

Chew on ECU food

Dining Hall update

SARAH BELL
STAFF WRITER

ECU's dining halls, Todd and West End, feed approximately 1,700 - 2,000 people each day - quite a few people to keep "fat and happy."

But by offering an all-you-can-eat buffet, a clean environment (both received A sanitation grades) and different types of food, the dining halls attempt to do just that.

Students, however, don't seem too impressed with the typical dining hall fare, saying there is little change in the menus.

"They have the same thing all the time - there's not much variety," said Lindsey Pope, freshman apparel merchandising major.

"It's repetitive ... the food's not that great," said Maria Ochoa, sophomore nursing major at brunch.

Ochoa said she typically only eats breakfast at the dining halls, because "they can't screw up breakfast."

The dining halls repeat meals weekly, like "Taco Tuesdays," fried chicken at lunch every Wednesday (Todd) and "Brunch-at-Lunch" Fridays.

Allison Metcalf, ECU marketing program manager, said the dining halls try to adapt to customers' preferences.

"The managers of the locations actually build the menus ...



Pizza is a popular dish for dining hall patrons eating on campus.

they can tell that something's not very popular if they're not having to prepare much and they'll take it off the menu," said Metcalf.

To help spice up the usual menu, the dining halls host special events, like the upcoming Holiday Dinner Dec. 7, the Thanksgiving Dinner and the 'Surfin' Safari premium night at Todd Dining Hall which drew more than 900 people.

To provide additional incentive to dine on campus, ECU has

signed up with the 'Jam' Rewards program - making ECU one of six universities throughout the U.S. participating in the pilot program.

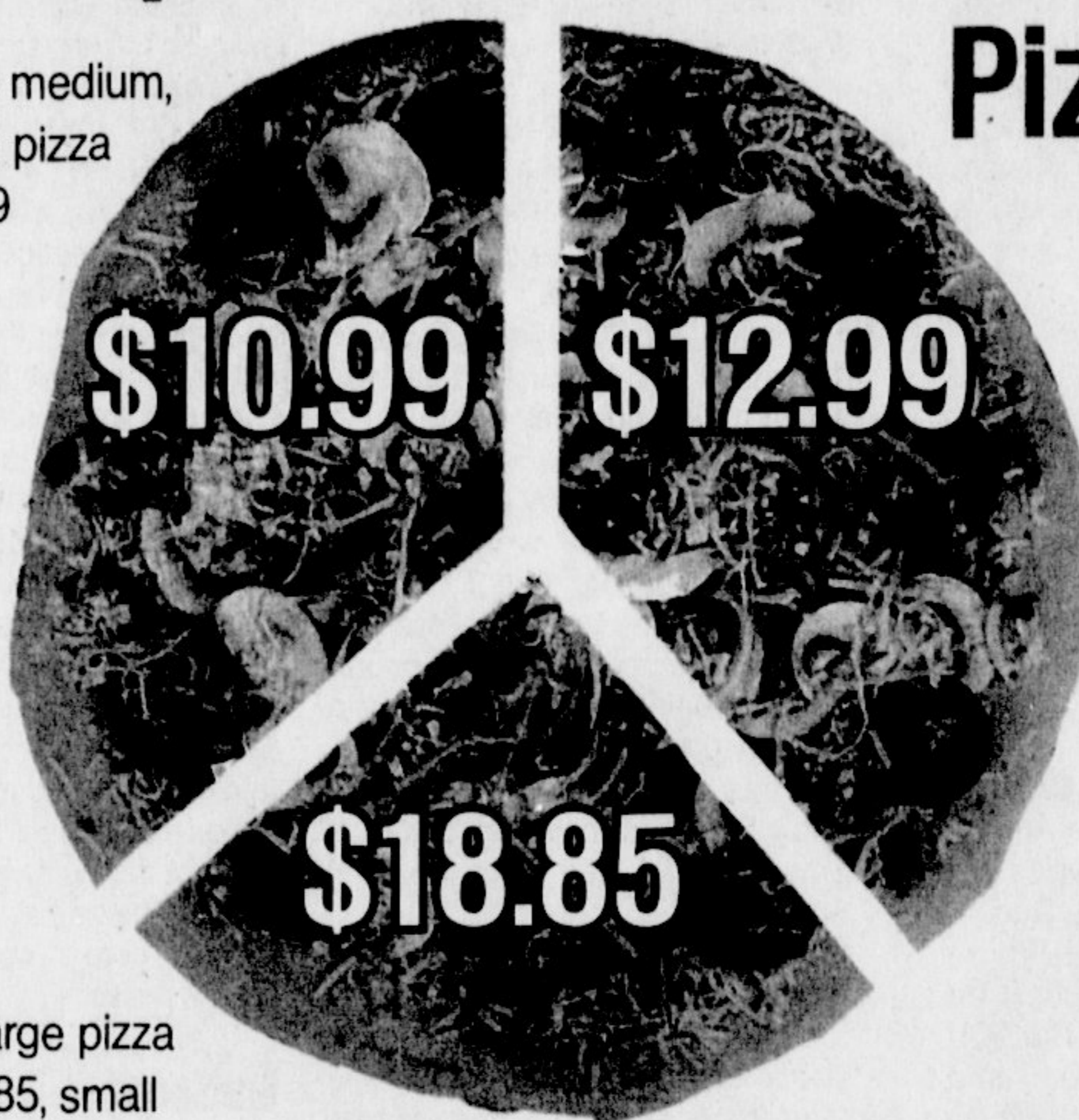
Students who eat at the dining halls or anywhere on campus can swipe their 'Jam' rewards card with their purchase to earn points. Points can be redeemed online at the Jam Rewards Web site, jamrewards.

see **DINING** page A2

Food prices in Greenville

Domino's = medium, one topping pizza costs \$10.99

Pizza



Sbarro = NY Style Cheese pizza costs \$12.99, first topping costs \$2.99

Boll's = Large pizza costs \$18.85, small pizza costs \$9.85

Burgers



McDonald's = Quarter Pounder costs \$2.20
Miami Subs = 1/3 pound burger costs \$2.29

Chicken Sandwiches



Wendy's = Home-style Chicken Filet combo costs \$4.99
Chic-fil-A = Chicken Sandwich (alone) costs \$2.55, Chargrilled Sandwich costs \$3.19

Patterns in dorm vandalism

The continuing trend

KIMBERLY BELLAMY
STAFF WRITER

Dorm vandalism is a continuing problem at ECU and there seem to be different patterns in the types of vandalism, areas on campus that are vandalized and the people who commit the acts.

Damage to residence halls with drywall is common. Students often create holes in these types of walls.

"Sometimes intoxicated people maybe bang into a wall, particularly punch a wall," said Aaron Lucier, associate director of campus living.

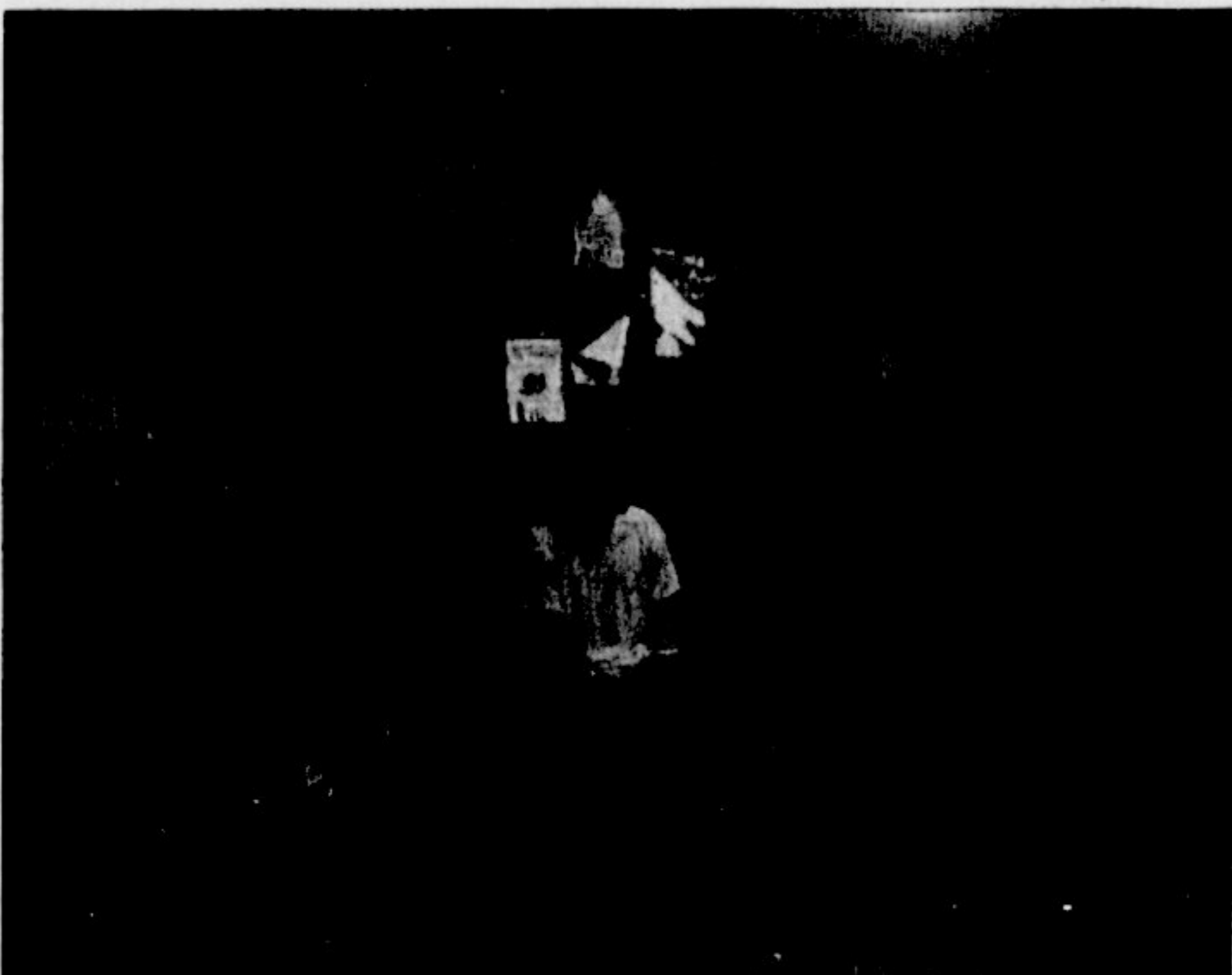
Other vandalism includes knocking door tags off residences' doors and damaging fire exit signs.

"A particularly popular one is to damage a fire exit which is a concern to us because it is a part of fire safety," Lucier said.

A pattern has also been noticed in regard to the individuals and areas on campus that experience more vandalism. Campus neighborhoods that have residence halls with sturdier construction tend to be less prone to damage.

"Some of our facilities lend themselves to be damaged easier than others," Lucier said.

"A number of our buildings



Even bus stops get vandalized. Partyeastcarolina.com left their handy work at a bus stop at the bottom of College Hill.

have cinder block hallways. It's really hard to do wall damage to a cinder block wall. Some of our buildings have dry wall, which is a little bit easier to damage."

A coed dorm versus a same sex female dorm has more incidents of vandalism.

"Buildings like Clement and Greene that have only women in them sometimes get less damage than hypothetically the same style building like White, that is coed," Lucier said.

Hanna Zhu, White Hall coordinator, was the coordinator of same sex female dorm Greene for two

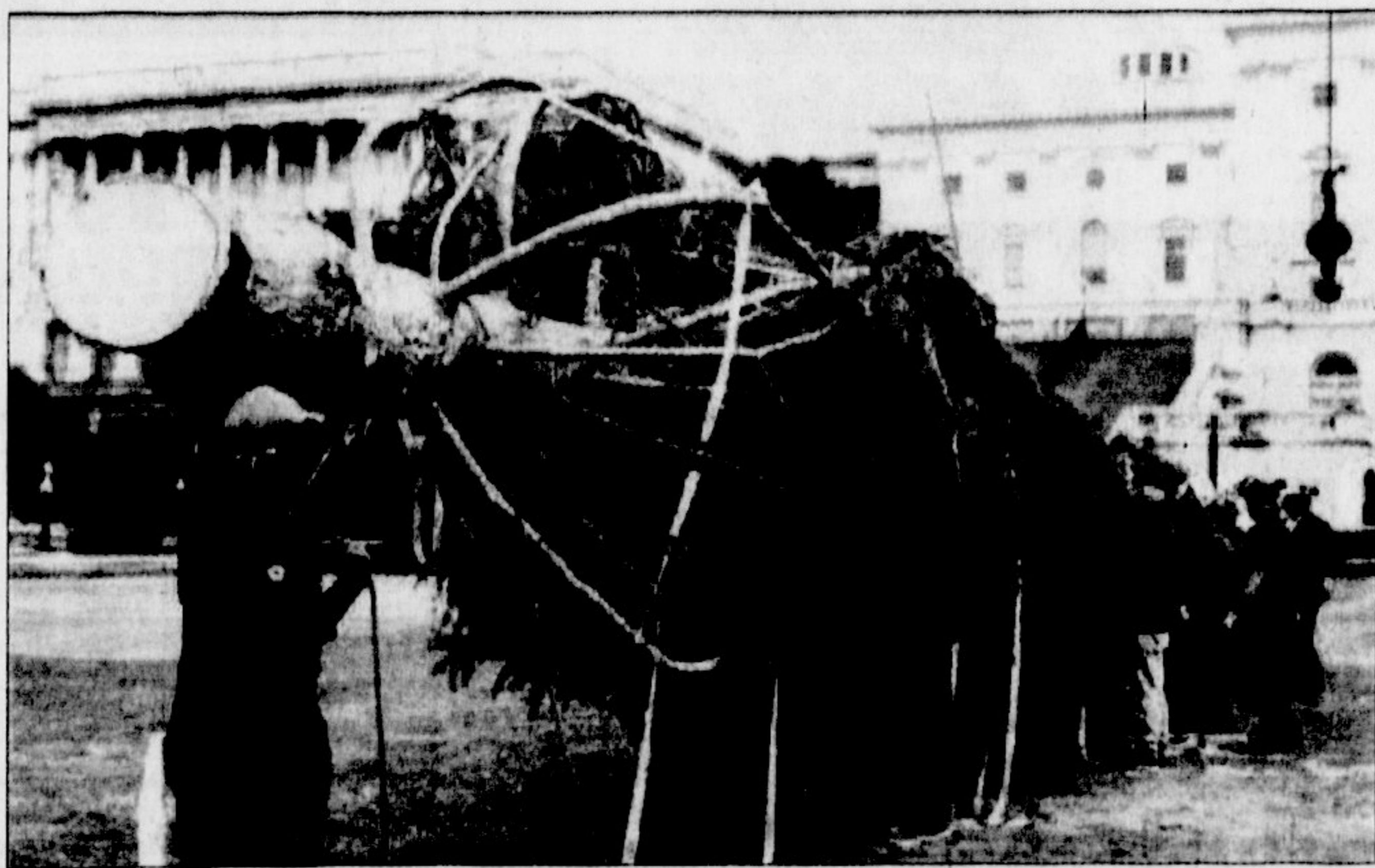
years and is now the coordinator of coed dorm White Hall. She noticed a similar trend in the amount of vandalism between dorms with males versus an all female dorm.

When asked if she notice a certain floor that has more vandalism than others or a difference between vandalism in Greene hall and White hall, Zhu said, "Yeah, definitely." Zhu also said that male floors have more incidents of vandalism.

The blame is not all on the males when it comes to the cause

see **DORMS** page A2

Bush, company get NC Christmas tree



The Washington, D.C. Christmas tree is being put together already. First Lady Laura Bush will be actively involved in the tree decorations and lighting. The tree is an 18 and a half foot Fraser fir tree. It came from North Carolina and will be put into the White House Blue Room once decorations are complete.

Canadian girl receives peanut butter kiss of death, only 15



Many people have allergic reactions to peanuts and peanut butter. Sometimes it can cause death.

MONTREAL (AP) - A 15-year-old girl with a peanut allergy died after kissing her boyfriend, who had just eaten a peanut butter snack, said hospital officials Monday.

Christina Desforges died in a Quebec hospital Wednesday after doctors were unable to treat her allergic reaction to the kiss the previous weekend.

Desforges, who lived in Saguenay, about 155 miles north of Quebec City, was almost immediately given a shot of adrenaline, a standard tool for treating the anaphylactic shock brought on by a peanut allergy, officials said.

An autopsy was being performed. Dr. Nina Verreault, an allergist at the Chicoutimi Hospital in Saguenay, declined to comment on the case.

The symptoms of peanut allergy can include hives, plunging blood pressure and swelling of the face and throat, which can block breathing.

Peanut allergies have been rising in recent decades. The reason remains unclear, but one study found that baby creams or lotions with peanut oil might cause children to develop allergies later in life.

About 1.5 million Americans are severely allergic to even the

smallest trace of peanuts, and peanut allergies account for 50 to 100 deaths in the United States each year.

Rhoda Kagan, peanut allergist at Montreal Children's Hospital, said Desforges' case is "very rare and worrisome" she said.

Reactions will depend on personal medical history and on how much peanut substance was ingested.

While giving a shot of adrenaline is requested immediately following such an attack, hospitalization is usually required to monitor progress as 20 to 30 percent of cases patients can have a recurring attack, Kagan said.

No-confidence vote in Canadian government, confidence a problem

TORONTO (AP) - Canadian politicians will hit the campaign trail this holiday season after opposition parties seized upon a corruption scandal to bring down the minority government of Prime Minister Paul Martin in a vote of no confidence.

Monday's loss means an election for all 308 seats in the lower House of Commons, likely on Jan. 23. Martin and his Cabinet will continue to govern until then.

The Conservative Party teamed up with the New Democratic and Bloc Quebecois parties to bring down the government, claiming the ruling Liberal Party had lost its moral authority. Recent polls have

given the Liberals a slight lead over the Conservatives, with the New Democrats in third place.

The same surveys suggest the Bloc Quebecois would sweep the French-speaking province of Quebec, making a majority government unlikely no matter which party wins the most seats.

Martin is expected to dissolve the House of Commons on Tuesday and set a firm date for the elections. Canadian law sharply restricts the duration of the campaign.

see **CANADA** page A3

Announcements

Book Donations

The Department of Library Science and Instructional Technology will be accepting book donations for the Greenville Community Shelter. Books can be dropped off at the Joyner Library Conference Room 2406 through Dec. 15. For more information, contact Al Jones at 328-6803.

Toys for Tots

Student Health Service will be collecting new, unwrapped toys until Friday, Dec. 7 as part of the annual Toys for Tots program. The drop box is located in the lobby of Student Health Service. For more information, contact Georgia Childs or Ellen Goldberg at 328-6841.

Student Store Holiday Sale

Dowdy Student Store's Annual Holiday Sale and Festivities will take place Thursday, Dec. 1 from 4 - 8 p.m. in the Wright Building featuring discounts on ECU gifts and apparel. The ECU Gospel Choir will perform and the ECU Cheerleaders will be on hand. Bring a donation of canned food or a toy and have a holiday photo taken with PeeDee for free. Donated goods go to the ECU Holiday Drive. Patrons may register for an hourly gift certificate giveaway. For more information, visit studentstores.ecu.edu or call 328-6731.

Pilobolus Dance Theatre

PTOO is considered the "little luxury edition" of Pilobolus Dance Theatre, one of the dance world's most renowned ensembles. Its two bravura dancers will present an evening of new and classic Pilobolus works at 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 1 in Wright Auditorium. Purchase a Crown Subscription by Dec. 1 to receive a choice of six events. Prices are \$162 for the public, \$150 faculty and staff, \$84 for youth and \$48 for students. Advance individual tickets, if available for \$25 public, \$23 faculty and staff, \$13 youth and \$10 students. All tickets at the door are \$25. Group discounts are available for groups of 15 or more. For more information, visit ecu.edu/ecuarts.

New Musical

John and Jen, a new musical, will be performed at 8 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 10 and at 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 11 in the Studio Theatre. *John and Jen* is an original musical that takes a look at the complexities of relationships between brothers and sisters and parents and children. The story is set against the background of a changing America between 1950 and 1990. The event is free, but tickets are required and seating is limited. For more information, call 328-6829.

ECU Arts Tickets

Subscriptions for the S. Rudolph Alexander Performing Arts Series and Family Fare are both currently on sale. The S. Rudolph Alexander Series is ECU's flagship performing arts series, presenting a season of nine of the world's top orchestras, ballet companies, jazz artists, dance ensembles, Broadway shows and much more. The Family Fare series provides kid-centered cultural excursions for the entire family. For more information, contact the Cultural Outreach Office, or visit ecu.edu/ecuarts.

News Briefs

State

White House Christmas tree arrives by horse-drawn wagon

WASHINGTON (AP) - A horse-drawn wagon pulled up to the White House Monday with an 18 1/2-foot Christmas tree that will adorn the Blue Room, marking the official start of the holiday decorating season at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

First lady Laura Bush walked outside to receive the Fraser Fir that was pulled up the driveway to the North Portico by two horses, including one that didn't seem happy in his work. "Our horses aren't working as a team this morning," Mrs. Bush said as she eyed the restless horse and scanned the tree, which was bound and protruding from the back of a green and red wagon. The tree was donated by Earl and Betsy Deal and their son Buddy of Smokey Holler Tree Farm in Laurel Springs, NC.

Gary Walters, chief usher at the White House, and Mike Lawn, grounds foreman, selected the tree at the Deals' farm Oct. 20. The tree for the Blue Room as well as trees for the Bush family's private residence and the Oval Office were cut Nov. 25 and transported to Washington.

This year, the holiday decorating theme at the White House is "All things bright and beautiful." The Blue Room is the centerpiece of the White House decorations. The tree must be 18 1/2 feet tall because a chandelier is removed so the tree can be attached to the ceiling.

"The decorators are in there right now," Mrs. Bush said. "Santa's elves are in, decorating the White House." The National Christmas Tree Association has presented the official White House tree since 1966. Members of the association, which represents about 4,500 people

involved in the production and sale of real Christmas trees, compete in state and regional competitions to become eligible to take a tree to the national contest. The Deals, who have been growing trees for about 34 years, competed and won the North Carolina contest and then beat 22 other entries at the national convention.

The Deals, who have about 240,000 trees growing on their farm, won the national competition with another Fraser Fir that was between 6 and 8 feet tall the size popular among homeowners. After the Deals won the national competition, the White House staff members traveled to the farm and chose the trees.

"We had tagged this one, hoping it would be the one picked," Earl Deal said. "This is a dream come true. I think every Christmas tree grower hopes that they will someday provide a tree to the White House, but it's still hard to believe that it will ever happen to you. There is no higher honor in this business."

National

Orders for manufactured goods rebound in October

WASHINGTON (AP) - Orders to U.S. factories for big-ticket manufactured goods rebounded sharply in October as demand for military aircraft shot up by the largest amount in more than five years.

The Commerce Department reported Tuesday that orders for durable goods rose by 3.4 percent last month, erasing a 2 percent decline in September that was blamed on disruptions from hurricanes Katrina and Rita and a machinists strike at aircraft giant Boeing. The increase was better than the 1.4 percent advance that economists had been expecting and provided

further evidence that the economy is shaking off the adverse effects of the Gulf Coast hurricanes.

For October, durable goods orders rose by \$7.1 billion to a seasonally adjusted \$214.4 billion. More than half of that increase reflected a \$4.1 billion jump in orders for military aircraft and parts, which surged by 140.4 percent to \$7 billion.

That was the biggest increase since June of 2000 and reflected the billions of dollars being spent by the federal government in a defense buildup to fight wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Orders for commercial aircraft also increased in October, advancing by 50.4 percent to \$11 billion after having fallen by 2.7 percent the previous month. The September decline was blamed in part on a strike by machinists at Boeing, which disrupted activities at the nation's largest airplane manufacturer.

Orders for all transportation items were up 11.4 percent, a gain that reflected strength in both commercial and military aircraft sales. Orders for motor vehicles actually fell by 2.2 percent in October, reflecting the trouble automakers had spurring sales following the impact of a sharp surge in gasoline prices in September.

Excluding transportation, durable goods orders would have been up a more modest 0.3 percent following a 0.2 percent decline in September. Total durable goods orders had fallen 2 percent in September.

Orders for non-defense capital goods, considered a good barometer of business plans for expansion and modernization, rose by 6.7 percent last month after having fallen by 8.6 percent in September.

World

Rescuers work to find missing

Dorms from page A1

of vandalism. "Vandalism occasionally happens in an all female building, so it's not impossible," Lucier said.

More incidents of vandalism occur at certain times of the year than others.

"I think a lot of times they are related to events like Halloween. Some of the football game weekends, for example, are sometimes periods when we see more damage than others," Lucier said.

Vandalism can be the result of a number of things.

"I think a lot of times vandalism is connected to other problems," Lucier said.

"Either students being frustrated or being aggravated by something else or it is often connected to alcohol use."

Lucier also said vandalism is caused by unintentional accidents while horse playing in the hall and by residents' guests who are not watched carefully enough.

The estimated number of vandalism occurrences per year is very high.

"In terms of direct vandalism, I would probably say about 10,000 incidents a year," Lucier said.

Efforts are taken by the school to minimize the problem of vandalism.

"We educate the residents at a first floor meeting by talking about the types of vandalism,

Chinese miners after explosion kills 148

QITAIHE, China (AP) - Rescuers in northeast China searched in freezing temperatures Tuesday for three coal miners who were trapped after an explosion killed at least 148 others.

The blast in the Dongfeng Coal Mine late Sunday prompted national leaders to demand stricter enforcement of safety rules in China's mines by far the world's deadliest, with thousands of fatalities a year in fires, floods and other accidents.

On Tuesday, roads leading to the mine were blocked several miles away, with police officers and vehicles standing guard. Search efforts were still going on at sundown.

The chance of survival was low because of a high concentration of poisonous gas in the tunnel, Song Kaicheng, an engineer with the group that owns the mine, was quoted as saying by the official Xinhua News Agency.

Inside the mine compound, rescue workers wearing orange jumpsuits and respirators could be seen making their way through the 10-degree temperatures to the mouth of the coal pit. Seventy-two workers have been saved, state media said.

Xinhua said 148 were killed including two people who died in an aboveground generator room. The others were all underground.

A man who answered the telephone at the coal mine said that there had been a meeting with relatives Tuesday and that mine officials were arranging for counseling and compensation.

The man, who gave only his family name, Liu, refused to give any more details.

The official China News Service said relatives were to receive up to

\$25,000 in compensation.

The disaster is a setback for Chinese officials struggling to improve safety in the coal mining industry. Most accidents are blamed on a disregard for safety rules or a lack of equipment for ventilation or fire control. Local officials often are accused of helping mine owners or managers flout safety rules.

"This industry is too corrupt. Safety is no good," said Yuan Yongqing, a 57-year-old retired miner, whose younger brother, Yuan Yongcun, was killed in Sunday's explosion.

One man who gave only his family name, Li, said he was hoping for news about his son. Reporters trying to speak with dozens of relatives waiting outside were swiftly escorted off the premises.

Beijing has unveiled one safety initiative after another in recent years. It has announced the creation of a national network of safety inspectors, stricter fire standards and shorter working hours for miners to prevent fatigue.

Authorities say they have shut down more than 12,000 coal mines this year for safety inspections. Thousands have been ordered to improve their facilities, and many others aren't expected to reopen.

The government said the explosion in Qitaihe was blamed on airborne coal dust that ignited. But there was no word on whether it was believed to involve misconduct or human error.

The town has seen a series of fatal mining accidents. In May 2004, 12 people were killed in an explosion. Blasts also killed 17 in March and another nine in May this year.

The Qitaihe disaster came as the nearby city of Harbin was struggling to recover from a toxic spill in the Songhua River that forced the government to cut off water supplies for five days.

Dining from page A1



Dining Hall employees help students to their choice of foods.

com, for prizes like electronics, sports gear or music downloads.

Purchasing an ECU meal plan or Pirate Bucks gives students the equivalent of the Jam points they would earn throughout the semester up front, instead of with each meal.

Despite the addition of Jam Rewards and various special meals, many students miss "Friends-Eat-Free" Fridays, which are no longer offered at the dining halls. "Friends-Eat-Free" Fridays allowed diners to bring one friend to lunch every Friday at no additional cost, but have been replaced this year by free guest passes included with meal plans.

Metcalf explained that the overwhelming crowd drawn by Friends-Eat-Free Fridays inhibited the dining halls' ability to provide optimum service, and concerns about regular patron satisfaction, not operation costs,

were what ultimately ended the popular meal.

"When your number of lunch guests doubles or triples on one day, it's not good for those customers who are on meal plans who come in all the time ... it wasn't fair to them ... it was hard to keep up with that many people and offer the level of service they needed," Metcalf said.

ECU is in the process of building additional dining facilities at the Brody School of Medicine, which are scheduled to be operational by March of 2006, and expanding the meal plan options to meet the needs of students who will be living in the new kitchenette-equipped residence halls.

For more information about the dining halls' upcoming events, menus and meal plans, visit ecu.edu/dining.

This writer can be contacted at news@theeastcarolinian.com.

Dorms from page A1

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Efforts are taken by the school to minimize the problem of vandalism.

"We educate the residents at a first floor meeting by talking about the types of vandalism,

the vision we have for the year, ownership and pride in our campus community," Zhu said.

According to Lucier, students can be billed if they are identified for the damage and it could result in occasional legal action or probation, depending on the severity of the damage.

"We have installed the camera system, which is at the entry of every residence hall building and that has helped us in many cases [to] identify some damage [and] people responsible for vandalism in a number of buildings and situations," Lucier said.

Resident advisors are a part of the efforts to keep the number of vandalism incidents low.

"We document them and then from there, they go to your coordinator and they take proper action depending on the vandalism that happened," said Matthew Taylor, second floor resident advisor of Belk Hall.

"It could go anywhere from a warning to getting kicked out of the hall."

Students seem to know about the effects of vandalism and how to stay safe.

"For the most part I feel safe," said Marty Barstow, sophomore living in Scott Hall.

"I always leave my door locked unless I'm going to the bathroom."

This writer can be contacted at news@theeastcarolinian.com.



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Reason #11:
It may not be your mom's home cooking,
but we bet it's the next best thing.



Join the family.
Buy a meal plan.



Canada from page A1



Canadian Prime Minister Paul Martin does a political "wave" during campaign speeches.

"The vote in the House of Commons did not go our way," Martin said. "But the decision of the future of our government will be made by Canadians. They will judge us."

Martin has had frosty relations with the White House, standing by the Liberal Party decision not to support the U.S. invasion of Iraq. He also declined to join in Washington's continental ballistic missile shield, infuriating the Bush administration, has been called weak on terrorism, and was vocal in his opposition of high U.S. tariffs on Canadian lumber.

His push to legalize gay marriage throughout Canada also raised the hackles of Republicans south of the 49th parallel, but Martin is widely respected worldwide for Canada's neutrality and

open arms toward immigrants and minorities.

Canada's Conservatives, by contrast, are seen as much more receptive to improving relations with Washington, though a majority of Canadians opposed the war in Iraq and the policies of President Bush.

Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper favors tax cuts and opposed Martin's successful bill to legalize same-sex marriage throughout Canada. He would become prime minister if the Conservatives receive the most seats in Parliament.

"This is not just the end of a tired, directionless, scandal-plagued government," Harper said after Monday's vote. "It's the start of a bright new future for this country."



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| Bodhi Day | Daeborum |
| Shichi Go San | Christmas |
| | Kwanza |

There will be food and festivities from each holiday around the world.



252-328-4715 www.ecu.edu/student_union

My Random Column

Wacky weather causes chaos this year

Seventy-five degrees in November, does that make since? It doesn't to me.

There is another tropical storm in the Atlantic Ocean and the season is supposed to end today but Epsilon takes this season to a new extreme with its formation in the mid-Atlantic around 800 miles east of Bermuda. The 26 storms named this season makes this the longest season in history since 23 storms named in 1933.

Usually only 10 storms are named a year and less than a handful threaten land. Not this year, we were blasted along the Gulf Coast with expensive damages and whole cities underwater. We are still trying to help those who were harmed or lost parts of their lives to storms that happened months ago. And there is speculation that the season may not be over yet because the water is still warm and with the low and high fronts causing storms to form, we can be looking for a possibility of more Greek named storms into December.

Isn't it the time of year where we should be looking for snow not hurricanes? It was snowing in the mountains last week but it is back up to 50-60 degrees there and here this week.

Not that I am ready for snow by any means, but I don't really know how I can handle the randomness of the weather. It has caused the majority of people I know to have gotten sick and the rain makes it miserable to go from one class to another. Luckily the rest of the week should, I repeat should, be nicer and sunnier but no promises.

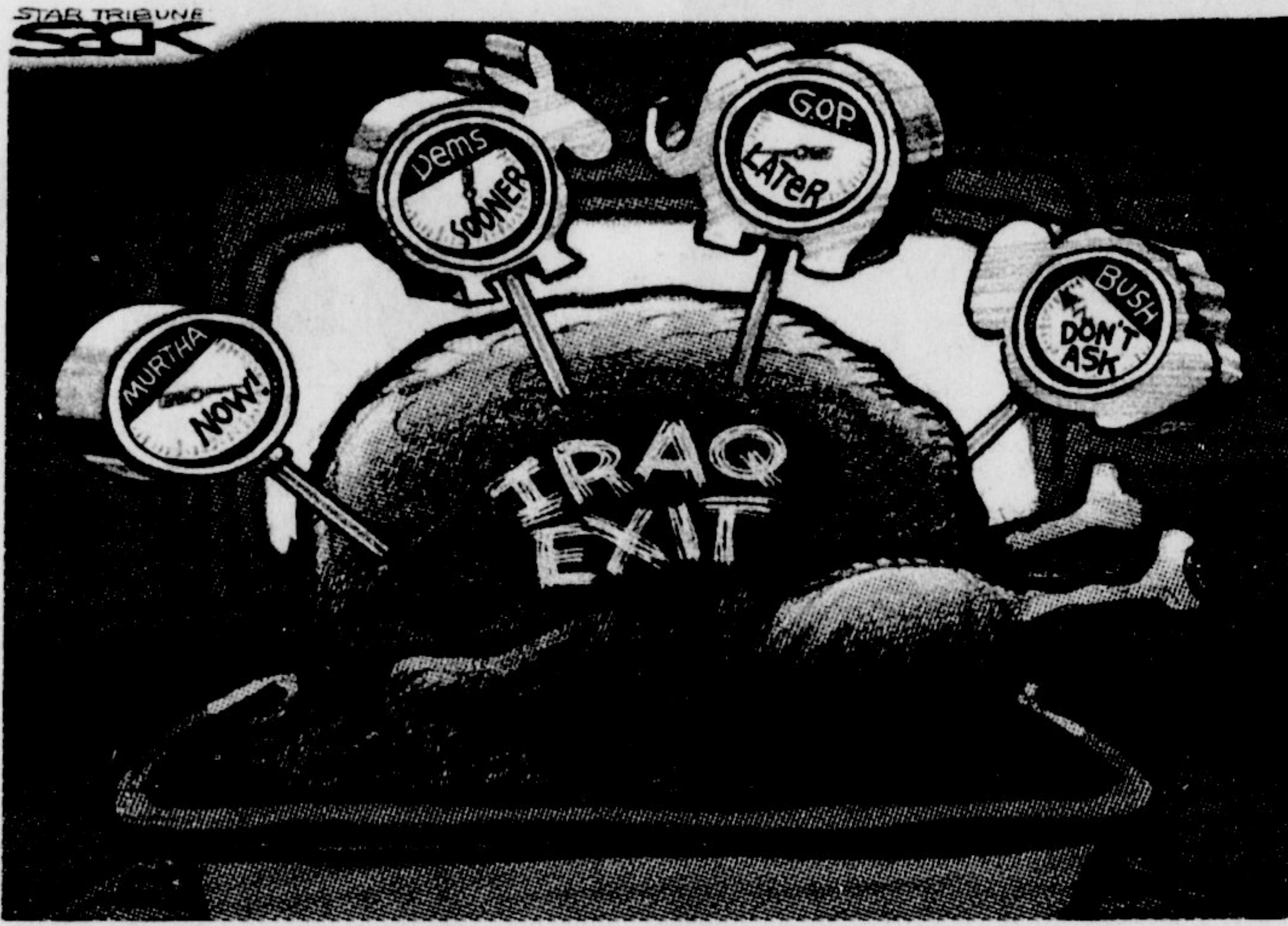
Lets just hope the sky makes up its mind and lets us know what season it wants it to be and not cause us to be miserable through the last week or so of classes. I hope all of you with colds have a chance to sleep a little more than usual and get the medicine you need. Good luck with the last week of class and the demands that teachers have put forth this last week of cramming all the loose ends into six more days. I know I need more than luck.

Until next week - Jennifer Hobbs

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Opinion Columnist

Unleashing your inner animal

What inspires us to connect with animals.

BENJAMIN CORMACK
CAUSAL OBSERVER

I've been hearing people talk lately about how that when they die, they want to come back as an animal. For most of them that animal would be a dog. Now I'm not exactly a believer in reincarnation, but then again I don't think it is not possible. I gave this issue some thought and here's some of the things I came up with.

The life of a pet dog would be pretty awesome: no job, regular meals, warm place to sleep and lots of love. Then again there are the fleas, trips to the vet and getting left behind while your owners are away. Then again, those are similar to things that I already have to deal with. That "no job" concept though is pretty enticing. I just hope my owners wouldn't name me Benji. I hate being called that.

Have you ever noticed how much humans willingly connect and try to connect themselves with animals? While we associate ourselves with a hardy, crafty and often savage man of the sea, other schools associate themselves with savage creatures of the wild. Even professional sports teams equate their game play with the behavior of animals. Some of these animals include wolves, rams, breeds of dogs, various species of birds, various species of insects, lions, tigers, bears and (oh my!) so many more.

According to Wikipedia, the term "zodiac" comes from the Greek word "zoon" which means animal. Almost two-thirds of the symbols in this order are ani-

mals, associated with animals, or at least animal-like. Actually if you look at the classic zodiac calendar, it almost looks like the line-up of teams for a professional sport. Just imagine it:

THIS SUNDAY

Arizona Aries vs. Cincinnati	Scorpios
Detroit Leos vs. California	Capricorns
Minnesota Gemini vs. Texas	Taurus's

In the Chinese Zodiac, all the characters are animals. Each year is represented by an animal and the animal changes every year. Each animal has its time in the spotlight, so to speak, about every twelve years. The twelve animals can be divided into two sets, one representing Yin and the other representing Yang. Yin, often considered the "dark element" has the characteristics of being passive, feminine, downward-seeking and corresponding with the night. Yang, often considered the "light element" has the characteristics of being active, masculine, upward-seeking and corresponding with the day. Even years are yang and odd years are yin. The cycle begins with the rat and ends with the pig. Here's a list of the animals, their alignment with Yin & Yang, and, I'm guessing most of you are about my age, a list of years some of you were probably born:

Rat	Yang	1972/1984
Horse	Yang	1978/1990
Ox	Yin	1973/1985
Goat	Yin	1979/1991
Tiger	Yang	1974/1986
Monkey	Yang	1980/1992
Rabbit	Yin	1975/1987
Rooster	Yin	1981/1993

Dragon	Yang	1976/1988
Dog	Yang	1982/1994
Snake	Yin	1977/1989
Pig	Yin	1983/1995

Then there's also the use of the simile. You know: Hungry as a bear. Cat-like reflexes. As big as a whale or elephant. Sly as a fox, etc.

So what is it that drives us to make associations or connections with animals? Is it out of a desire to connect with our primal nature, or just an inherent admiration of and curiosity about nature? Since we can not communicate with most animals the way we can with other humans, all that we do know is limited only to what science and observation can tell us. Some scientists have actually taught gorillas and chimpanzees to communicate with sign language and special sound boards. I've even heard of a parrot that has the IQ of a three-year-old child. Perhaps by better understanding animals and their nature, we can better understand our own natures and the nature of the world itself. Perhaps we can even unlock secrets that could change our way of thinking forever.

I know I've talked about animals before, but with the holidays my brain felt drained. So I thought I'd write about something... a little easier to wrap my brain around. After spending Thanksgiving picking and eating at poultry with my family like a pride of lions, I thought I should do something to "appease the spirits" so to speak of the turkey, pig and chicken we ate. As usual I hope this article has given you something to think about or at least been entertaining. I promise next week will be better.

Letters To The Editor

Dear All ECU Students,
The students of ECU have been kept in the dark about a financial matter that will have a grave effect on almost all students at this university. HigherOne, a debit based middle man has either purchased or been given private financial information by this university. The university signed a contract with HigherOne on Oct. 10 2005. The university will now outsource its financial aid department and the cashier's office thanks to HigherOne's debit card system. The students had no say in this nor do you have a choice if you rely on financial aid to attend this university.

The selling point for HigherOne is that it reduces administrative cost/time. If these departments are such a costly endeavor to keep here at this school then why have they yet to show a set plan to decrease these departments considerably? This also is another delay in turn around time for an already delayed financial aid system. Students of East Carolina University, you must stand up now and defend yourself. Do not activate these cards. There is a chance you can still get your checks if you do not activate them due to periods of time where the school has to be cautious to ensure everyone gets their financial aid money in a timely fashion. Your privacy should never be something that can be bought or sold.

Sincerely, John Johnson
Junior
Anthropology

Dear students at ECU,
Recently it has come to our attention at HigherOne that there has been some confusion regarding the new ECU debit card pro-

gram. Quite a bit of misinformation has been posted online and been spread through e-mail. I wanted to take the time to address concerns and provide the facts about the program so that there is a joint understanding of the way the program works. As a native North Carolinian (I went to River-side High School in Durham), I've been so excited that ECU is now a customer and look forward to providing a high quality service to the institution and its students.

Question 1 - Why am I getting this card? Do I have to pay fees to receive a refund? What does activate mean? Answer: You will use the ECU Debit Card that you receive to identify and authenticate yourself on the ECUDebitCard web site (ECUCard.com). You will then be asked to setup a login to the web site. You can use the Web site to receive information about refund payment status and your preference. In the next step you choose how you would like to receive any refund that may be owed to you. Many students have confused "Activating" the card with choosing the OneAccount and Easy Refund option. "Activating" means using the card to authenticate yourself on the web site to make your refund choice. It does not mean activating the account and Debit MasterCard option.

Question 2 - I am worried about my privacy. Is the OneAccount secure? Do I have to give out my social security number? Answer: NO. HigherOne does not sell consumer information. Period. Further, if you choose to use the OneAccount, the account and card do have security features.

Question 3 - If I choose the OneAccount, are there a lot of fees?

How can I learn more? Answer: If you choose to open the OneAccount and use the ECU Debit Card as a Debit MasterCard, you have chosen to open a Free checking account. This means that the funds in the account are FDIC insured up to \$100,000. You can use the OneAccount and your card without incurring any fees. There is no monthly fee, no minimum balance, and Debit MasterCard transactions (where you swipe and sign) are always free. Like any checking account, there are fees for additional services such as overdrafts, wire transfers, or stop payments. The fee schedule is accessible through the links under "Learn" on ECUCard.com.

Question 4 - Is HigherOne a reputable company? Answer: Higher One is a financially solid company that works with 33 colleges and universities across the country. Over 130,000 students have chosen to use the HigherOne OneAccount through their ID or debit card. The company has helped our clients make more than \$1 billion in payments to students. 3 of our clients have won best practice awards for implementing our service. At one college, Sam Houston State University (where we launched in 2003), four in five students have chosen to use and have a balance in their OneAccount. I think that this speaks for itself, as if our product was bad, students would choose a different option.

More information about HigherOne is available at HigherOne.com.

Thank you,
Sean Glass
HigherOne Founder

Pirate Rant

Enjoy your hump day!

To the person who decided to generalize... everyone that spends thousands of dollars to come to ECU does not come to "party and slack off." Maybe that's what you and your friends came here to do, but some of us are here to actually get a degree or two.

To the person who made the comment about smoking on Tuesday - Smoking is no worse than drinking or any other vice a person may have, and if you don't want to walk behind a smoker speed up I am sure that with your excellent lungs and crappy liver (one of the wonderful things drinking does for you) you can out walk us.

Why is it that people are on their cell phones at 8 a.m.? Just walk to class in silence if you must. We don't want to hear about your drama the night before. And another thing, don't take your cell phone to the gym - you are there to work out, not scream on your phone and get attention.

After looking over the EPA employee salaries on OneStop it's obvious that a lot of Administrators are leeching inflated paychecks from this University. Don't refer me to a secretary from now on, I know what you make and I want you to earn it!

To the person who said they were going to get lung cancer from walking behind me on campus: Stop making things up. The smoke I exhale is twice filtered and not all the smoke is going directly in your face and your lungs. There's this crazy thing called wind that blows it every which way. You're not going to get lung cancer. And personally I never cared if smoking was cool or not. I do it for myself so I can put up with people like you that complain to me all the time.

If there are any classy girls at this school who do not only care about hooking up, could somebody please tell me where to find them because it's obviously not downtown.

People need to learn that smacking gum or food is the most disgusting habit in the world and need to learn some manners. Nobody wants to hear or see you chewing anything... its called closing your mouth!

To the two "mini bike boys": I see you guys riding your mini motorcycles to campus and it's adorable - thanks for making me smile. Don't forget the construction in the Rivers building too - year four.

To the women and men who keep Bate building clean, thank you! You do a great job and are always friendly!

You would expect after spending \$500 on your new XBOX 360 it wouldn't crash on you! I'm glad I decided to wait until they worked the bugs out!

Are you a Southern girl?

I agree if you're driving down 264 and want to go slow please get in the right lane!

You know what really grinds my gears? Why is it that 95 percent of the girls that wear shirts that say hottie, or have license plates that say Q-Tee or something to that effect are not hot? Please stop false advertising, when you came back to your car I expected to see a beautiful face! Thanks for making me wait an hour for no reason at all!

As of Monday night the Athletic Department gets an additional \$50 per student on top of the \$50 increase last year. I love Pirate athletics but there are more important things in a school.

ATTENTION: Nice girl in search of "good" guy...

I cannot believe that the Student Government approved these new debit cards.

Why is it only called cheating when guys do it?

OK guys, if a girl was interested in you how would you want her to approach you? I really want to make this guy feel special.

What was the guy doing behind City Market at 3:45 a.m. anyway? Didn't your Mom tell you nothing good ever happens after midnight?

To the guy who offered to help me bring my luggage upstairs Sunday night, even though I had it and said no thanks, thank you for the thought. It is nice to know there are still some guys out there with manners. I got towed for overtime parking by 15 minutes and the driver damaged my vehicle. Not only did I have to pay \$130 to get it released, but due to some stupid policy eliminating liability for damage, I now have to pay \$500 for transmission repairs. &##\$ you very much!

Do we attend ECU or Florida State, because if you stumble into the so-called new and improved Wright Place the paint job is Burgundy and Gold. Not Purple and Gold! Outrageous! Great way to up school spirit, huh? Make sure the center of campus is devoid of school colors. Stellar! If it's not repainted by January 2006 then whoever made that decision needs to be fired! ASAP!

Nothing makes my day more than seeing some spoiled girl walking around campus in tears because she didn't get something she wanted. Deal.

ECU hockey is #10 in the South in standings.

I find it interesting that Gary McCabe got tons of rants and disgusted replies to his last article... and NONE of them were printed (only praise "rolls eyes"). So here's another: Gary McCabe, concerning your derogatory, ignorant and elitist comments in the AD article, please leave the South as you suggested.

Students quit reading the pirate rants during class.

I would just like to tell everyone that lives in North Carolina, the Panthers aren't that good! Get over it!

In the past six months I have realized how ridiculous our legal system really is. Hire a lawyer and you can get away with just about anything, but if you don't hire a lawyer, you'll get screwed for everything you have.

Editor's Note: The Pirate Rant is an anonymous way for students and staff in the ECU community to voice their opinions. Submissions can be submitted anonymously online at www.theeastcarolinian.com, or e-mailed to editor@theeastcarolinian.com. The editor reserves the right to edit opinions for content and brevity.

Top 5s:

Top 5 Movies

1. Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire
2. Walk the Line
3. Chicken Little
4. Derailed
5. Zathura

Top 5 Pop Albums

1. Madonna
2. Carrie Underwood
3. Kenny Chesney
4. Mariah Carey
5. Various Artists

Top 5 TV Shows

1. "CSI"
2. "Desperate Housewives"
3. "Lost"
4. "Without A Trace"
5. "Grey's Anatomy"

Top 5 DVD Rentals

1. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory
2. Christmas with the Kranks
3. The Devil's Rejects
4. Bewitched
5. Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith

Top 5 Books

1. A Feast for Crows
2. Light from Heaven
3. Predator
4. Christ the Lord
5. The Camel Club

Horoscopes:

Aries - Figure out a strategy for spending money wisely. Give yourself a special reward with all the money you save.

Taurus - You know what needs to be done. Get some help figuring out how. You'll do better if you include another point of view.

Gemini - Being well organized takes practice and now's a great time to try. Any organizing at all that you do will be a big help.

Cancer - Talk it over with the people who mean the most to you. Earlier is better for planning. The action begins tomorrow or late tonight.

Leo - There are things happening that would never have occurred to you. Listen carefully, but don't offer comments unless you're asked.

Virgo - The objective is to have the skills you'll need, before you need them. That time is approaching rapidly, so practice!

Libra - Start by sorting and filing. Figure out what you have. Then, planning how to use it will be the fun part. There's enough.

Scorpio - Be thinking about ways to improve your efficiency and increase your profits. You'll also get some pretty good ideas from a loved one. Ask.

Sagittarius - Don't expect others to come right out and tell you what they want. Figure that out and provide it, before you're asked.

Capricorn - You don't have to tell everything you know. In fact, you shouldn't. Resist the temptation.

Aquarius - Help the person who's actually giving the orders do it right. Provide technical support unless, of course, you really want her to fail.

Pisces - Information you've been seeking from far away comes through. Inquire again, even if you've been disappointed before.

Announcements:

The East Carolinian is looking for someone with savvy social skills and an exciting lifestyle to write a features column for next semester. Do you think you have what it takes to be the next Carrie Bradshaw? Come fill out an application at our office located on Third Street. Any questions can be sent to features@theeastcarolinian.com.

Fun Facts:

The average French citizen eats 500 snails a year.

Former U.S. President Franklin Pierce was arrested during his term as President for running over an old lady with his horse, but the charges were later dropped.

Roosters can't crow if they can't fully extend their necks.

Mel Gibson has a horseshoe kidney, which is two kidneys fused into one.

The oldest pig in the world lived to 68.

Every workday, 6.7 million people commute to Manhattan!

Nearly 22,000 checks will be deducted from the wrong account over the next hour.

CELEBRITY PROFILE: RUDOLPH

From red nose to red light and back

DANIEL BROCK
STAFF WRITER

Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer - it's a story we all know. Or do we? Noting the approaching holiday season I pondered what it might be like to sit down with Rudolph at his North Pole estate for a TEC exclusive with the "Most Famous Reindeer of All." My imagination ran wild and he had plenty to say about his dark childhood, crazy times, battles with drugs and the androgynous Hermie the Elf.

TEC: It's well documented that you grew up in an abusive household and were tormented by your peers. Did that affect your outlook on life at an early age?

Rudolph: Of course it did. It made me feel like a freak. My father constantly ridiculed me, and those punks at school were always taking shots at me. They'd be like, "Oh does the carpet match the light bulb." I didn't even know what that meant then. Then I get the gig with Santa, and everybody wants to be Rudy's friend. Needless to say, they got theirs.

TEC: Medical technology has advanced quite a bit since your childhood. Was your condition ever, and I hesitate, diagnosed?

Rudolph: (Silence) Yes, much later it was discovered that I had a rare condition known as North Polar Disorder. There is no known cure. It's not about suppression, it's about control. Of course it's helped me in my career, but sometimes I wonder, "What if?"

TEC: As a social outcast you met a disgruntled young factory worker named Hermie the Elf who had the dream of becoming a dentist. How did that relationship change your life?

Rudolph: Hermie was a cool cat. He was just sick of being hassled by the man. We had



The famous image of Rudolph from the 1964 made for TV movie.

some freak out times on the Island (The Island of Misfit Toys, the legendary North Pole hippy commune). He was a good guy and it never hurts to have a friend who will perform free dental work. Well, let me take that back. It never hurts to have a friend who will perform free dental work, and is licensed to do so.

TEC: Around the time you guys were on the Island of Misfit Toys, you met a wild-eyed miner name Yukon Cornelius, and began a much-publicized feud with the Abominable Snow Monster.

Rudolph: Yeah, Cornelius was crazy. We got into some rumbles with the Snow Monster, something about Yukon and the Monster's old lady. He stomped us a couple times, but we got the better of him in the end and things worked out. Hermie even did some bridge work for him.

TEC: Of course after that, there were heady times as Santa famously asked you to "Guide my sleigh tonight."

Rudolph: Yeah that's where things really took off, and my nose turned out to be an asset. Santa came around, and I reconciled with my dad. I was lead reindeer for 12 years after that. It was a great time, and a real turning point in my life. Shortly after I married Clarice (Clarice the Doe, Rudolph's three time ex-wife) and it seemed like I would be on top forever.

TEC: You mentioned Clarice, how are things with her now?

Rudolph: We still talk, and we have joint custody of the kids. I mean, when it was good it was good. I would rather not comment on those honeymoon videos that were floating around though.

TEC: Yes, that was my next question. Do you have at least a short comment?

see RUDOLPH page A6

Foods for thought



Bourbon brown sugar pound cake is a tasty holiday favorite.

Great holiday food for all tastes

MEREDITH STEWART
SENIOR WRITER

Thanksgiving is over and everyone's stomach is full, for now. The winter holidays are just around the corner so it's time to get your big appetite back. Some families prefer the traditional foods - ham, dressing, candied yams, rolls and everyone's favorite pecan pie.

It's nice to have these traditional foods at your table, but be sure to serve a bigger variety to satisfy everyone's taste buds.

Along with ham, serving turkey or chicken is also a great idea. Pasta salad is quick and easy. Just choose pasta (bowtie works well), add fresh herbs, light garlic and vinegar. Get artsy with your ingredients by cutting them to match the pasta shape.

Mashed potatoes are something most enjoy, especially children. To add a little something extra put in some cheese and bacon bits. Cooked baby carrots with brown sugar are sure to add color to the table. Almond green beans are great, but to add some zest, warm a can of green beans and then let them simmer in Italian dressings for about eight minutes. It has a very unusual taste, but worth a try.

"I told my grandmother about this recipe and she warmed a can of kitchen cut green beans, and then let them simmer in zesty Italian dressing for a few minutes. It was so good, that's the only way I like to eat them now," said Catherine Stallings, sophomore English major.

Cranberry sauce is a must along with simple greens, stuffing, broccoli casserole, rice pilaf and yams. All of these holiday food ideas will be sitting on many tables around the country, but it's up to you to add a little something special or a twist to make your dishes unique and memorable.

Making soup is also a great way to use excess food. Just

place tomatoes, butter beans, corn, celery, okra, potatoes, any kind of meat and any other kind of vegetable you like to in your soup. Place it on the stove and let it simmer. This includes all the foods that people love and you don't have to waste anything.

"Homemade soup is my absolute favorite. Each holiday season my family gets together to eat lunch and the vegetables we have left over are used to make soup. We usually eat that soup for dinner, along with other things we couldn't put in it," said Alina Panchuk, freshman biology major.

Holiday baking and food preparation can be rewarding as well as tasty. If you are looking to cut holiday calories, try surfing the Internet for low calorie holiday ideas and enjoy all of your low calorie kitchen time.

On another side note, always be sure to plan a menu around your guests. Find out about food allergies and extreme dislikes. The recipe to accompany the above photo is below for you to try.

This writer can be contacted at features@theeastcarolinian.com.

BOURBON BROWN SUGAR POUND CAKE

- 3 cups unbleached flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 1/2 cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 cups firmly packed brown sugar
- 6 large eggs
- 1/2 cup plus 2 teaspoons bourbon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 325 degrees Fahrenheit. Butter and flour two (nine-inch) loaf cake pans. Set aside. Whisk or sift together the flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and baking powder. With a wooden spoon or a mixer fitted with a paddle or rotary beaters, cream the butter until it is light and fluffy, then gradually beat

see FOODS page A6

Traditional holiday feasts



One of the most important elements in a holiday feast is including the people you care about.

Food variations among cultures and locations

SARAH CAMPBELL
STAFF WRITER

Now that Thanksgiving is over, families around the world have begun getting ready for the biggest holidays of the year, Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanza. In preparation people are shopping for gifts, decorating their homes and gathering the necessary ingredients needed to create their favorite holiday dishes. The winter holidays are a time to spend time with family and friends enjoying meals and celebrating the meaning of their winter holiday.

When speaking about each of these holidays, there are many variations of tradition and food that go with each. Christmas is no exception as far as cultural diversity goes. Different cultures around the

world have varying traditions when it comes to what foods they prepare.

In the United States, we enjoy a bountiful feast on Christmas Day followed by delectable desserts including pies, pastries and candies. Let's take a look at some native dishes of countries around the world.

In Italy, a traditional Christmas feast includes salted dried cod fish (baccala), vermicelli, baked pasta, capon and turkey. La Vigilia Napoletana is a traditional Christmas Eve dinner where seven types of fish are eaten in order to bring good luck.

A Christmas dinner of oven-baked ham, vegetable casseroles, liver casserole, mixed beetroot salad, smoked salmon and herring dishes are eaten on Christmas Eve in Finland. This is a time for families and friends to enjoy a festive atmosphere while sharing a traditional holiday meal.

In Poland, people begin cooking Christmas dinner up to a

month in advance. On Christmas Eve, there are traditionally twelve dishes served - that's why preparation for the day begins so early. Soup and dumplings are common dishes served during this feast. Polish desserts mirror some of our most popular Christmas desserts such as rum cake, butter cookies and fruitcake.

A special Christmas beer, Juleol, is brewed in Norway weeks before Christmas arrives. Juleol accompanies the pork dishes that make up the main course for the Christmas feast. Sweet Christmas bread filled with raisins sends a tantalizing scent into the air luring people in from the cold to enjoy a hot slice of it.

A centerpiece of turkey mole, a sauce containing chocolate and chilies, is surrounded by roast suckling pig, turkey and beet salad with peanuts at a

see CULTURES page A6

HO, HO, HO: Holiday drinks



Garnished martinis, when consumed in moderation, can make a great addition to holiday dinners.

Drink and be merry, safety of course

DANIEL BROCK
STAFF WRITER

No family holiday celebration would be complete without one (or more) of your relatives being excessively intoxicated. The awkward silences, inappropriate comments and the inevitable eviction are as much a part of the holidays as turkey and mistletoe.

In my family, the drunkard that towers above the rest (because he's standing on a coffee table) is my mullet sporting, tattoo bearing, dental hygienically challenged Uncle Dennis.

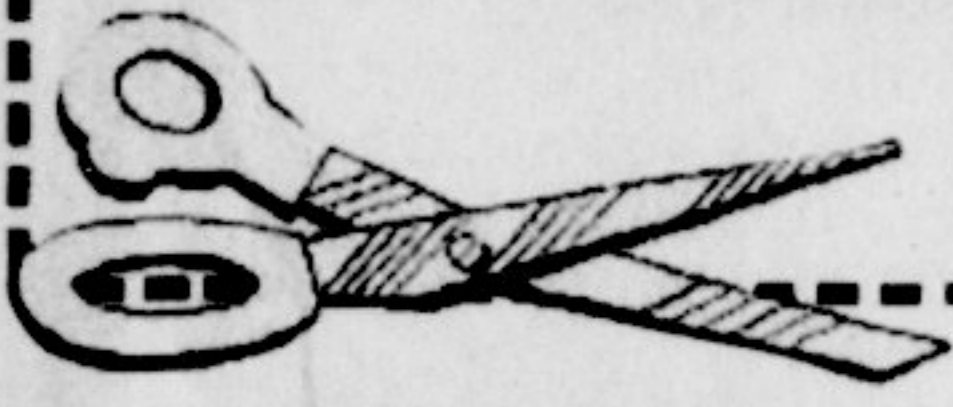
The holidays have always been Uncle Dennis' time of year, a time of free flowing alcohol and trips to the county correctional center. There was the Christmas of 1994 when he boldly proclaimed, "94 beers in '94!" He made it to 43 before he passed

out while urinating in the snow. Who could forget New Years 1998? In a now legendary scene, Dennis, whilst in the depths of despair after being laid off (for drinking on the job), drank a twelve pack of Budweiser and chugged an entire fifth of rum in 27 spectacular minutes. I was personally impressed, however, many in the room were not amused and my Aunt Mary Anne

see DRINKS page A6

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Drinks from page A5

was asked to once again cart the D-Train back to their mobile home. Uncle Dennis' *coup de' grace*, however, was the holiday season of 2003. Upon his return from rehab, Dirty D proclaimed he had converted to Judaism. We were all happy for him... until Hanukkah. Dennis redefined the phrase, "Eight Crazy Nights" in a wild booze soaked bender that landed him not only in jail, but also in divorce court.

If you are going to drink, why not do it in style moderation? Let the good times flow, but remember not to go totally overboard or you may have your exploits scrawled across the pages of some college newspaper's Features section.

Or worse yet, end up hurting yourself or others while in your drunken stupor.

So with holiday drinks on our mind, without further ado here is TEC's Holiday Libation List. Amaze your friends and family with your drink mixing skills and not only will you be guaranteed better gifts, but you just might end up under the mistletoe with your cousin's hot new girlfriend.

Three Wise Men:

Shot.
A wise man once said, "This round's on me." I once said, "Sweet!"
1/2 fl oz Bourbon
1/2 fl oz Whiskey
1/2 fl oz Scotch
Pour in desired order and drink up.

Christmas Martini:

Martini (6 oz. glass).
"It's no coincidence that the first letter in the word martini is mmmh." - Tony Sinclair
1 1/4 fl oz (31 ml) gin
1/4 fl oz (6 ml) dry vermouth
1/4 teaspoon(s) peppermint schnapps
Cracked ice as required
Candy cane to garnish
Half-fill a cocktail shaker with the cracked ice. Pour the gin, dry vermouth and peppermint schnapps. Shake well. Strain the mixture into chilled Martini glasses. Serve garnished with a candy cane.

Spiced Cider:

Enough for a crowd.
Cider, candy and rum. Oh my!
1 gal. Apple cider

1 cup Red Hots (candy)
1 cup Rum
Over medium heat, in a large pan, bring cider to a boil, add Red Hots and stir until dissolved. Let cool a bit and add 1 cup of rum before serving.

Egg Nog:

Enough for a crowd.
This Holiday classic is loved by all
6 eggs
1/2 pint Rum
1/2 pint Brandy
2 pints Heavy Whipping Cream
6 Tbs. powdered sugar
1 cup granulated sugar
Serve in any festive holiday glass.

Budweiser:

Beer.
A personal favorite of old St. Nick. Cookies and milk? Try pretzels and beer.

So there you have it, a drink for any and all holiday festivities. More info on these drinks and other ideas, visit www.ecu.com. Again, just to be sure, always drink in moderation and never drink and drive.

This writer can be contacted at features@theeastcarolinian.com.

Foods from page A5

in both sugars - cream mixture until very light and fluffy.

Beat in the eggs, one at a time, alternating with the flour-and-spice blend, a little at a time, until both are incorporated. Don't overbeat. Stir in the bourbon and vanilla, and spoon batter into prepared pans. Slip a table knife blade into the batter and run it through in a back-and-forth S motion to take out any large air pockets. Give the pan a couple of firm taps on the counter - enough to bring any air pockets to the surface.

Bake for about 1 1/2 hours, until risen, golden brown and a straw inserted into the center comes out clean. Don't open the oven door for the first 1 1/4 hours. Make sure the cake is completely done, but don't overbake it or it will be dry and heavy. Turn off the oven and let it cool for 10 minutes, then crack the door and let the cake cool completely before taking it out of the pan. Makes two loaves, 12 to 16 servings.

PER SERVING: Calories-456 (39 percent fat) Fat-20 g (12 g sat) Cholesterol-128 mg Sodium-136 mg Fiber-1 g Carbohydrates-60 g
SOURCE: "New Southern Baking."

Rudolph from page A5

Rudolph: Let's just say Cher was certainly a big fan (Rudolph and Cher were briefly married in 1979).

TEC: I'm glad you mentioned Cher. The late 1970s saw you go into an extended slide that led to some troubling personal problems.

Rudolph: Yeah the 1970s and 80s were crazy. There was a lot of coke around and the red nose was kind of a target. Hermie passed away from AIDS in 1981. No one even knew elves could get AIDS so it was really devastating. I was in and out of jail for a while, but Santa was always there for

me. Clarice and I got divorced and remarried and then divorced again, and things were really crazy. At one point I was working at the Parkview Mall in Omaha and living in a dumpster behind J.C. Penny.

TEC: That makes your recovery and sobriety even more remarkable. Is it true that Tom Cruise introduced you to Scientology?

Rudolph: I really feel blessed. I've been sober 10 years now, and I have never felt better. I've starred in a couple films, and I do specials every once in a while. For the most part I'm just happy

to hang out with my kids.

Yeah, for a while Scientology seemed cool but Tom is a guy that really freaks me out. I mean did you see him on the Today Show? Crazy. I'm a Kabbalist now and that has really changed my life. In fact Madonna and I are doing a seminar in London next month.

TEC: You've had an amazing life, and have taught everyone that adversity can be overcome with hard work, good friends and a glowing appendage. How would you sum it all up?

Rudolph: You just gotta be you, dude. Don't let man push you around and don't take

crap from nobody. Find a good woman and some good buddies, and enjoy the ride. Are there things I would change? Hell yeah! Who would ever want to live in a dumpster? You saw what it did to Oscar the Grouch. I've got to thank Santa for always being there for me, he really bailed me out a couple times. All in all though, I'm happy the with life I've had, even with my share of ups and downs. But at the end of the day I can sit back and say, "Rudy, you did alright."

This writer can be contacted at features@theeastcarolinian.com.

Cultures from page A5

traditional Christmas Eve dinner in Mexico. Chocolates, candies, fruits and nuts are hidden inside piñatas, which are broken by children after dinner.

Although Christmas is the most commercialized holiday during the winter season, Hanukkah and Kwanza host traditional foods as well. The most popular dish for Hanukkah are latkes, or potato pancakes. Their popularity stems from the way they are cooked, which is in oil. Being cooked in oil, latkes remind Jewish people of the miracles that a single pitcher of oil can hold.

Applesauce, green onions and sour cream can be poured on top of the latkes. If this doesn't sound like enough to eat, don't worry - baked chicken and salad accompany them to create a feast. At the close of Kwanza, a very

large feast is prepared in order for people to share fellowship and become closer to their African heritage. Information and entertainment is presented during the feast, which is held on December 31. The main ingredient of the feast is coconut. Some of the most common Kwanza foods include baked chicken in coconut milk, coconut coleslaw, glazed sweet potatoes and coconut cream pie.

For more information about traditional holiday foods from around the world and for recipes visit theworldwidegourmet.com and allrecipes.com.

With so many traditions to honor and so many different holidays to celebrate, it will be a busy holiday season indeed.

This writer can be contacted at features@theeastcarolinian.com.

Holiday favorites in Europe

Turkey is often regarded as the usual Christmas meal, but a variety of holiday dishes are enjoyed across Europe.

FINLAND Macaroni, rutabaga, carrot and potato ham or turkey Mixed meat and fish platter	NORWAY Smoked Cod, haddock and lutefisk preserved in lye, lefse flatbread Inland: Pork chops, mutton and special sausages
BRITAIN Pudding and mince pie	GERMANY Roast goose with potatoes, cabbage, carrots, parsnip and pickles
SWEDEN Shellfish, pork, cooked and raw herring, caviar, olives and brown butter	FRANCE Sautéed dry cod with leeks, onions and mushrooms
	SCOTLAND Wild boar and venison

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SPORTS

Sports Briefs

Wagner, Mets reach preliminary deal

Ace closer Billy Wagner and the New York Mets reached a preliminary agreement Monday on a \$43 million, four-year contract. Wagner, considered by many the top reliever on the free-agent market, saved 38 games for Philadelphia last season and is a four-time All-Star. The Phillies offered just more than \$30 million over three years to retain the 34-year-old left-hander and were prepared to enhance the proposal Monday – but not increase the length. – in each of the next four seasons, a high-ranking baseball official said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal had not yet been finalized. The Mets have an \$8 million club option for 2010 with a \$1 million buyout. If exercised, the deal would be worth \$50 million over five seasons. Wagner must pass a physical, which is likely to take place Tuesday, before the agreement can be completed. New York reached the agreement on the same day it introduced slugger Carlos Delgado, acquired last week in a trade with the Florida Marlins, an NL East rival just like the Phillies. Wagner's average salary will be the highest for a reliever, topping the \$10.5 million Mariano Rivera is earning from the New York Yankees under a two-year contract that started last season.

Rutgers headed to first bowl since 1978

Rutgers will play in a bowl for the first time in nearly three decades and Boise State is staying home for its postseason game. Rutgers (7-4) accepted an invitation to play in the Insight Bowl on Dec. 27 game in Phoenix against Arizona State. The last time the Scarlet Knights played in a bowl game was 1978, when they played Arizona State in the Garden State Bowl at Giants Stadium, not far from their campus in New Jersey. Rutgers has had just four winning seasons since 1984. Boise State accepted an invitation to play in the MPC Computers Bowl on the blue artificial turf of its home stadium. The Broncos will be making their fourth appearance in the nine-year history of the bowl. Boise State (9-3) will play a team from the Atlantic Coast Conference on Dec. 28. North Carolina State (6-5) is considered to be a front-runner after beating Maryland 20-14 Saturday. The Broncos beat Louisiana Tech 30-13 Saturday to earn a share of the WAC championship with Nevada and Fresno State. Boise State last played in its home stadium bowl in 2002, defeating Iowa State 34-16. The Broncos also won two previous appearances, beating Louisville 34-31 in 1999 and UTEP 38-23 in 2000. The bowl was known as the Humanitarian Bowl in its first seven seasons.

Ryan, Blue Jays finalize five-year deal

After finalizing the largest contract for a relief pitcher in baseball history – a \$47 million, five-year contract with the Toronto Blue Jays – B.J. Ryan was asked if he was worth it. A left-hander who turns 30 on Dec. 28, Ryan has 42 career saves, including 36 last season for the Baltimore Orioles. Ryan's deal tops the \$39.99 million, four-year contract Mariano Rivera received from the New York Yankees from 2001-04. Rivera has the highest average salary for a reliever under a \$21 million, two-year contract with the Yankees that has one season remaining. Ricciardi said signing Ryan was just the start of Toronto's offseason plans. The Blue Jays were also thought to be pursuing free-agent starter A.J. Burnett. Toronto was 16-31 in one-run games last season. The Blue Jays finished 80-82, third in the AL East behind the New York Yankees and Boston Red Sox (both 95-67). Ryan converted 36 of 41 save chances for Baltimore last season, going 1-4 with a 2.43 ERA. He struck out 100 and walked 26 in 70 innings and earned \$2,825,000, including bonuses.

Brohm tears knee ligament, out for season

Louisville quarterback Brian Brohm will miss the rest of the season with a torn ligament in his right knee. An MRI exam on Monday revealed Brohm tore the anterior cruciate ligament while scrambling for a 7-yard gain late in the third quarter of No. 16 Louisville's 41-17 win over Syracuse on Saturday. Brohm clutched the knee for several minutes before moving to a training table on the sidelines to watch the fourth quarter. Brohm has thrown for 2,883 yards and 19 touchdowns. No. 16 Louisville (8-2, 4-2 Big East) finishes its regular season Saturday at Connecticut. On Monday, the Cardinals accepted an invitation to the Gator Bowl. Hunter Cantwell, a freshman, will make the first start of his career against the Huskies. Cantwell is 8-of-11 passing for 153 yards and a touchdown in mostly mop-up duty this season.

Football season labeled a 'success'

ECU gains 5 wins, first time since 2001

ERIC GILMORE SENIOR WRITER

Skip Holtz visualized ECU becoming a top 20 national mainstay in his first season as head football coach.

"Honestly, our aspirations and our expectations going into this year were a lot higher than [5-6]," said Holtz.

"As I said, we were going to set the goals this year that we were going to have four years from now. We were going to give the seniors the opportunity to achieve those goals. And I said 'if you shoot for the stars and reach the moon, do you fail?'"

Consider the difference from last season's finishing emotions for both Holtz and ECU.

Unemployed, Holtz was recognized for his surname more so than his coaching ability. Once considered a prodigy after coordinating Notre Dame's offense for two years, the younger Holtz had regressed professionally 11 years later. After his father's second retirement, Holtz was networking after six years under his father at South Carolina, the last two years as a position coach.

And ECU was in a similar sad state of affairs. James Pinkney, the only hope in a 2-9 team full of mishaps, was beaten brutally

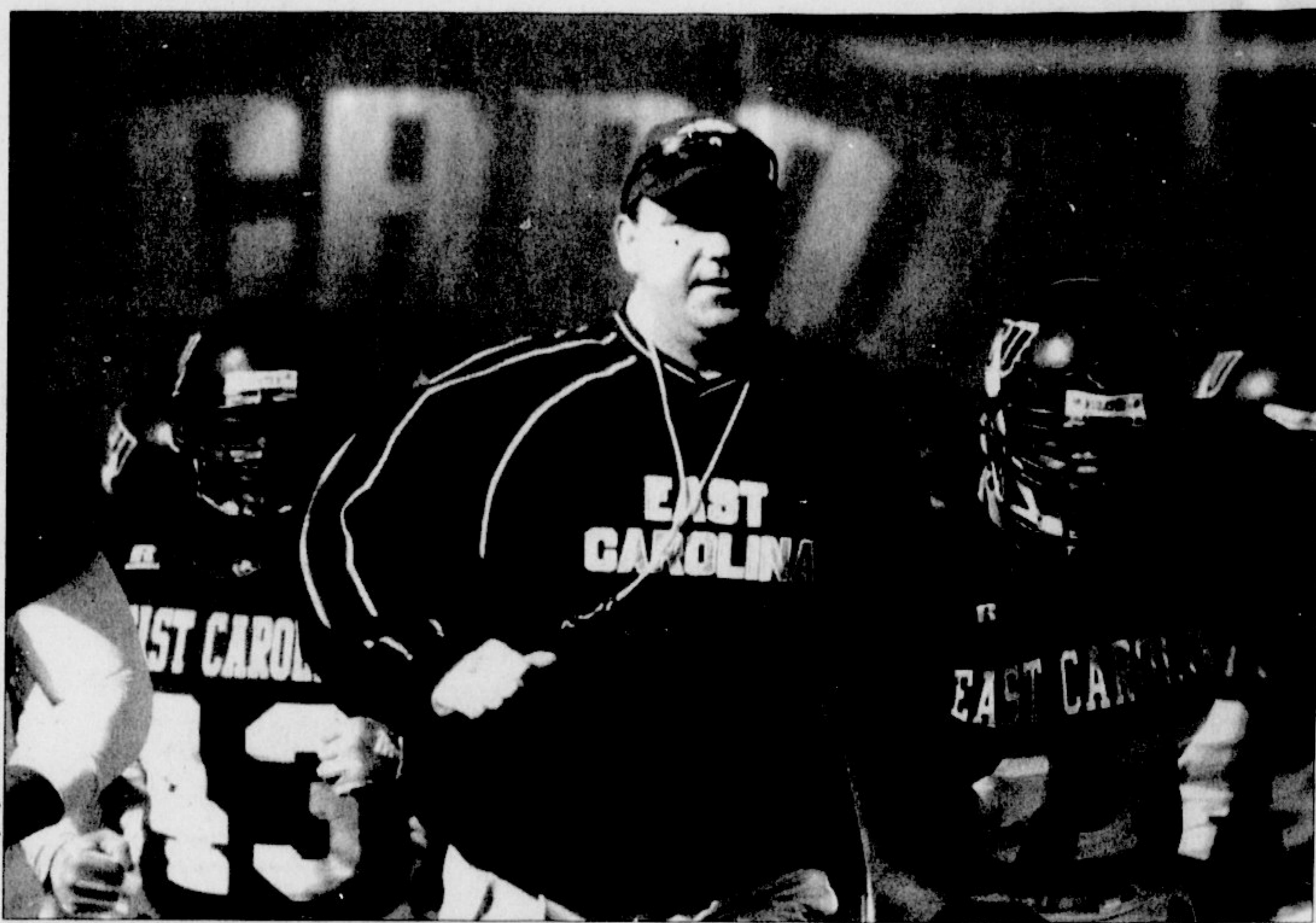
52-14 by then superior rival NC State. Backup Desmond Robinson, a Division I-AA quarterback on his best day, picked grass from his teeth constantly en route to 140 yards of total offense.

Approximately a year and five wins later, Holtz was embracing fellow Notre Dame letter winner and ECU defensive coordinator Greg Hudson in little ole Greenville amid the ambience of smiles and cheers. The Pirates had just spoiled UAB's bowl hopes with a 31-23 win a week after eliminating Marshall's odds 34-29.

But simply competing in every quarter was a far cry from the Thompson days. Instead of 48-7 and 56-23 drubbings by West Virginia, the improved Pirates hung tough losing 20-15. Instead of 337-yard Big East records by opposing running backs, the defense held tough allowing 200-yard totals only twice.

The Pirates finished 19th nationally in pass defense giving up a 300-yard plus passer once. While ECU still had trouble stopping the run, opponents averaged 28.8 points per game, an 11.1-point improvement over 2004's 39.9 per game average.

Offensively, the Pirates turned in the fourth-best single-season passing performance in school history with 2,816 yards. Pinkney matured equaling an ECU single-season record for most 200-yard passing games



ECU coach Skip Holtz led his team to a 5-6 record with consecutive wins over Marshall and UAB.

(10) while passing Jeff Blake to move into third-place on the school's career passing yardage list with 5,390. In addition, he finished with 2,773 passing yards, which ranks as the second-highest total in school history. And Aundrae Allison in his first year became the first 1,000 yard receiver in ECU history. Had Allison not suffered a MCL

injury during the season finale, he likely would have also broken Terrance Copper's single-season receptions record.

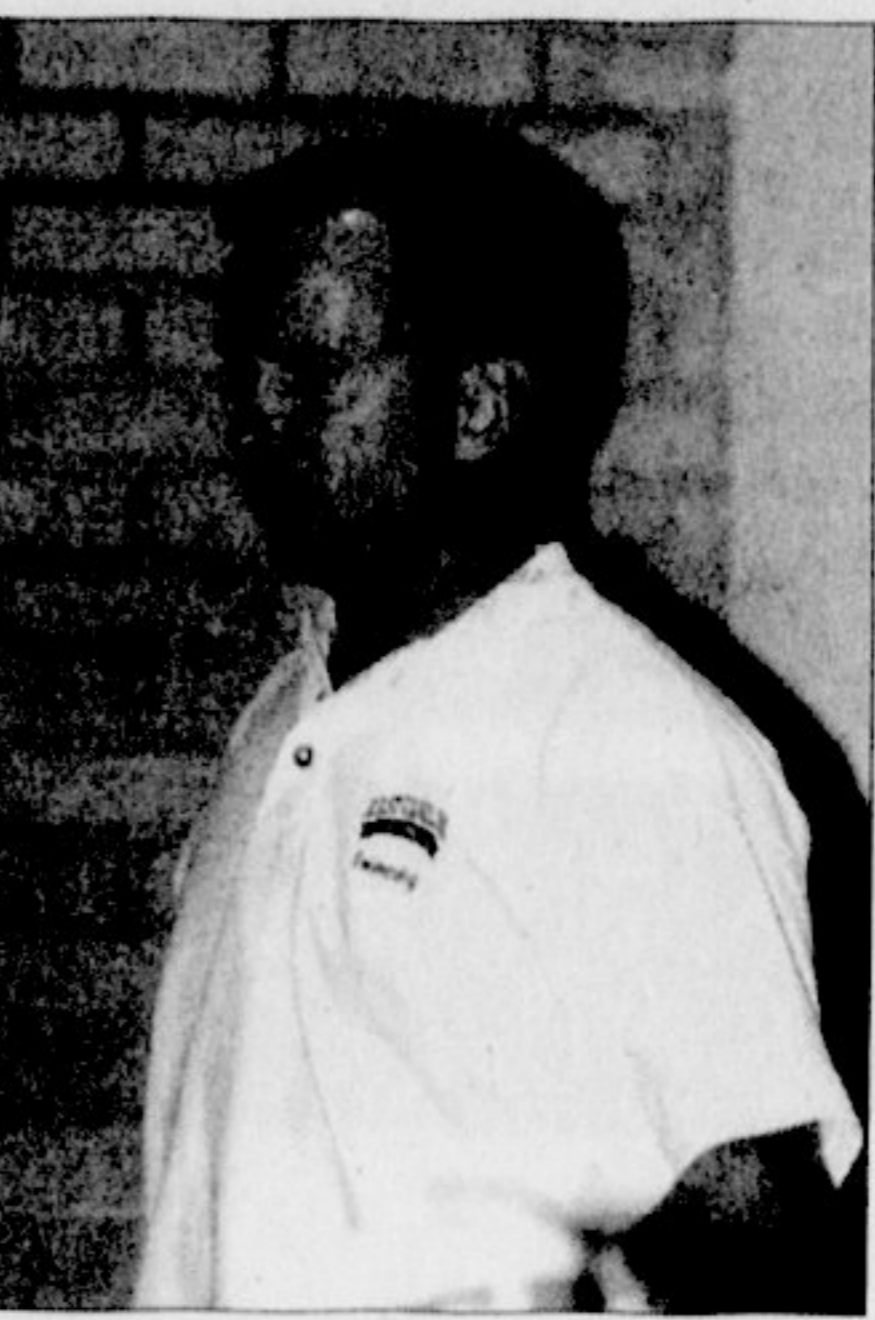
But the success label of a losing record doesn't reside with schemes or X's and O's. What is so impressive is that the personnel haven't changed from Thompson's days. The same players that fans claimed

didn't have enough Division I-A talent suddenly started making plays to win games.

The result came from a change in attitude, which emitted from the top, flipping the dynamic of team and subsequently its success. When arriving, Holtz and his staff gave the 19 seniors

see PIRATES page A8

ECU to carry unblemished record into new year



KOBE

ECU finishes stellar first half at Nike Cup

SCOTTY WILLIAMS STAFF WRITER

The ECU swimmers have been right on the money thus far in their season. They have come away victorious from every meet this year, and they completed a stellar first half of the season by making an impressive splash at the Nike Cup in Chapel Hill recently. Winning the event did

not register as the top priority – the important thing for the team was to swim fast and compete against themselves. That they did.

The Lady Pirates broke ten season meet marks, paced by Kate Gordon and Allison Miller. Both swimmers recorded the fastest times of the season in three separate events. Gordon qualified for the final in the 100- and 200-yard butterfly, and in the 200-yard individual medley. She ended up finishing fifth in the 200 butterfly and seventh in the 100 butterfly. Jennie Meade also made the finals in three different distance swimming events. In one of her events, the 1650-yard freestyle, she was joined by teammates Meghan Brosi, Megan Pulaski, Kimberly Brewer and Brennan Gaekle.

For the men, the star was Christoph Lubenau. Lubenau set the ECU varsity record in the 100-yard butterfly and placed second overall in the event by just under seven tenths of a second. Lubenau also reached the finals of the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle, joined by teammate Bryan Yasinsac. Their relay team (which also included Greg

Neville and Charlie McCannless) made the finals of the 200- and 400-yard freestyle relay, as well as the 200-yard medley relay.

Swimming coach Rick Kobe was ecstatic about the team's performance at the prestigious event as well as their level of competitiveness against some of the best teams in the nation.

"We had a great experience at the Nike Cup, we swam really fast and well over 20 finals swims, which is huge," Kobe said.

"It was very fast, one of the fastest meets in the country."

Kobe praised the performances of both Lubenau and Geoff Hansfield, who was the only Pirate to reach the finals of the 200-yard event. On the girls side, Meade, Allison Miller, Amanda Duncan, Kelly Shinton and Sarah Hunt all were on Kobe's short list of impressive performances.

The swimmers' incredibly strong performance at the Nike Cup brings a lot of optimism for the future. In the immediate future, the swimmers plan to work hard at their four hour per day routine up until after final

see SWIMMERS page A8



New York Rangers' right wing Jaromir Jagr celebrates a goal.

NHL winning back hockey fans

KRT — The new NHL is a hit.

After a season lost to a labor dispute, fans have flocked back to most NHL arenas this season to see what the majority believes is an improved game with more scoring, more skating and less hooking and holding.

Even in New Jersey, where the Devils have struggled to adjust to the rule changes and life after Scott Stevens and Scott Niedermayer, fans prefer this new version of hockey to the lower-scoring old NHL.

"I like it," said Karl Palzer, a Devils fan from Hillsborough, N.J. "The game is faster, quicker. There's more action. But I don't think it's helping the Devils at all."

With a mandate from the league with the intent of increasing scoring, referees have been keeping a close eye on obstruction fouls. As evidenced by the high number of penalties, some players are still adjusting, but by hindering defenders' ability to slow attacking players, the game has opened up.

The legalization of two-line passes over the center ice red line also has helped in this area, making it more difficult for teams to play the neutral-zone trap. The combination of all this has boosted scoring by 23.5 percent from 2003-04.

"To me, it's 10 times better than the old NHL," said Kevin Sinclair, a college student in Ottawa. "Talent is the most important thing. If you don't have talent, you shouldn't win. The teams with the best talent should be the best teams."

The most popular rule change has been the introduction of the shootout to break tie games. Fans are brought to their feet by the breakaway confrontation between shooter and goalie.

"It's great," Palzer said. "No one wants to watch for three hours and not have a conclusion."

Surprisingly, not all the fans

like the increase in offense. Some still prefer the subtleties of a defensive battle.

"I hate games that finish 8-7. Give me a 1-0 goaltenders' duel any day," said Brandyn Babitskas, a Florida Panthers fan from Sunrise, Fla. "(More goals) make it more exciting when you watch it, but they're going to keep changing it to the point where it's like basketball and one goal doesn't count for much."

Some players also have been highly critical of the impact the rule changes have had.

"Everybody keeps saying this is great. It's not great," Detroit Red Wings captain Steve Yzerman told the Detroit Free Press last week. "It's not hockey."

Yzerman was bothered most by the high number of penalties, which turn some games into power-play contests.

"They've taken judgment out of it and I think it's somewhat made it easy on the referees just to call anything, because there is no judgment," Yzerman said.

Another common criticism from players and coaches is that most of the physical battles in front of the net and in the corners have been eliminated.

"The new NHL is awesome," Sinclair said, disagreeing. "The only people who don't like it are the old players who can't keep up with the game anymore."

If attendance is any indication, most fans agree with Sinclair. Entering this week, the NHL's 30 teams were playing to 91.1 percent of capacity – a 1.1 percent bump from 2003-04 – and 21 teams had experienced attendance increases.

The Devils are part of the minority. They averaged only 13,889 fans over their first 11 home dates, which is only 72.9 percent of Continental Arena's 19,040 capacity. That also represents a drop of 1.9 percent from the 2003-04 11-game average of 14,159.

But other teams are play-

see NHL page A9

Chunk by chunk, Busch Stadium disappears

KRT — Driven by curiosity and devotion, the regulars make their way to the corner of 8th and Clark every day at lunchtime to watch the artless, methodical and for them irresistibly fascinating show performed in the dust and rubble of what used to be a ballpark.

Chunk by crumbling chunk, Busch Stadium, the 40-year home of the beloved St. Louis Cardinals, is disappearing before the eyes of the faithful, the rabid and the just plain sad-to-see-the-stadium-go crowd.

Most people who work in downtown St. Louis do not make the lunch-hour pilgrimage to Busch. But for Cardinal fans who hold dear the memories of Bob Gibson, Lou Brock, Willie McGee and Whitey Herzog, their daily trudge to gaze at this limited engagement of noisy destruction is a final albeit prolonged opportunity to say goodbye.

And it will be a long goodbye, lasting several more months.

This is not just a guy thing, and it's more than simply giving in to the childlike amazement at watching a building be demolished. This is baseball, and in St. Louis, perhaps the best baseball town in America, the home of the

Cardinals is a special place.

"This is the only stadium I've ever known," said Dick Hemkin, of Staunton, Ill., who stood with his wife, Michelle, as she snapped pictures at the yawning gap where home plate once was. Michelle comes to Busch three to four days every week to photograph the demolition of old Busch and, right next to it, construction of the new, dark-red brick Busch Stadium, which will open next spring.

"This is hard," she said. "I don't think this needed to be done."

Kerry Derrington, a legal analyst from Wentzville, Mo., walks to the park every day from his downtown office. On a recent day he recalled attending Game 7 of the 1982 World Series, in which the Cardinals beat the Milwaukee Brewers 6-3, after coming back from a three-games-to-one deficit. It was their last world championship.

"I've been here hundreds of times," Derrington said, saying he remembers attending a game at the old Sportsman's Park, which was torn down in 1966 to make way for Busch. Derrington said he is not upset by the demolition, but he walks here every

lunch hour to enjoy the memories and anticipate the arrival of the new Busch.

The uniquely American romanticism of baseball has elevated stadiums, such as New York's Yankee Stadium, Boston's Fenway Park and Chicago's Wrigley Field, to churchlike status. Defenders of Tiger Stadium in Detroit once created a human ring around the old park to demonstrate their opposition to the bulldozing of the stadium, which the Tigers left for a new home in 1999. The old stadium, now 93 years old, still stands, but it looks haggard and sadly neglected.

Busch Stadium, with honeycomb latticework at the top, replicating the curve of the nearby Gateway Arch, is an odd entrant for venerable stadium sainthood. It is the last of the lamentable quartet of carpeted, unisex arenas built in the mid-1960s to provide a public stage for baseball, football, soccer, rock concerts, revivals and the occasional tractor pull.

While baseball fans wax poetic about the old parks, one of the few memorable quotes about Busch in the past 40 years is

see STADIUM page A9

Pirates from page A7

opportunities to provide building blocks for success. A year later, five wins is evidence that the players bought in.

"We laid our foundation now," said graduating senior Chris Moore.

"We didn't finish out how we wanted to - go to a bowl, but we've got great coaches. The players that are coming back, I think they're going to be better than us."

Success is relative to a program's expectations. Because of Thompson's misery, few wins in 2005 were expected. The coaches

selected the Pirates to finish last in C-USA's East Division. Finishing .500 in C-USA exceeded reasonable calculations.

"We were competitive this year in [C-USA]," Holtz said.

"We can't sit status quo. When you look at the scheduling that's been done over the next eight years, we can't say 'it's good enough just to compete.' We are still building as a program. We still have a long way to go. We still are a work in progress."

Knowing that Holtz is currently scouring the nation to upgrade talent is comforting.

Trusting the head coach is something unseen from the players and coaches in more than six years. But if the seniors laid the groundwork for future progress, then when can ECU be stopped?

"We've got a great coaching staff," said junior receiver Bobby Good.

"We're looking forward to next year because we're showing our improvement. We know that next year will get better and better."

This writer can be contacted at sports@theeastcarolinian.com.

Swimmers from page A7

exams, when they'll get a week's break before traveling to Florida for some Christmas training and an exhibition with Loras in Jupiter, Florida on Jan. 4, 2006.

They will make their 24th straight trip to Florida in an attempt to get in better shape for a tough and all-determining stretch run next year. The teams take on the Virginia Tech Hokies (who they saw at the Nike Cup) on Jan. 15 and Duke will come to town on Jan. 28.

"We'll work about five hours

a day down there (in Florida), it should put us in great shape and hopefully put us over the top for our last huge, major meets coming up next year," Kobe said.

As for now, the swimmers can just tread water for the rest of year. They need to tread fast, though, because they'll need the speed coming up next year if they hope to keep their undefeated slate clean.

This writer can be contacted at sports@theeastcarolinian.com.

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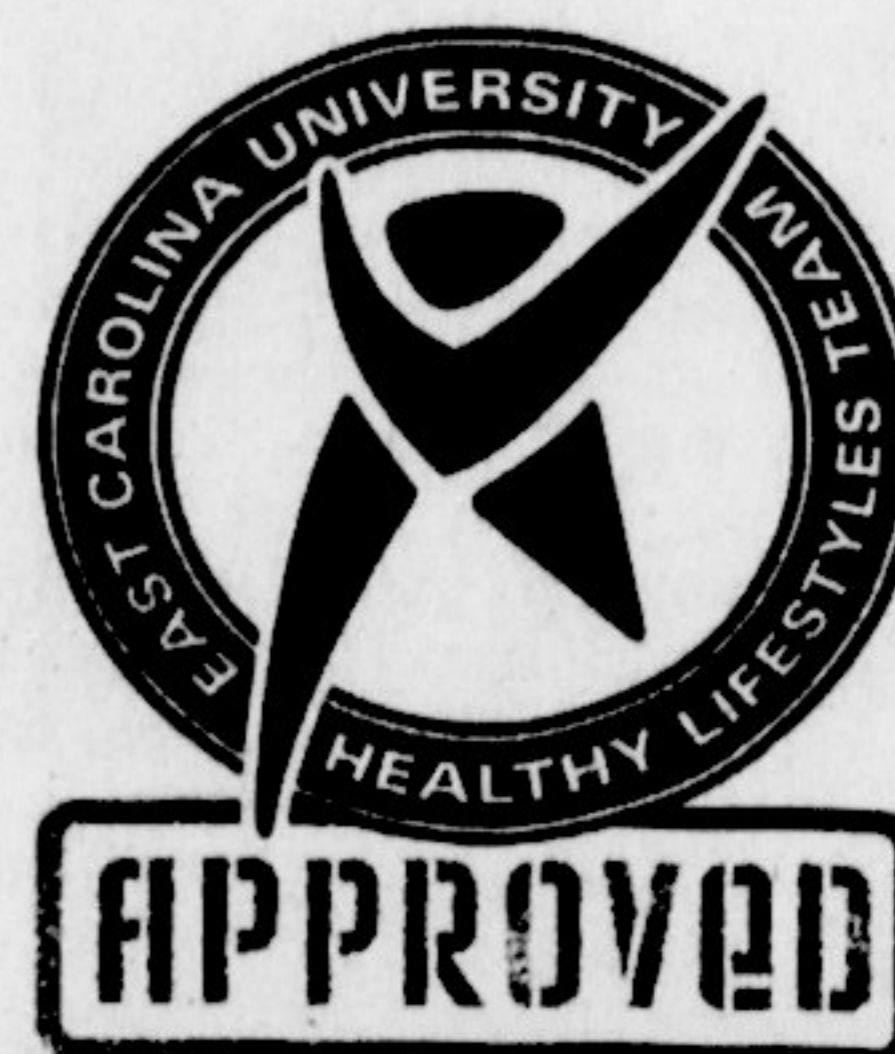
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Individuals requesting accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should contact the Department for Disability Support Services at least 48 Hours prior to the event at (252)328.6799 voice/(252)328.0899 TTY"

NHL from page A7

ing to packed houses. With rookie phenom Sidney Crosby generating interest, Pittsburgh's attendance is up 37 percent. Carolina, one of the teams that has benefited greatly from the rule changes, has experienced a 24 percent upsurge.

"I think fans in Canada like the NHL either way, but Americans were the ones that needed this to happen," said Michael Valentinuzzi, a Toronto Maple Leafs fan who lives in Ottawa.

"The people in Canada and the big markets in the U.S. like Detroit and New York were able to appreciate the game, but this has made it more exciting for the fans in the smaller markets in America where they needed their teams to do well to bring in fans."

Stadium from page A7

an all-too-appropriate ode to humidity: "It holds the heat well." Along with memories of Brock stealing 118 bases in 1974 and Mark McGwire hitting 70 home runs in 1998, nearly everyone has memories of sitting at Busch in the stifling, 100-plus degree heat.

Jack Buck) drove eight hours from northeast Ohio to peer through the chain-link construction fence. "My uncle brought me to my first game here in 1967," Buck said. "Gibson pitched and it lasted an hour and 58 minutes."

amid the mess, looking as if it were wiped clean by construction workers every couple of hours. Similar ballparks of that era - Cincinnati's Riverfront Stadium, Philadelphia's Veteran's Stadium and Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Stadium - all disappeared in spectacular fashion. They were blown up. Their violent end provided a prompt closure for those who dwell on sentimentality.

Yet here in late fall, people by the dozens brave the cold winds and the swirling dust, to take pictures and to remember where they sat and what they saw.

The demolition site resembles a scene out of *Jurassic Park*, with large, wheezing power shovels playing the role of prehistoric beasts foraging for food. The seats are gone, the supports dangle from upper deck wreckage. Curiously, a large full-color advertisement for Bud Light beer hangs

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*in some units

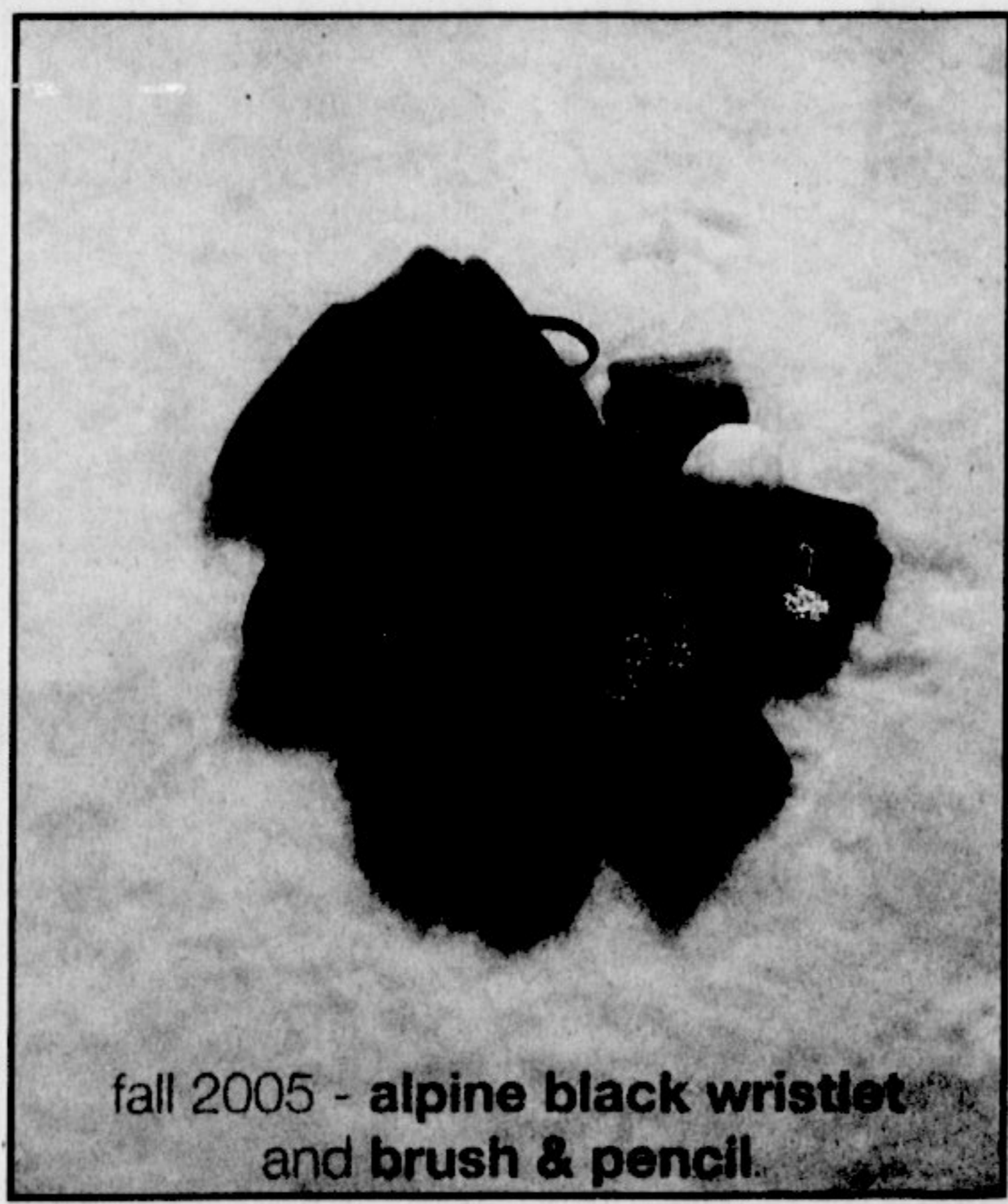
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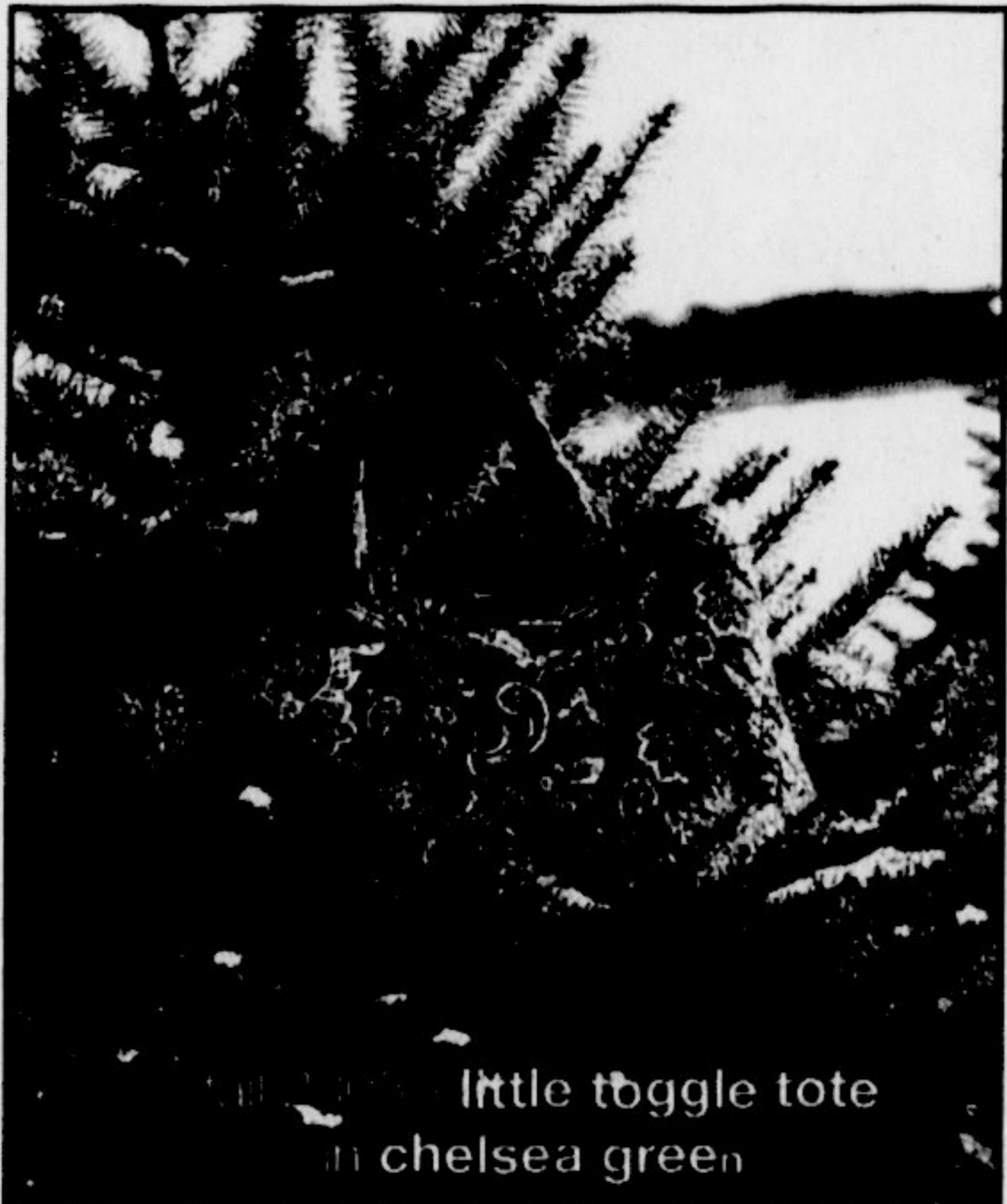
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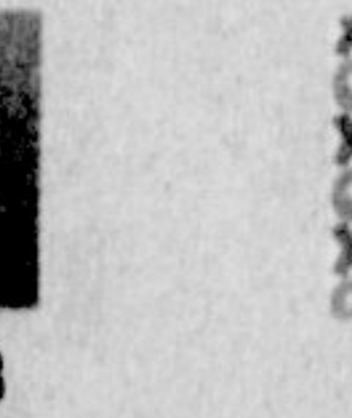
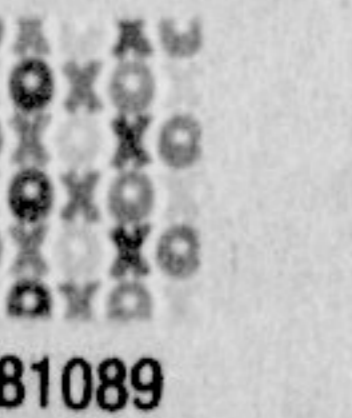


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