

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Healthbeat

Training upped for state's first responders

North Carolina's Executive Committee for Highway Safety, which includes representatives from the N.C. Department of Transportation, N.C. State Highway Patrol and other highway safety groups, has launched a new training program for first responders. The program is being paid for through a \$525,000 Federal Emergency Management Agency Prevention Grant and is aimed at improving safety, reducing secondary accidents and decreasing congestion on roads throughout North Carolina.

The N.C. Responder Safety Program will be provided to fire, rescue and law enforcement agencies, as well as emergency medical services, towing operators and other first responders across the state. The program includes a 30-minute DVD written and produced by the ECHS that lays out standard response methods for the most common types of incidents and educates personnel on how to clear them quickly and safely while minimizing their effect on traffic.

In addition, the program provides reference cards for responders to put inside their vehicles to serve as on-the-scene guides. The cards show several incident scenarios and point out key safety tips such as where to most effectively park response vehicles and how to appropriately position traffic cones. They also feature several state statutes, including the Quick Clearance and Move Over laws, which help protect first responders.

Death rate high for meat lovers

CHICAGO (AP) — The largest study of its kind finds that older Americans who eat large amounts of red meat and processed meats face a greater risk of death from heart disease and cancer. The federal study of more than half a million men and women bolsters prior evidence of the health risks of diets laden with red meat like hamburger and processed meats like hot dogs, bacon and cold cuts.

Calling the increased risk modest, lead author Rashmi Sinha of the National Cancer Institute said the findings support the advice of several health groups to limit red and processed meat intake to decrease cancer risk.

The findings appear in Monday's Archives of Internal Medicine.

Over 10 years, eating the equivalent of a quarter-pound hamburger daily gave men in the study a 22 percent higher risk of dying of cancer and a 27 percent higher risk of dying of heart disease. That's compared to those who ate the least red meat, just 5 ounces per week.

Women who ate large amounts of red meat had a 20 percent higher risk of dying of cancer and a 50 percent higher risk of dying of heart disease than women who ate less. People whose diets contained more white meat like chicken and fish had lower risks of death.

In an accompanying editorial, Barry Popkin, director of the Interdisciplinary Obesity Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, wrote that reducing meat intake would have benefits beyond improved health.

Livestock increase greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to global warming, he wrote, and nations should reevaluate farm subsidies that distort prices and encourage meat-based diets.

"We've promoted a diet that has added excessively to global warming," Popkin said in an interview.

Exercise may help patients in ICU

An exercise program developed at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center aimed at helping patients in the medical Intensive Care Unit (ICU) maintain physical conditioning is a featured "Innovation Profile" on the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Web site.

The movement therapy, designed for patients who require a mechanical ventilator to breathe, has been shown to encourage early walking and has reduced length of hospital stay. Read about the protocol at <http://www.ahrq.gov/>. AHRQ is part of the Department of Health and Human Services and focuses on advancing health care quality.

Dr. Peter Morris, an associate professor of internal medicine-pulmonary/critical care, launched a 24-month study of "mobility therapy" in 2004, following 330 ICU patients who received either standard care or a daily exercise intervention performed with the help of a critical care nurse, physical therapist and nursing assistant.

'The Coming Plague' at UNCG

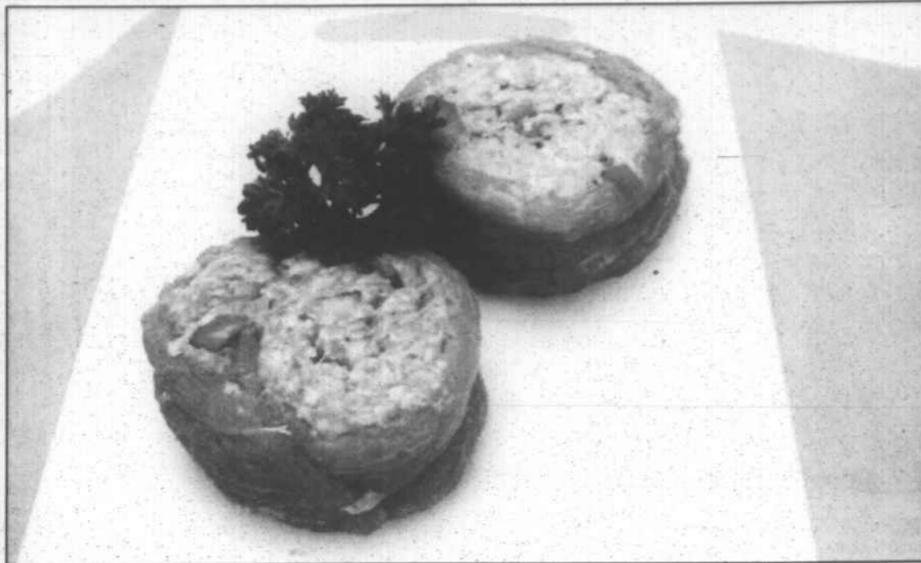
Pulitzer winner Laurie Garrett, author of the best-seller "The Coming Plague," will speak at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 31, in the Sullivan Science Building.

Sponsored by the UNCG Institute for Community and Economic Engagement, Garrett's appearance is free, open to the public, and part of the university's Science and Society Lecture Series. Seating will be available on a first-come basis with parking available in the McIver Street deck. A reception and book signing will follow her speech.

As a medical and science writer for Newsday, in New York City, Laurie Garrett became the only writer ever to have been awarded all three of the Big "Ps" of journalism: The Peabody, The Polk (twice) and The Pulitzer. She is the best-selling author of "The Coming Plague: Newly Emerging Diseases in a World Out of Balance" (1995) and "Betrayal of Trust: The Collapse of Global Public Health" (2001).



Garrett

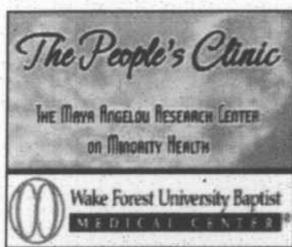


WHAT IS FOODBORNE ILLNESS?

There has been a lot of coverage in the news lately about foodborne illness, but surprisingly, not much information has been shared about what these illnesses are. Foodborne illness is caused by eating contaminated foods or drinks. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), there are many different types of things that can contaminate food and cause disease, including bacteria, viruses, and poisonous chemicals. Data from the CDC show that the most commonly reported food borne illnesses are caused by bacteria known as salmonella, campylobacter, and E. coli, as well as a group of viruses called Norwalk or Norwalk-like viruses. However, it is hard to know how many real cases of these illnesses occur each year, because many of the symptoms are similar to other viruses and diseases, people often do not see their doctor.

How do we get these illnesses?

The bacteria that cause foodborne illness can appear anywhere,



but they do have types of foods in which they are most commonly seen. Campylobacter is very common in undercooked chicken and other poultry because it is part of a healthy bird's digestive system. Salmonella is also common in the digestive systems of many animals, but as we have seen recently with peanut butter, it can show up anywhere. E. coli is most commonly found in cow feces, and when trace amounts of feces end up in the meat or a drinking water source it can make its way to us. The Norwalk group of viruses is different because they can be spread from person to person through food. For example, if

someone preparing a salad has the virus on their hands, the person eating the salad can easily contract the illness. This is why these types of foodborne illness are common and spread rapidly in communal living situations like dorms or nursing homes. There are other types of illnesses that can be foodborne, including hepatitis, staph infections (caused by staphylococcus bacteria), and shigella (caused by the bacterium shigella). However, these latter illnesses are much more commonly spread through other routes.

What are the symptoms?

Campylobacter, salmonella and E. coli illnesses are all caused by bacteria and have very similar symptoms. The most common of these symptoms are:

- Diarrhea, sometimes very severe and bloody
- Severe abdominal cramps
- Fever
- The Norwalk group of viruses

See Foodborne on A11

Students to dance for cancer research

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Wake Forest University students will stay on their feet from noon to midnight on April 4 during the annual Wake 'N Shake dance marathon to raise money and awareness for the fight against cancer.

Students can dance or play basketball, dodge ball and videogames, but they must stay on their feet for the entire 12-hour event held in Reynolds Gym.

"Every single student knows someone who has been affected by cancer," says senior Caleigh Jooste of Villanova, Pa., co-chair of this year's event. "While I personally dance for twelve hours in memory of two grandmothers and an aunt, I am also dancing for our future. The money we raise at Wake 'N Shake goes directly to the Comprehensive Cancer Center



Another Wake 'N Shake is slated for next month.

at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center where they are making huge strides in research and development to

help prevent and battle cancer." Jooste has been involved with Wake 'N Shake since her freshman year.

See Dance on A11

Meharry gets endowment to launch health policy center

FROM THE NNPA NEWS SERVICE

Meharry Medical College recently received \$9 million in funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) to establish a national health policy center on its Nashville, Tenn. campus.

The endowment, announced early this month, is part of RWJF's investment in expanding the diversity of perspectives shaping America's health policies. The multimillion-dollar gift is the largest of its kind in the 132-year history of Meharry, a historically black institution that has educated generations of African-American doctors.

The purpose of The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at Meharry Medical College is to increase the number and diversity of those with formal training in sociology and economics who engage in health services and health policy research. The project will integrate faculty and students from both Meharry and Vanderbilt's College of Arts and Science's sociology and economics departments within the Center. The Center will have four key components:

- The recruitment of health policy students and faculty at Meharry and Vanderbilt;
- The creation of a certificate program in health policy for Meharry's medical, dental, public health and biomedical science stu-



Meharry President/ CEO Wayne J. Riley and RWJF Senior Vice President John R. Lumpkin launch The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Center for Health Policy at Meharry Medical College.

dents;

- The establishment of a Health Policy Scholars in Residence program at Meharry;
- and to give support to student and faculty led research, seminars and symposia to inform various policy debates.

Princeton, N.J.-based Robert Wood Johnson Foundation focuses on the pressing

health and health care issues facing our country. As the nation's largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to improving the health and health care of all Americans, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, meaningful and timely change.

Moms praise local author

Willis lives in Winston-Salem

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

A local author who specializes in helping children with developmental issues and their families has won an honor for one of her books.

Dr. Clarissa Willis' "Teaching Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder"

has won the 2009 Mom's Choice Award, which honors authors, inventors, companies, parents and others for their efforts in creating quality family-friendly media products and services. A panel of business professionals, librarians, children and others pick the winners of the awards each year.



Dr. Willis

Published by Gryphon House, Inc., "Teaching Young Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder" is described as a straightforward, easy-to-understand guide to working with children who have autism. It explains the major characteristics associated with autism and helps teachers understand the ways children with autism relate to the world.

Willis, who lives in Winston-Salem, has spent the last 20 years working on behalf of children with autism spectrum disorder. She is a regular speaker on the topic at conferences throughout the world.

Willis has penned five books in all, including "Inclusive Literacy Lessons," and her latest, "Inclusive Environments for Young Children." She has also written articles that have appeared in a number of journals and other publications.

Willis is a former associate professor of special education and the associate director of the Center of Excellence in Early Childhood Learning and Development at East Tennessee State University.

For more information on her award-winning book, go to www.gryphonhouse.com. To learn more about Dr. Willis or to contact her, go to her Web site, www.clarissawillis.com.