

News

New Nanney Hall takes shape

By Rebecca Clark
Pilot Editor

The excavation behind Withrow Hall is no longer just a giant scar in the red earth. The walls are going up on Frank Nanney Hall, future location of the Noel Program, and it's starting to look like a building.

According to Mike Hardin, vice president of finance and development, things are right on target for the building schedule.

Groundbreaking occurred in March, and the plan is to have the building "fully operational by fall of 2008," said Hardin. He said a lot depends on the weather, but at this point they don't foresee any prob-

lems. Workers are finishing up the framing of the first floor and will soon start on the second.

Frank Nanney, a former trustee of Gardner-Webb University, donated funds for the construction of the new building. The Noel Program serves students with a range of disabilities, including social, physical and learning.

Cheryl Potter, program director, said they are very excited about the building.

"I think we've always had a quality program here and I think that the new building will project that image of quality and professionalism," Potter said.

"We definitely need the room," she said. "The test-

ing facilities are just going to be a phenomenal asset to the program."

Staff members hope to add to the equipment they have now, as well as update some of it.

However, there are some feelings of nostalgia about the small building that houses the program now.

"There's going to be some sadness at leaving as well," Potter said. "This has been home for so long."

She will miss looking out the window and seeing the rose garden in bloom.

The Noel Program was started in 1977, and named after Margarite Noel, who donated substantial funds for the program.



Photo by Sarajane Burroughs

An estimated 30 students, staff and community members met at the flag pole on Thursday for what was referred to as "The Ride." The participants raced to Ingles and purchased supplies for homeless shelters in Shelby. Awards were given for the fastest, the slowest, the most stuff, and the most style.

Students stop traffic to help feed homeless

By Jared Graf
Pilot staff writer

Thursday evening traffic on Main Street in Boiling Springs was stopped to allow about 30 riders on a variety of self-propelled vehicles to safely travel from The Gardner-Webb University campus to Ingles and back in order to benefit the homeless.

There were scooters, bicycles, skateboards, a Seg-

way, a golf cart and even a contraption consisting of a bicycle tied to a wheelchair. GWU students, staff and members of the community were there to support the cause.

Awards were given out to honor such things as the fastest and slowest modes of transportation, and the one with the most style.

The first-ever Ride for the homeless began at the flagpole in the Quad at 6:30.

Riders went through the main intersection of town to Ingles.

There they purchased items from a list of foods that homeless shelters in Shelby need to stock their pantries.

Then the race was on to make it back to the flagpole with the "goods."

The Ride was conceived of by the Living Club, which is a part of Campus Ministries.

Spotlight Dr. Webb glad to be at GWU

By Kory McNair
Pilot staff writer

Dr. Joseph Webb, who started teaching in the Communication Studies Department last spring, had been told good things about Gardner-Webb University before he arrived.

"Everything I heard was true," he said.

Webb came to GWU after retiring as a dean at Palm Beach Atlantic University in Florida. He has taught a variety of journalism and communication courses throughout his career.

When asked what he

loves most about teaching, he said it is the students.

"They keep you young," he said.

Webb said that while teaching is a hobby of sorts, his favorite pastime is printmaking. Some of his best works hang on the walls of his GWU office.

Webb doesn't have enough free time, as he'd like to do that hobby, though, because he is busy writing a book.

It's not the first book he has written. One topic he has written about is helping preachers improve their communication.



Dr. Joe Webb

Webb has been married to Andrea Worley for more than 30 years. His son, Joe, and granddaughter live in California.

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Ig Nobel Prizes illustrate just how bizarre science research can be

By Jenna Nierstedt
The Daily Free Press (Boston U.)

(U-WIRE) BOSTON - Vanilla soft serve could get its flavoring from cow dung; hamsters (and potentially people) on Viagra could avoid the effects of jet lag; enemy soldiers might be so sexually attracted to each other they are too distracted to shoot. The ideas are odd and unorthodox, but scientists at the annual Ig Nobel awards proved that they can be made real.

WHAT? Mayu Yamamoto, of Japan, developed a way to extract vanillin -- vanilla flavoring -- from cow dung. A group of scientists from Argentina discovered that Viagra aids jetlag recovery in hamsters. The Air Force Wright Laboratory developed a new weapon, the so-called "gay bomb."

These and several other unusual discoveries were recognized at the Seventeenth "1st Annual" Ig Nobel Prizes at Harvard University's Sanders Theatre Oct. 4, when more than 1,200 people attended an evening of entertainment and (some) explanation to honor scientists for such achievements, which make people laugh first -- and then think.

"A lot of scientists have done things that nobody has ever heard of and may never will," said Marc Abrahams, editor of *Annals of Improbable Research*, the science humor magazine that sponsors the event.

The event honors scientific discoveries in aviation, biology, chemistry, economics, linguistics, literature, medicine, nutrition, peace and physics.

EATING WITH OUR EYES Brian Wansink of Cornell University received an Ig in Nutrition for work he did with the infamous "freshman fifteen" weight gain in mind, exploring the seemingly boundless appe-

tites of humans.

Wansink surveyed Parisians and Americans on reasons they decide to stop eating. The 150 Parisians surveyed cited internal cues, such as "I feel full" or "the food no longer tastes good," while the 150 Chicagoans surveyed gave external reasons, such as "when my plate is empty" or "the TV show I'm watching is over."

But what if there were an endless supply of food? Wansink decided to study what would happen if the bowl never emptied. Wansink recruited fifty-four participants to indulge in a creamy tomato soup from a bottomless bowl, which was refilled as its contents were consumed.

"We found when we gave refillable soup bowls, people ate 73 percent more soup, but when asked if they were full, they'd say, 'No, I still have half a bowl of soup left,' because they were eating with their eyes and not with their stomachs," he said.

College students, he said, tend to eat out of "bottomless bowls" -- huge bags of chips or containers of ice cream.

"But if you dish some out and put it in another container and see for a second what you plan on eating," he said, "our studies show that you end up eating about 30 percent less."

"It shows how you can reverse these cues in your life to mindlessly eat less, without having to count calories or make food diaries."

PET-SIZE PRESCRIPTION

There's a new remedy for the weary traveler -- at least, for the four-legged, furry, round kind -- a group of scientists from Universidad Nacional de Quilmes in Argentina won an Ig Nobel in Aviation for their discovery that Viagra aids jetlag recovery in hamsters.

The idea came when Diego Golombek was working with mammals' circadian rhythms -- the daily activity cycle that runs, like in hu-

mans, on 24-hour intervals.

"In line with [the Ig Nobel philosophy], first we laughed and then we thought, why don't we actually do the experiment?" Golombek said.

Golombek and coworkers Patricia Agostino and Santiago Plano were unable to arrange flights to test jet lag remedies on their hamsters, but instead simulated the effects of air travel between time zones by exposing them to abnormal light cycles.

Golombek said they might have found a new mechanism for the treatment of circadian disorders like insomnia.

"It's something we were not after, I have to confess, but now we are very interested in looking at that," he said.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE IG

"I think [the Ig Nobel Prizes] humanize scientists," Golombek said. "They're not these serious, solemn people who are always wearing a lab coat, that don't eat or don't make jokes. Science is something more than that. It's a very interesting way of living your life because you're always asking questions. I certainly think it does inspire people to look at science and scientists in another way."

At the ceremony, six winners of the real Nobel prize presented the awards -- and one, winner of the 1998 Nobel Prize for Physics, Robert Laughlin, was offered as the prize for a "win-a-date-with-a-Nobel-Laureate" contest.

AND THE IG GOES TO ...

The winners of one award -- co-authors of a medical report, "Sword Swallowing and Its Side Effects" -- had never met prior to last week's ceremony; radiologist Brian Witcombe of the United Kingdom and Dan Meyer of Tennessee had corresponded via telephone and email.

"Somebody sent me an email of a sword swallow-

ing x-ray, and I thought, how the hell did they do that?" Witcombe said.

After finding little concrete information on sword swallowing, he emailed Meyer, Chief Executive of the Sword Swallowers Association International, and the two collaborated.

The base of over 100 swallowers to find out how they learned their craft, and study the kinds of side effects they encountered.

"The medical interest in this subject is clearly perforation of the esophagus," Witcombe said. "People have things stuck down their throats medically quite frequently, and it's a rare complication to perforate. I think the interesting thing, although our data is not robust, is that sword swallowers usually recover better from a perforation than

other patients."

As Witcombe accepted his award, he said, "Knowledge advances when people of two different backgrounds come together over an issue of common interest, and that is what we did here." But Meyers went first, and his sword swallowing act for the audience's entertainment was tough to follow.

SILLY SCIENCE

"The thing about the Ig Nobels is ... these are questions that people want to know about, and this is real science being done in those areas," said audience member Shaughn Bryant of Worcester. "When you look at it from the side, it's really absurd, but all science is kind of absurd. Sometimes it's so esoteric that no one really gets it, but if it's fingernails on a chalkboard or how a sheet wrinkles, the

questions seem more real to people."

"Every year there are more things crammed into [the ceremony]," Abrahams said. "We want the audience to feel they are never quite sure what's going to happen in the next moment, and probably not quite sure what they just saw."

But audience members don't come out for the show just for a few laughs, and some wanted more than the entertainment they got.

"I found myself a lot more curious about ... how someone gets to the point where they test Viagra in hamsters traveling on a plane," said Worcester mechanical engineer Michael Wixon. "I wish there was more talking and explanation. I mean, I love the gags, but at some point, I really want to know more."

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