would do well to demonstrate a greater willingness to operate more openly. In this case, the auditor’s report that indicated inappropriate expenditures had been made was not made public for more than two months after the auditor presented it and the situation corrected — and only after The Daily Reflector’s request. Such a lack of transparency has the potential to undermine confidence in overall university operations.

Terry Holland is a talented administrator and his commitment to improving Pirate sports should not be questioned. His reputation and his work here so far clearly have raised the profile and performance level of East Carolina athletics. His judgment strayed in this case, but he has acknowledged as much.

Attention now turns to East Carolina University’s response, especially since the campus community and the community at large will look to the administration to strongly embrace accountability and openness as it proceeds. That will not excuse what occurred in this case, but it can provide an appropriate impetus for the complete restoration of the public’s trust in one of its premier institutions.
Public Forum

Holland flap too trivial for page one

I was disappointed that The Daily Reflector chose to make “Aid to Holland relative halted” the headline for the Dec. 2 paper in bigger print than “Pirates are heading to Hawaii for bowl game.” I was surprised on Monday to see this matter again on the front page.

Everyone in the media business has a social responsibility as we shape opinions of others.

I believe that Editor Al Clark and the Reflector staff try to report facts objectively. If the facts reported are accurate, they should have been on the last page, not the first. We all need good news to read on Sunday morning.

Bad publicity and politics over trivial matters have caused many great contributors of Greenville to quit. Off the top of my head, I would name Chancellor Eakin, Chancellor Muse, Steve Logan and Ray Craft.

Try to remember back to 2003, before Terry and Ann Holland got here, the John Thompson-Mike Hammrick days.

Unless the Reflector would rather have a team like that back, the Hollands deserve much more respect.

If you have ever shaken Terry’s hand and looked him straight in the eye, you would know this guy is 100 percent class and only works because he loves to give back to North Carolina.

KIP SLOAN
Greenville

ECU’s ‘tomorrow’ a closed door for some

East Carolina University has recently decided to require that all students, beginning in fall semester 2008, have health insurance in order to attend the university. I believe this decision reflects poorly on East Carolina University and undermines principles of equality in education.

By requiring students to have health insurance for enrollment, East Carolina University is unreasonably limiting educational opportunities. Students of lower-income areas already are at unfair disadvantage and it would be a grave and embarrassing mistake for our university to add another obstacle on the road to attaining higher education.

By making health insurance a requisite for enrollment, ECU restricts access to education and communicates airs of exclusivity to those outside the university community. Although the university uses the motto “East Carolina University: Tomorrow starts here,” it fails to admit that due to university policy, such as the enrollment requirement for student health insurance, tomorrow is only for some, or maybe that “Tomorrow starts here ... but only if you have health insurance.”

SARAH BIEHN
Greenville
ECU fans give gift of a game to troops

By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector

Some members of the military will be spending Dec. 23 cashing in an early Christmas present in Honolulu.

Some generous East Carolina football fans who can't span the globe to watch the Pirates play Boise State in the Sheraton Hawaii Bowl have decided to give the gift of the game to members of the armed services likely to be spending the holidays on the Hawaiian Islands.

According to ECU's assistant athletic director for ticketing and marketing Scott Wetherbee, ECU fans are taking the initiative to make sure someone will sit in their seats at Aloha Stadium by buying Hawaii Bowl tickets and donating them to active members of the service.

According to Wetherbee, the idea was spurred along with the help of Hawaii Bowl Executive Director Jim Donovan.

"We worked with Jim Donovan. We know we're not going to take 5,000 fans to Hawaii," Wetherbee said. "He said he had a game plan in place to help us out."

Donovan had contacts with all five branches of the armed services, and the idea was to give those stationed on the islands—preferably those not from Hawaii—a chance to request tickets to the game.

A STACK OF TICKETS for the Sheraton Hawaii Bowl already have been donated to military troops stationed in Hawaii.

TICKETS

Continued from A1

The five branches of the military have 45,564 active, reserve and National Guard troops, sailors and Marines stationed at 13 installations throughout the islands, according an official with the Hawaiian state government.

If there aren't enough ticket-takers from the military, Wetherbee said tickets will be offered to firefighters, police officers and local charities.

In exchange for their donations, ECU fans will receive a commemorative bowl ticket in January.

As for the ECU diehards buying and using their own tickets to the game some 5,100 miles to the west, Wetherbee said the number grew slowly this week.

"Right now, we're pushing 200 that have ordered," he said. "If I had to guess, I would hope we would have 400 or 500 make the destination. We told them to send us about 1,000 and the rest of our allotment we would try to donate."

Wetherbee confirmed some fans have chosen to be more charitable than others during the holiday season.

The biggest givers since the donation process began Monday include one fan who donated 25 of the $40 tickets, and a company that tried to confirm seats for a handful of employees in Hawaii with ECU ties.

Nathan Summers can be reached at nsommers@coxnc.com, or at (252)329-9595.

See TICKETS, A11
East Carolina surprises N.C. State Saturday

By Tony Castleberry
The Daily Reflector

East Carolina pulled off a big men’s basketball upset a couple of weeks ago against George Mason, but that win didn’t come close to setting off the celebration that Pirate fans had Saturday night at Minges Coliseum.

ECU shocked arch-rival N.C. State 75-69 in the Wolfpack’s first-ever trip to Greenville. Several hundred of the 7,623 ECU fans rushed the Minges court after the final second ticked off the clock, making jubilant noise that probably hasn’t been heard there since the Pirates beat then ninth-ranked Marquette near the end of the 2001-02 season.

“That was kind of fun,” said ECU coach Mack McCarthy, who took over as head coach after the team finished 6-24 last season under Ricky Stokes. “It took a great effort ... I can say something positive about everybody that played and even the guys that didn’t play tonight.”

Pirate junior guard Sam Hinnant scored a career-high 30 points and ECU was deadly from 3-point range, hitting 10-of-18 from beyond the arc.

“It’s amazing,” said forward John Fields, who pulled down a game-high 11 rebounds. “Coach Mack told us we could do it. All we did was work hard and it came together.”

TAYLOR GAGNON, pointing, and Brock Young celebrate on the sidelines during ECU’s win over State.
Spangler Foundation pays part of grant honoring Eakin

The Daily Reflector

A $1 million endowment has given East Carolina University’s College of Nursing its first endowed distinguished professorship and it’s named in honor of former Chancellor Richard R. Eakin.

The endowment comes from a $667,000 grant from the C.D. Spangler Foundation Inc. and $383,000 in state matching funds from the Distinguished Professors Endowment Trust Fund created by the N.C. General Assembly in 1985.

“This is a well-deserved honor for Dick Eakin and a special day for the College of Nursing,” current Chancellor Steve Ballard said, “We are grateful for the vision and generosity of the Spangler Foundation.” The announcement was made Thursday.

The Richard R. Eakin Distinguished Professorship will support the recruitment of a nurse scientist who has a history of funded research in an area that addresses the health needs of eastern North Carolinians. Eakin served as ECU chancellor from 1987 to 2001.

“The establishment of the Richard R. Eakin Distinguished Professorship will have a remarkable, lasting impact on the College of Nursing,” said Sylvia Brown, acting dean of the College of Nursing. “It will provide an opportunity to attract an outstanding nurse scholar and researcher who can assist us in advancing the college as well as the university’s research mission to improve the health of the citizens of eastern North Carolina. In addition, it will enhance the quality and reputation of our college and students will, ultimately, reap the benefits of this prestigious gift.”

The ECU College of Nursing was established in 1959, the oldest college in the university’s health sciences division. It has an enrollment of 1,047 students in baccalaureate, master’s and doctoral nursing programs. It is the largest producer of new nursing graduates in the state and offers the only nurse midwifery plan of study and alternate entry master’s of science in nursing option for nonnursing bachelor degree holders in the state.

The Spangler Foundation committed $6.9 million to fund an endowed distinguished pro-

See EAKIN, B3

RICHARD R. EAKIN shares a laugh with his wife JoAnn, left, and Janet Moye during the announcement of the Richard R. Eakin Distinguished Professorship on Thursday.

EAKIN
Continued from B1

fessorship at each of the 16 University of North Carolina institutions in 2007. Endowed professorships range from $500,000 to $1 million. Eligible disciplines include high-need fields of education, engineering, nursing and the traditional arts and sciences. The Spangler Foundation named the professorships.

Beginning in 2008, the Spangler Foundation will invest up to $20 million over five years to help each campus qualify for one additional endowed chair each year, potentially adding 80 professorships systemwide. The plan is contingent on the state General Assembly providing matching funds annually through the Distinguished Professors Endowment Trust Fund.

The trust has provided matching funds for more than 300 professorships in the UNC system.

C.D. Spangler Jr., a Charlotte businessman, served as UNC President from 1986 to 1997.
batross. She is a 2001 graduate of J.H. Rose High School and received a bachelor's degree in English from University of North Carolina at Wilmington in 2005. Roberts plans to continue writing as well as teach when she receives her master's degree in creative writing from ECU. She is the daughter of Nel Roberts of Greenville.

Kick smoking starting Jan. 8

Smokers who resolve to put down their packs in the new year can get some help from ECU Physicians' eight-week smoking cessation program.

The class will cover smoking facts, ways to deal with cravings, healthy substitutions for cigarettes and other methods to help people quit smoking.

Classes are Tuesdays from 6-8 p.m. from Jan. 8 through Feb. 26, at Moye Medical Center at 521 Moye Blvd. in Greenville. Cost is $45.

Registration ends Jan. 4. To register, call 744-1600 or visit http://www.ecu.edu/pulmonary.

Associate dean plans to retire

The associate dean for senior research of Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences is retiring.

Scott Snyder will retire on Jan. 1 after 35 years with the university.

He was recently honored with a reception hosted by Dean Alan White and the college.

"Snyder's dedication to scholarship, higher education, ECU and the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences is contagious," White said. "He has inspired all of us to work hard and never lose sight of the reasons we are here: to learn, discover and pass that knowledge along to others."

Snyder joined ECU in 1972 as an assistant professor of geology.

"A vast majority of the people on campus are great," Snyder said. "The camaraderie and friendliness has kept me here."

He became an associate professor in 1976 and a full professor in 1983. Snyder spent 10 years as director of graduate studies for the department of geology from 1978-88 and served as chairman of the department from 1988-98. He spent 1990-91 as interim associate dean of arts and sciences. In 1998, Snyder became the interim, founding director of the university's doctoral program in coastal resources management.

In 1999, after a permanent director was hired for CRM, he took on his next role as interim associate dean of the college of arts and sciences, a position he held until 2001. At this time, he was promoted to the position of senior associate dean. In 2006 his duties were more narrowly focused as he became the senior associate dean for research.

Cindy Putnam-Evans, professor in the department of biology, will succeed Snyder upon his retirement.

Brody faculty edit book

Faculty members at the Brody School of Medicine have published a textbook on the hospital care of children.

Dr. Ronald Perkin, professor and chairman of pediatrics at the medical school, and Dr. Dale Newton, professor of pediatrics, edited "Pediatric Hospital Medicine: Textbook of Inpatient Management," which contains clinical information on the care of hospitalized children.

Half of the chapters were written or co-written by health care professionals affiliated with Children’s Hospital of University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina.

The book is published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Library section adds hours

The Special Collections Department at the J. Y. Joyce Library announces new weekend hours beginning Jan. 12.

The new hours will be 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Weekday hours will remain the same: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday-Friday.

The decision to change an expand weekend hours was made in response to the library's year-long re-visioning effort, which pointed to the need for greater access to materials in the Special Collections Department.
ECU, Cigna sever ties

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

East Carolina University and a private health insurance company have ended their relationship.

As of Dec. 31, Cigna will no longer cover care given by doctors in the university's practice group, ECU Physicians. The move will affect about 5,400 current ECU patients, according to an ECU news release.

Cigna terminated the talks on Nov. 27 after more than a year of negotiations on new reimbursement rates, said Dr. Nick Benson, acting medical director of ECU Physicians and vice dean of the Brody School of Medicine.

"What it kind of boils down to is, we know how much we need to be reimbursed for the care we give our patients, and Cigna was not willing to pay that amount of money," he said.

Payments from Cigna make up a small portion of the medical school's annual patient revenue, "definitely less than 5 percent," Benson said. By contrast, Blue Cross & Blue Shield, the largest insurer contracted with ECU Physicians, contributes more than 15 percent to receipts, ECU physicians officials have said.

Cigna's local clients include the city of Greenville, which buys its employee insurance from the company. More than 1,300 municipal and Greenville Utilities workers are on the city health plan, City Manager Wayne Bowers said Friday.

"A good number" of those employees, but not a majority, are ECU Physicians patients, he said. The Cigna-ECU impasse will hurt those people, Bowers said.

"I think it'll have a negative impact on our employees," he said. "The employees can still go to these doctors, but it will be more expensive."

Cigna will continue to cover some patients getting acute or specialized treatment after

See CIGNA, A13

CIGNA

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New Year's, Benson added. It's "really difficult to predict" whether ECU doctors will lose patients once the contract lapses, he said.

Renegotiating for higher reimbursement rates from insurers has been part of a year-long effort to improve the ECU physician practice's finances, Benson said.

Officials have reached a new deal with Blue Cross & Blue Shield, and they're in informal talks with other providers.

Central to the talks is securing reimbursement rates high enough to offset expenses, he added. Negotiators also look for companies that pay claims quickly and have strong relationships with Pitt County Memorial Hospital, Benson said.

"We're looking for people that are professional and efficient in their work so they don't get really tied up in things that will just end up getting bogged down forever," he said.

Whether those negotiations could someday involved Cigna again, Benson doesn't know. "It's certainly possible," he said.

Bowers hopes the two can reach an agreement. Otherwise, the city may look for another insurer who, when a new, one-year agreement with Cigna ends Dec. 31, 2006.

"We would urge ECU Physicians and Cigna to keep working to get this settled so those doctors could get back in that network," he said.

Jimmy Ryals can be contacted at jryals@coxnc.com and 329-9568.
State will allow ECU to acquire CyberKnife

The state had earlier denied the university's bid for permission to buy the new piece of cancer equipment.

By Jimmy Ryals
The Daily Reflector

State officials will allow East Carolina University to buy a new piece of cancer equipment, reversing an earlier decision.

The state Division of Health Service Regulation issued a certificate of need Dec. 3, clearing the way for ECU to buy a $4 million CyberKnife. The state had denied ECU's bid for permission to buy the linear accelerator.

Brody School of Medicine officials provided "supplementary information" that addressed regulators' questions about the CyberKnife proposal, said Helen Alexander, an analyst with the state agency. Alexander declined to detail that information.

In July, the Division of Health Service Regulation rejected ECU's request for a certificate of need. Division officials cited deficiencies in ECU's plan to pay for the CyberKnife and with projections of demand for the treatment. The Brody School of Medicine applied for the certificate of need in February.

In September, Chris Collins, interim executive director of ECU Physicians, said medical school leaders were surprised by the state's rejection, adding that "the methodology that was put forth very much stands on its own."

Attempts to reach Collins for this story were unsuccessful.

The CyberKnife will expand the Leo Jenkins Cancer Center's repertoire of noninvasive cancer treatments, medical school officials have said. Manufactured by AccuRay, the system targets tumors below the neck with concentrated bursts of radiation. CyberKnife therapy requires fewer treatment sessions than traditional radiation, interim cancer center director Dr. Ron Allison said in June.

ECU will be one of five medical centers in the country with ready access to both a CyberKnife and Gamma Knife, said Robbie Hill, chairman of the ECU Board of Trustees' Health Science Committee. "It's a very big deal," the Kinston businessman said at a Nov. 30 trustees meeting.

The Gamma Knife, owned by Pitt County Memorial Hospital, is similar to the CyberKnife, treating brain tumors much as the CyberKnife does other cancers.

The CyberKnife project will cost $5.3 million, including equipment and renovations to the cancer center to accommodate it. University officials have said the system would likely go online within 12 months of state approval.

Up to 250 cancer patients should receive CyberKnife treatment by its third year of use, according to ECU's certificate-of-need application.

Jimmy Ryals can be contacted at jryals@coxnc.com and 329-9569.
Thinker gets a dose of Swedish glitz

UNC-Chapel Hill professor receives his Nobel Prize today in Stockholm

BY MAXAN BOSTROM
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS & OBSERVER

STOCKHOLM — They call it “magic week” — a dizzying schedule of speeches, news conferences, concerts, parties and appearances that celebrates the world’s most dazzling thinkers.

For Dr. Oliver Smithies, a professor of pathology at UNC-Chapel Hill, it all culminates today in a crowning event featuring His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, who will award him the Nobel Prize in Medicine.

“It’s a marvelous honor,” Smithies said.

BY THE NUMBERS

Fewer than 800 people or organizations have earned a Nobel Prize since the awards — established in Alfred Nobel’s will — began in 1901. Other numbers from the Nobel Prize award ceremony:

13,000

The number of fresh flowers, mainly orchids and roses, shipped from San Remo, Alfred Nobel’s place of death, as decoration for the festivities.

20

Chefs who cook the food for the Nobel award ceremony. The menu remains secret until the moment the food is served.

3

Swedish royalty — king, queen and crown princess — who attend.

6

Categories for prizes, including physics, chemistry, physiology or medicine, literature, economics and peace.

7,000

Pieces of specially designed Nobel China used during the banquet.

SOURCE: THE NOBEL FOUNDATION AND NOBELPRIZE.ORG

Dr. Oliver Smithies of UNC-Chapel Hill will share the Nobel Prize for medicine with two other scientists.

PHOTO COURTESY OF UNC HEALTH CARE

RELATED COVERAGE

LONG TIME COMING: Dr. Smithies’ research is nearly 20 years old, and rumors that he would win the prize have circulated for years. ➤ 10A

To watch live coverage of the Nobel Prize ceremonies today at 10:30 a.m., go to: http://nobelprize.org/award_ceremonies/ceremony_sthlm/video/2007/index.html.
Waiting finally ends for UNC’s Smithies

BY MAJAN BOSTROM
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS & OBSERVER

STOCKHOLM – He’s heard the whispers of Nobel glory for a decade.
This year, it’s a reality for Dr. Oliver Smithies, a professor of pathology at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Smithies will share the prize with fellow scientists Sir Martin J. Evans and Mario R. Cappuccini “for their discoveries of principles for introducing specific gene modifications in mice by the use of embryonic cells.”

“There has been rumor of it for 10 years,” said Smithies after finally winning the prize for a discovery that’s nearly 20 years old. “It was wolf, wolf, wolf.”

Finally, in Stockholm, where the Nordic pitch-black December is brightened each year by one of the world’s most prestigious award ceremonies, Smithies was swept up in a rarefied schedule of events that only a handful of people in the Triangle have ever witnessed.

The Nobel Prize — which was established in the will of Alfred Nobel, an industrial magnate who invented dynamite — has been awarded to fewer than 800 people and organizations since 1901. It’s given in six categories for work that is considered a great benefit to mankind.

Smithies arrived in Stockholm on Wednesday with his wife, Dr. Nobuyo Maeda, who is also a pathologist at UNC-Ch, and was immediately booked into action.

Laureates are chauffeured in personal limousines and are assigned volunteer attachés to manage the schedule. It’s a full-time job to make sure the laureates are on time, have copies of their speeches, show up at ambassador brunches and philharmonic concerts, news conferences and, of course, the televised award ceremonies. Autograph hunters are kept at bay. Photography is strictly forbidden at many events — even photography by family members.

“It’s very organized and a well-planned event, and very enjoyable,” Smithies said.

It’s also a bit daunting. At age 82, Smithies acknowledged that the week-long schedule is demanding, even for a man who continues to work long hours and weekends at his lab in Chapel Hill.

Laureates stay at the Grand Hotel, a five-star accommodation that has hosted the honorees for 106 years. Its meeting rooms are appointed with soft leather and exquisite hardwood furniture. Through the windows, about a football field away and on the other side of a small bay, towers the 608-room Swedish Royal Palace, home to the king and queen.

Even amid the splendor, Smithies remained down to earth, winning over the international press corps and an audience of students with answers and anecdotes about his life and science. When someone asked him what he thought might be the greatest threat facing mankind, Smithies drew a thunder of laughter with his reply: “The Y-chromosome!”

“I think we have to teach our young boys not to solve their conflicts by fighting,” Smithies added, sounding as though he might collect the Peace Prize, too.

He gave a lecture on Friday at the Karolinska Institute, the medical university that helps select the prize winners in medicine, noting it was the event he had most looked forward to during the week.

The lecture, which he titled “Turning Pages,” was a summary of his lifelong research, with pictures from his cherished notebooks, some dating to Jan. 1, 1954.

Ulrika Funered, his Nobel attendant, said it went well.

“They all got great response,” she said of Smithies and his two co-winners, “but you could tell they really enjoyed [Smithies] and that they liked how down to earth he is.”

“I addressed it to the students,” Smithies said, making a gesture of reaching up to invisible students, sitting in the nosebleed section. “I told them, ‘I am talking to you young people.’”

This evening, for the award ceremony at Stockholm Concert Hall and the following Nobel Banquet at the City Hall, the dress code is tails.

That will be a first for Smithies.

“We are scientists, not party people,” said his wife, Dr. Maeda. She laughed and admitted that she had been enjoying the festivities in Stockholm.

“He has to work, I am here to enjoy,” she said.

Smithies, who is limited to two minutes for a thank-you speech, said he was a tad nervous about the formal evening.

“You’re always nervous that you don’t get it right and keeping the time,” Smithies said. “But a little bit of adrenaline is good in such a situation.”

Almost immediately after the Swedish king presents the diplomas and gold medals to the winners, the glitter is taken back and put on display during the banquet. Not until Wednesday do the laureates get to keep their prizes — including the money.

The cash award is roughly $1.5 million, which in Smithies’ case will be divided evenly among the three co-winners. When asked what he plans to do with the money, Smithies hesitated.

“It’s a very personal thing,” he said, adding that he was thinking about using some of it to help the universities he’s been affiliated with throughout his career.

As for the medal, however, he had a ready answer. “I will have a replica made of it so no one will know which one to steal.”

\[\text{END} \]
Even at age 82, Dr. Oliver Smithies spends most days working in his lab at UNC-Chapel Hill, where he is a professor of pathology.

UNC-CH NEWS SERVICES PHOTO BY DAN SEARS

SCIENCE INDEBTED TO SMITHIES

Research scientists say it’s hard to overstate the impact Nobel Prize winner Oliver Smithies has had on science and medicine. Much of the work in genetics and human disease going on today would not be possible without Smithies’ discoveries and those of co-recipients Mario R. Cappecchi of the University of Utah and Sir Martin J. Evans of the United Kingdom. Here’s a brief summary of Smithies’ contributions and why it matters.

WHAT HE DID: Smithies, a professor of pathology and laboratory medicine at UNC-Chapel Hill since 1986, developed a process for altering single, specific genes in laboratory mice. This enables researchers to create animals with virtually any illness that has a genetic basis, from cystic fibrosis and rare blood disorders to common scourges such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. The first mouse with a “knocked-out” gene was born in 1989.

WHY IT’S IMPORTANT: Mice and humans have about 95 percent of their genes in common, so laboratory mice are critical to helping scientists understand human disease. The ability to induce diseases in mice is invaluable to researchers who, before Smithies’ and his colleagues’ breakthroughs, had to hope they could find mice with naturally occurring genetic mutations. As a result, basic research and the development of new treatments move ahead much faster.

UNC-CHAPEL HILL’S ROLE: Smithies began his work at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and refined the key gene-altering technique shortly after joining the faculty at UNC-Chapel Hill. He developed the first “knockout” mice, including the first animals with cystic fibrosis, in Chapel Hill. Despite his 82 years, Smithies still works in his UNC-Chapel Hill laboratory most days of the week, where his current research explores the physiology of the kidney.

— Staff Writer Jean P. Fisher

OLIVER SMITHIES

CURRENT POSITION: Excellence professor of pathology, UNC-Chapel Hill School of Medicine, 1988 to present.

EXPERIENCE: Professor of medical genetics and genetics, University of Wisconsin at Madison, 1960 to 1986; research assistant and associate, Connaught Medical Research Labs, University of Toronto, 1953 to 1960; postdoctoral fellow in physical chemistry, University of Wisconsin at Madison, 1951 to 1953.

EDUCATION: M.A./Ph.D. in biochemistry, Oxford University, 1951; B.A. in physiology, Oxford University, 1946.


GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Developed a technique that permitted scientists to alter genes in laboratory mice, creating customized research specimens.

LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: 2007 Nobel Prize for medicine.

PASSIONS: Flying; doing scientific experiments; singing; playing the flute; watching baseball, notably the St. Louis Cardinals.

FAMILY: Wife and collaborator Dr. Nobuyo Maeda, an associate professor of pathology at UNC-CH.

OTHER FACTS: Smithies is a fraternal twin, but his brother is dead. His brother was the neat and orderly twin; he says he was born with a “happy gene” that contributes to his relaxed personality. He has also kept all his notebooks. He uses a computer, but he doesn’t trust it with his notes.

FAVORITE Quote: “For science is more than the search for truth, more than a challenging game, more than a profession. It is a life that a diversity of people lead together in the closest proximity, a school for social living. We are members one of another” it’s from his mentor, Sandy Ogsten, and he carries it in his wallet.

MORE NOBEL PRIZE FACTS

1,300

Guests who attend the dinner, including royalty, laureates, friends, family members and students.

1,500

Feet of linen for tablecloths used on 60 tables.

12

Nobel Prize winners for 2007, minus the members of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Al Gore, who won the Peace Prize, which is awarded in Oslo, Norway.

777

The number of people and organizations who have been awarded the Nobel Prize since it was started in 1901.

SOURCES: THE NOBEL FOUNDATION AND NOBELPRIZE.ORG
The state, tomorrow

Overshadowed to some extent by the unfortunate tempest over illegal immigrants' access to North Carolina's higher education network is a useful report by a panel called the UNC Tomorrow Commission. Formed by University of North Carolina system President Erskine Bowles, the panel was asked to make recommendations on how 17 public campuses (the state's 16 universities and a public high school, the N.C. School of Science and Math) should respond to North Carolina's changing needs.

The fact that Bowles, who has a reputation for getting things done, formed the commission offers promise that its work won't just collect dust somewhere.

UNC Tomorrow's major recommendations won't surprise anyone paying attention to the obvious challenges facing the state.

The commission determined that the public institutions must better prepare students for the global economy. They need to throw open their doors to more students, particularly underserved ones and those less likely to seek a college degree. (Count illegal immigrant youngsters among that number, despite the flack that the community college system is catching from some quarters for reaching a similar conclusion.)

Universities should help public schools address stubborn problems such as gangs, teenage pregnancy and dropouts. They should take the lead in studying health trends, and in attracting and graduating more doctors, dentists, nurses and other health care professionals in short supply.

In some cases, universities already have joined the battle. The UNC system is trying to increase the number and competence of public school teachers, and schools with medical facilities have created programs to produce more doctors and dentists willing to serve rural parts of North Carolina that have no providers. Those efforts likely could use a boost. The panel's recommendations may be refined before the report is presented to the UNC Board of Governors, which oversees the campuses.

But the greater value of the 48-page report is its ability to focus the board and the state itself on the big issues. It can help set the state on a more unified approach to dealing with its problems. And it's a given that North Carolina's universities ought to be leaders in working to improve the state's quality of life.
Duke expands student grants

Following U.S. trend, aid to rely less on debt

BY JANE STANCILL
STAFF WRITER

DURHAM - Joining a movement to reduce the cost of college, Duke will replace loans and parental contributions with more grants for low- and middle-income students, university officials announced Saturday.

The program will allow students with family incomes below $40,000 to graduate debt-free and eliminate parental contributions for students from families who make less than $50,000.

Duke also aims to reach into the middle class to reduce loan burdens. The program will reduce loans for students with family incomes up to $100,000 and cap loans for families with incomes above $100,000.

Duke officials estimate the program will help nearly 2,500 undergraduates. The changes will take effect for current and future students next fall.

"The main issue we're interested in is affordability, making people understand that Duke really is affordable," Duke President Richard Brodhead said Saturday.

"You don't have to be able to pay the price tag in order to afford it. If you can't afford it, we will help you do it."

At a time when college costs are rising faster than wages and inflation, Duke joins a number of colleges and universities that have helped low-income students by replacing their loans with grants, which do not have to be repaid. In 2001, Princeton University eliminated loans from its financial aid program. In 2004, UNC-Chapel Hill replaced loans with grants and work study for low-income students. N.C. State started a similar program in 2006.

The new aid was made possible by earnings on Duke's investments and a $300 million fundraising campaign specifically for financial aid, which has raised $240 million so far and concludes next year.

Brodhead thanked donors, who he said understand that "there's no more valuable thing you can give someone else than to create an opportunity for them. Quality education is the most valuable commodity in our culture."

This year, Duke has budgeted $73 million for need-based aid, merit scholarships and athletic scholarships. Duke will dedicate nearly $7 million for the new program, Brodhead said.

A year at Duke costs around $46,000. About 40 percent of Duke undergraduates receive some kind of need-based financial aid to lower the expense. In 2007-08, the average need-based grant is about $26,700. With the expansion, average grants could rise by $2,500 annually per student, Duke said, reducing costs by $10,000 over four years.

Duke admits students on a need-blind basis, meaning a student's financial resources are not considered. But such a high cost can discourage low- and middle-income students from applying at all.

Trustee Chairman Bob Steel said the trustees were thrilled with Brodhead's financial aid expansion. The Duke president received a vote of approval by the board this weekend after a performance review that spanned several months.

"This is right down the center of the vision and perspective of President Brodhead," Steel said.

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SEE TUITION, PAGE 28
Cardiac care plan sparks turf war

Smaller hospitals could lose patients

BY JEAN P. FISHER
STAFF WRITER

Working together to get heart attack patients to life-saving treatment faster seems like the kind of thing all medical providers could get behind.

But a plan among Wake County hospitals to join a statewide treatment effort has sparked a turf war in Johnston County, where the project is seen as a way for large hospitals to siphon away lucrative heart patients.

"It will make us into more of a Band-Aid station," said Dr. Franklin C. Wefald, a cardiologist and clinical director of the medical intensive care unit at Johnston Memorial Hospital in Smithfield.

At issue is care for patients suffering the most deadly type of heart attacks, which occur when a clot blocks the flow of blood to the heart.

When such an attack strikes, the preferred approach is to open the patient's artery with emergency angioplasty — a treatment in which a balloon-tipped catheter is threaded into the artery and inflated to clear the blockage. More than 20 years of medical research has established angioplasty as the treatment most likely to save a patient's life, if performed within 90 minutes.

Another approach, which is about as good as angioplasty if done within 30 minutes, is to give clot-busting drugs. Too often, though, patients don't get either treatment in time.

To change that, Duke University Medical Center heart specialists launched a statewide effort in 2005 to speed care. The project now includes about two-thirds of the state's hospitals and is in the early stages of expanding to include the rest of them. It has resulted in patients getting both clot-busting drugs and angioplasty faster.

But a major emphasis is taking patients directly to angioplasty centers whenever possible.

That's the sticking point for Johnston Memorial Hospital.

It doesn't do angioplasty. And with Wake County's 24-hour cardiac care hospitals — WakeMed and Rex — just a short ambulance ride away, the Smithfield hospital's cardiologists and administrators figure their heart center will end up being cut out of the "improved" system.

WakeMed's new air ambulance, which took flight last month, could cut transport times even further.

Worse, Wefald and other Johnston County critics say, patients may be shipped out of the county despite a lack of evidence that doing so saves lives. They say the Duke-led efforts' own data prove their point.

Patients treated under the streamlined system that Duke encourages were about as likely to die from their heart attack as patients treated before efforts to cut delays, according to results of the North Carolina project published last month in the Journal of the American Medical Association. The median time-to-treatment for transfer patients was outside the optimal window of 106 minutes, according to the JAMA study.

"The results I have seen are not promising," said Kevin Rogols, Johnston Memorial's chief executive.

Dr. James Joliss, a Duke cardiologist and co-director of the heart attack initiative, acknowledged that transfer times need improvement. But he said he is confident the effort will save lives, because it is helping more patients get treatment quickly. The percentage of patients treated with angioplasty within 90 minutes increased to 72 percent, up from 57 percent, according to the JAMA study.

It is "inappropriate" to suggest that rapid angioplasty, where available, is not the best treatment, Joliss said. He noted, however, that decisions about care, including when to transfer patients, are made locally, so Johnston County providers can't be railroaded into an approach they disagree with.

Joliss also said the JAMA study was not designed to show a survival benefit, which would have required a much larger study with tens of thousands of patients. The JAMA paper looked at care received by about 1,100 patients.

SEE HEART, PAGE 9B
**Avoiding a road trip**

Wefald and his medical partner, Dr. Eric Janis, don’t agree that emergency angioplasty is best if patients live near a full-service heart center. Both doctors are partners in Wake Heart Associates, a large private cardiology practice that has physicians on staff at both Rex and WakeMed. But the Johnston doctors still don’t think sending heart attack patients bumping over country roads and down Interstate 40 to Raleigh is the right way to go — especially when they say they are routinely treating patients with clot-busting drugs in less than 30 minutes at Johnston Memorial.

Clot-busting drugs can’t be used in some patients, though, and the drugs fail to clear blockages about a quarter of the time, so most smaller hospitals must transfer patients to angioplasty centers. Johnston Memorial sends such patients to Wake County’s heart hospitals.

Betsy Gaskins-McClaine, director of WakeMed’s heart center, said the WakeMed system stands ready to work with any hospital that wants to make transfers faster and easier. But she said the system has no plans to march into neighboring counties to steal heart patients.

In fact, Gaskins-McClaine said, the WakeMed heart center frequently operates at or above 100 percent capacity, so it has an interest in seeing only those patients who really need its specialized care. Patients suffering the most dangerous type of heart attack, called ST-elevation myocardial infarction, fit that description, as long as they can be transported and treated quickly, she said.

“There’s situations where you can be there, and we feel like we want them to be there,” Gaskins-McClaine said.

**HEART ATTACK CARE**

Patients suffering the most deadly type of heart attack, called ST-elevation myocardial infarction, need prompt care to survive. There are two main treatments for STEMI, which occur when a blood clot blocks a vessel to the heart:

**BALLOON ANGIOPLASTY:** During this procedure, a balloon-tipped catheter is fed into the affected artery to clear the blockage and restore blood flow. Patients who receive treatment within 90 minutes have the best chances of survival.

**CLOT-BUSTING DRUGS:** In hospitals where emergency angioplasty is not available, medical providers treat heart attack by administering a cocktail of blood-thinning medications that break up the clot and restore blood flow. If given within 30 minutes, such drugs are about as effective as angioplasty. However, patients at risk of bleeding problems cannot receive them, and clot-busting drugs fail in about one in four patients.

**WHAT TO DO:** If you or a loved one experiences sudden chest pain, shortness of breath or other heart attack symptoms, call 911. Medical providers say it’s the best way to ensure fast treatment.

SOURCE: AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION; NEWS OBSERVER REPORTING
**Pigskin payoffs**

In response to the critics, what was Carolina’s improving football program supposed to do when Arkansas began to cast envious eyes toward Coach Butch Davis? Just purposely self-destruct to satisfy a faculty whose ivory tower perch evidently makes it difficult to understand free-market economics?

When was the last time a UNC professor created a positive income stream for the university or taught a freshman student? A successful Coach Davis will pay his own salary with a sold-out Kenan Stadium and financially carry all the nonrevenue women’s and minor sports on the back of his football team. Plus, Davis teaches freshmen routinely — not only how to play football, but lessons in hard work, fortitude, teamwork, how to deal with adversity and how to take pride in themselves and their school. These are lessons that will stand his “students” in good stead throughout their lives — arguably more so than how to punctuate a sentence.

Yes, collegiate coaching salaries are out of kilter, but that is not the fault of Butch Davis or UNC. It's simply market-driven economics. If UNC is indeed “The People’s University,” then it ought to seek ways to give the citizens who pay its bills what they want — top-notch academics and athletics.

William I. Berryhill Jr.
UNC '83
Raleigh

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**Insidious influence**

It has been amusing to read letters defending big-time football at UNC-CH. As an alumnus of NCSU, ECU and UNC-CH and after 30 years of teaching at the college level, I have a suggestion: Ban intercollegiate sports and allow schools to lease their names to professional teams. This will give the universities the publicity without the expense, the athletes the opportunity to pursue their chosen careers without having to waste time pretending to get an education, and the public gets teams to root for without concern for money for salaries or athletic facilities and equipment.

Anyone who has studied the history of higher education is aware of the tremendous influence of athletics on the mission, from the 1920s — when athletes were being admitted without meeting requirements (who could imagine that?) and some teams were using players who were not students — right up to today, when admission requirements are lowered for athletes and salaries raised for coaches.

I hope athletics supporters don't think our nation will compete successfully in the world economy by paying adults large sums of money for playing children's games. I admire seeing a top athlete perform at an almost impossible level, but we should not think that that athlete has improved the institution.

Ed Nicholson
Raleigh

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**Real success**

The People’s Forum letter “Reality 101” published Nov. 28 really got me in a lather. What if the writer’s degree and knowledge was based on the football coach’s won-lost record?

I worked for over 50 years and never once during that time was I given a raise for what I promised to do next year, or the following year or five years from now. Teachers at all levels are given miniscule raises every year based on what they did, not on what they said they could do.

I love college sports and all the attention they bring to the schools that have them. However, the reality is that jobs are gained and success achieved not by the sports record of the school attended, but by the efforts of the teachers and their students working together in their classrooms. That’s probably not as sexy as a bowl bid, but it sure does provide for a bright, and longer, future for those who will rule this country one day.

Lenora Gustafson
Durham

1.07
Books and footballs

The library festivals at UNC-Chapel Hill and Duke have been one of the intellectual highlights of this area. These events were filled with excitement, wonderful speakers, authors and forums of every kind. The festival was a marvelous literary event accessible to all.

Attendance and participation by authors, librarians, students and the general public reflected the importance of the festival. North Carolinians could be proud that UNC rivaled other major universities in the United States.

In spite of this, UNC is unable to organize the festival this year because of a lack of funds. According to the Chapel Hill News, the first festival cost the university $220,000, the second $150,000. Duke spent $250,000 to organize its event. It is interesting that in the same week that UNC canceled the festival due to lack of funds, it increased the football coach's salary by $290,000. This amount would have more than funded the entire event.

What has happened to the mission of the university? How does UNC want to be known? What does this decision say to our state's best students? Where are our priorities?

As taxpayers in North Carolina and residents of Chapel Hill, we are disappointed in the turn taken by this wonderful school.

Linda Passman
Aida Zukowski
Chapel Hill

Ivy athletics

In response to a couple of Jim Jenkins' questions in his Nov. 29 column "Generous days at UNC-Chapel Hill":

Undefeated Yale played a strong Harvard team Nov. 17 in front of a capacity crowd of 61,000 in New Haven, Conn., to determine which would be the Ivy League champion. Both teams were ranked in the NCAA Division I Football Championship Subdivision (formerly I-AA) Top 25. Faithful, partisan fans cheered their teams of student athletes, who receive no scholarship money, and wondered what brilliant game plans would be devised by the teams' head coaches, whose paychecks are commensurate with their roles as teachers of young men.

Simply, it was intercollegiate athletics the way they ought to be. (Incidentally, Harvard won.)

Kevin Brice
Raleigh