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Conference Champs

Swim Team Wins Mountain East Title



UNCP's swim team has a reason to celebrate. The team traveled to Canton, OH to make school history. On Wednesday Feb. 12, the swim team achieved their first conference victory at the Mountain East Conference Championship. "I think we're going to surprise everybody and surprise ourselves," said Natalia Sarmiento. Check out page 6 for the complete story about this monumental accomplishment. Submitted Photo/ Jaycie Knight

Raeford Man to Face Court After Vehicular Accident

By Stephanie Sellers
Copy Editor

A Raeford man was charged after a vehicle he was operating damaged a total of seven vehicles at the Pembroke Pointe Apartments off Prospect Road. Austin Wallace, 19, also hit a tree on the property. The Pembroke Police's citation states that Wallace allegedly operated a vehicle on a public vehicular area carelessly and heedlessly in willful and wanton disregard of the rights and safety of others. The citation also states a second alleged violation that Wallace failed to see before stopping that such movement could be made in safety. Highway Patrol Officer C.D.

Lowry also issued a citation against Wallace. The charge alleges that Wallace. Drove while impaired, and after consuming, under age 21. "He was taken by EMS to the hospital, probably Southeast Regional, but before Trooper Lowry got there, Wallace fled and a warrant for his arrest was filed," Highway Patrol officer Sgt. Long said. The warrant was served on Feb. 2 at 11:49 a.m. Wallace's court date is April 6 at 9 a.m. at the Robeson County Courthouse. Although the Jan. 26 incident did not occur on university property, the code of conduct is intended for all persons affiliated with the university whether they are located on or off campus.

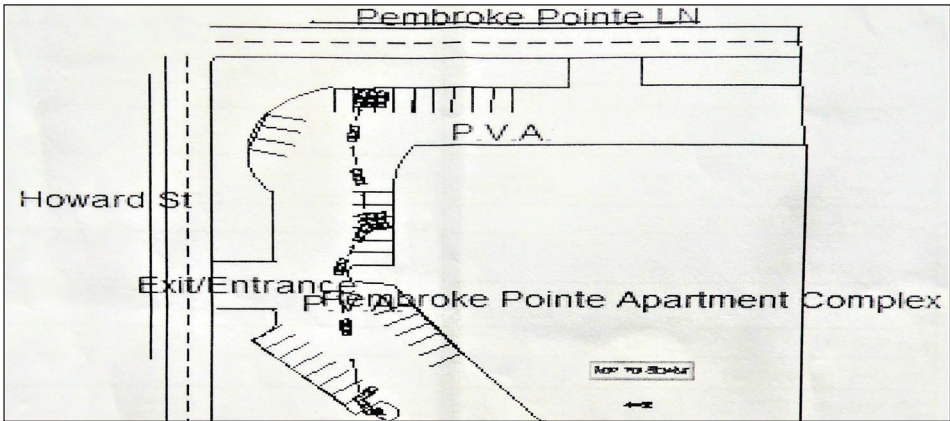


Photo illustrates path of Wallace's driving on Jan. 26, 2020 at Pembroke Point Apts. Diagram by Officer W.L. Cummings, Jr.



Artnauts: Globalocation II

On View through March 5, 2020
Opening Reception: Thursday, February 20, 4:30-6:00 p.m.

The A.D. Gallery at UNC Pembroke is proud to present the latest exhibition, Artnauts: Globalocation II. It features 85 works of art by members of the Artnauts artists collective. This traveling exhibition features work created in a variety of methods including printmaking, drawing, mixed media, and photography. The Globalocation II exhibit has already been shown in 11 locations internationally, including Bosnia, Colombia, South Africa, Mexico, and the United States.

The name derives from combining the words "art" and "astronaut" as a way to describe the process of exploring uncharted territory in the world at large. The name also denotes the practice that is "not" art as usual, going beyond the confines of the traditional or conventional art world and blurring the boundaries between art, activism, and social practice. The A.D Gallery is located in Locklear Hall on the UNCP campus. It is open Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Exhibitions are always free and open to the public.

The Pine Needle
UNCP Student Newspaper
Founded in 1947

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State Law Slows Release of Information on Homecoming Pepperspray Incident

By Mike McGuinness
Local News Editor

“Please know, that upon completion of the investigation, information will be released publicly in accordance with applicable state laws.”

Chancellor Robin Cummings wrote this on Oct. 18, six days after a now former UNCP police officer discharged pepper spray into a crowd that included students, alumni, and fans.

Dr. Lisa Schaeffer, the Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs, posted an addendum on UNCP’s official website on Nov. 2 that the officer involved in the incident was no longer working with the university.

Twelve days later, on Nov. 14, the Student Government Association (SGA) hosted a Public Safety Forum, that featured a panel of police officers who answered the questions from the students and faculty that were in the audience.

Since then, little has been heard and no investigation findings have been reported.

Students at UNCP have to wait a bit longer to find out what had happened, and it is because of one fairly straightforward

reason: the law. The State Human Resources Act (SHRA), which took effect in 2015, allows state employees (of which the officer was) vast protections, including when it comes to dismissal.

Michael Gordon Byrd, the University Program Specialist, said “The process of handling the dismissal of a SHRA employee is pretty extensive and has a lot of appeals processes.”

And he is not kidding. There are multiple layers of appeal present within the law.

The Office of State Human Resources (OSHR) website states that there are two reasons for the dismissal of a state employee: “Unsatisfactory job performance, including grossly inefficient job performance” and “Unacceptable personal conduct.

“Some actions by an employee may fall under both reasons. No disciplinary action shall be invalid solely because the disciplinary action is labelled incorrectly.”

There is also a “just cause” clause as well- which discharging pepper spray into a crowd is considered.

Kelvin Jacobs is the Interim General Counsel for the University of North Carolina-Pembroke.

He is also the lead lawyer for the school, and in an interview he described the initial investigation and the following SHRA appeals.

After the incident, the campus police conducted an investigation, led by a detective in the department.

After the investigaion was completed, it was passed to Dr. Lisa Schaeffer, the aforementioned Vice-Chancellor of Student Affairs.

At that point, the dismissed party can have their case heard in front of a hearing officer or panel; in this particular instance, the case was heard in front of a single officer.

That hearing officer then presents his or her findings to the Chancellor, who has the final university decision.

Because of his public comments, the chancellor recused himself and left it to a designated second.

The designee and chancellor both agreed on dismissal.

At this point, the former employee and the university can mediate, which Jacobs said has not

been broached by either party.

As the university’s lead attorney, he is preparing for the next step in the process, where the case is heading to the Office of Administrative Hearings. This involves a judge, and both parties are represented by attorneys.

“We’ve got to make sure we’re ticking all of these boxes,” Jacobs said.

Skipping over any part of the process or failing to perform due diligence in any portion of the process can result with the dismissal being overturned, with the officer possibly being able to recoup lost pay, or even seek reemployment at the school.

It is this very process that is keeping any information from being released to the student body; information cannot be released to the public until the entire process is exhausted, explaining the silence from the administration; it isn’t apathy, it’s just the law.

It’s a lengthy ordeal, but hopefully one that will bear fruit sometime in May, according to Jacobs.

Until then, students will have to do what they’ve been doing since November: wait patiently for justice.

Robeson County

Sheriff’s Department Hires Officer Involved in Homecoming Incident



Steven E. Jones

Officer

Auxiliary Services Building,
910-521-6235
steven.jones@uncp.edu

Former Police Officer Steven Earl Jones when he was employed by the university. Screen shot from UNCP’s website.

By Mike McGuinness
Local News Editor

A former UNCP Police Officer, who was dismissed for discharging pepper spray into a Homecoming Tailgate crowd, has been hired by the Robeson County Sheriff’s Department.

Steven Earl Jones, was the officer involved in the November, 2019 incident,

according to multiple members of the school administration.

“I can confirm that Stephen (sic) Earl Jones was hired as a Robeson County Deputy Sheriff in January of this year,” wrote Robeson County Sheriff Burnis Wilkins in an email.

“We won’t speak any further as to his employment other than he

was hired in January as a Deputy Sheriff.

“He went through a complete background check and physical as required by the NC Sheriff’s Training & Standards Commission followed by an interview by a Sheriff’s Office Internal panel,” Wilkins said, when asked for any further comments.

University Interim

General Counsel Kelvin Jacobs, in an earlier interview, stated that Jones’ ongoing State Human Resources Act appeal would not negatively affect his hiring by another law enforcement agency.

Jones would be able to seek gainful employment during the appeal process, Jacobs added.

Finding a Church around Campus



Mike Pennino. PN Photo/ Stephanie Sellers

By Stephanie Sellers
Copy Editor

Mike Pennino has led worship services since his UNCP graduation in 2015 with a degree in philosophy and religion and a minor in sociology. As director of the

campus program ECHO, a college ministry, he has become a familiar face and a minister for Vertical Church.

Pennino’s sociology minor helped him to integrate various religions to serve people from different backgrounds.

Vertical Church is held on Sundays at 9:15 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. at the Old Baptist Student Union across from GPAC.

Pennino offers support through activities and outreach to students and the group often shares meals in one another’s homes.

“The Vertical Church is open to all ages to help people who don’t

like church. Some who feel they may not fit in well or like their sins are too big. We help those who fall in the cracks,” Pennino said.

Attending Vertical Church often includes music by Pennino who performs Hip-Hop and has his own album, “Absolute Reality,” which can be heard online through Noisetrade.

Another nearby worship choice is Berea Baptist Church directly across from campus.

Robert Locklear, Jr. is the youth minister who is filling in while the lead pastor is out. Services are held at 10:45 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. The college level Sunday school class

is held upstairs.

After 9:45, visitors may enter through main entrance at chapel, go down hall through glass door, turn right, go upstairs and the room is the third door on right.

College Bible Study is Wednesday nights at 5 p.m. at the old sanctuary. They enjoy a light meal and devotion before study. Visitors may enter the old sanctuary in front of the road sign.

Both Vertical Church and Berea Baptist Church offer modern screen praise and worship.

Duke graduate Dr. David Nikkels, Professor of Religion and Department Chair, has served UNCP for 18 years. He shared that



Robert Locklear, Jr. PN Photo/ Stephanie Sellers

several recent graduates have continued studies in seminary.

“We have a very solid program with a variety in both Hebrew, Christian origins and other world religions with cultures that intersect,” Nikkels said.

Two of 2019’s Best Films: 1917 and Ford Vs Ferrari



Dean-Charles Chapman and George MacKay in 1917. PNPhoto/ Francois Duhamel / Universal Pictures and DreamWorks Pictures/TNS

By Mitchell Doub
Staff Writer

1917

Quick, why was World War I fought? Where was it fought and who fought with whom? Don’t worry if you can’t answer, you aren’t alone, most people have no idea how to answer these questions. As far as enjoying this movie, it doesn’t matter. “1917” is a retelling of the heroic narrative of “Saving Private Ryan.”

Director Sam Mendes (who co-wrote with Krysty Wilson-Cairns) takes movie-goers on a non-stop ride through the horrors of northern France, three years into the ‘war to end all wars.’

The first scene opens

with our young heroes Lance Corporal Blake and Lance Corporal Schofield napping in a grassy field. Movie-goers are quickly jolted into wartime as Blake and Schofield are sent into the hell of ‘no-mans land’ just as the allied forces were sent into the hell of the D-Day invasion.

Even if you know little about the historical time frame, this is an enjoyable movie to watch.

Private Blake is informed that his brother and 1600 other British soldiers are walking into a German trap.

The Germans have faked a withdraw and are baiting the British to attack. Death awaits the attackers.

Blake is to choose one soldier and they are to cross the miles of wasteland, into

enemy territory and deliver a message to call off the attack.

Much has been said of Mendes’ use of the ‘single 90-minute take’ effect which is meant to seem as though the entire movie is shot in one take. It is a difficult challenge that is cool to watch, but don’t get lost in the mechanics. This is a story of devotion, bravery, loss, triumph and tragedy.

Dean-Charles Chapman (from Game of Thrones) and George MacKay are perfect as two young British lads off for an adventure and find a war instead.

Many of the scenes are visually stunning and Thomas Newman’s score adds a foreboding pitch to the already menacing story.

This is not a romantic

date movie but if you want to see an enjoyable period piece that happens to be set in WWI, “1917” is the perfect choice.

Ford Vs Ferrari

“Continue making your ugly little cars in your ugly factory.” This sentence spawned a war. A war of wills between wealthy industrialists separated by the earth’s second largest ocean.

Ford vs Ferrari is Director James Mangold’s retelling of the actual events that led to Ford motor company’s four-year sweep of the 24 hour Le Mans car race in the late 1960’s.

Up until that time, Italian car-maker Ferrari had dominated the event and the American car makers were left to watch from the sidelines and grind their teeth in jealousy.

Enzo Ferrari (Remo Girone) had spent his life chasing perfection, which he supposedly found in the style, speed, handling and endurance of the Ferrari brand of racing machines.

This perfection came at great cost (literally, he was near bankruptcy), and was entertaining offers to buy his cash-strapped company.

Henry Ford II, flush with cash from the sales of Falcon wagons and pick up trucks, offered to purchase the Italian company and fully enter the thrill of Le

Mans competition.

Ferrari insisted on being allowed to keep its name and race under its own, independent banner.

Ford said no, which prompted Mr. Ferrari to tell Mr. Ford what he could do with his money (see opening quote) and to sell to Fiat instead. The war began.

American race car maker, Carroll Shelby (Matt Damon) was brought into the Ford fold to build Le Mans style cars for the American side and Shelby looked to British driver Ken Miles (Christian Bale) to be the lead driver.

Predictably, Miles attempt to win Le Mans is at first thwarted by the films true antagonist, Leo Beebe (Josh Lucas), Mr. Ford’s head of marketing. Beebe feels that Miles is not the proper image for Ford and insists upon an American driver.

Failure follows. Once Shelby muzzles Beebe, the true competition begins.

Most of the film is entertaining and fast-paced but a few scenes seem a bit contrived, (case in point; Shelby and Miles fighting because they haven’t done it in a while).

But the film is satisfying and educational as viewers are brought into the inner circle of corporate politics and competition in 1960’s America.

Book Review: Born a Crime by Trevor Noah

By Alisabeth Limon
Staff Writer

Trevor Noah, in his autobiographical novel “Born a Crime,” explores the topic of race and politics during his time growing up in a segregated South Africa.

Race becomes more complicated as he notices the lines created by segregation and the history of Africa due to the fact he is both white and black.

At the time, South Africa had made it illegal to have a mixed child.

A white male would be let off the hook, the other consenting party would be arrested. A white female

or a black male would be arrested.

Noah explores the ridiculousness of it all and the reasons for the separation and connects them back to history.

The complexity of racial lines among those who were black in South Africa are where your loyalties lie, whether you were Zulu, Parsi or Afrikaans.

All of this affected how you were treated and how people interacted.

This affected Noah and his family for years and even separated his father from him when he was young as he could get into deep legal trouble just for

the association of having a mixed child.

Noah’s “Born a Crime” is a read for everyone and is recommended for all. Especially if they enjoy history and politics.

However, much of the things that Noah discusses that appear in his childhood are still relevant today.

The distinguished culture and knowledge in how South Africa is perceived with what is actually there is broken down and given to the reader. Allowing for them to see the relevance and the necessity of understanding the past and present.



Alisabeth Limon with “Born a Crime.” PN Photo/ Stephanie Sellers

New Caribbean Student Organization



Caribbean Student Union President Makelee Roland and Vice President Danjarus Watkins. CSU is designed to infuse UNCP with a dose of Caribbean culture. PN Photo/Sports Tweede

By Sports Tweede
Staff Writer

UNC-Pembroke welcomed the Caribbean Student Union to its campus on Feb. 3. During the first interest meeting, CSU President Makelee Roland, a senior art major from St. Mary’s Parish, Jamaica and Vice President Danjarus Watkins, who has ties with Grenada, explained the future vision for the group.

The organization’s focus is to bring students with a connection to the Caribbean together while enriching the campus with Caribbean culture.

A prospective member does not need to be from nor have ties with the Caribbean, only have the desire to learn more of about Caribbean culture.

Currently, the locations represented by potential members

are Jamaica, Haiti, Grenada, St. Kitts, Nevis, Trinidad, Tobago, Dominican Republic, Monserrat, Israel, parts of the Middle East, Columbia, Panama, Mexico, The Virgin Islands, Laos, Thailand, Nigeria, El Salvador, Guatemala, Bermuda, Barbados and Puerto Rico.

Alex Brandt, the director of Global Engagement, supports this organization and serves as the faculty advisor.

Brandt is well-versed in the group’s goal to grow the campus’ knowledge of other cultures due to his experience.

CSU will be meeting bi-monthly on Mondays from 5-7pm. Monetary dues are not required. T-shirts will soon be available at a \$10 purchase.

Keep an eye out for CSU’s first official event, predicted to be on Feb. 26 from 6-9 p.m.



CSU members at the group’s first interest meeting. PN Photo/Sports Tweede

Upcoming Events:

- Feb. 19 Basketball**
USC Aiken 7:30 Lumbee Guaranty Bank Court
- Feb. 20 Black History Heritage Lunch**
11 a.m.-2 p.m. Dining Hall
- Feb. 20 Shaping the Imagery and Identity of a Nation: Blacks in the Arts**
4 p.m. – 5 p.m. Chavis University Center UC Lounge
- Feb. 20 MLK March**
6 p.m. March from Cypress Residence Hall to Old Main
- Feb. 21 Diversity and Inclusion Third Fridays Book of the Month Club**
2:30-3:30 p.m. Livermore Library, 212
- Feb. 22 Basketball**
Columbus State 3:30 p.m. Lumbee Guaranty Bank Court
- Feb. 22 Open House Orientation**
7 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Moore Hall 112 Auditorium

EARLY VOTING SHUTTLE

#UNCPVOTES

+ Shuttle Times
Feb. 19: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

+ Pick-up is in front of the University Center
+ Only drops off at Pembroke Public Library
+ Open to UNCP Students only
+ Look for the CCE Van!

RSVP TO RIDE HERE:
serve.uncp.edu/votershuttle/

Be sure to bring proper proof of residence if you are **not** registered to vote!

For additional information about early voting as a UNCP Student go to: serve.uncp.edu/uncpvotes

If you have a question, feel free to contact:
Jorge Castillo- jc0086@bravemail.uncp.edu
Joel Lowry- jl0067@bravemail.uncp.edu

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UNCP’s Non-Traditional Students

By Karyn Lindsey

You see them everywhere on campus. It’s the man in front of you in your history class and the woman who sits next to you in sociology. It may even be one of your professors. They can be found in almost every college in America. They are non-traditional students. Instead of going to college right after high school, their lives took them down different paths.

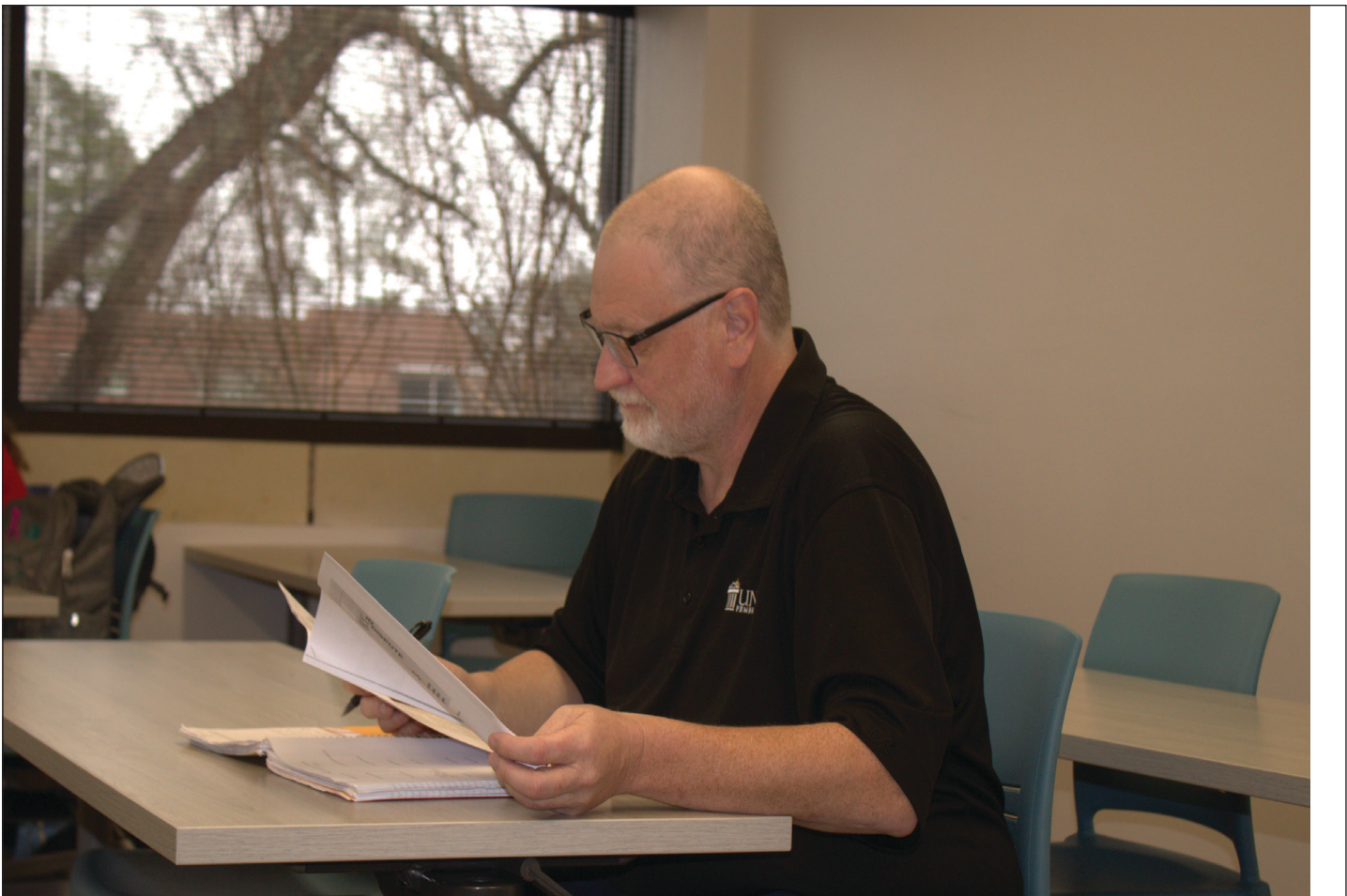
“I reversed the way I approached life, so as soon as I graduated from high school I began working in real estate... and then I got pregnant and then got married...and then I raised my kids,” rising junior Erin Drake said. In addition to raising their kids Erin and her husband have owned a business for 30 years and another one for five years.

Being a student at a college or university is difficult at any point, but being a non-traditional student comes with its own unique set of challenges. While everyone has bills to pay, non-traditional student’s bills may be more substantial in nature. Things like mortgage payments and credit card bills make working at least part time a big part of the non-traditional experience.

“I do work a lot on the weekends and when I can,” Uber driver and UNCP freshman John Ware said.

Having to relearn things you haven’t thought about in years is also an issue. Instructor Clejetter Cousins, from the Mass Communication Department, said after being out of school for more than 20 years, she had to retrain herself to write in an academic style when she went back to school.

Balancing a homelife as a non-traditional student is also challenging. While not exclusive to non-traditional students, being



John Ware, a freshman student at UNCP, catches up on some reading before class. Ware is one of UNCP’s many non-traditional students. PN Photo/Karyn Lindsey

married, and having kids may take up a significant portion of their time. Finding time to be a spouse or a parent can be difficult with looming homework deadlines.

“In addition to being a mom, I’m also pregnant and a military spouse. I find it is a lot harder to balance school with raising the kids when their dad is gone. Other than that I just try to do my school work when the kids are sleeping or when they’re playing with their dad,” Megan Sirmans said.

With the rapid changes in technology, the way classes are conducted may be different from the way the were when some non-traditional students were in school before.

“The last paper I wrote for college in the 80s was literally on a typewriter. I love being able to work at any time and submit work on my schedule. Also, the ease of finding information makes this

experience lots of fun,” Ware said.

Drake said she initially found it difficult to figure out how Canvas worked, but she learned to embrace it, and likes it better because unlike her previous school experiences she always knows what her grades are.

Being a non-traditional student is not only about the struggles. There is value in the life experience and wisdom that comes with being an older than average student.

“I consider the fact that I’ve lived for 50 years already as the basis of all the education I’m receiving on campus. I feel like the life experience I’ve had thus far...I can relate things that were being taught to times in my life when I’ve already experienced something like that,” Drake said.

When asked if she had any wisdom to impart to traditional students, Drake said she would like to encourage students of all ages not to take everything the

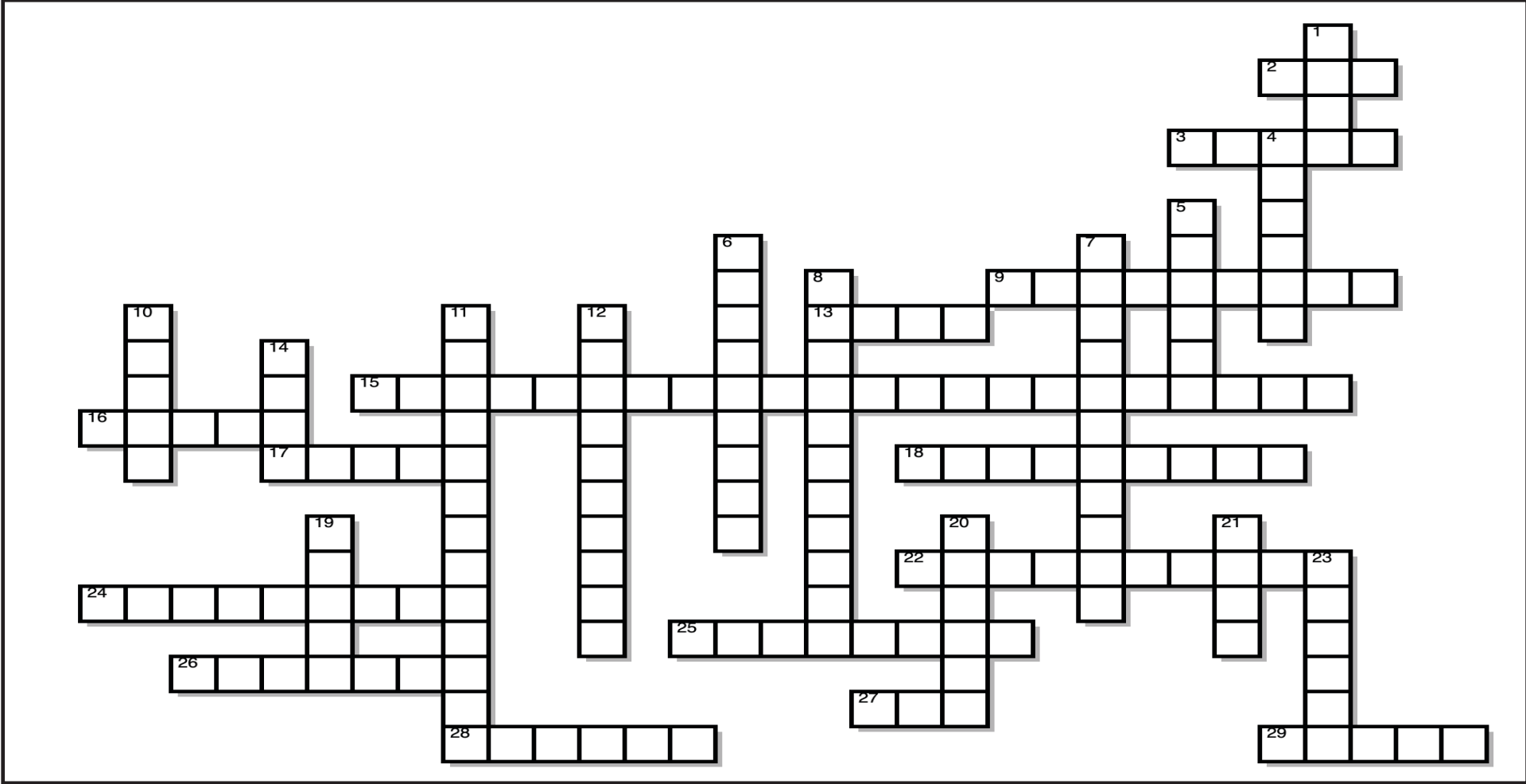
professors say at face value.

“They do not have to take word for word everything their professor says is true. I feel like they’re told that what the professor says goes and I would like to see them challenge the professors a little bit more with the critical thinking skills that they should be developing. My fear is that professors, although they claim that they want them to think critically, that professors don’t really want to be challenged by their students,” Drake said.

Of course, there is also a chance that you’ll be mistaken for a professor. “I had a funny encounter on the first day of one of my history classes. I walked in and went to the back of the class and sat down. A couple of girls turned around and started laughing at me thinking I was the teacher. I looked at them and said ‘I’m one of you!’” Ware said.

Crossword!

By Ky’Aire Goode



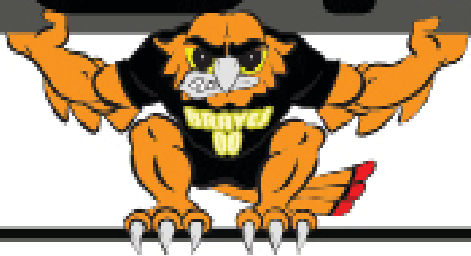
ACROSS

- 2 Number after 5 and before 7
- 3 Drink plenty of this daily
- 9 The study of the movements and relative positions of celestial bodies interpreted as having an influence on human affairs and the natural world
- 13 Opposite of Hate
- 15 UNCP Swimming became champions of this conference for the first time
- 16 Number that ate nine; six is afraid of it
- 17 What Seven did to Nine
- 18 On campus pizza at UNCP
- 22 A horizontal ladder found on a playground for children to climb and swing on
- 24 The only restaurant in Pembroke to get a meal 24 hours of the day
- 25 Famous Tik Tok dance created by Jalaiah
- 26 Popular social media with a bird as its logo
- 27 Man’s Best Friend
- 28 Lemon-Lime soda
- 29 Toast can never be this again once you toast it

DOWN

- 1 Number after four and before six
- 4 #1 Song on the Billboard Hot 100 as of Feb. 18
- 5 Baked or cooked food that is typically small, flat and sweet.
- 6 UNCP’s Mascot
- 7 Police Officer responsible for Pepper Spray incident
- 8 The best of the best players in the NBA are voted in to this game.
- 10 A place to rest for the night during extended or overnight trips
- 11 Cheating Major League Baseball Team
- 12 The act of fighting open-handed with your friends
- 14 Number ate by 7.
- 19 What you get when you cook bread
- 20 Grilled or steamed sausage sandwich where the sausage is served in a bun
- 21 Opposite of Love
- 23 8-legged arachnid. Can easily be found in a dusty old house

SPORTS



SECTION
B
The Pine Needle



UNCP’s Mariel Mencia Martinez (center), accepts the first-place award for her teammates Sarah Morden, Bianca Bateman, and Jaycie Knight after setting the school record in the 200 Yard Medley Relay with a time of 1:51.42 on Feb. 12, the first day of the Mountain East Conference championships held in Canton, Ohio. Photo Credit: Jaycie Knight

By: Zachary Young and Connor von Taborsky
Assistant Sports Editor
Sports Contributor

During the Mountain East Conference Championships, held in Canton, Ohio, the UNCP Braves wrapped up the first conference championship in program history. Freshman Nathalia Silva posted a meet record in the 1,000-yard freestyle with a time of 10:17.88 on Wednesday, February 12th gaining 32 points for the Braves overall score. Silva finished in 3rd in the women’s 500-yard freestyle with a final time of 5:05.15, earning the Braves 27 more points. To add to her accomplishments, Silva also broke a 2-year old school record in the women’s 1650 yard freestyle, earning another 32 points with a finals time of 17:21.27.

For the women’s 50-yard freestyle Mariel Mencia Martinez scored another 32 points for the Braves with her final time of

23.98. In the 200-yard medley relay, sophomores Jaycie Knight and Bianca Bateman, alongside freshmen Sarah Morden and Mariel Mencia Martinez helped secure a 3rd place finish for UNCP with a time of 1:52.42.

The Braves earned two 4th place finishes in the 800-yard freestyle relay, 400-yard freestyle relay and gaining 52 points in each event. The 800-yard freestyle relay swam by Mariel Mencia Martinez, Nathalia Silva, Megan Hunter and Ketlyn Rodriguez Matos ended with a final time of 8:03.49.

During the 400-yard freestyle the Braves finished with a time of 3:37.22, swam by Nathalia Silva, Sarah Morden, Ketlyn Rodriguez Matos and Mariel Mencia Martinez. The Braves racked up 715 total points throughout the event. Throughout the course of the conference championship, the Braves registered 23 school records and four NCAA qualifying times during the conference

championship.

This year’s roster can be described in one word: international. Coach Oscar Roverato has been able to recruit not only homegrown talent but some of the best young swimmers in the world. Freshmen Alyssa Ramosbarbosa and Sarah Morden, both of Fayetteville, as well as Trinity Mack of Pembroke, are just a few of the local swimmers, but the reach of UNCP is much further. The roster includes four international freshmen: Natalia Sarmiento from Bogota, Colombia, Mariel Mencia Martinez from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Ketlyn Rodriguez Matos from Ponce, Puerto Rico and Nathalia Silva from Sao Paulo, Brazil.

All the international swimmers found UNCP in various ways. Natalia Sarmiento was living with a host family in Florida while she was in high school; this was when she became aware of

UNCP. Ketlyn Rodriguez was attending a boarding school in Florida when she was introduced to UNCP; Nathalia Silva ended up at UNCP due to assistant coach Juliana Ribeiro also hailing from Brazil. Mariel Mencia Martinez was recruited by head coach Oscar Roverato while swimming in Greensboro.

Before heading to Canton, the Braves expressed confidence in their abilities to compete at a high level. Natalia Sarmiento expectations were straight forward: “I think we’re going to surprise everybody and surprise ourselves.”

The Braves will compete in the Royal Open on February 21st and Saturday February 22nd before the NCAA Championships begin on March 11.



Members of the UNCP swim team swim laps in preparation for the Mountain East Championships on Feb. 7th. PN Photo/Zachary Young



Ketlyn Rodriguez Matos poses after finishing in third place in the 400 Yard Individual Medley. Rodriguez Matos set a school record, finishing in 4:42.03. Photo Credit: Jaycie Knight

Braves Defeat Flagler College, Improving to 19-5 Overall

By Carson von Taborsky
Sports Writer

UNCP’s men’s basketball team hosted Flagler University on February 5. The Braves hoped to extend their seven-game win streak with a victory versus Flagler.

This game also marked the first time the Braves had reached Division II rankings since mid-December, by becoming the 23rd ranked team in the country. The score went back and forth early, but David Strother and Akia Pruitt would eventually catch fire.

As the lead started to grow, Spencer Levi would throw down some vicious dunks that sparked team momentum. The Braves finished the half shooting 58% from the field compared to Flagler’s 45%. The first half score was 44-34 in favor of the Braves.

Adding to the highlights of the first half, the second

half certainly didn’t disappoint. The Braves hit the ground running as the lead continued to grow throughout the second half.

Flagler would hit their stride midway through the half, but it just wasn’t enough to overcome the Braves lead. Shaun Kirk would have one monstrous alley-oop dunk assisted by his brother Tyrell Kirk to close out the game.

That final play took what was already a runaway game and sealed it. The Braves finished the second half shooting 52% compared to Flagler’s 39%. The final score would be 93-69, extending the Braves’ seven game win streak.

It was an all around team effort. The Braves’ leading contributors include: Akia Pruitt (19 points, 9 rebounds, and 4 steals), David Strother (19 points, 4 rebounds, and 3 assists), Spencer Levi (12 points and 8 rebounds) and Jordan Ratcliffe (13 points

and 5 rebounds). “We just need to focus and work hard. Even when we’re winning, they [coaching staff] try to stay on us about the little things and we need to listen.”

“We got big games coming up, so we need to be ready,” David Strother said.

“We need to take it one day at a time. We may have got one tonight and we need to prepare for tomorrow.”

The Braves winning streak has allowed them to outperform their performance to this date last season, where they went 18-7 overall. This season sees them at 17-4.

On February 19, the Braves will host the Pacers of USC Aiken on UNCP’s Neon Night. USC Aiken is currently tied for first with the Braves in the Peach Belt Conference with a record of 13-3.



Top: Senior Forward Akia Pruitt attempting to deny an inbound pass from Flagler. Bottom: Junior Guard David Strother looking for the inside pass to Senior Forward Carson Mounce. PN Photo/Carson von Taborsky



Women’s Basketball Holds Off Flagler with Free Throws

By Zachary Young
Sports Writer

The UNCP women’s basketball team hosted the Flagler College Saints on Wednesday, February 5. The Braves were able to come away with a win despite a night where they shot the ball 38% from the field and committed a total of 19 turnovers.

In the first quarter the Braves outscored the Saints 16 to 15, holding them to 28% from the field and allowing zero three-point shots. The Braves would shoot 46% from the field and making 2 of 6 three-point attempts.

The Saints still were unable to make a three-point field goal in the second quarter, with the Braves defense allowing only two attempts from beyond the arc. However, Flagler would outscore the Braves 12 to 9 because of poor shooting. UNCP shot 25% only making three of 12 field goal attempts and making only one three-point shot.

At the start of the second half the Braves came out to control the pace of the game. They outscored the Saints 18 to 8 in the third quarter, but in the fourth Flagler closed the gap on a UNCP 12 point lead; outscoring the Braves 23 to 15.

Efficiency from the free-throw line would determine the outcome of the game. The Braves would end the night shooting an impressive 94% from the charity stripe on 16 of 17 attempts. Flagler College would only shoot 50%, making six of their 12 free throw attempts. The Braves were able to force 16 personal fouls and out-rebound the Saints 36 to 28. The final score: 58 to 54.

The Braves had four players with double figures in points. Senior forward Aliyah Farmer finished the game with 10 points, 8 rebounds and 1 block. Senior guard ShaNiya Lester played a team high of 32 minutes and recorded 11 points 9 rebounds and 2 assists. Freshman guard Alcenia Purnell with 10 points and 3 assists. Freshman guard Courtney Smith contributed with a solid 11 points, 3 assists and 1 steal.

The Braves are now 10-14 overall and 5-11 in conference play, putting them 9th in the Peach Belt Conference standings. The Braves have two home games this month: February 19th at 5:30 p.m. versus the USC Aiken Pacers and again February 26th at 5:30 p.m. versus the Patriots of Francis Marion University.



Freshman Guard Alcenia Purnell in an isolation against a Flagler defender. Photo Credit: UNCP Athletic Department



Senior Guard Shaniya Lester driving to the basket for two of her 11 points. Photo Credit: UNCP Athletic Department

Women’s Basketball Upcoming Schedule:

Credit: UNCP Athletics



VS

USC Aiken

Feb 19 (Wed)

Neon Night



VS

Columbus State

Feb 22 (Sat)

Beach Night



at

Francis Marion

Feb 26 (Wed)

Taco Bell Cantina: Booze and Burritos



Taco Bell Cantina in Raleigh, NC. PN Photo/Madison Hardin



Customers having a meal at Taco Bell Cantina. PN Photo/Madison Hardin

By Jackie Porter

Opening just about 5 months ago, the Taco Bell Cantina in Raleigh, North Carolina is a new go-to spot for your late-night cravings. They offer over half a dozen beers including some from a local Fayetteville brewery, the Mash House Brewing Co., and the freezes come spiked with rum, vodka or tequila.

The restaurant offers all the staple favorites that you would come to expect from “The Bell”: the dollar burritos, Mexican pizzas, and greasy cheese quesadillas.

They offer indoor seating and an outdoor patio for you to drink and eat the day away. This location is one of nineteen that the company has opened throughout the country in hopes to elevate its eating experience for its patrons. The restaurants also offer other local breweries where they are opened up, so they have the added benefit of boosting local businesses as well. They plan to open hundreds around the nation and the one in Raleigh marks North Carolina as the 3rd state on the east coast to have on, with the other two being New York



A beer served at Taco Bell Cantina. PN Photo/Madison Hardin

and Florida.

These restaurants are said to appeal to a younger audience that enjoy drinking whenever they go out to eat. After experiencing the franchises newest venture first-hand, we can definitely say that it is a step in the right direction for the company to offer this type of service to those of age to participate.

The food remains at the same quality you would expect from Taco Bell, but the cantina restaurant looks the part and provides a nice middle-ground between fancy wineries and breweries with elaborate menus, and picking up a to-go bag and six pack on the way home. Those that can stop in and give a try should, beer and cheap Mexican food are the PB&J of a college experience.

Crossword Solution (from pg. 5)

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