

OPINION: Dear ECU professors: Why did you all wait until the last week before spring break to give us cumulative exams and make ridiculously long papers due? This sucks. **A4**

PULSE: Be sure to check out the pirate party tips in pulse. **A6**

SPORTS: The ECU baseball team hosts the seventh annual Keith LeClair Classic this weekend. Turn to sports for a preview. **A9**

Once a leader in school diversity, NC retrenches

Associated Press

When North Carolina's Wake County decided to do away with race-based busing to desegregate schools, local officials came up with a novel solution to maintain balance. The new method of assigning students by their socio-economic background rather than race helped to keep campuses integrated. Adopted in 2000, it quickly became a blueprint for other school systems.

That policy, however, has never sat well with many suburban parents — often white and middle class — who argue that the student assignment plan sends their kids too far from home. And a new school board, swept into office by those vocal parents, took the first step toward scrapping the plan Tuesday night.

The board that governs schools in Raleigh voted 5-to-4 to stop busing students to schools outside their neighborhoods. The change requires final approval at a meeting later this month.

Dozens of parents and students lined up to speak as discussion began late in the afternoon. Curtis Gatewood, a black man, urged the board not to dump the diversity plan and decried "white racists." His comments were interrupted by jeers.

"If you want to go to hell, don't expect to take our children with you," he said to the board as authorities approached to calm him down.

The issue has revived the term "segregation" and the brought the weight of history into recent school board meetings. Some parents and students around the state capital have implored the newly elected leaders to back away from their plan to drastically alter the diversity policy.

Reversing the diversity rules would follow a cascade of similar shifts around the South, and particularly in North Carolina, which once was a model of desegregation. Now the state is increasingly starting to mirror an era many thought had past: On one side of the state, in the coastal town of Wilmington, an elementary school of several hundred students has just one who is black. On the other, in the banking hub of Charlotte, a primary school of similar size has just one student who is white.

In the military town of Goldsboro, starkly divided schools have led civil rights leaders to accuse local school officials of creating "an apartheid district."

Ron Margiotta, the new board chairman in Wake County, vowed that the change there was in the interest of students because it would allow parents more options and refocus families on the schools in their neighborhood. He bristled at any suggestion that the move had something to do with race.

"It's something that offends me," Margiotta said in an interview before the vote. "Nobody's going to go back to Jim Crow days."

The diversity policy in Wake County became a popular model in 2007, when the Supreme Court limited the use of race in how districts assign students. Its current policy sends students to schools to achieve socioeconomic diversity, which also improved racial diversity by frequently sending lower income black children from the city's center to predominantly white schools in the suburbs. Some schools also created magnet programs to attract students from other neighborhoods with advanced courses in foreign language, science and other topics.

Margiotta said the busing program has not helped minority students and has distracted from focusing on stronger education policy.

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YOUR CAMPUS NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1925

Chat with chancellor delivers tough questions

Cassie McLean
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Last night, Chancellor Ballard and ECU's administrative board met with faculty, students and staff in an open-forum setting to discuss current, pressing issues regarding the university.

The event, sponsored by Omicron Delta Kappa, Student Government Association and several fraternity councils, was, as Student Body President Brad Congleton explained, "An open-forum and an opportunity to meet Chancellor

Ballard and his team."

Also in attendance was the newly-appointed football coach, Ruffin McNeill. He opened the evening by introducing himself as a North Carolinian at heart who was honored to be the new coach and honored at the chance to return to both his home state and alma mater.

"This is your school, but it is also my school," McNeill said, relating to the students in the audience and denoting his personal pride in the school. "I'm as country as a row of corn," he joked.

"Being here tonight," McNeill continued, "is beneficial to what we're about to embark upon. We need to ask, 'What can you, I, we do today to make ECU better?' That's non-negotiable."

Many pressing, critical topics were discussed in the brief hour and a half including ECU's vision for the future, tuition increases, downtown's upcoming plans and much more.

First on the agenda was the issue of ARAMARK and its expensive pricing. Dr. Virginia Hardy, senior associate dean for

Academic Affairs, addressed the complaint by explaining that the pricing for the Subway, Chic-fil-A and the Sbarro are set by their franchises.

"Some of that we just don't have much control over," she said. As for the pricing on items within the Galley and other stations around campus, she said, "If you were to go up to the Sheetz within town or any local convenient stores, the prices are comparable, maybe even less, but certainly not higher." In summation, they do not expect the pricing to change.

Additionally, the company has devised a new package called "Perfect Pirate Parties" in order to allow organizations and clubs around campus to have affordable catering.

Hardy added that ARAMARK is working to provide scholarships, leadership opportunities and food crew positions for students who are interested in getting involved.

Perhaps the most important topic discussed within the forum

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ECU hosts first annual Holi festival



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LESLIE BAKER | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Students tossed colored powder at one another during the Holi Indian Festival of Colors on Monday.

Michelle Collier
STAFF WRITER

On Monday afternoon, the Ledonia Wright Cultural Center sponsored a Holi Indian Festival on the grass behind Mendenhall. This was ECU's first annual Holi festival, but it is held at the beginning of March all around the world.

Holi is also known as the Festival of Colors. The Holi Festival of Colors is originally based on an old myth about good triumphing over evil, but it is now looked at as a celebration of diversity in communities, especially in India.

Participants wore all white athletic gear and threw bags of colored powder at each other while dancing to traditional Indian music. The vibrant colors symbolize the bringing together of different people

as one.

"One color, or person, may look good alone, but they are even more beautiful once they are all brought together," said Nandita Rao, a junior at ECU. Rao explained that throwing colored powder is a vital element of the celebration, and it is usually accompanied by water balloons and squirt guns to escape the intense heat in India. Bonfires are also part of the traditional Holi celebration.

Holi is associated with the Hindu religion, but it is also celebrated by non-Hindus. "It's the same as non-Christians celebrating Christmas and opening presents. Even people who don't practice Hinduism celebrate it because it's so much fun," explained Rao.

"The celebration is really awesome and definitely fun to watch," said onlooker Trenton Mollison. Mollison is a sophomore at ECU who came to support his friends in their celebration. Crowds gathered to watch the festivities, and many decided to join in the fun.

The event was funded by the Ledonia Wright Cultural Center. Hsin Dong, an employee of the cultural center, explained that they want to start bringing different cultural celebrations like this to ECU and start doing things that haven't been done before, like the Holi festival.

The Holi Festival of Colors was just a sneak peek into the upcoming diversity week. Diversity week will be hosted by the cultural center in conjunction with the Student Government Association, and it will take place on the third week of March, just after spring break.

Greg Stonewall, an SGA cabinet member, serves on the Cultural Organization Committee to help plan future events like Holi. The Cultural Organization Committee plans multicultural events, and is comprised of representatives from many student cultural organizations. They work together to promote each other's events. Stonewall described Holi as "an example of future events."

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Greg Mortenson, co-author of 'Three Cups of Tea,' visits ECU

Chris Thomas
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

This Monday, an audience of more than 5,000 gathered at Minges Coliseum to see a mountaineer, a humanitarian, an advocate for peace and a New York Times best-selling author. Amazingly enough, there was only one speaker slated to appear and speak. Greg Mortenson, co-author of "Three Cups of Tea" and founder of the Central Asia Institute, a not-for-profit organization created to promote education in remote areas of Asia, spoke on behalf of the College of Business and his own cause in a program entitled "Promoting Peace Through Education," a mission that began for Mortenson over a decade ago after failing to reach the summit of one of the highest peaks on earth.

"I failed in my attempt to climb K2," said Mortenson. He explained how he found his way to a remote village and "a little girl asked me to build a school, so I made a promise."

That promise would change Mortenson's career and life forever. Since 1996, when he co-founded the CAI, Mortenson has gone on to build over 100 schools for villages in Pakistan and Afghanistan, but Mortenson was no stranger to helping his fellow man before he made his promise. Mortenson was born into a family of missionaries that founded the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center in 1971. It was here that Morton first learned about empowerment, a motif that would carry over into his own work as a grown man. Empowering people would be one of the focal points of his speech. He said that the key to a prospering society was not only to help people, but to empower them.

"My father was fired [after he helped build the hospital] because he believed the Tanzanians could run the hospital," said Mortenson.

He and his family moved back the United States in the mid 1970s where he says he first learned what racism is; a lesson he learned due to a misunderstanding between him and his class

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Surplus food donated locally

Cassie McLean
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

After almost two years of planning and organizing, the much-awaited Campus Kitchen program kicked off last month.

On Feb. 24th, the program opened its doors at Todd Dining Hall to celebrate being the first school within the UNC system to get a student-run, hunger-fighting operation underway.

ARAMARK, the school food provider across campus, has teamed up with the Volunteer and Service Learning Center to provide what would otherwise be wasted food to the needy within the community. Surplus food from the dining halls is collected, packaged and delivered to areas throughout the community. The Little Willie Center and the Ronald McDonald house are currently the two locations that receive the highly appreciated charity at least once a week.

Every meal contains a protein, vegetable, starch and a dessert. ServSafe, a certified student leadership team, plans the meals each week.

Since kicking off, the organization has delivered meals to the centers twice. Their goal, measured in meal counts, is to provide 160 meals a month. They hope to



CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER | TYRONE DEMERY

Junior Daniel Lee adds the final touches to the group's pasta dish.

double this number by the end of the semester.

Sarah Schach, member of the student-run leadership team, said the group is hoping to start programs that involve the community and focus on hunger-relief.

"Many people think about hunger outside of the country in third world countries. They never stop to think about it occurring in their own state. North Carolina is one of the top 10 states in the country for having hunger prob-

lems," she said.

According to FeedingAmerica.org, the national average of all Americans that have significant household food insecurity rates is 12.2 percent. In North Carolina, the rate is almost 14 percent.

Senior Kelly Pippin, another volunteer in the effort, said, "I got involved early last year because I've always kept in touch and worked with the Volunteer Service Learning Center. When I heard about what they were doing, I was definitely interested because I'd actually been talking with my friends about something similar prior to that."

Pippin, who was involved from the beginning, says the small group of people on the leadership team have had to carry the bulk of the responsibilities until more volunteers come in. Their tasks have included planning, cooking, packing and delivering.

"We've done the planning portion and the hands-on part," she said, adding, "We've definitely gotten to know our way around the kitchen and Todd (Dining Hall)."

Pippin explained that the group was starting at a "manageable level," serving 25 to 30 people

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MORTENSON

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mates.

“I was really looking forward to my first day of American high school ... until I got beat up on my first day. I told my classmates I was African and they misunderstood that,” said Mortenson.

He joined the U.S. Army in 1977 and later graduated from the University of South Dakota in 1983 with help from the GI Bill. Education has long been a cornerstone in Mortenson’s own life and work and he believes education will be the key to winning the wars we are fighting in the Middle East. This is a belief Mortenson has stressed to the powers that be, including the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who have made “Three Cups of Tea” required reading for senior officers in the United States Military.

“We have to put the elders back in charge for democracy to work ... Education must be a top priority for society to return to order [in Afghanistan],” said Mortenson. “We don’t need fighting power, we need brain power.”

Mortenson claims that one of the reasons why the Taliban was so powerful in Afghanistan is because they were able to take advantage of a largely illiterate and generally uneducated population. They were able to break the traditional power structure that put wise, experienced

elders in charge of villages.

Understanding poverty was another bullet point of his speech. Poverty is rampant in both Pakistan and Afghanistan. Tens of millions in both nations are living under their nation’s poverty line and according to Mortenson, we have to experience it before we can do anything about it.

“The only way we can understand poverty is to see, smell, taste, touch and hear poverty,” said Mortenson.

Still, there are 120 million children not in school, 78 million of them are girls, but there is hope. In Afghanistan, with help from the CAI, 8.4 million children (2.5 million of which are girls) are now attending school. Mortenson puts special emphasis on education girls. He said that if girls learn how to read, it reduces infant mortality, population explosions and improves basic qualities of health. According to Mortenson, educating girls is in the best interest of everyone they live with.

“When you teach a boy, you help an individual. When you teach a girl, you help a community,” said Mortenson to an approving female audience.

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was the issue of tuition increase. Dr. Ballard attempted to the answer the question simply.

“It’s a little different each year because the financial picture is different each year,” he said. “The easy answer is, we don’t know.”

The chancellor explained that the Board of Governors has proposed and approved a 3.7 percent tuition increase for the next school year of roughly \$160.

He asked that students put all finances into perspective, though. ECU, he reminded students, over the last two years has been one of the lowest schools in the state in terms of tuition increases.

Dr. Ballard said that the tuition increase proposed by North Carolina legislature could increase tuition by \$200 next year and that money would go back to the state deficit. As a positive aspect, the \$160 increase set by the Board of Governors would all go back to the institution in the form of financial aid, graduation programs and renovations around campus.

“We will do all that is possible to keep our rates at or below the inflammatory rate,” he said. ECU is required to be within the bottom quartile of 15 peer schools, he explained. ECU could raise tuition another \$2,800 and stay within acceptable bounds, he said, imply-

ing that the \$160 increase was far from what it could be.

After the tuition discussion, the board, particularly Dr. Hardy, addressed the issue of Greek life on campus. Her goal is to work on the communication between the three councils.

Secondly, Dr. Hardy challenged ECU’s Greek life, particularly the fraternities, to raise their overall grade point averages. “I took a look at the average GPAs and they are not pleasant,” she said. “I have proposed a challenged to all fraternities. By the fall of 2010, every organization should have a 3.0. One, you can do it, and two, you should.”

As for the future, the board seemed optimistic about the opening of the dental school.

Dr. Ballard said, in regards to receiving the funding, “We are 95 percent optimistic, but we will stay vigilant.”

Once the dental school is well underway, the school hopes to turn its attention to expanding other aspects of the school.

“We want to grow things we do really well and make them the right size,” said the chancellor. “What we work on every year is, ‘What do we work on next?’ ... Our goal is not to grow at any cost, but to consider what makes the biggest difference to the people and our state.”

He explained that he would personally like to see the health science, construction management and engineering programs expand, areas ECU typically excels in.

Throughout the program, audience members were able to ask questions. One questioned the school’s reputation as a “stepping stone school” in which many students attend ECU for merely a semester and then transfer.

Maryland Sheerer, provost and senior vice chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, said the school has looked into the issue and has even spoken directly to the students who have chosen to leave. “Some of the students weren’t being challenged enough academically,” she said, but added, “If they got engaged in campus activities, though, they were not planning on leaving.”

To engage upper-level students, the school is working on developing the honors program, which Sheerer described as being too small, and eventually opening an Honors College, which would house 150 students in the fall.

“It’s about showing better students that ECU can step up,” she said.

Additionally, the board explained the progress with opening an alternative venue in what will be called “Uptown Greenville.” The

project hopes to open an alternative, alcohol-free option for students as a way to address both safety and alcohol.

“Students could gather and socialize, but alcohol would not be served. We are looking for a location with 5-6,000 square feet to house it. We have the Parent Council behind it, but we will need funding,” she said, “We definitely think it has some merit, but we are trying to figure it out from a financial perspective.”

McNeill added to the positive energy of the forum by explaining his demands of the football team and the pressure he puts on them to volunteer at either the Ronald McDonald house, the Special Olympics, the Boys and Girls Club and the March of Dimes.

“Giving responsibility and accountability helps,” he said, “We are a work in progress.”

In summation, the coach was asked how he felt regarding coaching a team of young players after many senior football players had left. He seemed to summarize the vibe of the entire student body when he answered, “Here at ECU, being challenged to achieve is no big deal to us.”

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DIVERSITY

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Margiotta said.

Gary Orfield, a UCLA professor who studies busing and civil rights, said the entire South has been resegregating for the past 20 years — which he deemed “a gigantic historic tragedy.” He praised Wake County’s current policy and warned that a renewed focus on neighborhood school assignment will be most damaging to children who come from poor or uneducated families because those students benefit most from integration.

“What it does when you go to ‘neighborhood’ schools is it means that you put the kids who are most affected by school opportunity in the schools with the weakest opportunity,” Orfield said. “That’s a tragedy.”

If the diversity policy is pulled back, Orfield said, Raleigh can expect to see some of the same impoverished, troubled schools as Detroit, Philadelphia, New York and Chicago.

KITCHEN

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and 40 to 50 at the Little Willie Center.

“We’re just getting started. There is a lot of room for growth. We just want to make sure things are running smoothly before we jump into anything more,” she said.

Pippin explained that while the majority of food has, and will continue, to come from ARAMARK, they hope to eventually expand and receive food from grocery stores, restaurants, local farms and the Food Bank.

As to whether the group has made a difference thus far, Pippin

has no doubts. “I definitely think so. It’s gone really well. I’ve been in contact with a lot of our community partners and everyone is just so thankful and excited.”

While students had the opportunity to sign up for this cause during the Service Fair, students newly interested in helping the growing charity can find them on Facebook or e-mail ckecu@campuskitchens.org for more information.

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I laugh as I'm walking through campus and see everyone from North Carolina freak out because of the POSSIBILITY of one inch of snow.

My mom is a librarian. When people won't shut up or start talking on cell phones she asks them to leave. Joyner could learn something from this?

I love on Facebook when people's status says they are sick and everyone likes it...

I am the only one who still likes you and you talk about ME to the people who don't like YOU every time I'm not around. Maybe that's why no one else still likes you.

Honestly, can we opt out of getting the Jam Rewards cards after each time we use our OneCards? I just cleaned out 10 that had collected in my wallet. Who actually uses them?

Dear ECU professors: Why did you all wait until the last week before spring break to give us cumulative exams and make ridiculously long papers due? This sucks.

Do people not understand that Skyping all night is not very conducive to others sleeping habits? Thanks guys.

Dear roommate: Just because you think you are whispering doesn't mean that I can't hear you. In fact, I hear EVERYTHING you say when I'm trying to sleep. Summer can't come soon enough.

The milk in my White Russian is a week past expiration, but it's ok, I think the vodka sterilized it.

Next time your all over him remember he was with me first...Sloppy seconds as the sad reality!

To the people who walk down the middle of the road: There is this new thing called the side walk that was made for walking... try using it and maybe you won't get ran over!

I'd like to say thank you to the group of girls talking inside the child observation lab. Due to your volume, I could not hear a word the children were saying and was delayed in completing my assignment. Awesome.

OMG Ed Hardy Ugg's... what were the signs of the apocalypse again?

To the drivers around campus: Please stop blasting your terrible music to show off. Especially if you have a bad sound system, my grandmother's speakers sound better than that. You are not cool.

To the girl in my psych class whose grandfather had "all-timers": LOL

Really...a trench coat and pinky ring with your name on it? No wonder you didn't get the girl.

I think my neighbor is a stripper... I don't know whether to ask her or just go show up and find out for myself??

If a turtle doesn't have a shell, is it naked or homeless?

To the girl who face-planted trying to get on the Minges bus on Tuesday: That's what you get for not waiting your turn and trying to rush onto the bus. I hope you learned to be patient next time

To the people who just started going to the Rec this week: YOU CANNOT GET FIT IN A WEEK!!! Come to reality and realize that. Thanks!

Girls I'm not trying to be mean but please let a guy go if you know it's not going to work out. Don't drag it out anymore than it already has.

To the guy who jacked two homeruns into the woods in intramural softball: I think ECU might need to implement Steroid and HGH testing for intramurals because of you.

To the girl who said the more boys I meet, the more I love my dog: Meet a man and he'll dog the s***t out of you...Reassurance from just another a**hole. Have a lovely day.

To the kid in my genetics class: You can't laugh your way to an A, he's really not that funny.

What is the point in having an RA if you won't tell the underage, loud, obnoxious drunk freshmen to learn to hold their liquor and follow the quiet hours?

The only pick-up line you have to say to me is, "I wish I was DNA helices so I could unzip your genes," and I'm yours.

True Life: I will wait 30 minutes for someone to text back rather than endure a three minute phone conversation with them.

If a guy sits beside you all through class and doesn't say a word and then suddenly starts to talk about the weather as you're walking out of class, does that classify as flirting?

According to one of my friends on Facebook God and Hitler are the same. Why am I friends with this person?

If a guy's skinny jeans are tighter than mine, it's a fail.

Guys when we continue to say, "I'm busy or I can't because..." it really means NO. Get a hint.

ECU, please explain why we only have a 2 hour delay when PCC and all of Pitt County had no classes today....WTF?? Last I checked ECU was included in Pitt County.

To the person who ranted about Panera Bread running out of bread: I worked that night, and let me explain how that happens...it happens when we have 1,000 orders in a day and people come in 30 minutes before we close and expect us to still have everything we had when we opened and get mad because they decided to wait until the last minute to eat...

OPINION

A4

Thursday, 3.4.10

opinion@theeastcarolinian.com

Ewe did what over spring break?!



Ben Cochran
OPINION COLUMNIST

With next week being spring break, we've all probably got plans for extraordinary adventures. Some of us will be going back home, some will be engaging in some sort of service activity, but most of us will be consuming an inordinate amount of alcohol while having copious amounts of sex on the beach in some exotic locale. It is to this group of partygoers that I issue a relaxed yet important warning: If you leave U.S. borders, remember that you are no longer in the United States. Painfully obvious, isn't it? But along with that statement of ostensible clarity comes some not-so-apparent facts.

Outside the U.S., Americans aren't necessarily well-liked. If you're in a pinch, say you're Canadian. Everybody loves Mounties. If you go to some island in the Caribbean, understand that it is most likely impoverished. You are a guest on their island, so don't critique your surroundings with an ostentatious air of superiority or else you'll be about as popular as Paris Hilton was on "The Simple Life." But most importantly, what constitutes lawfulness in other nations may not match up with what you're accustomed to here in the states.

Take for instance a recent spring break trip of mine where I went to Mexico. Gorgeous beaches, cheap tequila and hot bodies. What could possibly go wrong? Quite a bit, as it turned out. An otherwise "normal" spring break day in paradise was rudely interrupted when I awoke handcuffed in the magistrate's office. Apparently I started imbibing a little early and never really let up. I was minding my own drunken business when I calmly passed out on the side of the road. As I was in a state of unconsciousness, a rural woman

ing self and had me arrested for violating her sheep, a story that she villainously conjured out of thin air.

Being broke, the government issued me some kid lawyer right out of school who tried to convince the judge that two sheep years was really like 18 American human years or 16 east Russian years. Then he proceeded with his defense, citing the old "two baas means it's consensual" plea. I could feel myself sinking into the defendant's chair, trying to be consoled by the fact that at least I would appear on a future episode of National Geographic's hit series, "Locked Up Abroad." Eventually, the whole case was thrown out when the judge recognized the woman as having attempted the same vicious stunt a week before during some other poor sap's spring break. It's these sorts of terrifying experiences that make my mother's words ring true: "Don't put yourself in a situation where it's your word against hers; the court will make you pay child support every time." So please, use caution when traveling abroad. Utilize the buddy system, but make sure you use a condom when you do. Women can be wily like that.

So, while the postcards might sing to you like sirens, beckoning you to come and visit, the tropics aren't all they are cracked up to be. Furthermore, at this juncture of economic peril, I find it almost morally irresponsible to support the businesses of another country when ours are in such dire need. I do understand if you need a change of scenery, however. But remember, as the great essayist Michel de Montaigne once said, "Ambition, covetousness, irresolution, fear and desires do not abandon us just because we have changed our landscape." So whatever you wind up doing for spring break, just know that there are still laws, and there are still cops. Act accordingly.

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"Until you're ready to look foolish, you'll never have the possibility of being great."

CHER

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ILLUSTRATED BY ADRIAN PARHAMOVICH

Pelosi: Shut up, America, and let me do my own thing!



Michael Pacheco
OPINION COLUMNIST

It's been a rough year for liberals. They've gone from soaring highs, after Obama's election win and inauguration, to down in the dumps with low approval ratings, an angry populist uprising across the country and congressional Democrats dropping like flies.

Evan Bayh. Byron Dorgan. Chris Dodd. Patrick Kennedy. Etc., etc.

So what is the narrative now, both from the media and the Democrats? Washington is too partisan we're told. Washington is broken.

Which is convenient, no? Back when Obama and his liberals were still popular, and Pelosi and Reid were busy cramming the big government agenda through Congress, everything was hunky dory. But now that Americans are rejecting that agenda, the upcoming midterm elections are looking to be a bloodbath for Democrats.

Well, suddenly partisanship is a problem?

What a joke.

Partisanship isn't a problem in Washington, D.C. Politics have always been a nasty, backstabbing business, even in the earliest days of this republic. The problem is that the liberal agenda has stalled and liberals want to blame anything but their agenda.

As majority Democrats gear up to use the controversial rec-

conciliation maneuver to cram a health care bill Americans don't want down their necks, a poll reveals that just 10 percent of Americans approve of the job Congress is doing.

Of course, approval numbers for Congress are always low. Individual members of Congress no doubt have higher approval numbers. It's the old "Congress sucks, but my congressman is OK" thing.

Even so, this is an ugly poll for incumbents, and Republicans who are hoping to become the majority in Congress had better be ready to govern better than Democrats, should they find themselves in the majority in one or both houses of Congress; which goes to show that at least 10 percent of the population is either terminally stupid or woefully dishonest or both.

How anyone could approve of what the current, and to be fair, past couple of Congresses have done is beyond rational thought.

Personally, I'm not one to get that worked up about bipartisanship, mostly because the less the politicians get along, the less they get done. And the less they do, generally speaking, the better, because who said that action was always a good thing? Sometimes there are excellent reasons to do nothing.

But "bipartisanship" has been the buzzword in politics for some time now, especially from the Democratic side of the aisle as of late; so to hear Pelosi say something like this is knee-slappingly hilarious.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) said Sunday

that Republicans have left their mark on the health care bill and should accept that the bill will go forward.

"They've had plenty of opportunity to make their voices heard," she said on CNN's "State of the Union" Sunday morning. "Bipartisanship is a two-way street. A bill can be bipartisan without bipartisan votes. Republicans have left their imprint."

Take the public option for example; it has been stripped away from the health care bill because Republicans were so up in the air against it, as Pelosi would put it.

"They've had a field day going out and misrepresenting what the bill says," Pelosi said. "But that's what they do."

On ABC's "This Week," just a few days after the bipartisan health care summit, Pelosi said, "What's the point of talking about it any longer?"

So, in Pelosi's world, bipartisanship means the other side agreeing with everything you want. Of course, that wasn't the tune she was singing back when her party was in the minority.

It is just nice to see these comments in the media because she is slowly showing Americans she was a part of an epic failure of an innovation. Although, not throwing the towel in yet, Democrats are still scrambling to add in those details you readers wouldn't be able to see; and why should they care? Our generation will be the ones paying for it, not them.

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

Do you believe in magic?



Stephanie Fu
OPINION COLUMNIST

Fads, phases, the "in" style. Recently, there has been a vampire craze, documentary-like romantic comedies with every story connected and science fiction, action-packed movies. Why do we all get so imbibed in the mania of the moment?

The truth is, we are trained from birth to become susceptible to this obsession. "Let's play house!" Boys may not have heard this as much, but girls probably heard this growing up from all of their friends. Playing house or dress up is a classic childish manifestation of imagination. Companies that design toys for children do so based on imagination. Look at the little miniature ovens for imagining being a cook, or those plastic wheels that turn and beep for imagining being a driver. I grew up with my brothers pretending to be the Ninja Turtles or secret agents. At a certain age, playing "make believe" is no longer acceptable. How would others perceive an adult dodging ninja stars while waving around a stick

and completely adorned in a purple headband and stuffed backpack as a turtle shell?

Crazy as it may sound, every person, child or adult, still plays make believe to some extent. The form that it comes in is the only difference. Adults can get lost in books, pretending to be side by side with whatever hero or heroine of an action novel they choose. They can imagine themselves as the main character traveling the world. We do the same kind of pretending when we go to watch movies or plays. For that couple of hours, we let ourselves get lost in whatever world that production creates, be it New York City or some foreign planet.

This is the best explanation for the recent hype in all this "Twilight" business that may be nonsense to some, but provides the perfect escape for others to a world where cross-culture dating of a vampire is possible. Personally, I am extremely excited for the Wizarding World of Harry Potter opening this summer in Orlando, Fla. The description alone makes me want the summer months to arrive tomorrow. Who wouldn't want to "pass through the towering Hogwarts castle gates and explore the familiar passageways, classrooms, and corridors,

visit the shops of Hogsmeade and sample fare from the wizarding world's best-known establishments, including the Three Broomsticks and the Hog's Head?" All this, complete with "pulse-pounding rides including Dragon Challenge, Flight of the Hippogriff, and Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey." Got to love those advertisement writers at Disney!

Thinking of this coming summer also reminds me of this past summer when "Star Trek" was released and all these "Trekkies" were waiting in line for tickets or dressing up for the premiere. Although I am not as familiar with "Star Trek" as my parents or some others, I can understand the excitement.

Some may judge and turn up their noses to say that they no longer make believe at all and that they cannot succumb to becoming equally as obsessed with whatever the current fad is. They may say that it is ridiculous to be so engrossed in something so unrealistic, but what they don't realize is that perhaps it is as simple as wanting to escape the harshness of reality into a world of exploration, imagination and lightning scars.

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

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HOROSCOPES

ARIES - Physical attraction and sensuality are compelling over the next few days. Loved ones and potential mates will now ask for greater involvement in your daily life or family commitments. In the coming weeks powerful emotions will dictate the outcome of key relationships. Be prepared to make serious and lasting decisions.

TAURUS - Early this week family alliances may be challenged. Younger relatives now need extra time to establish their social values and priorities. Expect home relations to be briefly strained or disrupted. No serious or lasting effects can be expected, so not to worry. Do, however, argue for calm consideration and new group rules.

GEMINI - Workplace discussions will this week reveal valuable career options. Explore unique business contacts through friends or new colleagues. In the coming weeks secondary incomes sources and rare job offers are a continuing theme.

CANCER - Late cancellations or last minute invitations may cause minor tensions this week. Social relationships, although positive, may now experience a brief phase of frustration. Avoid bold public comments or group discussions. Close friends or trusted colleagues will not adopt new attitudes.

LEO - Friends, lovers or close relatives will this week acknowledge your emotional dedication. Watch for a new era of group acceptance and shared goals to soon arrive. Many Leos will now leave outdated relationships and painful memories in the past. If so, expect loved ones to provide obvious encouragement.

VIRGO - Romantic overtures are passionate and highly distracting this week. New attractions will soon lead to unexpected choices. Some Virgos, especially those born after August 29th, will also experience fast proposals or sudden home changes. Remain dedicated to shared family goals and all will be well.

LIBRA - Financial records and legal permissions are accented over the next few days. Finalize all outstanding documents as soon as possible. At present, potential employers or team leaders will announce vital schedule and procedural changes. Don't hesitate to take action. New business alliances are strongly favored.

SCORPIO - Delayed job negotiations now demand completion. Established roles, if allowed to continue, will soon create unnecessary strain. Before mid-week workplace jealousy, seniority and preferred assignments may all be at issue. Offer creative solutions. Your suggestions are valuable and accurate.

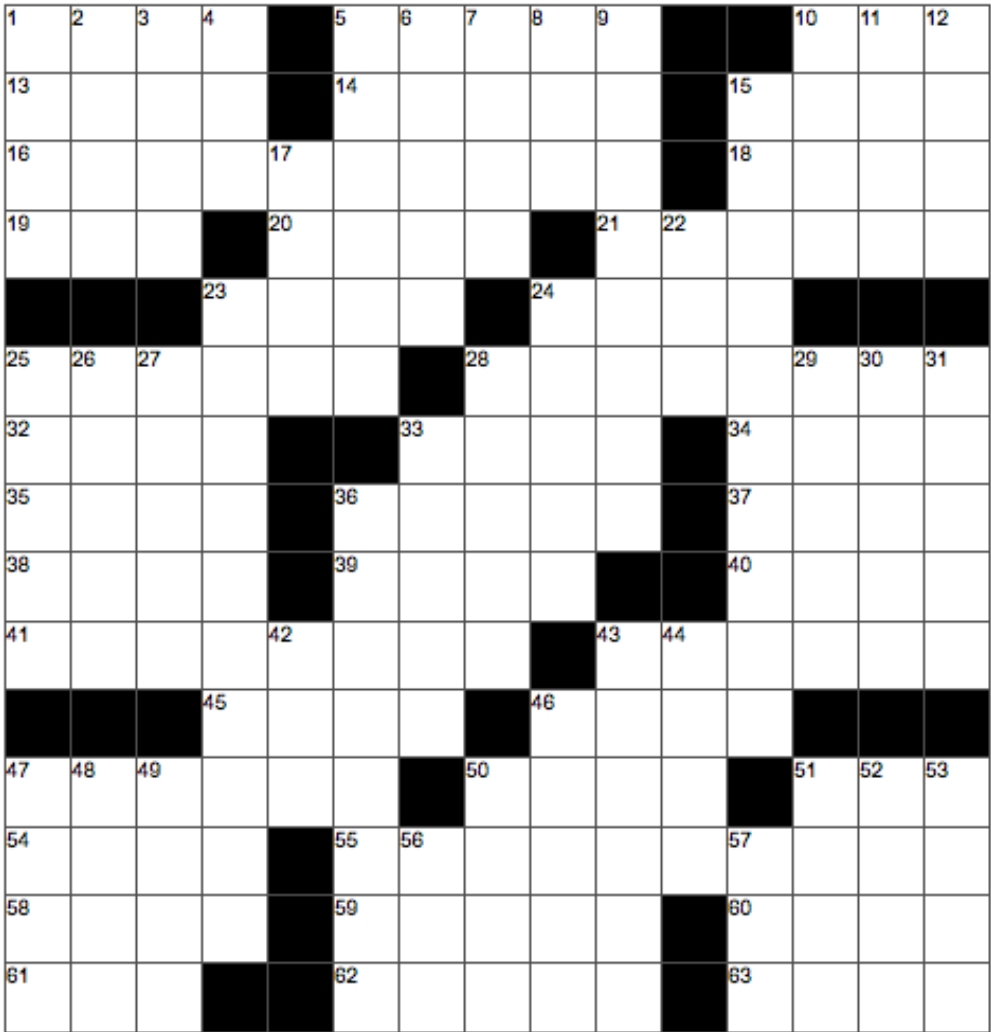
SAGITTARIUS - Facts, dates and social promises will soon be proven misleading. Monday through Wednesday ask for detailed information and take time to verify all vital information. Before next week close colleagues and friends are emotionally unpredictable: expect unusual reversals, boldly expressed opinions and last minute cancellations.

CAPRICORN - Career opportunities may now arrive for unlikely sources. Government agencies, large corporations and financial institutes are all accented. Early this week carefully evaluate all long-term expectations. Potential employers will demand complete dedication and a concrete expression of loyalty.

AQUARIUS - Over the next few days business delays may be costly and unavoidable. Private records, completed applications or legal information will require a special effort. Don't avoid complex or annoying duties. Loved ones or close relatives are now relying on your ability to finalize small details.

PISCES - Creativity and rekindled friendship are now captivating. Many Pisceans will this week adopt new social interests and an attitude of cultural exploration. Exotic or distant relationships may be a key motivation. Stay alert and carefully examine all fresh ideals or romantic proposals.

DIVERSIONS



ACROSS

- 1: Microsoft product

5: Practiced

10: It may be passed on the Hill

13: Jai ____

14: Arm bones

15: Satiated

16: Some bug sprays

18: Sty cry

19: Verbal zinger

20: Help for the hapless

21: Parlor piece

23: Brainwave

24: Hit with hailstones

25: Writing pad

28: Small monkey of the Americas

32: Object of pagan worship

33: ____ accompli

34: Sailor's outfit

35: Theater section

36: Merits, as compensation

37: Drainpipe bend

38: Math subj.

39: What picky people pick

40: Subordinate staffer

41: Court wear

43: Storklike waders
- 45: Old Italian money

46: Uptight, slangily

47: Subduing

50: They're beaten in the kitchen

51: Pot ingredient?

54: Stage direction

55: Stager

58: Trust, with 'on'

59: Olympic weapons

60: On cloud nine

61: Mag. submissions

62: Part of a bedroom set

63: Tennis match divisions
- 15: Small rabbit

17: Take on cargo

22: Shade tree

23: Misdemeanor, for one

24: Careful effort

25: Jousting bouts

26: Trim

27: UFO, on jetfighter's radar

28: Convenience stores

29: Garments worn by the Ganges

30: Circumvent

31: Varieties

33: Savoir-__

36: Efforts

42: Flesh and blood

43: Swallow

44: Striped fish

46: Go along

47: Limited time

48: Gives the heave-ho

49: Wire diameter units

50: Olympic weapon

51: Family follower?

52: Solving aid

53: Basic beds

56: Speed meas.

57: Balaam's mount

DOWN

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Pirates & Salty Wenches



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Friends vs. Lovers

Vivian Stockton
SEX AND RELATIONSHIP COLUMNIST

Friends are a very important aspect of any romantic relationship. They provide this outlet that you may not have with your lover. Yes, ideally you and your man will like all the same things and want to do everything together and never get tired of each other, but this is reality and that just doesn't happen. So you have your friends to escape to, a haven where you can just chill and watch "New Moon" while your man is out playing intramural basketball with his boys.

But friends can also be the bane of your relationship. You generally see friend-issues in two states of the relationship: the beginning and the end (or at least what your friends are hoping is the end).

In the beginning, you'll often hear this famous line, "You never hang out anymore!"

Let this slide off your back – you're not doing anything wrong. In the beginning of a relationship, it is common and healthy to spend as much time with your honey as humanly possible. This is what we call "the honeymoon phase," the time where new couples are getting to know each other and develop an attachment to the other. Of course your friends are going to be upset that you haven't hung out in the past month, but take advantage of the time that you have when the relationship is fresh, exciting and new, because it won't always be like that. Eventually the two of you will run out of cute things to laugh about and begin to miss having your time as an independent entity. You'll start making time for both your boyfriend and your friends.

Another friend-line is, "You've changed ever since you started dating him."

More than likely, you've known your friends for a while now – they know what you're like outside of a relationship and inside of a relationship, so take heed to this line, because it just might be true. So ask yourself what has changed about you? If it is the fact that you aren't going downtown and getting wasted every weekend because you date a guy that doesn't drink, then there really isn't a problem. Certain behaviors have to be modified in order to have a good relationship with someone, and if that means that you don't party all your free time away, then good for you – you obviously care about your

future with this person.

Let's flip the situation and say that your friends are complaining that you've become a lush since you started dating this guy – that isn't a good thing. If you're in a relationship that is promoting unhealthy or destructive behaviors, you should consider getting out.

But what do you do when your friends simply don't like your boyfriend? And perhaps "don't like" is putting it lightly – what do you do when your friends hate your boyfriend?

You've been dating this guy for months and you've been spending time with him and your girls equally, but something still irks them about him. Every time he calls, they complain. Every time you talk about him, they complain. The only aspect of your relationship that seems to please them is the thought of its demise. You need to ask yourself why they hate him, because as I said, your friends know you well and they may be getting at something. If every time you talk to your boyfriend, it ends in a fight or you crying or being upset, that probably isn't a good sign. Friends don't like to see other friends crying on a regular basis, especially if it is over a guy. They see your boyfriend as a pest that should be removed from your life so you can finally be happy.

However, if your friends can't give you any substantial reasons as to why they dislike him, don't pay any attention. It may be a simple case of jealousy, especially if your friends are single. Once upon a time, my three favorite guys in the world lived in the same apartment and all three had girlfriends. Well, one of the guys broke up with his girlfriend and the other two kept theirs. So the newly single guy took it upon himself to tell the other two that he didn't sign up to live with guys with girlfriends so he was going to move out. Guess what – he moved out!

You can't always please everyone, so it stands to reason that sometimes your friends will become irritated that someone is taking you away at times. So do you keep him or dump him? Ultimately, you have to live with the decisions you make, so don't let them make up your mind for you. Listen to your friends and find out why they don't like your boyfriend, take their words into consideration and make moves after that.

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

Sudoku

	2	6	5				9	
5				7	9			4
3				1				
6						8		7
	7	5		2			1	
	1					4		
			3		8	9		2
7				6			4	
	3		2			1		

S	9	I	L	b	Z	6	E	8
8	b	E	I	9	6	Z	S	L
Z	L	6	8	S	E	b	9	I
6	S	b	9	E	L	8	I	Z
E	I	9	b	Z	8	S	L	6
L	Z	8	S	6	I	E	b	9
9	8	S	Z	I	b	L	6	E
b	E	Z	6	L	9	I	8	S
I	6	L	E	8	S	9	Z	b

5 Pirate party principles:

1. Watch your drink!

We all know there is a possibility that someone could slip something into our drinks, but it's easy to forget, especially when those drinks are free! Pirates, please be safe and only take drinks from bartenders or open it yourself. You'll be glad you did when you make it back to Pirate Nation safely.

2. Know your limits!

Everyone wants to have fun. It is spring break for goodness sakes ... but don't let the happy hour take over your vacation. You don't want to go to Panama City and not actually remember anything besides your eyelids from passing out blackout drunk every night.

3. Travel with your mates!

No matter where you go, please stay true to your Pirates and never leave a man behind! You don't want a replay of "The Hangover" and find your roommate on the roof ... where you didn't leave him.

4. Designate a driver

... or take the bus! Nobody wants to have to re-visit his spring break destination for a DUI, so please do some investigating into the bus system or take turns playing the sober driver. You may want to actually make it back safely to that hotel you paid for.

5. Protect your fellow Pirates!

If you are going to spring break hot spots such as Panama City, Cancun or Daytona Beach, you may inevitably see fellow Pirates roaming around the city. Even though you may have never spoken to that girl from your English class last year, it doesn't give you a reason to leave her stranded waiting for a cab by herself.

Caitlin Hale
ASSISTANT FEATURES
EDITOR

For those not rushing off to spend their spring break partying away down in Panama City or flying up to spend the week shopping in prestigious Manhattan, don't fret – there are still plenty of fun and relaxing things to do right here in North Carolina!

For those who enjoy sand between their toes with a heavy dose of relaxation, North Carolina is really the place to be. Kure Beach, Carolina Beach and Wrightsville Beach all are perfect destinations for a spring breaker deciding to stay close to home. These three beaches all offer different selling points that would do any spring break justice.

If relaxation is enormously needed, try out Kure Beach. These sandy shores are all about a casual, uncrowded atmosphere where visitors can just relax. And for fans of fishing, Kure Beach has an amazing fishing pier that serves as a major attraction.

Carolina Beach offers visitors a completely different atmosphere – complete with resort-style hotels, popular beach entertainment, including surfing, scuba diving and top-notch restaurants. For those who want a little excitement in their spring break, this just might be the place to visit.

If neither of these beach destinations are quite right, maybe Wrightsville Beach is. This beach combines the relaxation from Kure Beach with the excitement of Carolina, seeing as how Wilmington is only a few minutes away.

For those who aren't tired of the cold and snow, maybe the beach isn't the right destination. Instead, try visiting the mountains of North Carolina, which offer snowy ski slopes



NC offers alternative spring break options for Pirates

THE EAST CAROLINIAN | ERIN DUNCAN

complete with winter resort-style housing. Sugar Mountain Resort, North Carolina's largest winter resort, offers visitors skiing, snowboarding, tubing, ice-skating and snowshoeing day and night.

For those looking to only

venture off during the break for a night or two, maybe checking out a live performance is the right option. Jeff Foxworthy, Bill Engvall, and Larry the Cable Guy will be performing at the RBC Center in Raleigh on March 12,

while Gary Allen will be performing that same night in Durham. For those who don't mind driving down to South Carolina, REO Speedwagon with Edwin McCain

BREAK page A8



ADDICTED TO MARCH MADNESS

The rush begins :

Michael Perry
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Every year, following the respective conference tournaments, March Madness begins and people go crazy. Why?

Some people soak up the men's NCAA Division I Basketball Championship with every fiber of their being, while others unplug their television sets for a month.

For me personally, I sit somewhere in the middle of the aisle. March is the only time I could be caught watching college basketball voluntarily, as I use it for filler between hockey games and as a segue to baseball season.

However, this year might just

be a good year to pay attention, especially if you enjoy Cinderella stories, tight-wire contests and upsets.

College sports in general contain sports' biggest dynasties and lopsided matchups, but also some of the most spectacular tight-knit tilts as well. The NCAA Tournament is no exception; as far as this season goes, the playing field will be about as level as it's going to get.

There's no dominating team

this year, not even Kansas, Syracuse, Kentucky or any other team that has "locked down" a bracket spot.

Large teams like Northern

"However, this year might just be a good year to pay attention, especially if you enjoy Cinderella stories, tight-wire contests and upsets."

Iowa, Butler and Gonzaga could be seen as the bracket narrows down, or even more obscure

schools like Stony Brook or Lipscomb.

In all honesty, who's to say who comes away with the National Championship, much less say who will make it?

As much of the pre-March Madness frenzy will ensue over the next week, even the experts admit (off camera, of course) that they can study the brackets like constellations all they want but nothing matters until the 65 teams dwindle down to one.

That is the true intrigue of March Madness for me. It's not the non-stop basketball, or the pre

RUSH page A8

Breaking the bank :

Tucker Middleton
STAFF WRITER

As basketball lovers anticipate the March 18 tip-off of the NCAA tournament, many will be filling out brackets to see if they can correctly guess who will make it far in the competition and who will be eliminated from the get-go. Some may complete brackets on their own, simply testing themselves on how well they know college basketball or how accurately they can blindly guess winners.

For others, bracket pools are intense competitions among university students, company employees or sports bar regulars. The start of March Madness signals a time when basketball fans

can pick their pony in the tournament and hope that their team rides all the way to the championship game; if they correctly guess the national champion, they'll get recognition from their peers and perhaps get a little financial reward if monetary bets have been placed within their pool of competitors.

It is estimated that between \$80 and \$380 billion is spent on sports gambling annually. Many who participate in bracket challenges with friends and colleagues may think of it as just friendly competition, but

for some, the friendly competition may give way to serious gambling addiction. Wagers on brackets, even if it's just a few bucks, can be a slippery slope

"Something as simple as completing a \$10 bracket might be the start of a behavior that could lead to addiction."

for participants with addictive personalities. Tim Otteman, an internationally known expert on sports-related gambling, said that even the mildest of competitions

could lead to an all-out gambling addiction later.

"Betting on any form of sports can have dangerous consequences," he said. "Something as simple as completing a \$10 bracket might be the start of a behavior that could lead to addiction. Another way to look at it is that no one becomes an alcoholic without taking their first drink. Well, no one becomes addicted to gambling without making their first bet either."

The NCAA estimates that 1 in 10 will complete a March Madness bracket this year. According to a U.S. News and World Report article, sports gambling analyst

BANK page A8

March Madness Means... Pirate Baseball ... Basketball ... St. Patrick's Day ... Sunshine! Hitting the Rec Center • Getting Ready for Spring Break! • Finishing that Term Paper!

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WTF?! of the Month

Samantha Hughes

Nuwaubianism

WHAT?!

A term used to describe the teachings of creator Dwight York. It is a collection of religious teachings, based on a wide range of sources such as Freemasonry, Islam, Christianity and the Reptilian movement. Much of the Nuwaubian practice is meant to counteract “the spell of Leviathan” or “the spell of Kingu.” In their mythology, Leviathan is a god associated with the moon, sex and spirit. He is also known as Lucifer, Jehovah and Poseidon. The Southern Poverty Law Center has

categorized the Nuwaubians as a black supremacist hate group.

HISTORY?

Nuwaubians originated as a Black Muslim group in New York in the 1970s. The religions underwent many changes and moves. York is now in prison after having been convicted on counts of money laundering and over 100 counts of sexually molesting children.

W H O A . A N Y - T H I N G E L S E ?

Nuwaubian teachings include: Everyone is conceived as twins but usually only one fetus survives. It is important that the afterbirth of the remaining child be buried so

that Satan does not use it to create a duplicate of the baby. Also, some aborted fetuses survive their abortion but come to live in the sewers, where they are gathering to take over the world.

Homo sapiens are the result of experiments that were done on Mars using Homo erectus.

The Illuminati have nurtured Satan's son, who was born on June 6, 1966, at the Dakota House in New York City. Satan's son was allegedly born to Jacqueline Onassis. The Pope was present at the birth and performed necromantic ceremonies. Then the child was raised by Richard Nixon, but now lives in Belgium, where he is hooked up to a computer.

Shamrock or blarney?

An Irish shamrock is a wildflower, but the ones sold in U.S. flower shops are often imposters, clover-like sorrels easily grown in greenhouses.

‘Original’ Irish shamrock

“Shamrock” comes from the Irish “seamrog” or little clover

- Probably closest to today's *trifolium repens* (white clover), which originated in Europe
- May have a triangular mark (a crescent or watermark) on upper surface
- White flowers, sometimes with pink hue

Familiar shamrock

Oxalis acetosella (wood sorrel) is a variety sold often for St. Patrick's Day

- Three heart-shaped leaflets; easily mistaken for clover, but leaves are paler green, softer
- Fold easily at midrib; many plants fold leaves up at night
- White or pink flowers



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Why shamrocks?

According to legend, St. Patrick used the shamrock to explain the Holy Trinity to Christian converts in Ireland

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, University of Vermont, Peterson Field Guides: Wildflowers

Shamrocks, saint and shillelaghs

St. Patrick's Day, celebrated on March 17, honors Ireland's legendary patron saint, who died on that day in 461.

Shamrock Small, three-leaved plant appears on U.K.'s coat of arms with English rose, Scottish thistle 	Irish flag Green represents Catholics; orange, Protestants; white, the wish for harmony 	Leprechauns Fairies who work day and night mending shoes of other fairies 	Shillelagh (shil-lay'-lee) Walking stick; Irish for stout oak club or cudgel; also a forest that once stood in County Wicklow 
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Patrick: Saint and legend

387 A.D. Born in Britain to a Roman family; his father served as a magistrate; his original name was Maewyn

Early 400s Taken to Ireland as a slave; after six years, he escaped to France where he studied for priesthood

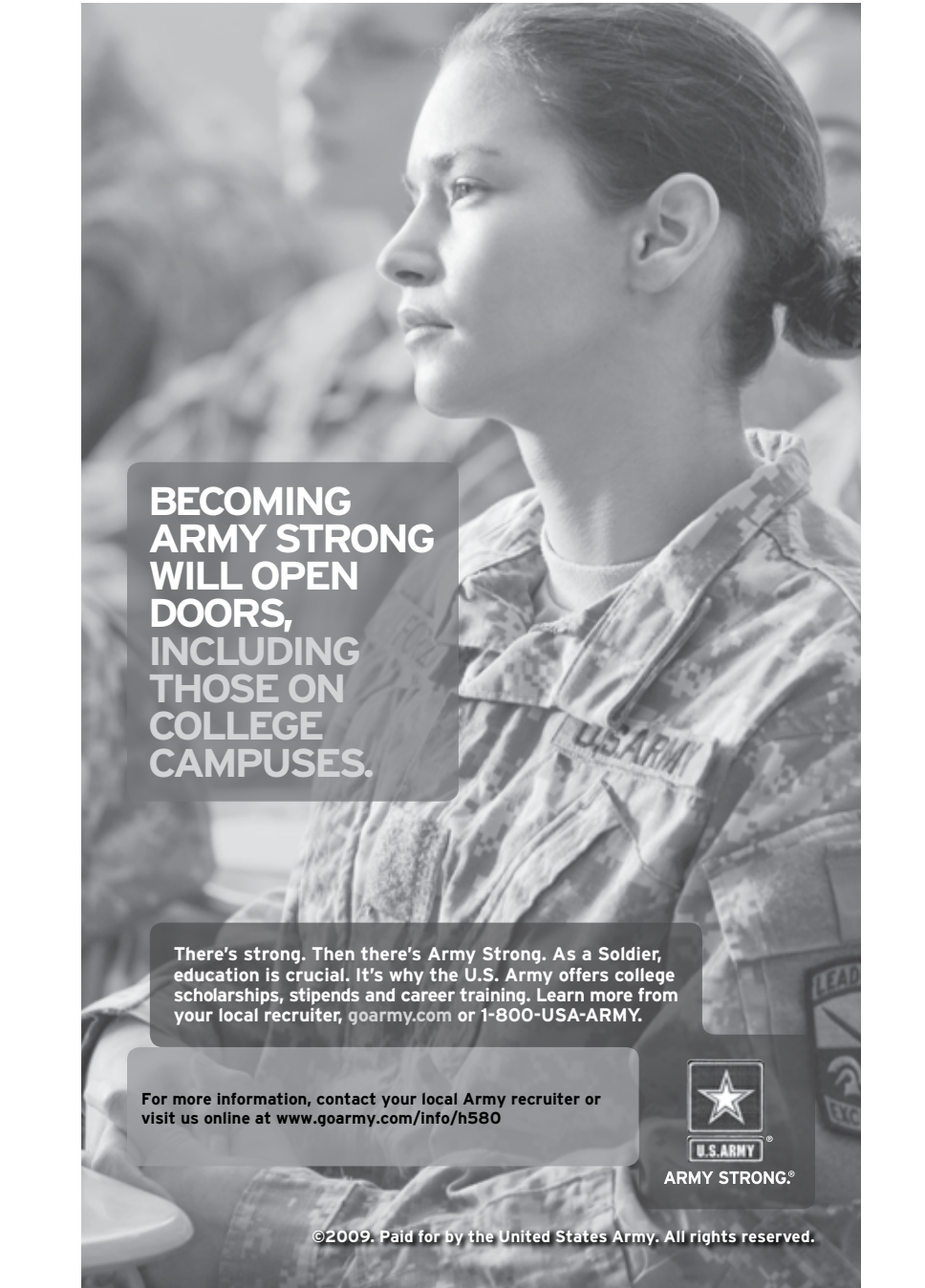
432 Sent to Ireland as a Christian missionary by Pope Celestine I, who named him Patricius, which means noble in Latin; he introduced Roman alphabet, Latin literature; Christianized the land

Familiar legend

He drove the snakes from Ireland by beating a drum

Source: "Shamrocks, Harps and Shillelaghs" by Edna Barth, "All About American Holidays." World Book

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BREAK

continued from A6

Speedwagon with Edwin McCain and Ben Folds Five will be at the House of Blues in Myrtle Beach on March 12 and 13.

Sports fans also have many options for their break, one being catching the Carolina Hurricanes versus Pittsburgh Penguins on March 11 or Carolina Hurricanes versus Phoenix Coyotes on March 13, both at the RBC center in Raleigh. The 2010 Women's ACC Basketball Tournament Championship will also be happening in Greensboro on March 7. AMP Tour's "Thunderslam" Monster Truck Spectacular will be happening next week in Fayetteville on March 13.

So no matter the interest, North Carolina offers plenty of fun spring break activities that should provide that much-needed relaxation, along with some fun, that the majority of the ECU campus is looking for.

RUSH

continued from A6

dictions or bracket pools; it's the fact that mathematically there's a chance for an otherwise no-name school to stamp its place in history.

For the fans who watch and wager, their luck is a little less favorable than 65-to-1. As with the current 65 team limit, there are roughly 18 quintillion possibilities for who will win, making the chance at a perfect bracket 18-quintillion-to-1, leaving me to think picking at random is the best policy.

So, whether you're madly in love with March Madness or just mad that it's March, make the tournament as big or as little as you wish to make it, but know it's bound to be a lot more interesting with you involved.

Even if you don't watch one game, join a bracket pool — as both you and the guy with the dry erase bracket in his room have the same chance of winning.

BANK

continued from A6

hoods. This will expose a young generation to the potential for gambling addiction — even demographics that may not be thought of as typical gamblers, such as children and women.

Students are extremely susceptible to gambling addiction. It is estimated that adolescents gamble at two to four times the rate of adults, and that 4 to 7 percent of college students meet the criteria for gambling addiction. So, a word to the wise about brackets this year: Don't become a statistic; leave the money in your pocket and just enjoy the ups and downs the tournament has to offer.

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Staff Reports

Colley wins shortened Seahawk Intercollegiate

The final round of the Seahawk Intercollegiate was canceled due to a winter storm moving through the area, leaving ECU sophomore Jake Colley tied with Augusta State's Patrick Reed as individual medalists.

Augusta State ran away with the tournament title, winning by 19 strokes over South Carolina. UNC Wilmington finished third followed by Georgia State and ECU.

The Pirates finished three strokes ahead of Wake Forest and VCU who tied for sixth-place Wake Forest and 19 strokes in front of eighth-place North Carolina.

The Deacons were placed just outside the top 25 in the first Golf World/NIKE Golf Division I Coaches' Poll of the spring.

Junior Warren Straub was the only other Pirate to place among the top 20 and finished tied for 18th overall.

The Pirates continue their spring schedule on March 8-9 at the Palmetto Intercollegiate.

Aliotta claims Conference USA shot put title

Sophomore Dennis Aliotta made sure that the ECU track and field teams would leave Houston with an event title as the Pirates wrapped up competition at the 2010 Conference USA Indoor Championships Saturday.

Aliotta secured a mark of 16.95 meters in the shot put, beating out Knut Syversen of Memphis. Both the men and the women took sixth place in the championships, while Tynita Butts was named C-USA Indoor Freshman-of-the-Year.

Antonia Marshall and Isiah Gyasi took third and fourth in the finals of the 60-meter dash, both clocking in at 6.84. Marshall then followed that performance with a seventh-place nod in the 200-meter dash by finishing the race in 22.16. Ron Wright picked up a seventh-place result in the 400-meter dash finals, recording a time of 49.64.

The 4x400 relay team of Wright, Marshall, Jarrett Newby and Mario Briscoe finished just off the podium, taking fourth place at 3:22.88.

In the pole vault, Aaron Zakula captured sixth place by reaching 4.61 meters and setting the school record in the event.

Tiffany Harris improved her placement from the prelims of the 400-meter dash, finishing fifth in the finals with a time of 56.08. Additionally, Brittany Copeland continued her strong showing at the meet, taking second in the 3,000-meter run and just missing an NCAA provisional mark with a 9:36.01 result.

In the field events, Tynita Butts put up a stellar 1.83-meter mark in the high jump, an NCAA provisional mark that will most likely land her in the NCAA Indoor Championships field in two weeks. Cameila Morman placed sixth in the triple jump, recording 12.14 meters on her last attempt.

SPORTS

A9

Thursday, 3.4.10

sports@theeastcarolinian.com

No. 11 ECU gears up for seventh annual Keith LeClair Classic

Pirates set to host Illinois, West Virginia and Western Carolina.

Michael Perry
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Good weather and better baseball are expected at Clark-LeClair Stadium this weekend as the seventh annual Keith LeClair Classic is set to take place with ECU hosting Illinois, West Virginia and Western Carolina.

The No. 11 Pirates head into the tournament 4-3, wishing to be 5-3, but Wednesday's game at High Point has been postponed due to weather.

On the mound against the incoming visitors, ECU will adjust the weekend rotation slightly by bumping up Kevin Brandt and Brad Mincey to Friday and Saturday, while the new Sunday starter has not been named.

As usual, the Pirates have managed to bring in respectable competition in the three teams invited, something ECU's first year hitting coach and Pirate baseball alum Nick Schnabel is sure of.

"These teams coming in will be well coached and they're going to be good," Schnabel said. "Regardless of who you play, every game is important and you've got to approach them all the same."

In a closer look at the incoming talent, the Fighting Illini have barely had a chance to get their feet wet this season as their first pair of games were canceled due to weather, and last week in the Big Ten/Big East Challenge, they dropped to 1-2.

Illinois posted a 34-20 record last season, its best since 2005, with a winning series over then No. 1 Louisiana State on the road and finishing fourth overall in the Big Ten.

This weekend will mark the first matchup between the Pirates and the Illini.

Big names leading Illinois this weekend will be outfielder Willie Agro, first basemen Matt Dittman and catcher Aaron Johnson.

Johnson, a senior backstop, has been named to the Johnny Bench Watch list, just as ECU senior catcher Jared Avchen has been.

Two probable starters for Illinois on the mound this weekend look to be a pair of sophomore right-handers: Bryan Roberts and Will Strack.

It will be tough to say what the Illini is capable of with only three tours of action under their belt, but they seem to have a fair balance of experience and youth on their 2010 squad.

"All I know is Illinois has eight or nine guys coming back position-wise," ECU designated hitter Kyle Roller said of the Illini. "They beat LSU two out of three last year."

The Mountaineers of West Virginia are all too familiar with Greenville in regard to football, but they are another uncommon baseball matchup for ECU. With the two teams meeting only 13 times, the Pirates hold a shallow margin of 8-5.

At the plate, West Virginia (2-5) is expected to bring heavy power all the way through lineup, especially from juniors Jedd Gyorko and Dan Dibratolomeo. In three of the past five seasons, the Mountaineers have been ranked among the top-five



ECU catcher Jared Avchen waits on a pitch during Friday's 6-2 loss to South Carolina.

collegiate team batting averages.

Taking the mound, the West Virginia pitching staff seems to look just as capable, with strength at the starter, relievers and closer positions.

Jarryd Summers, a right-handed junior, is a very likely start this weekend, and reliever Andy Aletmus could also make a possible appearance. Mountaineer closer Chris Enourato has already made three appearances this season, posting one win and 14 strikeouts.

West Virginia comes into the weekend with a losing record like Illinois, but they too should be respected as a formidable opponent.

"We talked about the importance of it (the Keith LeClair Classic), and being here, we're looking forward to it," freshmen first basemen John Wooten said. "It's going to be a good series and we're going to be playing some good competition."

Western Carolina, which always brings a talented group and has a deep history in baseball, as well as a special connection to ECU through the late

coach Keith LeClair is riding a good wave of momentum as they have kicked off their season with a 6-1 starts.

"Western Carolina, they're always good, in passed time they've always battled us well," Roller said. "We're going to have to come out and compete."

In the pitching department for the Catamounts, the Pirates could see Vance Chavis and/or David Sullivan who have both picked up two wins and have combined for 23 strikeouts.

In the overall series, ECU leads WCU 14-2.

Off the diamond, this matchup holds a concrete bond through the man for which this tournament is played in honor of. Coach LeClair played (1985-1988) and coached (1992-1997) at WCU prior to his coaching tenure with the Pirates (1998-2002), and that connection is a strong presence among those involved.

"The name Keith LeClair embodies everything that our program (WCU) stands for," Catamount head coach Bobby Moranda said. "This tourna-

ment is a great way to honor the memory and legacy of Keith LeClair between both the ECU and Western Carolina baseball programs."

LeClair is honored and known to both programs as a determined and hardworking player, coach and person.

"It was an honor for me to be here and play for him (LeClair)," Schnabel said of his former coach. "Anytime you can bring in a quality program like Western, and one that has a connection to Coach (LeClair), it's special. It's a neat thing because he did so many good things at that university, that will be special as well."

ECU is scheduled to play Illinois at 5 p.m. on Friday, 3 p.m. against West Virginia on Saturday and 2 p.m. on Sunday against WCU.

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

OPINION



Jared Jackson
SPORTS EDITOR

Going into the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, hockey was along the lines of my sixth or seventh favorite sport.

In fact, I would have probably watched the WNBA over a NHL game any day of the week. It's just not a sport that has ever clicked with me other than a couple romances with the Carolina Hurricanes when they reach the playoffs.

But after Sunday's dramatic 3-2 Canadian overtime victory over the United States in the gold medal round, I simply cannot stop thinking about the sport that used to only draw my attention to its highlights through a vicious fight or a shootout to win a game. Perhaps it was the insane amount of media coverage and hype concerning the game or maybe watching it was just the patriotic thing to do, but I'm definitely more interest in hockey than ever before and will definitely monitor the rest of the NHL season with a close eye.

It shocked me while watching "SportsNation" on ESPN the other day, a poll run by the show claimed that out of the almost 45,000 people that voted, 57 percent said they had the same interest in hockey as they did before the Winter Olympics even started. Those in that percentile must simply not have a pulse.

It's been a long, long time since I've openly cheered for a team (or country for that matter) like I did on Sunday during the course of the dramatic showdown.

Perhaps the most telling sign of the sudden hockey boom in the U.S. would be the incredible television ratings. While NBC's viewership for this Winter Olympics was 13 percent higher than the 2006 games



Members of the team USA hockey team celebrate after tying up Sunday's gold medal game against Canada with 24.4 seconds left in regulation.



The USA hockey team accepts its silver medals after losing to Canada 3-2 in overtime Sunday.

OPINION



Michael Perry
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

As somewhat of a devout hockey fan, I was excited and hopeful for USA Olympic men's hockey, but I figured with the Winter Olympics right in the middle of the NHL season, the upcoming tournament would be the timid soft-contact hockey that makes the all-star game the offensive showcase it is — fortunately, I was wrong.

Not only did the 2010 Vancouver Olympics deliver hard-hitting action normally only seen in the Stanley Cup Playoffs, it rekindled my love for the game and my pride for my country.

USA 5-0 heading into the gold medal game looked to defeat the Canadians ... in Canada ... in hockey, for a second time.

It was no small feat for the U.S., who brought home the silver, but with the 6-on-5 goal that Zach Parise squeaked through in the final seconds of the third period dragging the game to overtime, it seemed that this upset-of-upsets was on the verge of happening and that America would have its first men's hockey gold since the 1980 Lake Placid Miracle — sadly, I was wrong again.

With one flick of the wrist, Sidney Crosby, considered one of the sport's biggest stars by some, found himself once again, in the right place at the right time, to seal hockey gold for Canada simultaneously delivering the proverbial punch to the gut for hopeful Americans.

Some may say silver is not too shabby, or Canada deserved gold on home ice, but in that moment, I felt the pain and disappointment displayed clearly across the faces of the team USA players.

JACKSON continued on A10

PERRY continued on A10



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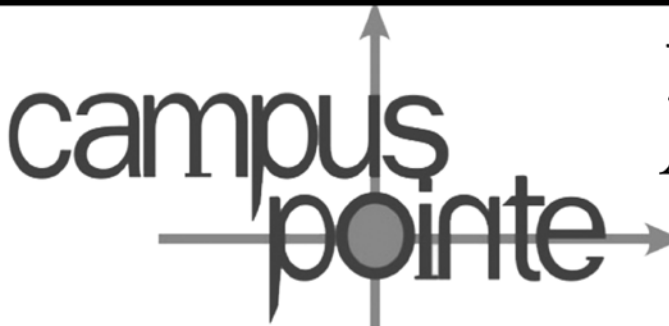
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