



The Stentorian

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The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics

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AROUND THE WORLD ...and back

COMPILED BY MONICA MCCLAIN

Can he handle it?

Boris Yeltsin, the president of the Soviet Union, is in need of heart-bypass surgery. However, his aides are trying to cover up the seriousness of the issue by comparing it to getting your teeth cleaned. Everyone survives that.

Due to great risks, surgery may not happen at all. Doctors say that his problem may have arisen from his drinking history. Is he too sick to try?

Is Democracy always right?

Bosnia's new found democracy could pose a problem. What if the new leaders are fascists, racists, or separatists, or even all of them? The elections were the first step in piecing together a torn nation. The elections could do the opposite. Just because the elections went peacefully does not mean that ethnic rivals can live side by side.

It's so hard to say goodbye

Nelson Mandela, the first black South African president, has officially announced that he will not seek re-election in 1999. At the age of 78, he feels that he is too old for a second term. He will not be seeking party leadership either. This has the people of South Africa wondering after Mandela, who?

From rags to riches

The seven wealthiest nations in the world, including the U.S., have agreed to absorb \$7.7 billion in poorer nations' debt. The majority of the nations receiving aid are in Africa. The money will come from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

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Fran rocks state, NCSSM

BECCA BOOI

North Carolina is no stranger to hurricane damage. It remembers Hurricane Hazel in 1954 and Hugo in 1989. Nonetheless, when Hurricane Fran came through the state on Sept 5, 1996 the impact was immediate and local. Even the most prepared suffered.

The center of the storm landed at Cape Fear, NC that Thursday at 9 p.m., one day after coastal communities were evacuated. Over one million state residents were without power after the hurricane passed through their area.

After NCSSM lost power at about 12:30 a.m. Friday morning, the back-up generator immediately turned on, providing power for the fire alarm system, telephone system, exit lights, and emergency lights on hallways.

In addition to the power loss, the high school suffered major damages including roof destruction, water damage inside the buildings, and crushed state vans. Total costs were estimated at about \$60,000 by Director of Operations, Ed McBride. None of the costs will be covered by commercial insurance.

The effects of the storm were so greatly felt that the school closed the next day, the first authorized school closure since NCSSM opened in 1980.

"Unlike after a heavy snowstorm when we still had classes, many staff members were

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not merely inconvenienced, but victimized by the hurricane's wind and water. Therefore, NCSSM staff had to keep all of our students secure and well fed." said Executive Director John Friedrich.

The day after the hurricane, Hunt had an all-day Interviz, restricted to hall lounges in the hope of creating recreational opportunities inside, away from possible hazards such as downed power lines.

"We were trying to work with the students to alleviate the stress as much as possible," the SLI on 3rd East, Sandy Sanford, said.

The NCSSM staff moved students bothered by water leaks from the rain, noise and exhaust caused by a generator to the cafeteria and library. Students returned to their own halls when power was restored.

"It was really hot in the library," Junior Cooke Adams of First Beall said, "People were sleeping everywhere - on the tables, in the chairs, on the floor. We were really glad to go back to our rooms when the power came back on."

In the midst of all these difficulties, the storm also had positive effects. Agencies such as the American Red Cross and Carolina Power and Light Company prepared

themselves for the emergency and quickly came to the aid of victims. Local areas came together and offered tips to citizens on safety, what to do about damage, and information on school closings. NCSSM also received help from various staff members and students.

"The outpouring of help from staff was pretty impressive. Especially outstanding was the work of the SLIs who were everywhere helping out," said Head of Communications, David Stein.

Plant facilities crews came twice to help clean up the campus, in addition to a pick-up the following Sunday organized by school staff and carried out by more than fifty caring students. Junior Amita Sanghvi said she was pleased with productivity of the clean-up.

"The campus looked really bad after the hurricane but we spent a long time removing tree branches and that made a big difference," Sanghvi said.

Although NCSSM always had an emergency plan in the case of a hurricane, Fran was the first to test it.

"I was extremely proud of the students and staff on how we worked together as a community to meet the challenges presented by this natural disaster," Director of Student Life Dr. Joan Barber said. "We are reviewing our plan and will make any changes necessary so it can be the best possible."

ETC chemical levels safe, work resumes

JENNIFER LI
CELESTE MOORE

After weeks of testing by Law Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc., the N.C. School of Science and Math reported that the amounts of harmful chemicals at the construction site of the Educational Technology Complex (ETC) were too low to be hazardous.

On July 17, workers complained of scratchy throats, redness around the eyes and a sweet odor, said Director of Operations Ed McBride. The construction was delayed indefinitely until tests could confirm that the site was safe.

"We smelled an odor so we called for a testing agency," construction superintendent Bret Recce said.

"We went through tests for six weeks," McBride said. "Early on, the symptoms suggested formaldehyde [a pungent gas found in solutions used to disinfect and preserve]. But, since it was [not detected], we kept on testing for others."

"The end result was a very low amount of formaldehyde," McBride said. "In the action levels of formaldehyde, you measure in parts [per] million. The amount we found was 1,100 parts per billion."

In addition to testing for formaldehyde, Law Engineering and Environmental

Services also tested for methane, ethane, propane, metals, and the pH level.

"They did find a metal, Barium [a radioactive element], and a pH level of 5 rather than 6 [normal]," McBride said. "Now, everything has been corrected."

The amount of formaldehyde found was not enough to raise any safety issues alone but along with the heat, long hours of work, and fatigue, the formaldehyde may cause some health concerns. Construction has resumed with the addition of fans if needed and cooler temperatures due to the seasonal change, McBride said.

Most students at NCSSM

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