



Retention rate falls to ten-year low, administration responds

By Laird Allen
SENIOR WRITER

The Oct. 1 deadline for re-enrollments has passed, and the statistics are in: Guilford's retention rate has fallen to 68 percent, the first time since 1988 when it has fallen below 72 percent, according to Director of Institutional Research and Assessment Thomas Coaxum.

It is easy to blame this on either last year's first-year class, administrative practices, or simply the plummeting economy. When asked the cause, three administrators responded similarly.

"Retention," said Coaxum, "is a complicated issue."

It is a sentiment echoed by Dean of Students Aaron Fetrow and Vice

President for Enrollment Services Randy Doss.

"Retention is incredibly complex to me, and I've worked in estate tax law," Fetrow said.

There are three essential concepts that are necessary to understand what this drop in retention means. First is retention itself – the percentage of students who remain on from year to year. This is measured not from the whole population, but rather from what is called "the cohort" – the core of each class, consisting of first-year, first-time college students. Retention only connects to the behavior of this cohort, excluding transfers and CCE students.

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PHOTOS BY MAX KOCHINKE/GUILFORDIAN

By Mary Bubar
STAFF WRITER

Last week in observance of North Carolina Archives Week, the Friends Historical Collection conducted behind-the-scenes tours in addition to creating a display of memorabilia highlighting Guilford sports history in the Friends Historical Research Room in Hege Library.

This year's theme is "Capturing Memories of

Sports and Leisure in the Old North State."

Embracing that theme, the newest exhibit case features a pair of black rubber-bottomed canvas lace-up woman's basketball shoes circa 1939.

Alongside the shoes is a visual tribute to Laura Worth, a member of Guilford's first freshman class in 1889, when the New Garden boarding school became Guilford College. Worth went on to become the first director of female physical

(Above) Delicate volumes like these from the Friends Historical Collection in Hege Library were on display during North Carolina Archives Week. (Below left) The 2008 theme, "Capturing Memories of Sports and Leisure in the Old North State," was embodied in the unveiling of a new exhibit case dedicated to Guilford sports history.

education in 1895.

Guilford's sports history dates back to 1867 when baseball was introduced at New Garden Boarding School.

While putting together the display, Liz Cook, archives associate for the Friends Historical

Collection, discovered a gray sports letter with a thin maroon arrow stitched in.

The significance of the arrow remained a mystery until she discovered that Guilford offered girls archery in the 40's. "There is always something to find out about (our history)," Cook said.

Archives week pays tribute to the people and organizations responsible for maintaining and making available archival and historical records.

"Keeping the artifacts stable and accessible to the public is important in understanding and promoting Guilford and

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Students discuss the writing process with author **Ron Rash** in the Greenleaf.

Author Ron Rash inspires first-years

By Sallie Chase
STAFF WRITER

Life at Guilford is full of opportunities to meet fascinating people from all around the world. On Oct. 23, first year students had the chance to meet Ron Rash, author of "Saints at the River," which was the required summer reading for all incom-

ing first years.

Students gathered in Dana auditorium at 11 a.m. to listen to Rash speak about his experience with the book. He began with a reading of the opening passage, a haunting yet beautiful narrative in which a little girl is swept up by a river and drowns.

First-year Meg Holden found this to be the most poignant part of the presentation.

"When he read from the opening scene of the book, it made it a lot more meaningful than when I read it myself," said Holden. "It really came alive for me."

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