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Rick Niswander, vice chancellor for administration and finance, defends ECU's decision to dump debris off Clark Street during the Greenville City Council's first meeting of the new year on Monday. (Aileen Devlin/The Daily Reflector)

A pile of mulched debris sits in a lot on Clark Street between 11th and 10th streets on Monday. (Rhett Butler/ The Daily Reflector)

**Council discusses PAL future, ECU debris**

By Michael Abramowitz

The Police Athletic League, debris disposal at East Carolina University and a “dream park” for west Greenville were topics of discussion and action Monday night at the Greenville City Council’s first public meeting of 2012.

Councilman Calvin Mercer asked the council to express its feelings about the value of the Police Athletic League so it could consider whether there are ways to trim the cost of the program without sacrificing its benefits. Mercer said the program, which receives more than $500,000 from the city,
approaches the cost of the city’s downtown plan for police coverage in the bar district.

“I’d like to see if there’s a way we can review the program and see if there are ways to be more efficient with it,” Mercer said. “The original intent of the PAL program, as I understand it, was to see if it could be largely funded privately.”

Police Chief William Anderson explained the program’s purposes and accomplishments.

“The program we started in 2007 is very successful,” Anderson said. “We have more than 100 kids at three sites. We presented council a public survey that showed it was an overwhelming success.”

He said that other than salaries and other administrative costs, the police department spent $49,000 from its administrative bureau budget on PAL activities this current fiscal year.

The chief told the council a recent golf tournament raised more than $7,000 in supplementary funds. The program also has applied for grant money and requested some unused funds from the Community Development Commission.

Mercer then solicited council comments to help him understand the viability of seeking other resources for the program.

Councilwoman Marion Blackburn said she had no objections to seeking other funds from the community and elsewhere as long as the goal was to make the program bigger and provide more services to children.

Councilwoman Rose Glover said the focus on cost was a typical result when money is spent on something that works for at-risk people in a low-income community.

“Someone always decides we’re spending too much money and it should be all volunteer,” she said. “This is a mentoring program that gives kids a chance to see police in a different light. They grow up respecting police. That makes a big difference in a community where police have always been the enemy. That’s what PAL is all about.”

The council voted in a split decision to examine ways to make funding more financially efficient.

The council also agreed to continue discussions with East Carolina University to develop a contingency plan for debris storage.
The university used a lot on its property at Clark Street between 11th and 12th streets for storage of downed trees and other vegetative debris following Hurricane Irene, raising concerns among some on the council about its appearance in a residential neighborhood.

Rick Niswander, vice chancellor for administration and finance, said he appreciated the council’s indulgence for what he considered a once-in-his-lifetime issue.

“We decided that, since we use about 2,500 cubic yards of mulch a year at ECU, rather than take the trees to a dump, the most ecologically sound thing to do was to turn them into mulch,” Niswander said.

Niswander said the process has taken longer than the university wanted, but added it is complete with the exception of about 400 cubic yards to be mulched.

The council also unanimously approved adoption of the master plan to expand and improve the Dream Park, a 2.4-acre recreational and cultural “mini-park” near the Greenville Community Shelters.

The park was conceived in the mid-1990s as a part of the Weed and Seed program, but was neglected and left incomplete, said city Recreation and Parks director Gary Fenton.

Contact Michael Abramowitz at mabramowitz@reflector.com or 252-329-9571.
National advocacy organizations are challenging East Carolina University’s decision to fire the adviser of the student newspaper.

The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education sent a letter to Chancellor Steve Ballard on Friday asking the university to reinstate Paul Isom, who was fired Wednesday from his position as student media adviser.

The decision came two months after the student-run East Carolinian printed unaltered photos of a nude streaker at a Nov. 5 football game. The university did not publicly release a reason for the dismissal and will not comment further, citing personnel confidentiality.

Isom maintains that his termination was in retaliation for the student editors’ decision, which he legally could not control. He said last week that he is considering legal action against the university.

“Firing The East Carolinian’s adviser unquestionably qualifies as adverse administrative action against the newspaper,” the letter from FIRE states, citing several legal precedents. The organization is prepared to use the full range of its resources to secure a “just result” in the case.

“I did not know it (the letter) was coming, but I was bowled over by it; it was thorough and powerful,” Isom said Monday evening.

The situation has gained national attention as a freedom of speech issue.

Other organizations are working on responses to ECU on Isom’s behalf, including the Student Press Law Center, the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, the Society of Professional Journalists and the Association of Educators of Journalism and Mass Communications, according to Isom.

“It’s hard to wrap my mind around,” Isom said. “A former colleague told me it’s like I’ve become a flag bearer for the First Amendment. I didn’t mean to, but I’m honored and happy to be one, if necessary.”
Student editors at The East Carolinian have not commented. A statement released after the photos ran defended the publication as a factual account of the incident.

Isom attended his exit interview with ECU human resources Monday, which he said “went well,” though no further explanation was given as to the reason for his dismissal.

“It’s still the same thing; they were being very cautious not to say what the reason was,” he said.

As student media adviser since 2008, Isom oversaw The East Carolinian newspaper, the Rebel literary magazine and the Buccaneer yearbook. He said he was not informed of any problems with his work except that administrators were looking to go “in a different direction.”

Isom continues in his position as an adjunct professor, teaching one basic reporting class.

Isom stands by his students’ decision to print the photos.

“I couldn’t be prouder of The East Carolinian students and staff,” he said. “I think they’ve done some great work that shouldn’t be overshadowed by one controversial story.”

Isom said he has talked informally to some his students since his dismissal.

“They’ve been very kind, and I wish them nothing but the best,” he said.

Contact Jackie Drake at jdrake@reflector.com or 252-329-9567.
What if: Every month had 8 days?

By Diane Tennant
The Virginian-Pilot

Well, it's that time of year again.
No, not time to get back to work or to make/break resolutions or to write the wrong year on important documents.
It's time for calendar reform. Time to talk about changing that old standby, the Gregorian calendar (you know, 12 months in a year, 30 days hath September, Leap Day on Feb. 29) to a perennial calendar, one that never changes.
OK, one that changes very little.
Say, a calendar in which your birthday is always and forevermore on the same day of the week, a calendar that is used by everyone except farmers, a calendar that adds an extra week between Christmas and New Year's every so often.
It could be time for a change.
Or not.

"Strange business, time." - Doctor Who

Calendars have been around for as long as there have been astronomers watching the Earth circle the sun. But there are always shortcomings, so there also have always been attempts at calendar reform.
"There isn't a perfect calendar because of the way the solar system works," said Rick McCarty, a philosophy professor who discusses calendar reform in his classes at East Carolina University. "People have always tried to figure out a better way to solve the problem of the calendar."
Julius Caesar came up with a pretty good one about 45 B.C. His contribution is acknowledged even now by the word "July." But even though Caesar figured out the need for a leap year, he was 11 minutes off in calculating the length of a solar year.
"Over 128 years, an extra day would creep in," McCarty said.

That caused Easter, which is based on the lunar calendar, to shift out of place. So Pope Gregory XIII reformed the calendar, first cutting several days out of October 1582 to get everything back in place, then adjusting leap years to add the "divisible by 4 or 400 in years ending in 00" rule.

The Gregorian calendar respected the Christian sabbath, a seven-day week, but the months are all messed up. Some have 31 days, some only 30. February has 28 days, unless it has 29. Years and months can begin on any day of the week.

As early as 1745 someone proposed to fix the problems by adding a "blank day," a day without a name, to even out the solar year. Under that scenario, life would imitate the Beatles song "Eight Days a Week," but because the day wasn't named, it wouldn't interfere with the Sabbath being the seventh day of the week, or so the theory went.

In 1926, the president of the Eastman Kodak Co. supported, for business reasons, a calendar with 13 months, each with 28 days, plus one left over to be known as "Year Day" and tacked on where Dec. 29 ought to be. That, however, still interfered with certain religions.

McCarty proposed his own fix, which he called the Long-Sabbath Perennial Calendar, in 1996, which extended some Saturdays and Sundays to 36 hours each to retain the seven-day week. The idea went nowhere.

Since then there have been suggestions such as the Alphabetic Calendar, the Bonavian Calendar, the Ecliptic Calendar, the 30x11 Calendar, the Sexagesimal Calendar, the Double Leap Calendar, the Hermetic Lunar Week Calendar, the New Earth Calendar and the modestly named A Modern Calendar.

But the Gregorian calendar has stuck around. This is a boon to the calendar industry. If Jan. 1 did not fall on a different day of the week from one year to the next, there would be no need for a new cute-puppy calendar every 12 months.

But it is an inconvenience to many, such as college professors, who have to prepare a new calendar each semester for the same class they have been teaching for many years.

That is exactly what happened to Richard Conn Henry at Johns Hopkins University. But he is an astrophysicist, and he decided to do something about it.
"Always in motion is the future." - Yoda

In 2003, Henry proposed a Common Civil Calendar and for good measure tossed in the idea of everyone using a standard clock, too, set to Universal Time.

"I said, 'Wait a minute, I'm an astronomer,' " Henry recalled in a phone interview. Then second thoughts set in, and he said to himself, "Henry, you are not going to be such a fool as to get involved in something as hopeless as calendar reform." But, of course, he did.

His reformed calendar would have saved him from having to figure out each semester when assignments were due and tests given, as the dates from year to year would never change. For example, Jan. 1 would always be on a Sunday in Henry's calendar.

The idea got a lot of publicity but came no nearer adoption than the calendar mandated by invading space aliens in a promotional video for the young-adult novel "The True Meaning of Smek-day." The aliens' calendar had only three months, remembered by reciting, "329 days has Boovember, and every human should remember. All the rest have 31, except Humanuary, that has five. You are lucky we don't kill you."

That kind of all-or-nothing power isn't around to order calendar reform now, unlike in 45 B.C. and 1582.

"There's nobody powerful enough to say this is how it's going to be," McCarty said. "Julius Caesar had that power. The pope had that power. I don't think anybody can change the calendar these days."

In the 1950s, he said, India proposed to the United Nations that the World Calendar be adopted - a calendar that sometimes tossed in an eight-day week - but when the United States said it wasn't interested, the idea died.

Henry's 2003 proposal fixed the eight-day week but faced the same lack of interest. So in 2011, he picked up a partner and they added a powerful motivator - money.

"Time is money."- Ben Franklin

The latest proposal is called the Hanke-Henry Permanent Calendar, after Henry and Johns Hopkins economist Steve H. Hanke. According to a news release from the university, the reformed calendar would streamline financial calculations, such as interest on mortgages.

The Permanent Calendar does not violate the Sabbath rule of seven-day weeks, but it does change the length of the months: March, June, September
and December would have 31 days, the rest, 30. That makes each quarter of the year equal in length, and adds up to a 364-day year. To keep Jan. 1 on Sunday every year, (which also fixes Christmas on a Sunday), every five or six years a leap week would be inserted at the end of December, which Henry and Hanke call "Xtr" or "Extra."

"There are enormous economic advantages to the proposed calendar," Henry wrote on his website http://henry.pha.jhu.edu/calendarDir/calendar.reform.html [1]. In addition, he and Hanke propose that the world adopt Universal Time so everyone's watch is synchronized everywhere. The only problem that might arise, according to a Frequently Asked Questions page, is that farmers might need to consult the Gregorian calendar to make sure they don't miss planting on time. Leap Day babies will age right along with the rest of us, having a birthday every year on Feb. 29, which will always be a Tuesday. In addition, there would be Feb. 30 birthdays for the first time. But those born on what is now the 31st of January, May, July, August and October would find the Fountain of Youth, or at least the Fountain of No More Birthdays, because those months would each stop at 30 days.

"A mysterious thing, time; powerful, and when meddled with, dangerous." - Albus Dumbledore

This whole calendar reform thing is moot, according to doomsday theorists, who contend that nobody will need a calendar after Dec. 21, 2012, because the world is going to end. They base that gloomy forecast on their interpretation of the Mayan calendar, although there are others who argue just as fiercely that the Mayans did not predict the end of the world, they simply intended to flip a page and start over from Day One, just as we do now when Dec. 31 morphs into the New Year. The discussion is all about the Mayan Long-Count Calendar, which is good for 5,126 years, said by archaeologists to have been used to document past and future events, because the Mayans' other, 52-year calendar cycle wasn't long enough to cover everything. Henry is in his own sort of moot place now. "I'm 71 years old and, bless me, I am in a final-year sabbatical and I won't be teaching again," he said last week. "Now it's all academic to me. I don't
know why I bother with it. Yes, I do know why I bother with it. It's crazy to have the system we have."

So here's a question to ponder on Sunday, Jan. 8, which happens to be the same in 2012 on both the Gregorian and Hanke-Henry Permanent calendars: Will the calendar ever be reformed?

Time will tell.

Diane Tennant, (757) 446-2478, diane.tennant@pilotonline.com
Calendar critics say we ought to date around

By MARK ROTH, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

New Year's Day fell on a Sunday this year.

And if Richard Henry and Steve Hanke had their way, it would fall on Sunday next year, and the year after that, instead of the sequence we'll face under the 430-year-old Gregorian calendar.

Henry, an astrophysicist, and Hanke, an economist, are the latest in a long line of calendar-reform advocates. Yes, the Johns Hopkins University professors say, we may be used to "30 days hath September, April, June and November," but does it really make sense?

In their scheme, each quarter would consist of two 30-day months and one 31-day month, for a 364-day year. There would no longer be an extra day in February in leap years, as there is this year, but to keep the calendar aligned with the seasons, every fifth or sixth year, they would throw in an extra week at the end of December.

Over the past several decades, there have been many attempts to reform the annual calendar, none of which has made much headway.

The last serious assault was the World Calendar proposed in the 1950s by the United Nations. Like the Hanke-Henry Calendar, it would have had 364 days with equal quarters, but would have added one extra unnamed day a year, or two in leap years.

That ran afoul of Jewish and Christian leaders, who said the extra days would interfere with the required seven-day cycle between Sabbaths, which was enough for the Eisenhower administration to shy away from the proposal.

By periodically adding an extra week instead of extra days, the Johns Hopkins professors say their plan avoids that pitfall.

Henry got involved in calendar reform about seven years ago. This time around, he has been joined by Hanke, who has added financial reasons why redoing the calendar would make sense.
Some might wonder whether the entire calendar needs to be changed to fix problems like calculating interest on bonds.

That's one reason Stephen Abbott, a freelance writer and public relations consultant in New Hampshire, has proposed a "gentler" revision that he calls the 30X11 calendar.

In his version, there would be 11 months of 30 days, which could start in any given year, and then December would have 35 or 36 days, depending on whether it was a leap year.

Unlike the Hanke-Henry plan, Abbott's dates wouldn't occur on the same day each year, but because the 30X11 is closer to the current calendar and yet makes it more rational, he thinks it has a better chance of being accepted.

Does he think calendar reform is right around the corner?

"I'm hopeful, but I believe the chances are fairly dim," he said.

Rick McCarty, a philosophy professor at East Carolina University who maintains a website on calendar reform, agrees. He said changing the calendar "doesn't matter to most people." But he believes that some kind of calendar reform will eventually take place.

As with many other changes in modern society, incremental business practices may lead the way, McCarty said.

"I think nobody today can make a calendar reform in the sweeping way that Julius Caesar or Pope Gregory did. The only person who is remotely able to do that now is Bill Gates. If Microsoft's calendar changed, I guess we'd all follow along."

(Contact Mark Roth at mroth(at)post-gazette.com. For more stories visit scrippsnews.com)
Frank M. Hammond

Dr. Frank M. Hammond, 78, of 129 Fairway Drive, Washington, N.C., died at his residence on Saturday, Jan. 7, 2012. He was born Jan. 21, 1933, in Fair Bluff, to the late Chalmers and Mamie Hammond.

Attending East Carolina University and earning his BS in Music Education in 1955, Dr. Hammond then served as a United States Air Force pilot with the Strategic Air Command from 1955 to 1958. He earned his MS in Music Education from the University of Illinois in 1959 and his doctorate in Music Education from the University of North Carolina in 1973, the first doctorate in music education awarded by UNC-G.

Dr. Hammond's life was devoted to music and to music education. He taught instrumental music in the North Carolina public schools, grades 4 through 12, for 13 years. At UNC-G, Dr. Hammond taught trombone, Brass Pedagogy, Conduction, and Instrumental Methods and supervised student teachers. He conducted the University Band, Trombone Choir, and Jazz Ensemble. Additionally, he performed with the Market Street Brass Quintet.

Accepting a position with North Carolina State University, Dr. Hammond served as Director of Bands, conductor of the marching band, symphonic band, British Brass Band, trombone choir, tuba choir, and the jazz ensemble, retiring in 1995. During the summer of 1991, Dr. Hammond was coordinator of the NSCU Abroad, a summer studies program, at Oxford University in Oxford, England.

In recognition of his devotion and contribution to the music program at North Carolina State University, his former students have established the Frank M. Hammond Music Scholarship.

After his retirement from NCSU in 1995, Dr. Hammond relocated to Washington, N.C., and continued his involvement in music education as an educational representative for Pearson Music Company, McFadyen Music Company, and Brook Mays Music Company until 2005.

He then conducted small ensembles, taught music lessons, and was a mentor for students and faculty at the Music Academy of Eastern Carolina in Greenville.

Along with his academic career, Dr. Hammond continued performance in other venues. He played with the Ringling Brothers Circus, Holiday on Ice, Modern Jazz Quartet, Clark Terry, and John Lewis. As a trombonist, he particularly enjoyed jazz music and often performed in small and large ensembles, including the Tar River Community Band and the Emerald City Big Band.
Dr. Hammond enjoyed performing annually at Homecoming with the Collegians, "the best band in Tar Heel Land," a group of ECU alumni who had performed in the Collegians dance band while undergraduates.

Dr. Hammond is survived by his wife, the former Constance Ross, of the home; son Steven Hammond and wife, Dana, and their daughter, Taylor, of Tampa, Fla.; daughter, Karen Hammond and her daughter, Madeline, of Raleigh; stepson, Harold R. Helms and his daughter, Madeline, of Macomb, Mich.; and a brother, Tom Hammond and wife, Mary, of Athens, Ga.

Visitation will be held at the residence, 129 Fairway Drive, from 4 to 7 p.m. on Thursday.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Friday at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Washington, N.C. The Rev. Barbara Chaffee will officiate.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, memorials be made to the Music Academy of Eastern North Carolina, 1400 Red Banks Road, Greenville, NC 27858 to establish the Hammond Music Institute in support of Dr. Hammond's legacy of music in North Carolina.

Online condolences may be sent by visiting www.paulfuneralhome.com.
Paul Funeral Home & Crematory of Washington is honored to serve the Hammond family.
Development team members with WebAssign like Chris Kershaw, left, Robert Johnson, center, and instructor Todd Wright, from nTier Training in Georgia, work together at their headquarters in Centennial Campus in Raleigh.

**NCSU spinoff develops online homework service**

BY JAY PRICE - jprice@newsobserver.com

RALEIGH–Helping students with their homework, it turns out, can be big business.

That's how Advanced Instructional Systems has quietly become one of N.C. State University's largest and fastest-growing spinoffs.

Now the company is making plans to build on its basic online service, using information it learns about each student from answers they get wrong to create a form of instant, customized tutoring that's available around the clock.

The company, which offers an online assignment and testing service for university and high school students called WebAssign, was started by a small group of academics on campus in the late 1990s. NCSU holds rights to part of the underlying computer coding and company trademark and licenses those to the company, which is owned by a handful of its employees.
AIS moved from the main campus onto the public-private Centennial Campus in 2003 with just a dozen employees, said John S. Risley, a physics professor and the company's chief executive. It has grown to nearly 150 employees now - many of them with science, math and engineering degrees - and in the year that just ended passed two milestones: its 5 millionth student user and one billionth answer processed for homework assignments, tests and practice problems.

In any given semester now, more than half a million students are using WebAssign.

It has grown so much that in December, Risley and the company's other owners felt it was time to appoint a board of directors, he said.

"When you are a startup and you grow quickly, it becomes clear you need the help and experience," Risley said.

If the company ever goes public, NCSU would get a share of the money raised, but that may not happen, at least not any time soon.

In the tech world, many private companies seem to be aimed at going public from the minute they're founded, but Risley said there aren't any plans for that. He said the owners are interested in education and like the direction the company's going.

**Tailored learning**

For now, institutions sign up for WebAssign, and course instructors control the assignments. The company plans to begin marketing directly to students and to offer them an enhanced service that verges on using artificial intelligence to craft an online tutor. The company can have access to hundreds or even thousands of answers for a given student, Risley said, and can sift and monitor that data to tailor their learning.

Analyzing several questions students get wrong in a physics class, for example, can show whether they're getting an answer wrong because they don't understand the concept or they have a deficiency in a specific math skill. If they happened to have used WebAssign for, say, an algebra class a semester earlier, that would further expand the information that the system has for analyzing what they know and what they need to work on. The company's current service gets solid reviews from the instructors who use it in their classes.

"They got in fairly early, I think, and as a consequence developed what is probably the most mature system for online homework of this type that's
available," said David Pengra, a senior lecturer at the University of Washington's physics department, where he oversees graduate assistants who teach up to 50 sections of introductory undergraduate physics labs.

**Budget help**

His department uses WebAssign for lectures and labs for the course. Pengra said the department started using it in the labs about two years ago, just in time to help with a sharp budget cut from the state. It let them cut the 400 hours of graduate assistant time by about one-third just when they badly needed the savings to preserve teaching quality. Most of the saved labor was in that most mind-numbing aspect of teaching: grading assignments.

At Penn State, the company's service is used in seven large physics classes with a total of 3,500 students. It freed the 60 or so graduate teaching assistants to do substantially more teaching because they no longer have to grade a couple million homework answers each semester, said John Hopkins, a senior instructor.

It also allowed the university to boost the staffing of a night-time learning lab where students can come for help from one or two graduate assistants to eight or nine, all without additional cost. "And that lab gets used a lot," he said.

Students benefit, too, he said, because they get instant feedback on their answers and, the way instructor there configure WebAssign, can try five more times for a diminishing amount of credit. That instant feedback makes it easier for students to know whether they have grasped a concept or not, he said.

"That's really important, because they know whether they've made a mistake immediately, instead of having to turn in the assignment and wait a few days or more to get it back," he said. "You can imagine how important that might be if they have an exam on the material the next day."

Given graduate assistants' lack of experience, the instructors said, reducing their role in grading yields results that are more reliable.

Part of the system's strength is that it relies on an approach that gives instructors flexibility in which textbooks they use and how they can formulate assignment questions, Pengra said. Some competitors are tied to a specific publisher and only offer a single text for a given class.
AIS is a modest bright spot for the Triangle job market, with 26 job openings. In particular it has been a boon for those with math, engineering, computer science and science degrees.

University officials declined to say what the company pays in licensing fees, but the total from all start-ups is about $5.1 million a year. The fees, while obviously welcome, aren't the university's goal for start-ups, said Kelly B. Sexton, an assistant director in the office of technology transfer. The main point is jobs.

NCSU's startups have created more than 6,900 jobs, including 3,100 in North Carolina, she said. That's up from 3,071 total jobs, including about 2,500 in the state, in 2009.

Price: 919-829-4526

**NCSU's top spinoffs***

1. Cree
2. Liposcience Inc.
3. AIS/WebAssign
4. Alphavax
5. Liquidia

Centennial Campus's largest tenants
1. Red Hat, 680 employees
2. ABB Inc., 450
3. USDA/APHIS, 240
4. N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, 175
5. IAS/WebAssign, 148

*ranked by number of employees

Sources: N.C. State University and AIS Inc.
Bach's charms soothe edgy prostate patients

BY JAY PRICE - jprice@newsobserver.com

DURHAM—A good set of headphones and a little Bach may ease the pain and anxiety of getting a prostate biopsy, according to a newly published study by Duke Cancer Institute researchers.

Which could be music to the ears of the 700,000 or so American men who each year get the often-uncomfortable procedure, which is regarded as the only reliable diagnostic test for prostate cancer.

The results of the study were published this month in the journal Urology.

Researchers enrolled 88 patients and randomly assigned each to one of three groups. One group wasn't given headphones. Another got headphones that cancelled noise but provided no music. The third wore headphones that played Bach concertos.

The subjects all received a type of biopsy involving an ultrasound probe and a spring-loaded needle that has a loud trigger. The noise alone often causes men to flinch as the needle trims off a tiny piece of their prostate, even if they report no pain.

Diastolic blood pressure - which can rise due to stress or anxiety - spiked among patients in the two groups that didn't listen to music, and remained elevated after the biopsies.

Diastolic blood pressure was unaffected among the patients assigned to the group that got music. Also, via standardized questionnaires, they reported less pain.

About one in five men report high stress and anxiety about the procedure. Don Young, 57, of Durham said he definitely would have been among them if he had not been one of the study subjects who got the music.

Young described himself as extremely apprehensive about getting the biopsy. And that was before he found himself face down in the required, vulnerable-feeling position as his healthcare team set out 12 containers with the intent of clipping not one but a dozen tiny pieces of tissue from his prostate.

Then he got the Bach.
"The music, it actually took my mind somewhere else," he said. "It really calmed me, and before I knew it, the whole thing was over."

**Music as therapy**

Music has long been considered an aid to healthcare. Hospitals often employ music therapists, and previous studies have shown that therapies based on music - in some cases with patients themselves singing or playing instruments - can help ease pain and improve mood and vital signs among those being treated for a variety of conditions.

The Bach study was the brainchild of a group of medical students, who received no outside funding for it.

The researchers tried only the classical master rather than other genres, such as the Motown or rock that Young normally listens to.

That might have actually helped, Young said, because he felt like he had to really concentrate on the complexities of the instruments.

"And I can tell you, without the music, I might not have been able to let them do the procedure at all," he said.

Price: 919-829-4526
N.C.A.A.’s ‘Justice’ System

By JOE NOCERA

I stand corrected.

Contrary to my assertion last Saturday, the N.C.A.A. does allow college athletes to engage a lawyer if they are accused of violating its rules. After hearing from the N.C.A.A., I made a few phone calls and discovered that, indeed, universities investigating improprieties by athletes do usually inform them that they can hire a lawyer.

In the course of those calls, however, I stumbled on a case so egregious — yet so perfectly illustrative of the N.C.A.A.’s judicial “process” — that I concluded it needed wider exposure. Last week, I described the N.C.A.A. as a cartel. Turns out, it’s a Star Chamber, too.

Meet Devon Ramsay, a fullback at the University of North Carolina, and once a big-time pro prospect. He is also a good student and “a fine citizen,” according to a former coach, John Shoop, “the kind of person this university should be proud of.”

In the summer of 2010, a scandal befell the football team, when it was discovered that some players had attended a party that appeared to be thrown by sports agents trying to curry favor with them. (The N.C.A.A. forbids athletes from accepting gifts from agents.) North Carolina’s ensuing investigation led it to several instances of supposed “academic fraud,” including a paper Ramsay had written two years earlier.

After practice one day early in the 2010 season, Ramsay was brought in for questioning by North Carolina officials and confronted with e-mails between himself and a university athletic tutor. The e-mails showed that she had made a series of minor suggestions to improve a three-page sociology paper. The university’s Honor Court would later conclude that the tutoring was so within the bounds of normalcy that it declined to hear a case against Ramsay.

The N.C.A.A., however, came to a rather different conclusion. After being shown the e-mail “evidence” by North Carolina officials, it told the school that Ramsay was guilty of academic fraud. Fearing that the N.C.A.A. would punish the university if it continued to play Ramsay, North Carolina declared him ineligible. When it then asked the N.C.A.A. to restore his eligibility — as it must do to get a player back on the field — the N.C.A.A. refused. Thus, without so much as a
hearing, much less any due process, Ramsay’s college career appeared to be over, along with his hope of one day playing pro football.

Belatedly, Ramsay found a lawyer, Robert Orr, a former State Supreme Court judge. Or rather, Orr found him after reading an article in which his mother expressed her anger and bewilderment at what had happened to her son. A date had been set to appeal the N.C.A.A.’s decision, and university officials were pressuring Ramsay to admit wrongdoing. Such an admission, they said, was needed to sway the N.C.A.A.

Orr said no; his client had done nothing wrong. The appeal was canceled. Instead, Orr led an effort to convince the N.C.A.A. that the university had uncovered “new evidence,” starting with the fact that no one knew whether Ramsay ever submitted the paper with the tutor’s changes. The N.C.A.A. restored Ramsay’s eligibility — after the season had ended — without ever admitting its own culpability. It was a face-saving ploy.

I wish this story had a happy ending, but, so far, it doesn’t. In the first game of his senior season, Ramsay suffered a terrible knee injury. Earlier this week — after learning this column was in the works — the N.C.A.A. agreed to grant him an extra year of eligibility, so he can show pro scouts he can still play. In the interim, however, North Carolina hired a new football coach who doesn’t use fullbacks in his offense.

“I wish all the players had gotten a lawyer immediately,” says Ramsay’s mother, Sharon Lee. “Everyone needed someone to look out for their interests.” But these athletes are still kids, often naïve and overly trusting of their school. At the point at which Ramsay was told he could have a lawyer, he didn’t even know what the accusation was; once he found out, he assumed it would quickly blow over because it was so insignificant. By the time he realized he needed a lawyer, it was far too late.

Whether he plays professional football or not, his mother says, for the rest of his life, “Devon is going to have to answer questions about his ethics. The N.C.A.A. has done far more damage to my son than just deprive him of the chance to play football games.”

I know there are readers who believe I am wasting valuable space writing about sports. I got e-mails to that effect after last week’s column. To my mind, though, the fact that the N.C.A.A. is willing to destroy an athlete’s career without even a nod to a fundamental right like due process is simply wrong. It needs to change. That is why I will continue writing about this subject, as events warrant, in the coming months.
Lawsuit Pits Political Activism Against Campus Diversity

By ADAM LIPTAK

WASHINGTON — Teresa R. Wagner is a conservative Republican who wants to teach law. Her politics may have hurt her career.

An official of the University of Iowa College of Law, where Ms. Wagner applied for a job in 2006, certainly seemed to think so.

“Frankly, one thing that worries me is that some people may be opposed to Teresa serving in any role, in part at least because they so despise her politics (and especially her activism about it),” Associate Dean Jonathan C. Carlson wrote in 2007 to the law school’s dean, Carolyn Jones.

Ms. Wagner, who graduated from the law school in 1993 and had taught at the George Mason University School of Law, was not hired. She sued, alleging discrimination because of her political beliefs. Late last month, a unanimous three-judge panel of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, in St. Louis, ruled that her case should go to trial, saying she had presented enough evidence to suggest that “Dean Jones’s repeated decisions not to hire Wagner were in part motivated by Wagner’s constitutionally protected First Amendment rights of political belief and association.”

Ms. Wagner’s lawyer, Stephen T. Fieweger, said the decision was a victory for an important sort of academic freedom.

“It’s gotten to the point where the law school’s diversity efforts are to eliminate everyone from the mainstream,” he said. “They espouse cultural diversity, but won’t consider the conservative viewpoint.”
According to Ms. Wagner’s lawsuit, the law faculty at Iowa in 2007 included a single registered Republican among its 50 or so members. The Republican professor was appointed in 1984. In 2009, The Des Moines Register found that there were two registered Republicans on the faculty.

Ms. Wagner would have added some balance, her lawyer said.

“My client is an ideologue,” Mr. Fieweger said. “She does believe in conservative values.” Ms. Wagner has worked for the National Right to Life Committee, which opposes abortion and euthanasia, and the Family Research Council, which takes conservative positions on social issues.

Walter Olson, a fellow at the Cato Institute, the libertarian group, and the author of “Schools for Misrule: Legal Academia and an Overlawyered America,” said there was nothing unusual about the number of Republicans on Iowa’s law faculty.

“What would count as freakish would be to find two dozen registered Republicans on a big law faculty,” Mr. Olson said. “Law schools are always setting up committees and task forces to promote diversity on their faculty, which can serve to conceal an absence of diversity in how people actually think.”

A study published in The Georgetown Law Journal in 2005 analyzed 11 years of federal campaign contributions by professors at the top 21 law schools as ranked by U.S. News & World Report. Almost a third of these law professors contributed to campaigns. Of those who gave $200 or more, the study found, 81 percent gave wholly or mostly to Democrats, while 15 percent gave wholly or mostly to Republicans.

The percentages of professors contributing to Democrats were even more lopsided at some of the most prestigious schools: 91 percent at Harvard, 92 at Yale, 94 at Stanford. At the University of Iowa, it was 78 percent.

Political affiliations and contributions are, of course, an imperfect proxy for ideology, and political beliefs may in any event have no effect on scholarship and classroom teaching.

It may be, moreover, that liberals are simply more likely than conservatives to seek positions at law schools. There are plenty of conservative lawyers at firms, in government service and on the bench.

John O. McGinnis, a law professor at Northwestern University and an author of the Georgetown study, said last week that “it is still the case the legal academy is quite ideologically monochromatic.” But he added that things seem to be changing.
“My perception, for what it is worth, is that the younger generation in academics is largely quite open to those of all political views,” he said. “They did not experience the polarizing effects of the 1960s and the Vietnam War.”

A spokesman for the University of Iowa, Tom Moore, would not comment on the lawsuit or the ideological composition of the law school’s faculty.

Ms. Jones, who is no longer dean, said she could not comment until she had consulted with her lawyers. In 2009, she told The Des Moines Register that “Teresa didn’t get the job, and I’m sure she’s disappointed, but she didn’t not get the job because of her politics.”

Mr. Olson said he had mixed feelings about the Eighth Circuit’s decision, saying it may have identified an instance of a real problem while allowing it to be aired in the wrong forum.

“I have serious misgivings about asking the courts to fix this through lawsuits,” Mr. Olson said. “It threatens to intrude on collegiality, empower some with sharp elbows to sue their way into faculty jobs, invite judges into making subjective calls of their own which may reflect their assumptions and biases, all while costing a lot of money and grief.”

“At the same time,” he added, “there’s a karma factor here. Law faculties at Iowa and elsewhere have been enthusiastic advocates of wider liability for other employers that get sued. They’re not really going to ask for an exemption for themselves, are they?”
Mark Gail/The Post - The University of Maryland president’s residence will be demolished in order to make way for a new mansion.

**University of Maryland plans $7.2 million president’s house amid budget cuts**

By Jenna Johnson

Construction crews are poised to demolish the president’s house at the University of Maryland this week and to pour the foundation for a new 14,000-square-foot on-campus mansion that carries a $7.2 million price tag.

But some question why the school would build such an elaborate house at a time when the flagship university is asking donors to support students who might drop out because they can’t afford tuition. And construction will begin just weeks after President Wallace D. Loh announced that he will cut eight varsity sports teams in June to save an estimated $29 million over the next eight years.

University leaders say the school has a dire need for the new facility, which is designed to woo supporters and attract major donations at a time when state funds make up less and less of the overall budget. They say the bill will be picked up by about 30 private donors — not students or taxpayers — and will pay huge dividends. It also will replace a building plagued with problems.
The university will continue to pay for general upkeep and utilities for the mansion, which will be more than twice the size of the current home and will have dedicated entertaining spaces.

Staci Armezzani, director of communications for the student government, said even student leaders did not know the new house was in the works.

“They’re a bit confused,” said Armezzani, a senior criminology and criminal justice major from Germantown.

“The big question that I’ve heard is, ‘Why is the money being used there instead of for athletics?’ ”

On many campuses, the president’s house has long been a revered gathering place for students, faculty and friends of the school, especially generous friends. Most presidents in the region live in university-provided housing and host thousands of guests each year, making the space feel like a museum or bed-and-breakfast. One president likes to joke that he and his wife “live above the store.”

Buying, building or renovating one of these homes is considered a sure way to ignite controversy, especially at public institutions. Last year, University of the District of Columbia President Allen Sessoms was questioned for making nearly $500,000 worth of repairs over several years to a university-owned house in Chevy Chase. In 2009, North Dakota State University’s president resigned after construction of a new home went more than $1 million over budget.

“One of the first things you learn as president is, don’t renovate the house, especially the kitchen,” said former U-Md. President C.D. “Dan” Mote Jr., who used to live in the soon-to-be-razed house with his wife, Patsy. “We never complained.”

Mote retired and moved out in 2010, and he now has no problem listing his complaints with the old home: temperatures that fluctuated between too hot and too cold; limited privacy, as the couple shared their kitchen with caterers and their living room with the world. The Colonial-style house was filled with asbestos, was not fully accessible to the disabled and faced away from campus.

Mote called his wife a “miracle worker” for decorating the rooms and masking imperfections with elaborate flower arrangements. In their 12 years there, the Motes hosted more than 1,000 events. For small dinners, they squeezed 14 to 16 people in the dining room, another 20 in the living room, and 45 to 50 in a converted garage. Gatherings of more than 100 required
pitching tents (and, in the winter, nervously watching wealthy supporters and high-ranking officials maneuver around heating lamps).

“It’s a nice residence for a family, and I think that was the intent” when it was built in 1956, Mote said. But the president then “didn’t see the presidency as we see it today.”

When the house was damaged by a tornado in 2001, Mote said, he contemplated a major expansion but decided doing so would attract negative attention. When he announced his retirement, the foundation that fundraises on behalf of the university decided to take on the project itself.

“There’s never going to be a good time; it doesn’t matter what the economy is like,” said Brodie Remington, president of the University of Maryland College Park Foundation and a vice president at the school. “This is a good investment.”

Remington said the foundation’s trustees decided it would be easier to rip down the house and start fresh.

The “University House” is scheduled to open this fall and will have two distinct sections: One wing will contain a 4,000-square-foot private residence with four bedrooms that will cost about $2 million. The rest will be a 10,000-square-foot “events center” with a grand foyer, public living room, catering kitchen, office space, a formal dining room for small parties and a large hall that can seat 125. That section will cost $5.2 million.

Loh currently lives in a house he purchased near campus, and it’s unclear if he will relocate. Two university spokesmen declined to make him available for an interview.

“We’re not sure. That will be his choice entirely,” Remington said. “The facility is primarily for events.”

Unlike other entertaining venues, Remington said visiting the president’s house can elicit emotions similar to those felt when receiving an invitation to the White House, governor’s mansion or a friend’s home. “We informally call it the ‘power of the house,’” he said.

That power is being utilized on other campuses, too. Although many schools have historic homes that have sheltered a long line of presidents, others created that space more recently. Johns Hopkins University reopened its president’s house in the mid-1990s and now requires residency in employment agreements. In 2008, George Washington University transformed its alumni club into an on-campus home for its new president,
Steven Knapp. And in October, St. Mary’s College of Maryland trustees took the first step toward planning to build a president’s home.

In College Park, the university asked for demolition permission from the Maryland Board of Public Works on Wednesday, while students were still on winter break. This was the first time many people had heard about the project. The request was approved. One board member — Comptroller Peter Franchot (D) — voted against it and quizzed officials for about 15 minutes.

“What is the cost of the project?” Franchot asked during the hearing.

“Seven-point-two million dollars,” Remington told him.

“Okay, and didn’t I read recently that College Park is planning to eliminate several Division I sports?” Franchot said.

“That is correct,” Remington said, explaining that building the house will be a one-time expense that will have “a considerable return on investment” by attracting donations for the entire campus, including athletics.

“Maybe it’s the timing, maybe it’s the bad economy . . . but this just strikes me as a really unfortunate project,” Franchot said. “I guess the wrecking ball is out there, poised, but I would urge you to reconsider this, because it doesn’t look good.”

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