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# THE PENDULUM

ELON, NORTH CAROLINA | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2008 | VOLUME 34, EDITION 10

www.elon.edu/pendulum



## Service students build house over break

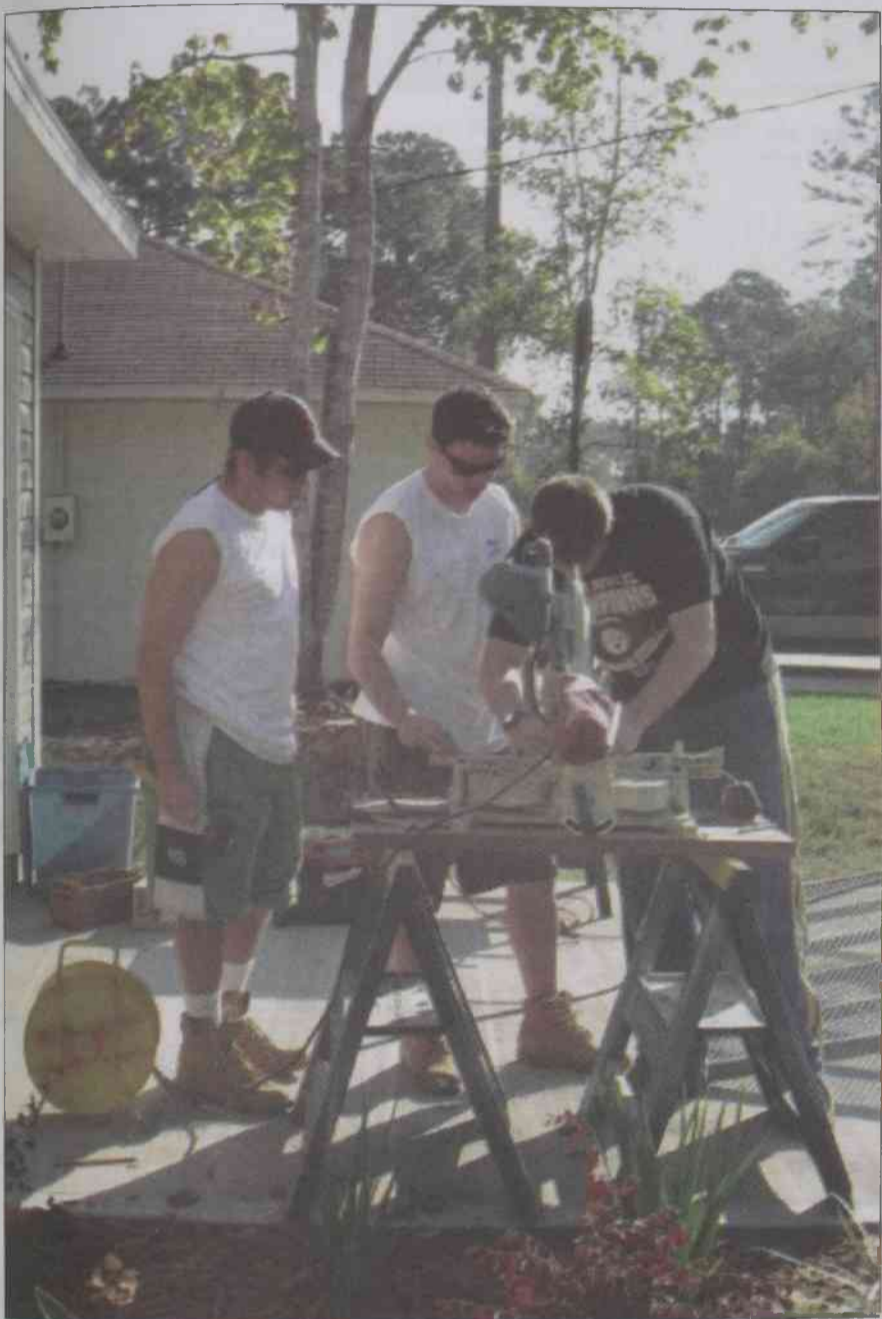


PHOTO SUBMITTED

From left, Justin Sposato, Andrew Crispin and Nate Smith saw wood used for the hardwood flooring of the Habitat for Humanity house the students helped build in Palm Coast, Fla. over Spring Break.

Carolyn VanBrocklin  
Reporter

While many students were enjoying a restful Spring Break, a group of nine students from the Elon University Catholic Campus Ministry drove to Palm Coast, Fla., to help build a house for Habitat for Humanity.

The small, one-story house has three bedrooms, one bathroom, a kitchen and open areas for a living room and dining room. It is simple, but one family will call it home.

The group drove south March 23, and spent the next four days finishing the house that had been worked on by several previous groups of students from around the country.

The students laid sod, painted the house and laid flooring.

"Many people in the group hadn't ever worked with Habitat before, so this was a good experience for them," said Trung Huynh-Duc, an administrative assistant for Catholic Campus Ministry who accompanied the students on the trip.

"There were some tough parts," he said. "Everyone was really happy that they all got it done."

When the students first arrived at the worksite, previous groups had built the house, but the lawn was entirely sand, and the house had concrete floors and drywall.

During the first day, students transformed the sandy lawn to grass with a garden in the front yard. During the second day, they painted the house.

By the final two days, the house was nearly ready for the family to move in, complete with wood floors.

"It was so satisfying to see the changes that our group made, even from day one," freshman Katie Dirks said. "We came to the house, and there was a dustbowl of a yard. We left that day, and the house had a lawn."

The students learned many new skills, including carpentry.

Students said the most challenging part of the week was the two days spent laying down wooden floors in all of the rooms and the hallways.

"It was hard to get around corners

and closets and the ends of the room," Huynh-Duc said.

The students had to snap the flooring together using a rubber mallet, and when the inspection crew came in and saw one crack in the floor, they made the students redo it.

"It was hard work and some of it wasn't all that fun," junior Caitlin McDonnell said. "But knowing that we helped build a house for someone who otherwise wouldn't have had one was really satisfying. I felt very accomplished."

Elon students were the final group to work on the house as part of the Collegiate Challenge.

The challenge was created to give students an alternative to the typical Spring Break of beaches and parties.

Students got a chance to do something for others who are in need.

"It's just such a good opportunity for students to do service for the community," Huynh-Duc said.

The trip provided the chance to learn about carpentry, gardening and construction, but it was also a great time to forge bonds of friendship, students said. For Huynh-Duc, it was nice to see the students working together as a team.

"At the end of it, they were good friends," he said.

On Tuesday night of the trip, a current owner of a Habitat for Humanity house met with the students. He made the group hot dogs for dinner to show his appreciation for their cause, even though his house was not the house the group built.

Because of the success of this year's trip, Catholic Campus Ministry is planning to continue doing an alternative spring break trip each year.

Habitat for Humanity, the nonprofit organization for whom Catholic Campus Ministry built the house, was founded in 1978 in San Antonio, Texas.

Habitat for Humanity has assisted more than 30,000 American families in all 50 states. There are more than 1,500 Habitat affiliates throughout the United States.

## Recent intruder report marks fifth incident since January

Andie Diemer  
News Editor

During the past 90 days, students' inboxes have been littered with reports of indecent exposure, intruders and Peeping Tom encounters occurring around campus.

The most recent incident, involving a white male who exposed himself to a 20-year-old female student last Wednesday on N. Holt Street, marked the fifth incident that has been reported since Jan. 6.

While Vice President of Student Life Smith Jackson said the number of incidents is unusually high, Campus Safety and Police Chief Chuck Gantos said university communities are prime targets for sexual deviants.

Sam Russell, captain of police for the Town of Elon, said all the incidents seem to be isolated and random at this point. There also doesn't seem to be a trigger to the recent surge, he said.

"We are following up on tips we are receiving, we have been pointed in a direction," Russell said. "We have

a couple persons of interest. We are doing everything we can."

In response to the increasing amount of issues emerging, the town and university chiefs of police held an open forum on campus about safety, Jackson said.

Three sexual exposures, one suspicious person and one Peeping Tom account have been reported.

"The town police are working diligently to solve these cases and arrest the persons perpetrating these crimes," Jackson said. "The university is in constant communication with the town and assisting the town in this significant effort."

Students who have been victims were gathered and questioned for subsequent information last week, Jackson said. On the night of the last incident, Gantos, Russell, Town Manager Mike Dula and Jackson met to discuss their next move.

Two officers from the town's department and one from campus security have been assigned to the task; more officers are acting as extra

manpower to patrol the streets and follow up on leads, Russell said.

"Rest assured we're doing what we can to catch the guy or guys," Russell said. "We're treating it very seriously."

A composite of the suspect from N. Holt Street was released last Wednesday, but more security measures are being implemented, such as installing more video cameras, starting a Neighborhood Watch program and programs like House Vacation, a service where town police will keep an eye on an apartment or house while its occupants are away.

Even though there is an excess of officers and detectives working on the cases, the most important thing to remember is to practice safety habits and contact authorities immediately if anything is witnessed, Jackson said.

"It is a natural reaction to call a roommate, but you lose valuable seconds," he said. "It's okay to call 911 and get the fastest, most comprehensive response. The faster they can get there the better chance they can find someone or evidence."



COMPOSITE DRAWING FROM TOWN POLICE

A sketch of the intruder was rendered based off the student's descriptions. The mug sketch, pictured above, was sent to all students by Dean of Students Smith Jackson.