

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthbeat

WFU Baptist Medical Center will celebrate King holiday

Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center will hold its seventh annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration Jan. 20 at 12:15 p.m. in Babcock Auditorium. The public is invited.

The Rev. Alton B. Pollard III, director of black church studies and associate professor of religion and culture at Emory University's Chandler School of Theology in Atlanta, will be the featured speaker. Pollard is the author of "Mysticism and Social Change," co-editor of "How Long This Road: Race, Religion and the Continuing Struggle for Freedom." He is former associate editor of the journal *Black Sacred Music*.

An ordained Baptist minister, Pollard is an associate minister of Trinity African Baptist Church, Mableton, Ga. He received his bachelor's degree with honors from Fisk University, a master's degree from Harvard University divinity school and a doctorate in religion from Duke University. He and his wife, Jessica, have a son, Brooks, and a daughter, Asha.

At the celebration, musical celebrations will be provided by soloist Devon B. Cuthbertson, the New Faith Ensemble of Winston-Salem and the Ultra Sounds!, a men's cappella singing group made up of first- and second-year students at Wake Forest University School of Medicine.

Admission is free. Free parking will be available on the employees parking deck on Hawthorne Road.

Kernersville doctor has new title

RALEIGH — Dr. Kenworth Holness of Kernersville was installed as minority physicians constituency director of the N.C. Academy of Family Physicians (NCAFP) during the NCAFP's annual Winter Family Physicians Weekend and Annual Meeting at the Grove Park Inn in Asheville. Holness will serve a two-year term.

The N.C. Academy of Family Physicians Inc. (NCAFP) is a nonprofit association, headquartered in Raleigh, with a 54-year history serving family physicians, family practice residents and medical students statewide, currently numbering more than 2,400 members. The academy also has a philanthropic arm, the NCAFP Foundation, a charitable public foundation recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

The academy's mission is to improve the health of patients, their families and the people of North Carolina; to promote access to primary care services by family physicians; to advance and represent the specialty of family practice; and to serve, with professionalism and creativity, the unique needs of its members. The NCAFP is a constituent chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP). Founded in 1947, the AAFP is the only medical specialty society devoted solely to primary care and currently represents nationwide more than 93,100 family physicians, residents and students. For more information about the NCAFP, visit the academy's Web site at www.ncafp.com.

New associate director named

Michael Batalia, Ph.D., has been appointed associate director of the Office of Technology Asset Management at Wake Forest University Health Sciences.

Spencer Lemons, director of the Office of Technology Asset Management, said Batalia would join his staff on Jan. 6.

Batalia comes to Wake Forest University Health Sciences from the Office of Technology Transfer at N.C. State University, where he served as the interim associate vice chancellor and director of the office and before that as associate director, managing inventions and technology from the life sciences and physical sciences.

"He has worked with many start-up companies and businesses licensing intellectual property into the commercial sector," Lemons said. "We are extremely pleased to have someone of Michael's talent and experience joining our team."

One function of the Wake Forest office is to assist in developing start-up companies.

Batalia joins Lemons and Dean Stell in the office.

Before his appointment at N.C. State, Batalia was a postdoctoral fellow at the Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where his research focused on molecular immunology and structural biology. Batalia has a bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Chicago and a doctorate in biochemistry from the University of Texas at Austin.

He is active in the Association of University Technology Managers, the major professional group in the field.

Group is gearing up for 2003 A Cleaner World MS Walk

GREENSBORO — The Central North Carolina Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society is gearing up for its 14th annual A Cleaner World MS Walk. The MS Society will host six walks within the Triad area, including two new walk sites.

This year's goal for the MS Walk is to raise \$286,000. The funds raised by the walk will provide services for nearly 1,800 people with multiple sclerosis and their families in the local area. Funds are also allocated toward much-needed research into the cause and cure of this unpredictable disease.

Call (336) 299-4136 for information or register online at www.ncc.nmss.org. Be one of the first 200 to register by Jan. 31, and receive A Cleaner World MS Walk license plate.

2003 A Cleaner World MS Walk dates are: April 5 in Winston-Salem at Wake Forest University and in Reidsville at the Penn House; April 6 in Thomasville at Mills Home at Baptist Children's Home; April 12 in Asheboro at the N.C. Zoo and in High Point at the Piedmont Environmental Center; and April 13 in Greensboro at Country Park.

Set realistic resolutions



Robert Harris, M.D.

Guest Columnist

It's that time of the year again — the time when many of us think about the resolutions we made last year and wonder what happened to them. We all know the drill: Intentions run strong at first, then before we know it, it's March and those resolutions are faded memories.

For many of us, this year's resolutions will include losing weight, exercising more, and lowering stress or cholesterol levels. The key to achieving these New Year's resolutions is to set reasonable, yet attainable goals. Don't be discouraged if you don't see results immediately. Remember that real changes happen slowly over time. And if you think your plate is too full right now to possibly pile on one more commitment, consider these simple changes that can add up to a significant positive impact on your overall health.

10 Obtainable Health Goals

1. Work on sensible eating habits.

Many of us eat on the run, but we can still eat healthful foods. Take along good-for-you snacks such as fruit or nuts. Look for low-fat or reduced-fat foods offered in restaurants, and chew your food slowly. Not only will you enjoy your meal more, but also you'll be less likely to overeat. Fuel your mind and body with a balanced breakfast to jumpstart your day. And don't skip meals. Doing so may cause you to overeat later in the day.

2. Drink water.

Drink those much needed six to eight glasses of water a day. Carry a

water bottle with you at work and around the house, and drink even if you don't feel thirsty.

Make a habit of drinking water whenever you feel hungry and before each meal.

3. Form a support system.

Form a support system of friends and family who will cheer you on and help you keep your goals in sight. Consider joining a support group or getting an exercise partner.

4. Be active every day.

Get at least a little exercise every day. You do not need to join a gym to enjoy the health benefits of being physically active. Take the stairs instead of the elevator, take a 15-minute walk at lunch, or park farther away from buildings. If you decide to take on a full-fledged exercise program, good for you! Just be sure

to check with



your doctor first.

5. Find a doctor you like.

You will take better care of yourself if you feel comfortable discussing your health with your doctor. Find a doctor you can trust and develop a good working relationship with him or her.

6. Track goals.

Keep track of your new goals by writing them down and reviewing them regularly. And remember to reward yourself when you make progress toward your goals, but choose a reward that doesn't involve food.

7. Use positive reinforcement.

Create a list of all benefits of changing habits, and place it where

you will see it every day. Make a collage of words and pictures from magazines to help you visualize your goals.

8. Wear sunscreen all year.

Remember that skin damage happens all year round. Wear SPF 15 (or higher) particularly if you're outside a lot to protect yourself from skin cancer and premature skin aging.

9. Make time for yourself each day.

Stress is hard on your body, so make rest and relaxation a priority. Take a warm bath, meditate, read — anything that gives you that necessary down time each day.

10. Get your sleep.

Get plenty of sleep. Depriving yourself of those important seven to eight hours of sleep sets you up for

stress, accidents and irritability. Find a way to relax before going to bed, and try to turn in and wake up at the same time each day, even on weekends.

By making these simple changes to your life, you can make 2003 the first of many healthy years to come. Keep this list where you can see it, and commit to making five or six of these healthy ideas a part of every day. Before you know it, you'll be congratulating yourself on turning this year's resolutions into healthy new ways of life.

Robert Harris, M.D. is chief medical officer of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina.

Med student takes top prize for research

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Frank Killian of the Class of 2005 at Wake Forest University School of Medicine took first place at the 18th annual Medical Student Research Day for his project on the viability of a trauma service in orthopedics.

Killian, a combined M.D./M.B.A. student, found that establishing an orthopedic trauma service made sense economically because it concentrated the trauma cases in a group of orthopedic surgeons, freeing the sub-specialists in the department to concentrate on elective surgery within their specialty areas. The new service also would result in improved patient care, enhanced education of residents and increased research opportunities, he said.

"Our data suggest that an orthopedic trauma service is a smart medical and business decision," he said.

Killian, who is from Asheville, worked with Mitchell B. Harris, M.D., professor of surgical sciences



Killian

(orthopedics) and with two members of the Class of 2003, Jimmy G. Garas and Gregory S. Freidel, who also are in the joint MD/MBA program.

"The work they performed was instrumental in our department's decision to go forward with the service," Harris said.

Kristina Tansavadi, also a second-year student, finished in second place with a project that looked at variants of the BRCA 1 gene, which is linked to breast cancer. Her project compared 21 women who carried different BRCA1 variants with 21 women with "normal" BRCA1 genes, to see if they would react differently to ionizing radiation (one indicator of whether BRCA1 is also involved in DNA repair.)

She found that some of the BRCA1 variants showed increased response to radiation, while others had almost no response.

"Specific types of BRCA1 abnormalities seemed to predispose cells to the effect of radiation exposure (more than others)," said Tansavadi, who is from Los Angeles. "Our results provide a likely explanation for the variations in clinical outcomes that we see among individuals with BRCA1 mutations."

She worked with Jennifer Hu, Ph.D., associate professor of cancer biology and public health sciences.

Katron Rhodes Cofield of the Class of 2005 took third place for her project that focused on trying to find an early marker for ovarian cancer. Ovarian cancer has a high mortality rate because it ordinarily is not diagnosed until the disease is in the advanced stages.

Cofield, who is from Wimauma, Fla., found that an enzyme, phospholipase D, is produced in excess amounts in conjunction with ovarian cancer cells and may serve as an indicator that ovarian cancer is progressing. The presence of the enzyme may offer a new focus of attack for anticancer therapy.

She worked with Brigitte Miller, M.D., associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology, and Larry Daniel, Ph.D., professor of biochemistry.

Ashley Noel Rush, 2005, from Basking Ridge, N.J., won

Three Mile Island plaintiffs throw in the towel after 20-year battle

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARRISBURG, Pa. — Attorneys for 1,990 plaintiffs who alleged that their health was damaged by the 1979 accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear plant say their legal action is over, nearly two dozen years after the reactor meltdown.

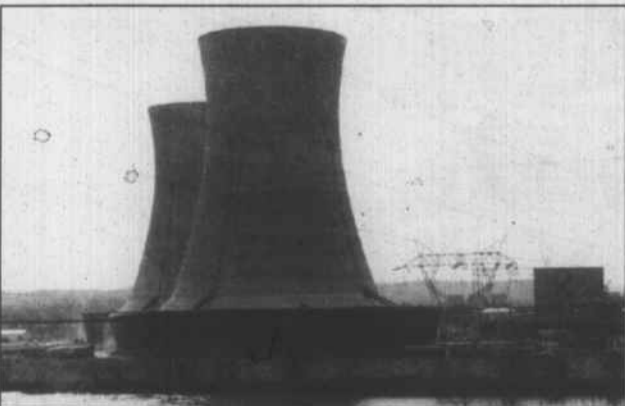
Earlier this month, the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals refused to hear an appeal of a lower-court decision granting summary dismissal of the claims against former TMI owner General Public Utilities Corp. and related defendants.

"There's nothing more that can be done to proceed with them, essentially," said Harrisburg attorney Lee C. Swartz, who has been co-counsel for the plaintiffs from the beginning. "We doubt the U.S. Supreme Court would agree to hear the case."

No other major litigation remains from the March 28-April 1, 1979, accident at TMI, the nation's worst commercial nuclear accident.

The plaintiffs said their health was harmed by radiation that escaped from the damaged TMI-2 plant for several days before the reactor was brought under control. An estimated 100,000 people fled the region during the crisis.

GPU and Nuclear Regulatory Commission officials have maintained that not enough radiation was released to cause adverse health effects, but some doctors as well as anti-nuclear activists argued that



Three Mile Island has several nuclear reactors like these.

was unclear.

"It just seemed to me there was scant, if not zero, evidence of a true corollary between the radiation and the illnesses," former GPU president and chief operating officer Herman M. Dieckamp said last Thursday. "So it was probably the right thing for them to do."

In 1990, a Columbia University study concluded that the reported exposure levels were too low to have caused increased lung cancer and leukemia cases near the plant, which is on the Susquehanna River, about 10 miles south of Harrisburg.

But a later study by Dr. Stephen Wing and others at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill School of Public Health used the same data

and concluded that "downwind" areas during the 1979 accident had increased cancer rates. Wing conceded that his study did not prove more potent radiation releases, but said there was little else that would explain the higher cancer rates.

A spokesman for a watchdog group that monitors Three Mile Island vowed last Thursday that the group "will continue to pursue and track radiogenic cancers."

"While this is a setback, I believe we'll endure and prevail, probably when I'm a very old man," TMI Alert spokesman Eric Epstein said.

Two of the plaintiffs were Terry

See **Plaintiffs** on C4

See **Student** on C4