



COMPILED BY KATHERINE WIKRENT

A \$25.5 million theme park is to be constructed in memory of action film star Bruce Lee, who was suggested to have been the world's greatest martial artist and who died of a cerebral edema at age 32 in July 1973. Bruce Lee fan-club chairperson Wong Yiu-keung claims that the park will contain a martial arts academy and a conference center. The park, which will be located in the Chinese town of Shunde, will be finished in three years. *Facts from AP and ABC news.*

Traditional images of St. Nicholas are banned from kindergartens in Vienna. Community officials claim that the legend of St. Nicholas, the benefactor of the good little boys and girls, causes fear among children of strangers lurking into their homes at night. Many oppose this ban, believing that the ban was imposed solely for the sake of political correctness. Right-wing extremist Heinz-Christian Strache condemns the ban, claiming that its argument for the sake of children is "bordering on absurdity." His supporter Hans-Joerg Jenewein added, "Whoever comes to Austria must realize it's a Christian country. Christian traditions are part of the equation." *Facts and quotes from MSNBC Online and WTOP News.*

Over 300 Thai primary and secondary schools in the southern province of Pattani have been closed as of Nov. 27 until further notice following the brutal slayings of two teachers, bringing the death toll of Thai public educators to 59 in the past three years. Muslim insurgents are suspected to be guilty of these increasingly frequent crimes, and Thai teachers now work with constant fear. Bunsom Thongsripai, president of the Teachers' Association in Pattani said, "Teachers can't bear what has happened. They are paranoid, worried and afraid." Thongsripai adds that schools will open as soon as conditions improve and teachers feel they can work safely. *Facts and quotes from Topix.net.*

School plans for flu outbreak

By LISA ZHANG

Due to rising concerns about the avian flu, NCSSM has drafted a pandemic response plan which was mandated by the UNC system.

A pandemic flu is a global outbreak of serious illness which can spread easily from person to person.

An epidemic does not currently exist, but the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has made projections for an outbreak in the near future because of the highly pathogenic and antiviral resistant nature of this strain.

Congress has set aside \$3.8 billion for pandemic preparations in efforts to produce enough vaccines within six months of an outbreak to inoculate the entire U.S. population. According to The Washington Post, the national plan details an 18 month crisis period during which 1.9 million Americans are potentially killed in a worst-case scenario.

"I'm not too sure I believe all this only because scientists have been saying there will be a flu pandemic for the past two to three years," junior Prashant Angara said. "They said it last year too, but nothing too bad happened."

Among the students, there is a shared skepticism in regard to the likelihood of a flu pandemic.

"I think it's just a bit out there," junior Steven Norton said. "I've heard of people getting it but never to the point of a national pandemic."

Since the virus spreads and mutates very quickly, scientists are concerned that the bird flu will reach the United States either this year or in the next few years. However, this prediction is not universally held to be accurate.

"I don't think it's going to be soon," said physician assistant Sherry Mowrey, who was part of the planning committee. "I'm not 100 percent convinced, maybe 75 percent convinced but it's not a strong possibility."

Even though it is uncertain how the flu will progress in the future, Chancellor Gerald Boardman directed the school to form a crisis team and a committee that began to outline a plan in August. This plan was finally presented to the faculty and staff on Oct. 30 and then sent to the UNC General Administration for approval.

The plan outlines procedures for four different levels from zero, the current preparation stage, to three. Level one implements a social distancing policy once there is a human to human transfer of the bird flu somewhere in the world. Students should avoid sharing fluids and utensils, wash hands very often and avoid any unnecessary contact with others. If there is an outbreak within a 500-mile radius of the school, level two is initiated and a school-wide quarantine is possible. In case of quarantine, ample food for four to six weeks will be prepared and meals will be delivered to all residents.

"Our goal is to get as many



Photo by Luis Zapata

Nurse Sharon Evans administers a flu shot to Ben Ryan. These shots are available to student and staff through the clinic.

students home as possible before we were quarantined," said Harry Tucker, director of campus resources. "We would try to continue classes through the web."

In the event that the virus does break out within our school, the clinic plays an important role during both the level one and two stages.

"We want [students] coming to the clinic as soon as there are sniffles of illness," Mowrey said. "If there are many sick students, we'll set up a clinic in the gym."

If the school is unable to provide the maximum safety for students, level three is introduced.

"At level three, campus is closed," Tucker said. "Everything stops except student life and maintenance."

Even the most intricate and

well thought-out plan can evoke negative sentiments from those whom the plan will affect most.

"I don't think the plan is a good idea," Angara said. "I think that maybe we should just send everyone home as soon as there's word that there's a pandemic."

The plan is a result of four months of discussion and committee members are satisfied.

"I think it's a great plan," Mowrey said. "I just don't see the virus jumping from Thailand to North Carolina. I think it will be slow."

Regardless of whether the flu actually strikes, careful preparations have been made.

"It is important that students know that the school is taking this very seriously," Tucker said. "Safety is the number one thing. We want to disrupt life as little as possible."

Lack of supplies leads to TP raids

By WHITNEY BAKER

Student concerns have risen recently regarding the availability of such staple supplies as toilet paper and paper towels. Poor communication and wasteful practices have led to supplies running

out before they can be replaced, driving students to take supplies from outside their halls.

"It happens almost every time," Fourth East RLA Noah Seymour said. Some halls, particularly those with public bathrooms, have consistent problems with supplies like toilet paper, paper towels and trash bags running out too early.

Supplies are delivered to halls in cases that are expected to last three to four weeks, according to Marlene Blakney, assistant director of housing and residential life. Some halls request supplies after as little as one or two weeks, which can put a strain on the Residential

Life budget.

Supplies run low when used in a wasteful manner, such as taking three or four paper towels to dry hands or using paper towels for housekeeping that can be done using sponges. Sometimes non-crucial items like paper towels or trash bags are withheld from halls, Blakney said, until a more reasonable amount of time has passed.

"I'm trying to get students to be more mindful of how they use supplies," Blakney said. "If they had to pay for these things, they'd be a little more careful."

And when one hall runs out of supplies, the trouble can spread.

"It gets to be a problem when people go on hall and take toilet paper without asking," Second Beall RLA Radhika Deshmukh said. She indicated that when toilet paper is running low, some students resort to other halls or public restrooms as a temporary solution.

A more constructive action would be letting RLAs know when supplies are running low or are out, Blakney said. When requests for additional housekeeping supplies are made in a timely manner, the supplies are usually delivered the day after. Sometimes the lack of supplies is just a communication issue, according to Blakney.

Requesting supplies earlier than expected is discouraged, but not completely ignored, according to First Beall RLA Elizabeth Cutrone.

"We've only gotten yelled at once for asking for supplies within three weeks," she said.



Art by Laura Chao