

MULTIMEDIA:

GO ONLINE TO VIEW DAILY UPDATED VIDEOS AND BLOGS  
www.elon.edu/pendulum

ANDERSON COOPER video and story  
PRESIDENTIAL FIRESIDE CHAT video and story  
ELONTHON video, story, blogs  
BEST BARBEQUE IN N.C. see Elon's favorites and nominate your own ... video coming soon!

FLYING PHOENIX FRISBEES  
Women's Ultimate Frisbee advances to regional tournament

PAGE 20

# THE PENDULUM

ELON, NORTH CAROLINA | WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2009 | VOLUME 35, EDITION 11

www.elon.edu/pendulum

## Report challenges Alamance sheriff

Elon professor's study says 850 more Hispanics were stopped than sheriff reported

Margeaux Corby  
News Editor

An Elon professor's independent research has provided a new challenge to the Alamance County sheriff's assertions that his deputies are not going out of their way to stop Hispanic drivers to check his or her immigration status.

After Alamance County Sheriff Terry Johnson said publicly in February that his deputies had made traffic stops on 494 Hispanic drivers from 2004 to 2008, Elon political science professor Laura Roselle conducted her own study of traffic data using statistics filed with the state government.

She found the total was actually 1,344 for the same period — 850 more than Johnson reported.

Roselle, who has been critical in the past of the Alamance County Sheriff Department's actions on this issue, stopped short on Sunday of claiming the statistical difference represents the practice of racial profiling.

But she said the big difference in figures raises questions about the sheriff's accountability on a sensitive topic.

"There are many good people working in that sheriff's department," Roselle said. "There are men and women doing a really good job and I understand they put their lives on the line to protect and defend. I think this whole thing does them a tremendous disservice."

Randy Jones, a spokesman

for the department, played down the statistical difference and said Monday the variation in numbers is primarily the result of software difficulties the department has dealt with for years. He said the variation is true not only for cases involving Hispanic drivers, but all stops of motorists.

"It's a combination of human error, paperwork errors, computer errors and major software errors we've been dealing with (for) some time," Jones said. "I don't see how racial profiling could be involved if it affects everyone across the board."

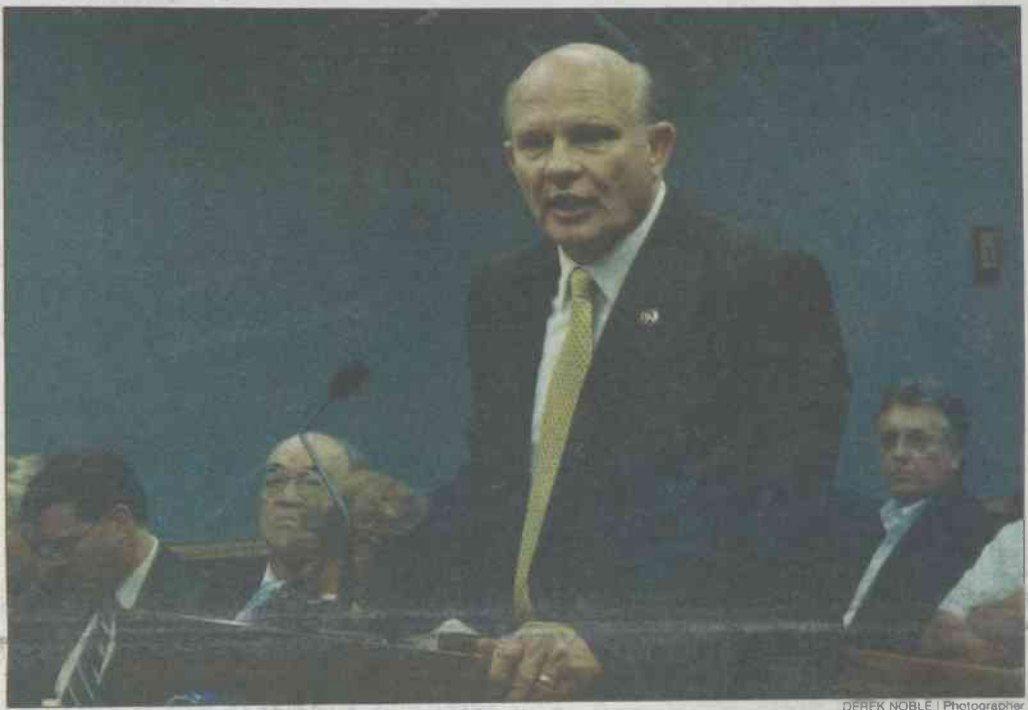
At Monday night's county commissioners meeting, Chief Deputy Tim Britt echoed Jones's statements. He said back in March, the sheriff's department found they had "grossly underreported traffic stops in all demographic groups."

Britt said they have been working ever since to correct the data and to employ a new system.

"The problem with the previous system was that there were no checks and balances," Britt said. "We have implemented some internal safeguards and some new procedures to correct that."

According to Britt, they now have a staff member that reviews the traffic stop data weekly from the office and will have a full report to the board in 30 days with the correct data.

"We certainly don't have anything to hide, this was not by design or intentional," Britt said. "It was simply an error."



At a county commissioners meeting on Monday night, Alamance County Sheriff Terry Johnson briefly addressed the Alamance County Commissioners on recent allegations of racial profiling in traffic stops.

He claimed that accusations of profiling made against the sheriff's department were unfair and unwarranted.

"I think what is being done to the sheriff's office, what is being done to us, is the same thing we're being accused of," Britt said. "We're being profiled and put into a group because somebody doesn't like a particular program."

Commissioner Tim Sutton

has backed Johnson's policies in the past, and he did so again before Monday's meeting by questioning Roselle's purposes.

"I have never seen such an obsessed attack on government in my life," Sutton said. "It's stunning to me that people don't want to address the problem of illegal immigration and don't want to address the processes needed to do so."

At issue behind all of

this is the sheriff's embrace of a section of a federal immigration law that allows local law enforcement agencies to arrest and detain people found to be in the United States illegally. Section 287 (g) of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act and Immigration and

See TRAFFIC | PAGE 3

## Chemistry professor dies in University Drive accident

Ashley Barnas and Margeaux Corby  
Executive Editors

Chemistry professor Eugene Gooch died Friday night at 6:47 p.m. when a motorist struck him while he was riding his bicycle on University Drive near Highway 87. Gooch was riding west in the same direction as the car that hit him, when the car crossed over into the shoulder where Gooch was cycling. He died at the scene of the accident.

The driver was identified Monday morning by Capt. Craig Andrews of Elon police. Mary Davis Murphy, a resident of Hebron Church Road in Mebane, was behind the wheel of the 2005 Buick that struck and killed Gooch. Murphy is in her early 80s.

According to Elon police, no charges have been filed against Murphy at this time and the investigation is ongoing. Alcohol does not appear to be a factor

in the incident. Gooch joined the university as a faculty member in 1988, specializing in chemical education and organic chemistry. He taught two sections of organic chemistry II, a section of general chemistry and medicinal chemistry this semester.

"Gene Gooch was a complex guy," said Dan Wright, chair of the chemistry department. "He was bright and passionate about teaching organic chemistry. He might not always have had the right technique in teaching organic, but he would try new things, trying to find that special method that would make students learn."

Students and faculty have written notes and posted them on the corkboard outside of Gooch's office on the third floor of McMichael Science building. A 1000 mL graduated cylinder and Erlenmeyer flask filled with flowers have been placed in front of his office door, a door, according to several students, that was rarely ever shut.

"He loved student interaction," said Carly Fabrizio, a junior biochemistry major who has had three classes with Gooch, including medicinal chemistry this spring, and is one of his organic chemistry teaching assistants.

"He was always rocking out to jazz

“ He loved life, he loved this building and he loved Elon. I guess I never really realized what he added to my chemistry experience until now that he's gone.

- Sarah Denin  
JUNIOR CHEMISTRY MAJOR ”

music in his office," she said. Gooch was an avid jazz enthusiast and had planned to teach a global studies class in the fall called "Rediscovering Rembrandt," a course connecting chemistry and art.

"I remember one story in particular, which characterizes the teachings of Dr. Gooch," said senior Philip Zakas, who took four classes with Gooch. "On his way to work one day, he ran out of gas and was stranded in the McMichael parking lot. Without concern, Dr. Gooch simply mixed a few organic compounds from the chemistry lab, emptied a flask of combustible liquid into his German-made automobile and was able to drive to a gas station. His lesson was that there are always several answers to a problem, and there is always a new approach to a common dilemma."

Gooch lives on through such humorous stories and through his love for his life, Zakas said.

"He loved life, he loved this building

and he loved Elon," said Sarah Denin, a junior chemistry major. "I guess I never really realized what he added to my chemistry experience until now that he's gone."

Faculty in the chemistry department are not only having to deal with the emotional loss of a coworker and friend, but are having to manage the four courses Gooch was teaching this semester as well.

"I'm grieving for my friend and colleague, and I'm having to worry about the logistics of how to cover his classes," Wright said. "If I could magically talk to him this morning he would have said, 'Dan, focus on the latter. Take care of the students.' That says a lot about how much he cared about his students."

Assistant professor of chemistry Lisa Ponton will teach a large lecture in order to take over Gooch's general chemistry courses and Joel Karty will be taking

See GOOCH | PAGE 5