

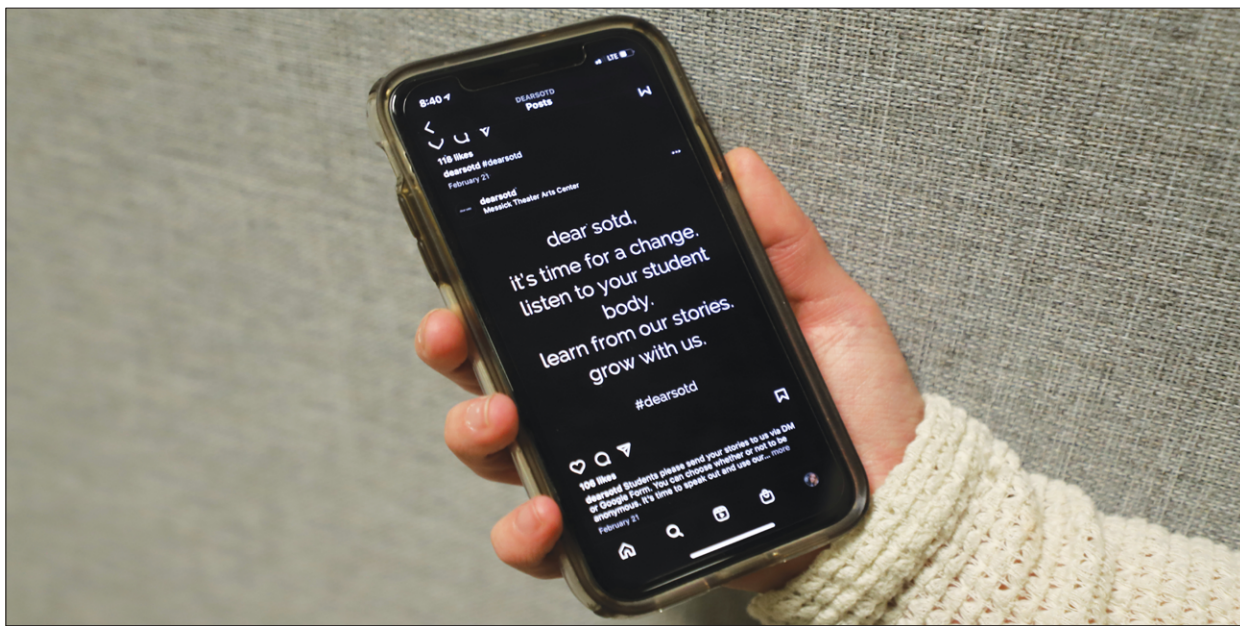


# The East Carolinian

YOUR CAMPUS NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1925

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One of the posts featured on the dearsotd anonymous Instagram account displayed on an East Carolina University student's phone. HALIE MILLER | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

## Dearsotd turns the spotlight Instagram account sheds light on school concerns

**Emily Peek**  
TEC STAFF

**Jennifer Sieg**  
TEC STAFF

**Hannah Bolick**  
TEC STAFF



On Feb. 21, an Instagram account titled dearsotd was created as a platform for East Carolina University's School of Theatre and Dance (SoTD) students and alumni to anonymously share their concerns and experiences within the school.

Shortly after this account surfaced, it gained significant attention throughout the department from students, faculty and staff. The moderator of the account feels unsafe disclosing their identity due to having already received warning of legal action.

Based on direct messages sent to the dearsotd Instagram page and their personal phone number, and conversations circulating throughout the student body, they feel as if they could incur potential academic and personal consequences if they reveal their identity.

The moderator shared that their reason for creating the account was to create awareness of issues throughout the department between students, faculty and staff. Shortly after the account was created, many faculty members began to try to find out who was running the account.

The moderator wrote in a direct message statement that students

within the program have experienced situations of discrimination, microaggressions, fatphobia, sexism and racism over the years, in addition to potentially criminal claims.

"Current students and alumni alike have used this account to not only promote change to our faculty, but also heal from our collective trauma," the moderator wrote. "Meetings upon meetings have led to seemingly no action as these issues continuously occur and students are left to wonder how to get through to our faculty."

College of Fine Arts and Communication Dean Linda Kean provided a written statement on March 1 regarding the accusations and concerns raised throughout the department. She wrote that the college is dedicated to student education as well as the overall physical and mental health of its students.

"Last week I was made aware of the Instagram account @dearsotd in which students shared concerns regarding the School of Theatre and Dance," Kean wrote in her statement. "After reviewing the content, hearing directly from a student in a meeting and receiving a list of specific issues from current School of Theatre and Dance students, I called for a school-wide listening session Monday, Feb. 28."

Kean did not respond to requests for comment on whether any of these concerns have been brought to the dean's office in the past.

ECU administrators were present at the meeting on Feb. 28, including the vice chancellor for student affairs, the provost, and additional faculty members and representatives from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee, according to Kean.

"The greater faculty were not in attendance as this was a time exclusively to be heard," Kean wrote in her statement. "The goal of that two-hour moderated discussion was to begin a dialogue with students to hear their voices and specific concerns."

The East Carolinian was denied access to the meeting by SoTD Director Jayme Host on Feb. 28.

Junior SoTD dance major Melody Martinez said she attended the meeting on Feb. 28, where Associate Vice Chancellor Eric Kneubuehl acted as moderator. She said the only officials in attendance were Kean, Host, Interim Provost Grant Hayes, Dance Area Coordinator Tommi Galaska, Design and Production Area Coordinator Delta Childers-Smith, and Assistant Professor of Directing and Acting Bryan Conger.

Besides Kneubuehl and various SoTD students, none of the administration spoke during the meeting, Martinez said. She said several SoTD students stood up and told stories about their concerns and experiences during the time allotted

> SOTD page A2

## COE receives large donation for professorship

**Emily Bronson**  
TEC STAFF

**Kristin Outland**  
FOR THE EAST CAROLINIAN



East Carolina University's College of Education (COE) received a \$2 million donation by the C.D. Spangler Foundation to fund a distinguished professorship within the concentration of early childhood literacy.

Elizabeth Swaggerty, associate professor and literacy specialist within the COE, said the donation will fund and create a professorship within the discipline of early childhood literacy in order to build on ECU's pre-established research efforts in the field.

As details of the professorship are being sorted out, Swaggerty said the position will provide a literacy specialist professor within COE to teach and research. The donated money from the C.D. Spangler Foundation will be put toward this chosen professor's salary and other related research initiatives, Swaggerty said.

"It will basically allow us (COE) to build on our existing efforts for teacher candidates using evidence-based practices in reading instruction and partnering with community schools and community organizations so that we can enhance reading and literacy instruction for (K-12) students," Swaggerty said.

Dean of COE Art Rouse said the college plans to provide and initiate a professorship that will create a position for faculty with expertise in childhood literacy, which will allow teachers and other specialists to best prepare students within the field.

Rouse said that pre-service teachers, students in the teacher preparation program, and in-service teachers, teachers who are in the field, will focus on items such as reading and comprehension to provide the best possible learning outcomes for K-12 and ECU students.

With speculation, Rouse thinks the C.D. Spangler Foundation searched for a place to get the best investment for its money and saw that ECU's literacy studies program in COE could make a tremendous difference in the area.

"I think the Spangler Foundation realized that this was a great investment in this college so that in turn we could significantly impact North Carolina," Rouse said.

Elizabeth Hodge, assistant dean for COE, said the college received news of this donation in mid-February, and despite not knowing all that it entails, COE faculty are excited and thankful for the new opportunity that comes with the donation.

In North Carolina, ECU is the top producer of educators, Hodge said, which is why the university was such a prime candidate for the \$2 million donation by the C.D. Spangler Foundation.

"I think one of the benefits of the College of Education is that we're very agile," Hodge said. "And we adapt to the market and what is needed. We have different ways of preparing educators through different alternative methods."

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

**ONLINE | FULL STORY**

## Season to conclude against Memphis tonight

**Chris Long**  
TEC STAFF

East Carolina University women's basketball (11-16, 4-10 American Athletic Conference) will face Memphis University (14-11, 5-9 AAC) today at 8 p.m. in Memphis, Tennessee.

This game for the Pirates follows a home loss on senior day to the hands of the University of South Florida (21-7, 11-3 AAC) by a score of 68-60. In the loss, junior guard Taniyah Thompson led the Pirates in scoring, creating 29 of the 60 points that ECU scored. She shot 64.7% from the floor on 11 for 17 shooting and 75% from the 3-point line.

As a team, the Pirates shot 22 for 61 from the field. Junior forward Xianna Josephs, sophomore guard Alexsia Rose and senior forward Tiara Chambers combined for zero points on nine shot attempts. The second leading scorer for the Pirates, graduate student guard De'Ja Green, gathered her 10 points on 2 for 12 shooting.

For the Bulls, two players scored 18 each against ECU. Their points came more

efficiently on 21 for 55 shooting. USF's junior point guard Elisa Pinzan scored 18 points, nine assists and five rebounds. Pinzan's shots all came from behind the 3-point line. The other leading scorer, redshirt senior forward Dulcy Mendjiadeu Fankam, grabbed 17 rebounds to pair with her 18 points.

Looking ahead to the final game of the season, this is the second time the Pirates will have faced the Tigers this season. The first game was a 68-38 win at home in which Thompson scored 26 points. Graduate student forward Tylar Bennett blocked five shots and grabbed three rebounds. The Pirates were able to secure a collective 11 steals to secure the win.

Historically, ECU is ahead in the all-time series against Memphis. The Pirates have 18 of the two teams' matchups to the Tigers' 15 wins. ECU is currently on a six-game win streak dating back to Feb. 9, 2019. The longest losing streak that the Pirates faced came through 2011-2013, where five consecutive games were lost. At home, ECU is 12-4 against Memphis, whereas away the



The East Carolina women's basketball team huddles up together before they take the court. COURTESY OF ECUPIRATES

record is a less optimistic 5-11.

The game earlier in the season was the largest margin of victory for the Pirates, blowing out Memphis by 30 points. The first game that the two teams played against one another was in 2005. The Pirates won that game 60-47.

Neither team will be competing for a

conference title during the final game of the season. The Pirates are playing to keep the win streak alive and even out the conference win record with Memphis. The Tigers will be playing to break the losing streak against ECU and stay ahead in the AAC standings.

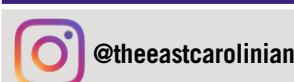
This writer can be contacted at news@theeastcarolinian.com.

**ONLINE**

» Check out our website for activities, photo galleries and more

» Check out our poll online about attending the Leclair Classic

**SOCIAL MEDIA**



## BRIEFS

## Student Affairs to host special Unity for Ukraine vigil

Today, East Carolina University's Student Affairs will hold a vigil in solidarity with Ukraine from 8 to 9 p.m. near the ECU Cupola. The vigil is open to all students, faculty and staff in light of the recent tragedies and acts of violence committed against Ukraine. Attendees are encouraged to wear blue and yellow clothing to show their support of the people of Ukraine.

## Cupola Conversations to discuss mental wellbeing

Tomorrow, East Carolina University's Student Affairs will continue its Cupola Conversations program with "You Matter: Getting Real about Student Mental Health" from noon to 1 p.m. via Microsoft Teams. As the pandemic continues to affect the mental health of college and university students everywhere, the campus community and general public are encouraged to attend the program and learn more about how to protect the mental wellbeing of themselves and others.

## CORRECTIONS &amp; CLARIFICATIONS

If you feel there are any factual errors in this newspaper, please contact Jennifer Sieg at editor@theeastcarolinian.com.

## PeeDee's Sensory Room sees success

Breanna Sapp  
TEC STAFF

Rachana Charla  
FOR THE EAST CAROLINIAN



PeeDee's Sensory Room, a collaborative effort between East Carolina University Athletics, Aces for Autism, and the College of Health and Human Performance (CHHP), reopened Feb. 12 at Minges Coliseum two years after COVID-19 postponed the original launch date.

Part of the CHHP's Design4Disability initiative, PeeDee's Sensory Room provides youth and young adults who struggle with sensory processing a space to calm themselves through objects that stimulate their senses.

David Loy, director of CHHP's Design4Disability, said the initiative encourages research, product design, training and inclusion. PeeDee's Sensory Room is a space that allows those at ECU athletic events at Minges Coliseum sensory interventions that calm overload caused by overwhelming environments, Loy said.

The room is filled with objects such as a color bubble column, a fiber optic curtain with lighting, a color wheel projector, tactile balls, mats and more, Loy said.

"They (multi-sensory rooms) are typically a calming area where people can get out of those noises and kind of bring down their arousal level to where it needs to be," Loy said.

After seeing multi-sensory rooms created at different athletic venues, Director of ECU's Medical Family Therapy Doctoral Program Jennifer Hodgson said she proposed the idea of PeeDee's Sensory Room in collaboration with Design4Disability.

Supporting the Greenville community is incredibly important, Hodgson said, considering how the local area provides for ECU. The room targets youth, adolescent individuals and their caregivers who may need to leave athletic



HALIE MILLER | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Elizabeth Gardill, physical education and health fitness specialist major, in PeeDee's Sensory Room.

events to calm themselves, Hodgson said.

"Sometimes we overlook populations in our community that are just wanting to be seen, wanting to have spaces to thrive, wanting to be part of a larger community and are just waiting for the community to become these adaptive places," Hodgson said.

Parker Ferebee, director for Communications and Marketing at Aces for Autism, said due to COVID-19, this athletic season is the first time PeeDee's Sensory Room has been able to operate and see its impact on youth and their families.

Ferebee said increasing awareness of different sensory needs and connecting families of individuals with sensory-processing issues.

A multi-sensory room here in the community can be incredibly helpful for those who may experience panic and anxiety from overwhelming environments and loud noise, Ferebee said.

"East Carolina University has always been very supportive of Aces for Autism and our initiative to raise awareness of autism in our community and really beyond," Ferebee said.

Aurora Shafer, president of the Autism Student Alliance, said the sensory room is a "phenomenal" resource to have on campus and a "game changer" for those with sensory disabilities. Shafer said sensory rooms didn't exist when she was young and she eventually stopped attending sports games all together.

"It (the sensory room) increases accessibility socially and instills life long changes for the future," Shafer said. "The room lets kids know they matter and that can give them a different mindset about the world around them. It makes things like sensory rooms a standard not an add on."

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

"We love our school and we care enough about this place to ask for it to be a better place for each and every one of us."

-Ava-LaShaun Winslow, SoTD student

## SOTD continued from A1

for the meeting and at the end, Kneubuehl expressed his apologies to the students for everything they've experienced.

"All of us started clapping because no one has said that to us, no professor has said sorry to us (during the meeting), no professor has tried to understand where we're coming from," Martinez said. "So, that was a huge highlight."

Martinez said overall, she felt as though the meeting was effective because she and other SoTD students finally felt heard.

"But it was very much of we've done this a billion times. We've talked to you (SoTD faculty and staff) a billion times individually. We made a page, we got people together. You scheduled a meeting at 12 o'clock in the afternoon like we don't have other classes," Martinez said. "I'm not going to believe anything until something happens."

Martinez said as for the next steps, a SoTD student gave the administration in attendance a deadline of March 4 to schedule another meeting and address next steps.

Kean wrote in her statement that the meeting ended with reaffirming students that the session was the first step in SoTD's "sincere promise" to address the concerns.

"Next steps will include further meetings with students and the development of concrete steps addressing the points listed in the student statement," Kean wrote in her statement. "This process will involve students, faculty and staff at each stage. While I know the pace of addressing some issues and concerns will be slower than others, I want students to know they have our support."

Kean wrote any student who needs to immediately address mental health issues can seek help through ECU's Center for Counseling and Student Development, or reach out to her personally via her ECU email, keanl@ecu.edu.

Host provided a written statement on March 1, and said SoTD faculty "cares deeply" about the concerns that have been brought to their attention and are working to address the issues with SoTD students.

"We continue to work diligently to build on the works of our active Diversity and Inclusion Action Committee, our School, and our university's efforts to improve our students' experiences. We are committed to working in strategic and sustainable ways to do our part, individually and institutionally, to be a community that supports all our students in their successes and helps them grow as professionals in a welcoming and safe environment," Host wrote in her statement.

Following a now-deleted post on the dearsotd account that the faculty construed as potentially threatening, Jessica Doyle-Mekkes sent messages to the dearsotd account and

several SoTD students warning them that the account could potentially face legal issues if their posts become threatening to individuals.

"The dear SOTD insta is crossing over into cyberbullying. NC has laws that protect students AND teachers and threats like 'your time is done' are a Class 1 misdemeanor. I'm all for speaking up and self expression but perhaps mention to whoever is running it that they could get into trouble when names are used and threats are made," Doyle-Mekkes said in a text message to a student in the SoTD.

According to North Carolina general statute § 14-277.1. on communicating threats, a person is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor if they willfully threaten to physically injure another person or their property, the threat is communicated to the person, it is made "in a manner and under circumstances which would cause a reasonable person to believe that the threat is likely to be carried out," and if the individual threatened believes the threat will be carried out.

A significant number of SoTD students sent an action plan to a SoTD department-wide email list multiple times on Feb. 24. The moderator said another student created a Google Document that contains the action plan and a petition for students to sign with over 200 signatures.

The action statement listed out multiple summaries of issues experienced in the SoTD and calls for change within the school.

In the fall, dance teaching instructor Dirk Lumbard began working on a piece for the fall dance concert based on the notable civil rights march in 1965 in Selma, Alabama, and Martinez said she feels as though Lumbard type cast her for the tap dancing section due to the color of her skin.

In regard to her feelings about the issue,

Martinez reached out to Lumbard via email with her concerns on Oct. 12.

In her email, Martinez explained her confusion at having been cast for a tap dancing role, as a non-tap dancer. She wrote that despite this, she was determined to learn the piece and work professionally on the show, until she was told by another cast member that she was cast for her skin color.

"I think it is amazing you want to make a piece about Selma and it should be casted correctly. Dirk (Lumbard), I am not African American. I am a proud Dominican-Puerto Rican, Hispanic woman. While my skin is beautiful and I can understand the assumptions, I would have appreciated that my ethnicity not be assumed. Not only do I feel I was disrespected, but my Culture also. Had I been asked to portray a strong black woman, I would have been thrilled. I was given no choice," Martinez wrote in her email to Lumbard.

The piece was later changed to "Celebrate: A Tribute to Broadway," in which Martinez and everyone in the original Selma piece were recast. She wrote in her email to Lumbard that she still did not feel comfortable with her new role, as the role was intended for a Black woman, not Hispanic.

After Lumbard emailed Martinez back on the same day saying they would talk about it further, she said he brought it up to her during the next rehearsal in front of other cast members.

"(He) called me out in front of everyone and was just like 'So, Melody, you sent me an email, what was that about,'" Martinez said. "So that happened, that conversation happened, I still had to go to rehearsal."

On March 1, Lumbard provided a written statement regarding his Selma piece and his casting process. He said he cast white, Latinx and Black students for the piece, after he auditioned every student in the SoTD dance department. He said he planned to partner on the project with an ECU vocalist, six dance students and the children's choir from The Sallie B. Howard School of Arts and Science (SBHSAS), where he is also a faculty member.

Lumbard wrote that having to transport SBHSAS students to and from Wilson, North Carolina, and ECU's campus, as well as "technical challenges," caused him to cancel

the Selma piece and transition to working on "Celebrate: A Tribute to Broadway," which was performed in the fall dance concert.

"I used the same ECUSTD dancers I had cast for the Selma piece, which never went into rehearsal, and, along with Gabriela Estrada, created a new work, a salute to Broadway, using the tap, modern and contemporary styles to showcase these exceptional dancers," Lumbard wrote. "My approach to casting is always without regard to race, color, gender, gender identification or sexual orientation. It is informed by talent."

SoTD alumna Tiffany Terry said in a direct message statement everything she has experienced or heard about within SoTD has been addressed on the dearsotd page.

Faculty within SoTD were aware of the concerns now being voiced by students, Terry said, and they decided not to take action. She said she hopes the department's faculty "gets on board" soon, as change is coming.

"The fact that certain faculty could care less about how they treat their students is a huge problem and very disappointing," Terry said.

Junior musical theater and professional acting double major Ava-LaShaun Winslow, who sent a direct message statement, said SoTD is where students are able to explore and grow their talents as artists, but has also been a place where students have faced sexism, body shaming, racism and more.

"No program is perfect," Winslow said. "In the past, we've made our concerns known only to be ignored and/or silenced."

Winslow said the dearsotd account has allowed past and present members of SoTD to share their experiences for the first time, without judgment or being ignored.

"We love our school and we care enough about this place to ask for it to be a better place for each and every one of us," Winslow said.

Musical Theater teaching instructor in SoTD Jacob Kerzner said students within the school did not feel heard when attempting to address their concerns in the past. The dearsotd Instagram page is the result of their emotions being bottled up, Kerzner said, as well as a way to ensure they're heard.

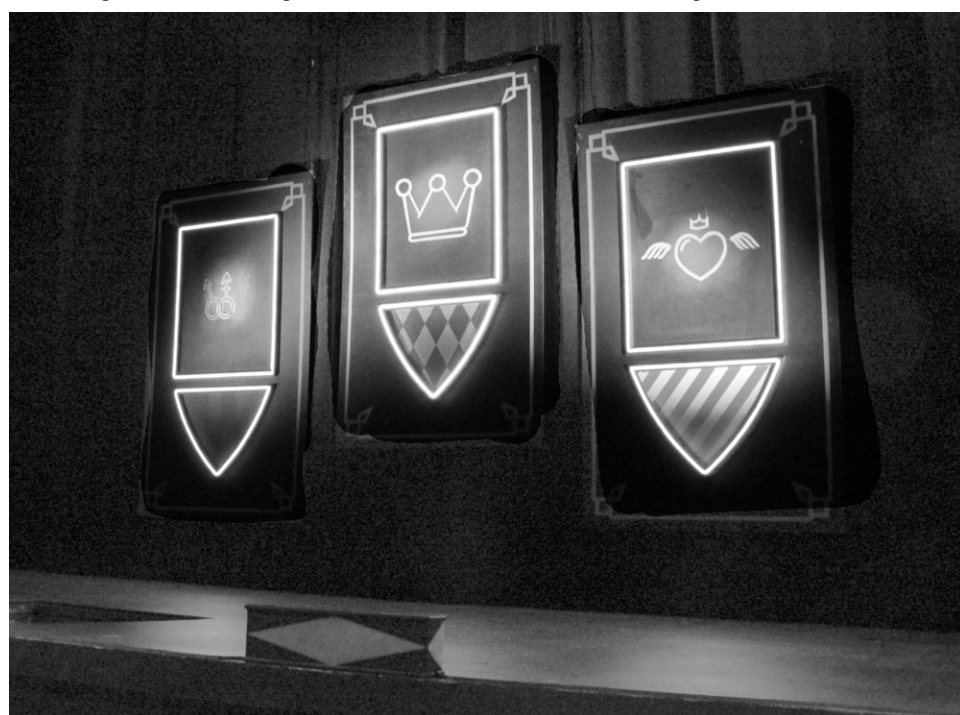
In a SoTD faculty staff meeting on Feb. 25, Kerzner said a conversation was held to decide that it is up to each individual faculty member to decide whether or not they choose to support the action taken by the students. He said as a SoTD staff member, he is seeking ways to support the students, and he hopes the same is true for the rest of the department.

Kerzner said SoTD students have taken "the mature way" in terms of their actions, and previously wanted a forum to express their concerns long before moving forward to create the Instagram account.

On March 1, Host sent a message to the SoTD student body apologizing for the experiences shared at the Feb. 28 meeting.

"I'm sincerely sorry that I have not been able to prevent the hurt that many of our students are feeling. I am sorry you are experiencing immense pain and trauma and I promise to continue working to improve SoTD, as we celebrate each member of our community within Messick and McGinnis," Host wrote.

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



HALIE MILLER | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Lights from the set of "The Visit," one of the SoTD's fall theatre productions, at a break during a rehearsal.

## OUR VIEW

### Baseball fans should remain optimistic

Even though the East Carolina University baseball team (2-5, 0-0 American Athletic Conference) lost five of the seven games of the season, there is still a lot of season left to be played and a chance for the team to return to the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

The Pirates fell 0-3 in a series against Bryant University (1-6, 0-0 North East Conference) from Feb. 18 through Feb. 20. Since then, the team has lost an additional two games to the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (6-1, 0-0 Atlantic Coast Conference) on Friday and Saturday.

We, the editorial staff of The East Carolinian, believe it is not too late for the baseball team to turn its season around despite the slow start to the regular season. Pirate fans must remain hopeful and continue to show support for the baseball team.

Aside from those losses, the Pirates have gathered a win against Campbell University (1-6, 0-0 Big South Conference) on Feb. 22 and against UNC-Chapel Hill on Sunday for a total of two on the season.

The baseball season stretches until the AAC Championship starting in May. ECU has shown in the past that its baseball program is a force to be reckoned with. However, as the season progresses, the team will need to make a quick change in order to return to NCAA rankings.

We encourage the student body and the university community to continue to come out and support its baseball team.

## PIRATE RANTS

The East Carolinian does not endorse the statements made in Pirate Rants.

Dear white kids, please stop trying to act Black while clinging to your racism and hate of Black people. You look ridiculous and ignorant wearing Jordans and blasting rap music. My culture is not a costume. Stop your caricature show please. It is disrespectful. It is ignorant. It is racist. I don't have to "act Black," I am Black!

ECU please turn on the ac in the study rooms, the whole point is to have a quiet area to work, opening the door defeats the purpose.

People clean up your trash and food in the Dining hall! The workers are not your maids!

This Dear SoTD page is crazy. The University needs to address this ASAP

My rant is preemptive. If individual classrooms are about to require masks, I will scream.

Mustaches are not for everyone... or are they?

Can someone please explain to me why ECU can't clean the air conditioners properly so that everyone can avoid getting sick. Having to repeatedly file with NSO is pointless. Time for ACTION

Questions regarding Pirate Rants can be directed to Giana Williams at [opinion@theeastcarolinian.com](mailto:opinion@theeastcarolinian.com).

Submit your Pirate Rants on our website under the opinion tab or scan the QR code.



## Free press needed on warfront

### Honest media is essential for current Russia, Ukraine conflict



Breanna Sapp  
TEC STAFF

As disinformation and war propaganda erupt across Russian media in light of the country's invasion on Ukraine, the necessity of a free press and reliable reporting from the warfront has become more

apparent than ever.

While the U.S. reports "unlawful war" and military advancements against Ukraine, Russian state-led media outlets have pushed the narrative that the Russian government is preventing genocide and the "nazification" of Ukraine, blaming the other nation for its aggression.

Following accurate reports made by independent media organizations on Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Roskomnadzor, the federal overseer of mass communications in Russia, published a press release warning the media of the consequences when publishing knowingly "false" information and to only utilize Russian official information sources.

ONLINE | FULL STORY

**"International agencies have a moral responsibility to protect journalists as they engage in honest reporting in the face of governmental injustices."**

-Breanna Sapp

In fact, Reporters Without Borders ranked Russia as a "stifling atmosphere for independent journalists" and placed the country as 150th on its 2021 World Press Freedom Index, citing disinformation and even violence committed against opposition journalists.

Though freedom of the press has been essential to the culture of the U.S. for hundreds of years, Russian citizens are facing not only a lack of knowledge, but the consumption of the wrong knowledge in itself.

It is a human right for both the press and an informed citizenry to have access to a free media and accurate information on international and domestic news.

Every nation has a moral duty to uphold basic human rights such as a free

press and should always maintain integrity in their own release of information to the public. Journalists should be supported in their pursuit of accurate news and have an obligation to investigate the truth to the people of their nation.

As the Russian government creates inaccuracies to preserve false support from their citizenry, the importance of clear, engaging and effective communication between public offices and their constituents is more apparent than ever.

International agencies have a moral responsibility to protect journalists as they engage in honest reporting in the face of governmental injustices.

Sapp is a sophomore English major and a TEC columnist. To contact her, email [opinion@theeastcarolinian.com](mailto:opinion@theeastcarolinian.com).

## Rural communities require support



Breanna Culler  
GUEST COLUMNIST

I grew up in Stokes, North Carolina; a small, rural town that was made up of many blue collar, working class families. While my community was built on a foundation of hard work and resilience, the effects of systemic inequity impacted the life of every member.

Growing up, it always seemed that no matter how hard my neighbors worked or how long my peers studied, the hope of a better life remained far off. It was normal to hear of neighbors who were left without health coverage, families who struggled to put food on the table, or peers who couldn't complete their school work due to a lack of wifi connectivity.

Once I began high school, the educational gap only widened. My graduating class was 160 students. We started as a class of nearly 400, only about 25 of those who graduated went on to college. I was one of the 25, but I wouldn't have been if there hadn't been a scholarship program set up specifically for

rural North Carolina students.

Thanks to that program, I was the first person in my family to go to college. Today, that same program is putting my younger brother through college. It changed the trajectory of my entire family line and it only came to be because someone recognized a disparity and chose to help rather than ignore it.

The inequity that exists within rural North Carolina is an issue that should be of concern to anyone who is dedicated to promoting social equity, justice and accessibility within North Carolina. Due to cultural stereotypes and media misrepresentation, much of the rural south is viewed as a conservative monolith by those who exist outside of it.

The dated idea that rural individuals are ignorant, uneducated and resistant to change is one that has allowed systemic inequity to continue for centuries. The fact is that rural communities are underrepresented, receive little to no resources and experience a severe lack of community based advocacy.

Research has shown that individuals in rural communities are more likely to live in poverty, attend underfunded

or short-staffed public schools and experience a severe lack of health resources in comparison to their urban counterparts. These findings shed light on the historical inequity that has led to the current standard of living in rural North Carolina. The reality is that the rural south, including rural Pitt County, is the optimal breeding ground for social activism and community based advocacy.

Our tiny city of Greenville is brimming with passionate community organizations, thriving businesses, advanced education and health systems. With so much opportunity at our door, why are we not promoting advocacy for further educational, health and resource access within our rural Pitt County communities?

While creating positive change in these areas is not necessarily easy, it is the perfect opportunity for our entire community to create sustainable change that will continue to positively impact the lives of the next generation of Pitt County residents.

Culler is a ECU alumna and a guest columnist. To contact her, email [opinion@theeastcarolinian.com](mailto:opinion@theeastcarolinian.com).

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Serving ECU since 1925, The East Carolinian is an independent, student-run publication distributed every Wednesday during the academic year and during the summer. The opinions expressed herein are those of the student writers, columnists and editors and do not necessarily reflect those of the faculty, staff or administration at East Carolina University or the Student Media Board. Columns and reviews are the opinions of the writers; "Our View" is the opinion of The East Carolinian Board of Opinions.

As a designated public forum for East Carolina University, The East Carolinian welcomes letters to the editor limited to 300 words. Letters may be rejected or edited for libelous content, decency and brevity. All letters must be signed and include a telephone number.

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## EVENTS

### TODAY

#### Call for Artworks - Fine Arts Celebration

Greenville Museum of Art  
802 South Evans St.  
10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
(252) 758-1946

#### Safe Spring Break Resource Fair

MCSA Lawn  
1000 E. 5th St.  
2 to 4 p.m.  
(252) 328-5172

#### Open Mic Night

Pitt Street Brewing Company  
630 S. Pitt St.  
8 to 10 p.m.  
(252) 227-4151

#### Speaker:

**James Rhodes, Greenville Southwest Bypass**  
Brewster Building  
E. 10th St.  
Noon to 12:50 p.m.  
(252) 328-1270

### TOMORROW

#### ECU Symphonic Wind Ensemble

Wright Auditorium  
212 Wright Circle  
7:30 to 9 p.m.  
(252) 328-6851

#### Therapeutic Thursdays - Face Masks

MCSA Well-Being Hub  
128 E. 7th St.  
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
(252) 328-6387

### FRIDAY

#### March First Friday

Emerge Gallery and Art Center  
404 Evans St.  
5 to 8 p.m.  
(252) 551-6947

#### International Coffee Hour

International House  
306 9th St.  
6:30 to 8:30 p.m.  
(252) 551-6947

#### First Friday Artwalk

Uptown Greenville  
5th & Evans St.  
5 to 8 p.m.  
(252) 561-8400

### SATURDAY

#### Minka & Friends

The State Theatre  
110 W. 5th St.  
7 to 11:30 p.m.  
(919) 828-4444

#### Paints & Pints

Pitt Street Brewing Company  
630 S. Pitt St.  
3 to 5 p.m.  
(252) 227-4151

#### Latin Social Night

Pitt Street Brewing Company  
630 S. Pitt St.  
6 to 11 p.m.  
(252) 227-4151

### SUNDAY

#### VOCTAVE:

**The Corner of Broadway and Main Street**  
Wright Auditorium  
212 Wright Circle  
4 to 11:59 p.m.  
(252) 328-6851



ILLUSTRATED BY ABIGAIL LUND

## Guest artists join ECU SoM

**Audrey Duke**  
TEC STAFF

**Jacqueline Fischer**  
FOR THE EAST CAROLINIAN



East Carolina University's School of Music (SoM) will host three guest artists for the In Guest Artist Residency event tonight and tomorrow, which will include an open recital at 7:30 tonight and masterclasses for students from noon to 6 p.m. tomorrow.

Christine Gustafson, flute professor and chamber music coach, said the SoM has been trying to bring in Aleksandr Haskin, an international flutist, since the start of COVID-19. Haskin will also be joined by pianist Jaun Pablo Andrade and flutist Ethan Lin-Schwartz.



Christine Gustafson

"We would normally have an extra guest or two but during COVID-19 we really can't do that," Gustafson said. "It's still not safe and we want to be really, really careful to keep things as safe as possible, especially with an artist coming in internationally."

Select students from the SoM will have the opportunity to play in the recital alongside the guest artists, Gustafson said. She said Haskin and Andrade will also host masterclasses that flute and piano SoM students will be able to attend.

The students who were chosen to play in the recital with the guest artists were chosen because of their skill and knowledge of the instrument, Gustafson said. She said she speaks with the guests frequently about what they will be playing in the program and what her students will be playing in the masterclasses.

"Sometimes we've been able to involve the orchestra, this time, because of COVID-19, it's a quieter, more modest event, but it's still very exciting for us," Gustafson said.

Dale Cox, sophomore music education and flute performance major, said he will play in one of the masterclasses facilitated by Haskin.

During the masterclass, the guest artist gives the students feedback on the pieces they have been working on, Cox said. He said instead of their regular instructor giving them feedback and instructions, the guest artist's job is to focus on what the students are doing right and wrong

with a fresh ear.

"I am very grateful to finally work with another male flutist because all the flute teachers I've ever had the past three years have always been female, so it will be interesting and nice to finally be able to work with someone with the same stature as me," Cox said.

"We get to hear really awesome music coming from one of the best flute players in our world, and he's incredibly talented, so I am very thankful," Cox said.

Kasey Oregon, a junior in the SoM and a music ambassador, said she will be performing the "Piano and Flute Sonata" by Francis Poulenc in the masterclass.

Oregon said for preparation of the event, they are expected to know several facts about the composer, such as their nationality and what they did for a living, and what the piece is about.

"It's an honor to meet someone who is such an up-and-coming flute player. It's an honor to even see him perform," Oregon said.

ONLINE | FULL STORY

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

## Two exhibitions to open for public Friday

**Noelle Edwards**  
TEC STAFF

Emerge Gallery and Art Center will have two March exhibitions, The DownEast National Juried Sculpture Exhibition and the River Rat Photography Exhibition by Morgan Zichettella, that will be open to the public at 5 p.m. on Friday at Emmerge located at 404 Evans St. in Greenville, North Carolina.

Sarah Lazure, marketing and exhibits coordinator for Emmerge, said the exhibitions this month allow multiple art forms to come together in the same place. She said this will open conversations about different types of art and the purpose of the art in the exhibitions for all of those who view them.

Zichettella's exhibition, River Rat, will be open from Friday to March 24 at the Harvey Wooten Gallery in Emmerge. Zichettella is a second year graduate student at East Carolina University on track to earn her master's of fine arts in photography.

"Morgan's photographs are really unique because the photographic process that she uses to make the images incorporates water from the location where the photographs were made," Lazure said. "Seeing an artist make connections between process, materials, and content is wonderful."

The DownEast National Juried Sculpture Exhibition will be viewable by the public for the duration of the year until February 2023. It consists of sculptures from different artists around the country. The indoor sculptures are located in the Don Edwards Gallery at Emmerge.

The outdoor sculptures can be found at various locations around Pitt County, which include the Greenville Museum of Art, the Greenville Greenway and the ECU Health Sciences Campus Student Center. A full list of locations for outside sculptures can be found on Emmerge's website.

"The juxtaposition of sizes, materials, and subject matter between the outdoor sculptures, where steel is the main material used, and the indoor sculptures, and where artworks range from glass to fabric/fibers to wood and metals, is really fascinating," Lazure said.

Zichettella earned her undergraduate degree from Georgia Southern University with a major in photography and a minor in graphic design in 2020. She said she was a summer camp counselor at Emmerge the summer of 2021, which is how she started to get involved with the organization. She has always had a love for all art forms



Morgan Zichettella



CONTRIBUTED BY MORGAN ZICHETTELLA

One of the many pieces Zichettella will display.

since she was young, Zichettella said. She said her mom was a painter, which pushed her to pursue her own art medium. She said she likes to incorporate old fashioned methods of photography, such as alternative process (photography before the digital age), with new forms like digital photography.

"My goal so far with art is to try to get people to reconsider what their conception is of photography," Zichettella said. "Photography is one of those things that people think 'oh, you just push a button' but it's so much more than that."

Zichettella said she was the recipient of a grant from ECU's Water Resource Center, which hosts the Student Water Scholar program. She said being awarded this grant allowed her to fund her research of the connection between water and the community in which she grew up.

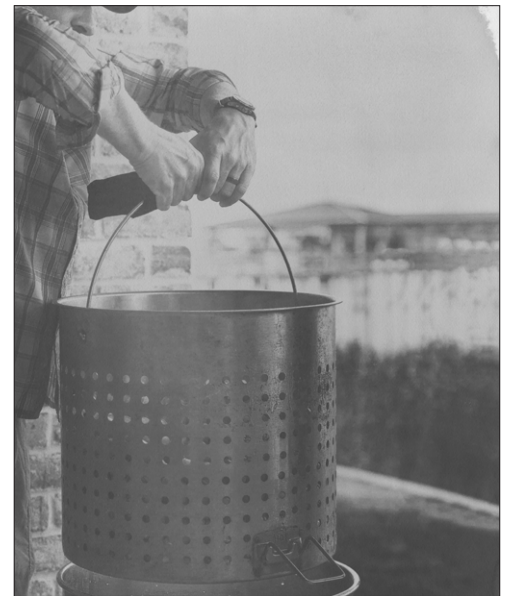
River Rat, the exhibition by Zichettella is composed of salt prints, which means her photos are developed in saltwater. She said this project has helped her form a solid idea for her senior thesis.

Zichettella said she grew up in Savannah, Georgia, and has always had a love for the marshes. She said she uses her digital camera to take the photos but then develops the photos with the water from the area where she takes the photographs.

"It causes these really fun reactions in my images and I love it because I am collaborating with the area that is a part of me," Zichettella said. "I want to share it with others so that they too can place themselves in this environment and also understand that water is more than a resource."

The year-long exhibition, The DownEast National Juried Exhibition, was juried by James Maston, a sculptor and set designer from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This means Maston chose the pieces that are in the exhibition.

Matson earned his master's of fine arts degree in sculpture and drawing from the Uni-



CONTRIBUTED BY MORGAN ZICHETTELLA

Another piece in the River Rat Photography Exhibition.

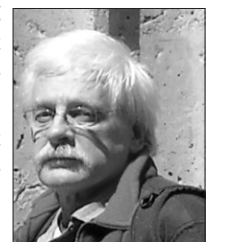
versity of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He said he knew Hanna Jurban, an ECU professor and past exhibit artist for Emmerge, from graduate school, which is how Lazure got in contact with him. Maston said he had total control over which pieces were chosen.

"Ultimately, as I was reading through all of the work, I was looking to build an exhibition that was going to speak to the audience," Matson said. "I was looking for things that really provide an experience for your community."

Matson said he was given a week to narrow 250 images down to 25 that he felt were cohesive and fit his standards. He said he has been a juror before and always looks for the same factors when he has to pick out pieces regardless of theme.

The factors include how well the product is made, whether or not the piece is cohesive with the guidelines of sculpture yet is also an original piece of work and lastly, he wants the artist to make a personal statement in the work that they present.

"When you enjoy art versus looking at art, you don't really talk about it, it's something you do inside in a very quiet space," Matson said. "You kind of have a different brain than you normally would when you're just enjoying art."



James Matson

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

## CLASSIFIEDS

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ECU Student Duplexes at Wyndham Circle 2 and 3 Bedroom, 2 Full Bath, Cathedral Ceilings, Newly Decorated, Great Price, Large Deck in Back Yard for Grilling,

Some Pets O.K., Great Parking Available July 1 and August 1, 2022 \$700.00 month Call fast 1-252-756-3009 or text 252-341-9789

ECU House for Rent! 3 Bedroom 1 1/2 Bath, 1909 East 4th St. \$1500.00 month!

Call 252-756-3009.

### ACTIVITY

Comic Book & Toy Show: Sat, Mar 5. 10a - 4p. Free Admission! American Legion, 403 St. Andrews Dr, Greenville.

## HOROSCOPES

**Aries** (March 21-April 19) — Today is a 7 — Insights, breakthroughs and revelations sparkle in the dark of tonight's Pisces New Moon. Dreams seem within reach. Enjoy a two-week creative, imaginative and organizational phase.

**Leo** (July 23-Aug. 22) — Today is a 9 — Find creative ways to grow your family nest egg. A lucrative two-week phase dawns with tonight's New Moon. Launch valuable initiatives with your partner.

**Sagittarius** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21) — Today is an 8 — Realize domestic visions with upgrades over a two-week New Moon phase. Get creative. Improve the beauty and functionality of your home. Nurture family.

**Taurus** (April 20-May 20) — Today is an 8 — Connect for shared support, fun and appreciation. This New Moon phase in Pisces benefits team efforts. Grow through friendships, social networks and community participation.

**Virgo** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Today is a 9 — Collaboration flowers. Your partnership blossoms with the New Moon. Strengthen bonds and deepen roots over the next two weeks. Begin another chapter together.

**Capricorn** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — Today is an 8 — Profit through communications for two weeks. Possibilities spark in conversation over this New Moon phase. Creative projects flower. Express, share and connect. Write your story.

**Gemini** (May 21-June 20) — Today is an 8 — This New Moon illuminates professional opportunities. Develop interesting projects over the next two weeks. Pursue exciting possibilities. Your career, status and influence rise.

**Libra** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) — Today is a 9 — Energize your physical moves. The New Moon tonight initiates two weeks of growing health and strength. Put your heart into your actions. Practice makes a perfect.

**Aquarius** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18) — Today is a 9 — Begin a lucrative New Moon phase. Discover fresh markets and rising prosperity. Strengthen financial foundations for growth. Rake in and preserve a healthy harvest.

**Cancer** (June 21-July 22) — Today is an 8 — Educational opportunities arise after tonight's New Moon. The next two-week phase favors study, investigation and exploration. Consider new perspectives. Make connections, contributions and bold discoveries.

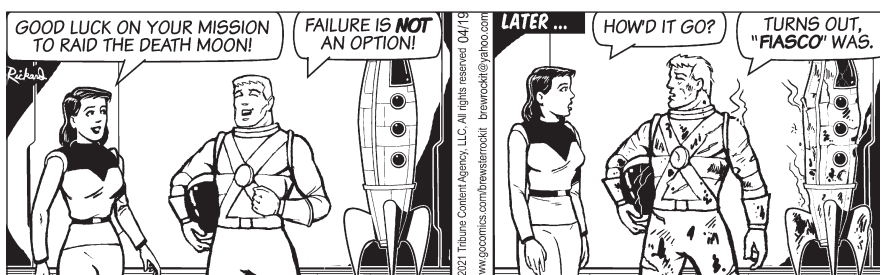
**Scorpio** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21) — Today is a 9 — Enjoy yourself. Stir up some romance. The New Moon tonight begins a two-week family, fun and passion phase. Get creative. It's all for love.

**Pisces** (Feb. 19-March 20) — Today is a 9 — Pursue personal dreams. Expand talents, capacities and skills over two weeks with the New Moon in your sign. Grow and develop. Shine your light.

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## COMICS

### BREWSTER ROCKIT



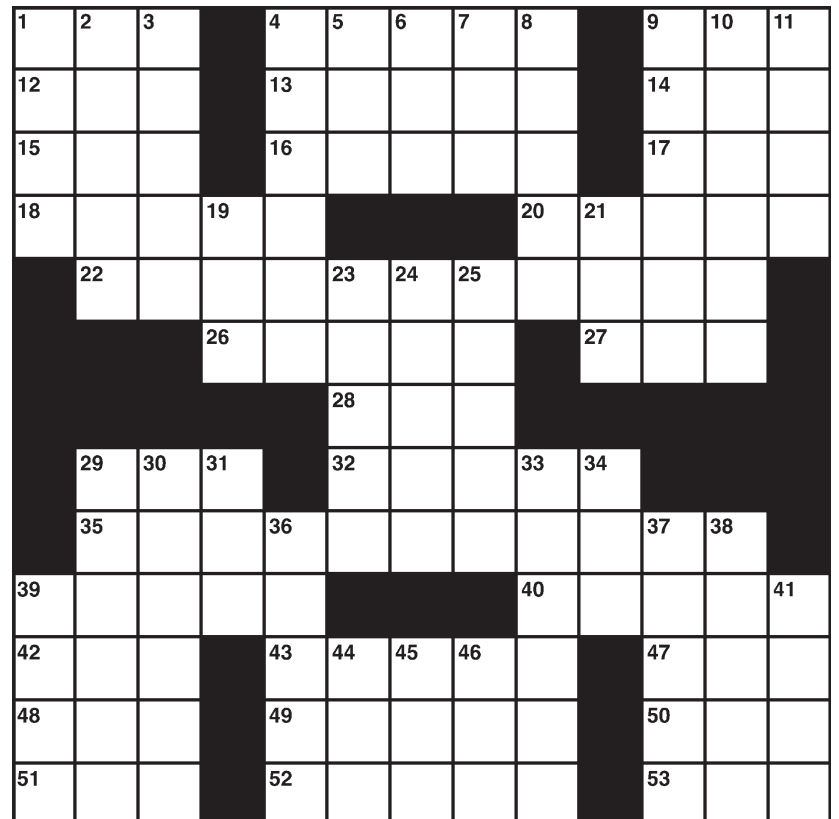
## BLISS



## CROSSWORD

# THE TV CROSSWORD

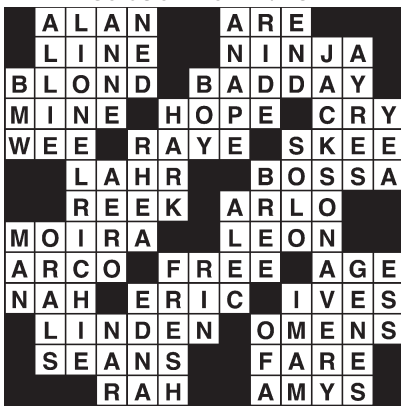
by Jacqueline E. Mathews



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

- ACROSS**
- 1 "Leah Remini: \_\_\_ All Relative"
  - 4 \_\_\_ Felice Smith of "NCIS: Los Angeles"
  - 9 "American \_\_\_!"
  - 12 Groove
  - 13 Large antelope
  - 14 Beverage in a stein
  - 15 Apple pie \_\_\_ mode
  - 16 Grape bearers
  - 17 Long or Peeples
  - 18 Jeremy of "FBI"
  - 20 Portrait holder
  - 22 Role on "Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D."
  - 26 Satchel handle
  - 27 Shoo-\_\_\_; sure winners
  - 28 Donkey
  - 29 Bit of soot
  - 32 Nessa, to Bernie Mac
  - 35 Actor Eric
  - 39 African nation
  - 40 Prefix for violet or sound
  - 42 List-shortening abbr.
  - 43 Giraffe's smaller cousin
  - 47 Holbrook or Linden
- DOWN**
- 1 Retirement accts.
  - 2 Bulb flower
  - 3 Hidden supply
  - 4 Armed uprising
  - 5 Actor Wallach
  - 6 Fabray, to friends
  - 7 180 degrees from WSW
  - 8 Ford failure
  - 9 Actor Ted
  - 10 Alf and E.T.
  - 11 Start of the title of Howie Mandel's show
  - 19 "... \_\_\_ the season to be jolly..."
  - 21 Start of "The Streets of Laredo"
  - 23 Frasier's last name
  - 24 Place of refuge
  - 25 Rattled
  - 29 Actor Kutcher
  - 30 "Ned and \_\_\_"
  - 31 Term of affection
  - 33 Actor Tom
  - 34 Sushi bar offering
  - 36 Wynonna's mom
  - 37 Lucy's landlady
  - 38 "Without a \_\_\_"; Anthony LaPaglia series
  - 39 "Boy, Did I \_\_\_ Wrong Number!"; Bob Hope film
  - 41 \_\_\_ vera; lotion ingredient
  - 44 Berry or Olin
  - 45 "Life \_\_\_ House"; Kevin Kline movie
  - 46 "Peter \_\_\_"

Solution from 2/23



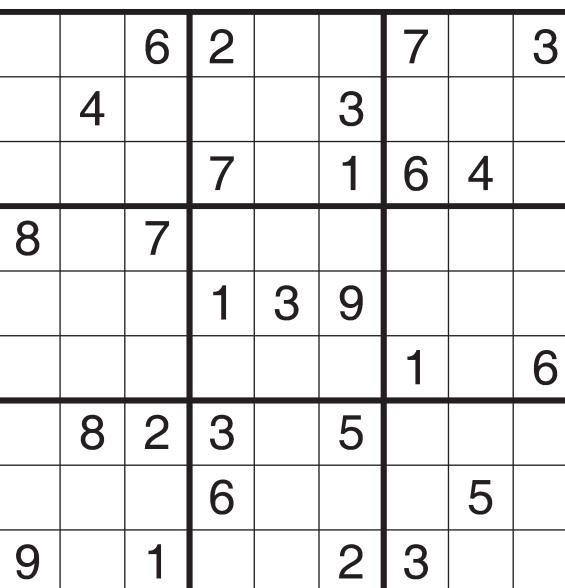
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## SUDOKU

# SUDOKU

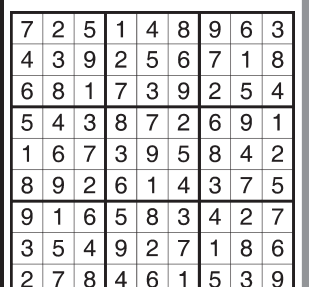
THE SAMURAI OF PUZZLES By The Mephram Group

Level



Complete the grid so each row, column and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, please visit [sudoku.org.uk](http://sudoku.org.uk)

Solution from 2/23



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## Pirate baseball prepares for LeClair Classic

Chris Long  
TEC STAFF

Starting on Friday, the East Carolina University baseball team (2-5, 0-0 American Athletic Conference) will host Indiana State University (5-2, 0-0 The Valley Conference), the University of Michigan (5-2, 0-0 Big Ten Conference) and No. 21 Maryland University (7-0, 0-0 Big Ten) in ECU's annual LeClair Classic.

The Pirates are returning home from a contest against Duke University (4-3, 0-0 Atlantic Coastal Conference). ECU faced the Blue Devils yesterday in Durham, North Carolina, only two days after they played No. 24 University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (6-1, 0-0 ACC) in Clark-LeClair stadium on Sunday.

After falling to the Tar Heels in the first two games of the series, the Pirates were able to get some redemption on their home field pulling out a 5-0 win. Junior Carter Spivey (1-0) helped lead the Pirates to their first home win this season after pitching a career best of 4.1 shutout innings and striking out a career high seven batters.

Junior pitcher Ryder Giles (0-0) grabbed the first run for the Pirates in the second inning, and a second in the bottom of the fourth. Sophomore catcher Justin Wilcoxon hit a home run for the Pirates giving them their fifth run in the eighth inning. Sophomore outfielder Alec Makarewicz and senior outfielder Bryson Worrell also made runs for the Pirates.

The Pirates were previously ranked No. 12 in the National Collegiate Athletic Association baseball preseason polls but dropped after they were shut out against unranked Bryant University (3-3, 0-0) in their first three game series this season. ECU fell out of the top 25 rankings after they were defeated by UNC in two back-to-back games on Friday and Saturday.

The Sycamores will head to Greenville off of back-to-back games against Minnesota University (2-6, 0-0 Big Ten) in Fort Myers, Florida, on Saturday and Sunday. Indiana State grabbed two massive wins over Minnesota, 16-3 and 14-8.

Michigan is coming into the weekend off of back-to-back games on the road against Florida Atlantic University (5-3, 0-0 Conference USA) in Boca Raton, Florida, yesterday and today.



HALIE MILLER | THE EAST CAROLINIAN

The ECU baseball team warms up for its game against Bryant University on Lewis Field inside of Clark-LeClair Stadium.

Maryland will return to North Carolina after a matchup against the University of Delaware (2-4, 0-0 Colonial Athletic Association) on the Terrapins' home field yesterday. The Terrapins played in North Carolina the previous weekend in a three game series against Campbell that kicked off on Friday. The Camels were shut out by the Terrapins, falling 4-0, 3-1 and 9-2.

The LeClair Classic will kick off on Friday where Michigan will face its first ranked team of the season as the team plays Maryland at noon. Following that game, the Pirates will face the Sycamores of Indiana State at 4:30 p.m.

In the second game of the tournament, the Sycamores will face off against Maryland. Following the matchup between Indiana State and Maryland the Pirates return to the diamond on Saturday at 4:30 p.m. to face Michigan.

The final games of the LeClair Classic will take place on Sunday. Indiana State will take on Michigan at 11 a.m.

and the Pirates will close out the tournament as they face Maryland at 3:30 p.m.

Maryland will be the second ranked team the Pirates have faced this season. ECU faced its first nationally ranked opponent on Friday when they played the Tar Heels.

Earlier in the week the Pirates headed to Durham, North Carolina, to face the Duke Blue Devils, who as of Feb. 21 sat just two spots above ECU in the NCAA rankings. As of Sunday, both teams are no longer ranked in the top 25.

After their contest in Durham, the Pirates return to their home field to fight for their second at home win of the season. ECU will play their first game in the LeClair Classic on Friday. The first pitch is scheduled for 4:30 p.m.

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

## Men's basketball to wrap up season with Wichita

Reyna Crooms  
TEC STAFF

East Carolina University men's basketball (15-13, 6-10 American Athletic Conference) will play in its final game of the regular season against Wichita State University (13-12, 4-9 AAC) at 3 p.m on Friday in Wichita, Kansas, at Charles Koch Arena.

The game will be broadcast by ESPNU, WNCT and 107.9 FM. The Pirates are currently ranked No. 8 out of 11 teams in the AAC and Wichita comes in just below ECU at No. 9. The Pirates have managed to successfully walk away with a total of six wins this conference season while the Shockers currently stand with four conference wins.

Back in October 2021, the AAC ranked East Carolina last in the 2021-2022 preseason poll while Wichita was picked for the No. 4 spot. ECU men's basketball was originally set to see the Wichita Shockers earlier this season for its conference opener on Dec. 29 in Greenville, North Carolina. However, the game was postponed due to COVID-19.

Wichita and ECU have a history that dates back to January 2018 and results in a total of five straight losses for the Pirates.

The two teams last saw one another on Jan. 1, 2020. The Pirates suffered a close loss to the Shockers while in Kansas, 69-75.

Former ECU junior forward Jayden Gardner was East Carolina's top scorer in the 2020 face off against Wichita, and Gardner put up a total of 29 points for ECU. Senior guard J.J. Miles scored a total of 12 points with help of two 3-pointers and junior guard Tremont Robinson-White showed up with 11 points for the Pirates.

ECU will look to win its third game in a row of the 2021-2022 conference season as they take on Wichita on Friday. The Pirates were recently able to add two more wins to the roster while at home in Greenville against the University of South Florida (8-20, 3-13 AAC) 64-60 and the University of Tulsa (9-18, 3-13 AAC) 64-59.

Robinson-White made his presence known once again on the court in the Pirates' recent face off against the USF Bulls on Feb. 23. Robinson-White achieved a total of 13 points in the recent game. Sophomore guards Tristen Newton and Brandon

Suggs were East Carolina's highest scorers against the Bulls, both walking away with 15 points.

Miles and Robinson-White will see some familiar faces once again as they prepare to take on Wichita. In the 2020 game, Wichita player sophomore guard Tyson Etienne was one of the top scorers for the Shockers and put up 11 points for the team. This season, Etienne has been one of Wichita's top scorers and managed to bring home 15 points in the Shockers game on Feb. 20 against the University of Houston (24-4, 13-2) on Feb. 20.

Wichita has recently suffered two straight losses against the University of Houston 76-74 on Feb. 20 and the University of Memphis 81-57 on Thursday. Before Wichita prepares to face off with the Pirates, the team will take on Tulsa University at 8 p.m. tomorrow in Tulsa, Oklahoma, at Donald W. Reynolds Center. Both the Pirates and Wichita will look forward to the AAC Championships March 10 through March 13 in Fort Worth, Texas, at Dickies Arena, after Friday's matchup.

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

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**TECspertZ**  
The East Carolinian Sports experts predict this week's basketball matchup

**Brendan Cavazos**  
Sports Editor  
@bcvaz\_xi  
**Men's basketball vs Wichita State on Friday predictions**  
**Score Prediction? 68-55 ECU**  
**Why?** ECU is coming off back-to-back wins after struggling to put a streak together for weeks. This win would end the Pirates' season with a three-game win streak. After securing the first winning season for the program since the 2012-2013 season, the team should not let up against a team ranked below them in the AAC rankings.

**Chris Long**  
Sports Reporter  
@notchrislong  
**Men's basketball vs Wichita State on Friday predictions**  
**Score Prediction? 68-66 ECU**  
**Why?** Wichita State is on a three-game losing streak, with their last win coming against a battered USF team. While they did keep it competitive with Houston, this is a team on the decline. ECU's going to have its share of issues playing away and always seem to make games closer than they need to be. The deciding factor will be how hard the boys want it. It seems obvious to say, but if the ball can get through the hoop consistently then there's nothing else stopping the Pirates.