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Weeks of budget woes end

UNC STUDENTS TO SEE 5 PERCENT TUITION INCREASE IN '03-'04

BY ELLIOTT DUBE
STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

The possibility of a partial government shutdown. Heated debate over a one-time federal aid infusion and increased alcohol and tobacco taxes. The looming shadow of a shortfall of hundreds of millions of dollars in revenue. State legislators staying up well past their traditional bedtimes.

All these things ended when Gov. Mike Easley signed a new \$14.8 billion state budget plan into law Monday, beating the start of the new fiscal year by several hours.

A significant game of tug of war had taken place in state legislative offices, halls and chambers since April 17, when the House offered the first in a string of budget proposals and possibilities. The Senate countered with its own plan, bringing two months of compromise amid a struggling economy.

"It is always a formidable challenge in tough economic times to find a way to keep a budget balanced and to pass one to begin with," Easley told a throng of budget writers and members of the press.

The House voted 77-39 in favor of the proposal in a rare Sunday night session. Representatives began a new session shortly thereafter at midnight Monday, wasting no time in giving the proposal final approval, 75-40.

The Senate did its part to pass the bill with a 25-19 vote Sunday and a numerically identical Monday decision.

Both chambers of the General Assembly also approved adjustments to the plan to assuage some of the governor's worries.

Easley had warned legislators that he would veto the bill if it came to his desk unchanged, telling them that they were being overly optimistic in anticipating revenue growth of 5.5 percent for the 2004-05 fiscal year and that the conference report was more than \$400 million out of balance.

But the governor stepped away from his veto threat once legislators passed the Budget Adjustment Act, which gives Easley the power to take \$50 million out of the state's "rainy-day fund" for every 1/2 percent of expected growth that goes unmet for the second year of the biennium.

The budget puts \$150 million into the rainy-day fund and \$50 million into a repairs and renovations fund, among other allocations.

Democratic Rep. James Crawford of Vance County, a co-chairman of the conference committee, said that after working into the early morning on numerous occasions, budget writers developed a final proposal that pays heed to numerous state services and needs.

"It does a great job for education," he said of the newly approved plan. "It does a great job for health and human services. We have some money in here for commerce and for bringing the industries into the

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Sen. Linda Garrou, D-Forsyth, and co-chairwoman of the budget conference committee holds the state budget alongside Gov. Mike Easley.

MIAMI, VIRGINIA TECH JOIN ACC, END EXPANSION SAGA

ANALYSIS

Quest for money drove expansion

BY TIM CANDON
SPORTS EDITOR

When announcing Miami's intention to join the ACC on Monday, UM President Donna Shalala called the expansion saga "a bizarre, strange, goofy process."

Call it whatever. The ACC doesn't care how its expansion drive is characterized, as long as it proves to be one thing: profitable.

INSIDE The ACC wanted to ensure its Reaction to spot in the Bowl Championship Series and make more money on a from UNC new TV deal, so it went out and got one of the most recognized programs in the country, Miami, and one that's in the upper echelon of the college football ranks, Virginia Tech.

The ACC's current television contract expires after the 2005 season. With Miami and Va. Tech now in the league, ACC officials will use that as leverage at the bargaining table and try to turn it into a lucrative deal.

"When Virginia Tech and Miami are in, that becomes a new jumping off place because that's a new contract from there forward," Swofford said. "When bringing in two schools that bring a lot across the board, it's two perennial, national-caliber football programs, both of whom have a superb history of television ratings, and they bring that to the table, which is most definitely leverage. We've been helped significantly in that regard with the addition of these two programs."

ACC officials also hope to turn the addition of Miami and Virginia Tech into a nice BCS payday.

That contract, which runs out in 2006, pays conferences with teams in one of its four bowl games \$11 million-\$13 million. The ACC champion is guaranteed one spot in the BCS, and now the conference hopes that another school will be able to claim one of two at-large spots and its accompanying payout.

Regardless of money, Miami's switch actually makes sense. Virginia Tech has been waiting for an ACC invite for 50 years, so the Hokies' move was a no-brainer.

But for Miami, in geographic terms, the move is infinitely more practical. In basketball, the Hurricanes'

SEE ACC ANALYSIS, PAGE 4



Miami Director of Athletics Paul Dee (left) fields a question as Virginia Tech's AD Jim Weaver (middle) and ACC Commissioner John Swofford look on during Tuesday's press conference introducing Miami and Va. Tech as the newest members of the ACC.

BY TIM CANDON
SPORTS EDITOR

GREENSBORO — With 11 placards displaying the logos of the 11 ACC schools and with a banner proclaiming "ACC Tradition of Excellence" as a backdrop, ACC Commissioner John Swofford officially welcomed the addition of Miami and Virginia Tech to the conference Tuesday.

"Our best path in a changing landscape was to grow," Swofford said. "And I believe that a superb decision was reached to invite Miami and Virginia Tech to join us. I think that this will truly enhance all of us, and we're here tonight to celebrate Virginia Tech and the University of Miami becoming an integral part of the Atlantic Coast Conference."

While the ACC's road to expansion took several unexpected turns and encountered dozens of bumps along the way, Ron Wellman, Wake Forest director of athletics, said the ACC came out strong in the end with the two schools it added.

"Both have strong leadership," Wellman said. "They have outstanding programs, and they are literally a perfect fit for the ACC. This has been a long, twisting, unpredictable and oftentimes frustrating path to this wonderful conclusion."

Swofford gave both Miami Director of Athletics Paul Dee and Va. Tech Director of Athletics Jim Weaver polo shirts in

their schools' respective colors adorned with the ACC logo, as well as an ACC hat.

"We're looking forward to working with you," Swofford told Dee. "This is my giving this to you on behalf of the nine athletic directors that will be your colleagues in the ACC, and we're thrilled to death that you'll be with us."

When addressing Weaver, Swofford said: "There's a number of people that felt that Virginia Tech was a natural fit for the Atlantic Coast Conference, and I'm just glad, and I am really just thrilled, that that time finally has come."

While that day has been a long time coming for many at Virginia Tech, John

SEE ACC, PAGE 4

ACC TIMELINE

May 8, 1953

The ACC is founded with seven charter members: Clemson, Duke, Maryland, UNC, N.C. State, Wake Forest and South Carolina.

December 4, 1953

Virginia admitted to the ACC.

June 30, 1971

Charter member South Carolina leaves the conference.

April 3, 1978

Georgia Tech admitted to the ACC.

July 1, 1991

Florida State added to make the ACC a nine-team conference.

May 13, 2003

Expansion discussions begin concerning admission of Miami, Boston College and Syracuse.

June 24, 2003

New proposal made to Miami and Virginia Tech.

June 30, 2003

Miami and Virginia Tech accept offers to join the ACC starting with the 2004-05 academic year.

Sodomy ruling could negate N.C. law

BY GREG HORN
STAFF WRITER

On June 26, the Supreme Court struck down Texas' anti-sodomy law on the basis of privacy rights in a 6-3 ruling.

The legal repercussions of the court's decision still are being explored by officials in states that still operate under some form of anti-sodomy laws.

North Carolina's own statute 14-177 holds that any person engaging in sodomy, or a "crime against nature," is guilty of a Class I felony — punishable by two years in prison.

"The initial indication is that the

"The Supreme Court ruling casts serious doubt on the constitutionality of the North Carolina statute."

JOHN BASON, PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER, N.C. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Supreme Court ruling casts serious doubt on the constitutionality of the North Carolina statute," wrote John Bason, public information officer for the N.C. Department of Justice, in an e-mail. "We will continue studying the opinion, and we will confer with the North Carolina Conference of District Attorneys, who have jurisdiction to bring

charges under this seldom-used law."

To some, the court's ruling is a triumph for equal protection and privacy rights advocates in addition to gay rights supporters.

"The problem with the statute has been that it's generally not enforced against heterosexual couples," said Patricia Camp, execu-

tive director of North Carolina's American Civil Liberties Union chapter. "It's only used in cases where someone is thought to be homosexual. It's usually not even applied against women."

Camp said the decision takes away the basis for denying particular people the same rights others have. "In that sense, it will allow some different ways of dealing with issues where people who are homosexual have been denied opportunities and privileges and rights that heterosexuals take for granted."

SEE SODOMY, PAGE 4

Conservative legend Strom Thurmond dies

BY JOSEPH SCHWARTZ
STAFF WRITER

After 100 years of life, the man who delivered the longest filibuster in the history of the Senate passed away June 26.

The South Carolina senator served in office for 47 years and five months, a span which is unmatched. His tenure began in 1954 when he became the only U.S. senator thus far to be elected as a write-in candidate.

To some, Thurmond was a stubborn segregationist who refused to patch up the racial divide. To others,

he was a man who served his constituency with pride. "He understood politics are local," said Robert Becker, director of the Strom Thurmond Institute at Clemson University, the senator's alma mater.

Becker said the institute has received hundreds of letters and phone calls from people who remembered how Thurmond helped them.

In a press statement released Friday, President Bush remembered Thurmond as a man who

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INSIDE

TRIANGLE READIES FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY
There are many celebrations for patriotic locals to visit for the Fourth of July **PAGE 3**



INSIDE

'SINBAD' JUST FLOATS BY
Fun adventure cartoon provides laughs and thrills but isn't quite "Finding Nemo" **PAGE 7**

WEATHER

TODAY A.M. Clouds, High 87, Low 67
FRIDAY T-storms, High 87, Low 68
SATURDAY T-storms, High 93, Low 68

