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TECHNICIAN

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NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER SINCE 1920

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J.C. Raulston Arboretum holds field trials



CARL HEDSON/STAFF

Plants flourish at N.C. State's J.C. Raulston Arboretum, including (from left to right) ornamental sweet potatoes, purple dove vines, bat-face cuphea and 'Linde Armstrong' cleome.

◆ The annual summer bedding plant field day trials were held Friday.

LaWanda Ray
Staff Reporter

On Friday, the J.C. Raulston Arboretum held its semi-annual Landscape Bedding Plant Field Day. This summer's version included tours and seminars and showcased hundreds of bedding plants, including some just introduced to the area.

From 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., there were walks and guided tours, such as "Highlights of the 2002 Annuals and Tender Perennials," led by Bob Lyons. The "Building Successful Soils for Landscape Color" talks were given by Bill Fonteno.

After the cookout luncheon, the afternoon educational sessions began, broken up into the Landscape session and the Greenroom session. The topics and

speakers for these sessions were "Weed Management in Color Beds" by Joe Neal (Horticulture Science); "Outstanding Color Beds" by Linda Anderson (Bland Landscaping); "Winners, Losers and True Breakthroughs in Landscaping Color" by Robert Lyons; "New Poinsettia Cultivars and Cuts" by John Dole (Horticulture Science); "Poinsettia Fertilization and Physiological Disorders" by Brian Whipker (Horticulture Science); and "Controlling Poinsettia Diseases and Insects" by Colleen Warfield (Plant Pathology) and Christine Casey (Entomology).

The field day is beneficial for landscapers or gardeners who have planting questions and concerns, as well as those who are looking for new ideas.

"A landscaper or home gardener may be hesitant to gamble on a plant until he knows it will grow well here," said Dr. Robert Lyons, director of the Raulston

Arboretum and the recipient of the J.C. Raulston Distinguished Professor of Horticultural Science award at N.C. State. "Field tests like this give them a chance to spot the real winners — plants that do well with less fuss, even in drought conditions, and are maybe a little different from what everyone else is growing."

A few of the recently introduced plants attracting a lot of attention this year are:

• **'Sweet Caroline' ornamental sweet potatoes** Introduced this year by the arboretum and NCSU's Department of Horticultural Science, 'Sweet Caroline' is available in four foliage colors (bronze, green, bright green and purple) and is less invasive than other sweet potato vines, making it better for small spaces, Lyons said.

• **'Purple dove vine'** This fast-growing vine has textured, heart-shaped leaves and handsome purple flowers (actually they're bracts) shaped like wings. It's a

good alternative to morning glory.

• **'Bat-face cuphea 'Firecracker'** A cousin of Mexican heather, this low-growing sun lover bears hundreds of tiny, vivid red and purple flowers. It thrives in poor soil.

• **'Linde Armstrong' cleome** More compact than other cleomes, Linde Armstrong grows just two feet high and has blooms that look like white-and-fuchsia fireworks.

There were many other beautifully bright plants demanding the attention of the home gardeners and landscapers who walked along the beds. Many of these individuals came from different counties to get ideas for their companies.

Many of these plants are available only from specially seed catalogues, Lyons said. "If they do well in plant trials and create a buzz among visitors, then you might start to see them in retail stores and catalogues a year or so down the road."

"I come every year with my job to get ideas on what to grow and what not to grow," said Dot Corbette of Johnson Nurseries. "The bedding fields are a way for my company to see what plants will grow the best in North Carolina's climate." According to Bernadette Clark, agriculture research technician for the Department of Horticulture Science, "Gardeners can come and visit the beds that are open to the public from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. year-round."

The eight-acre Raulston Arboretum is a research and teaching facility with nationally acclaimed gardens and the most diverse collection of cold-hardy, temperate-zone plants in the southeastern United States. The facility is located at the NCSU Horticultural Field Laboratory at 4301 Beryl Road in Raleigh, Call (919) 515-3132 for directions or more information, or you can visit www.ncsu.edu/jcraulstonarboretum.

Physicist wins DOE Outstanding Junior Investigator Award

◆ Dr. Gail McLaughlin is one of only five recipients of the award, which comes with \$213,000 for research.

News Staff Report

Dr. Gail McLaughlin of Raleigh, assistant professor of physics at N.C. State, has been awarded an Outstanding Junior Investigator Award by the U.S. Department of Energy's Division of Nuclear Physics.

She is one of only five recipients this year. The award — \$213,000 over three years — will help support McLaughlin's research in theoretical nuclear and particle astrophysics, specifically the way nuclear reactions and subatomic particles affect astrophysical objects and vice-versa.

She also studies how and in which astrophysical environments the elements of the periodic table are produced. She is especially interested in supernovae, which are the end states of massive stars, and gamma ray bursts, which have an unknown origin.

The DOE's Division of Nuclear Physics, through the Outstanding Junior Investigator program, supports the development of individual research programs of outstanding scientists early in their careers.

McLaughlin came to NCSU last fall. She earned a bachelor's degree in physics from Princeton University in 1991 and a Ph.D. in physics from the University of California San Diego in 1996.



CARL HEDSON/STAFF

BLINDED BY THE LIGHT

Students from both the College of Design and the College of Engineering collaborated to create a system of shades designed to automatically control the amount of light in classrooms. The students tested a model of their invention on July 24, and the first classroom to use the technology is scheduled to be built and used in the Wake County School System next year.

Four students receive fellowships from NC Beautiful

◆ A record number of N.C. State students won awards this year, bringing the university's all-time total to 12.

News Staff Report

A record four N.C. State students have been awarded the Governor and Mrs. Dan K. Moore Fellowship to Keep North Carolina Clean and Beautiful for 2002-2003 by NC Beautiful.

Selected for the fellowships this year were Adam Luckenbach of Asheboro, a doctoral candidate in zoology; Corey Oakley of New Bern, a master's candidate in zoology; Nathalie Reys of Morehead City, a doctoral candidate in

marine, earth and atmospheric sciences; and Srinivas Siriparapu of Raleigh, a doctoral candidate in chemical engineering.

The fellowships are designed to recognize graduate students who will utilize their knowledge and creativity to provide solutions to North Carolina's environmental issues. The award of \$10,000 per student will be used to support those students' research efforts.

Luckenbach is studying the development of ecologically important and economically valuable southern flounder, which is vital to effective fisheries management and restocking of wild populations.

Through his research, Oakley hopes to

advance the recovery of the endangered shortnose sturgeon to maintain commercial fishing levels.

Reys is examining the blue crab in the Pamlico Sound to understand how juvenile dispersal later leads to blue crab abundance and distribution.

Siriparapu is concentrating on developing novel carbon dioxide-based polymer processing technologies to produce a new generation of foamed plastics. He hopes his research will lead to stronger aircraft parts, low-k dielectrics for newer microelectronic devices and biomedical scaffolds for tissue engineering.

A total of 12 NCSU students have received the award since its inception in

1995, one each year until 2001, when two students received the award. NC Beautiful officials said that because of the strength of this year's candidates, contingency funds were used to offer four fellowships this year.

NC Beautiful is a non-profit organization focused on protecting, preserving and enhancing the state's appearance, as well as educating students and citizens about sustaining the environment for future generations.

In addition to the Governor and Mrs. Dan K. Moore Fellowship, NC Beautiful awarded its first undergraduate research awards in 2002, and hopes to expand the program statewide.



Notice of public memorial service for Tim McLaurin

A public memorial service will be held for Tim McLaurin Friday at 7:30 in Talley Student Center's Stewart Theater. McLaurin, novelist and English professor at N.C. State, died of cancer in July at the age of 48.

TECHNICIAN'S VIEW

Fast food lawsuit is ridiculous

CAESAR BARBER, AN OBESE MAN SUING THE FAST FOOD INDUSTRY, IS A FEW FRIES SHORT OF A HAPPY MEAL.

Last week, Caesar Barber, an obese man from New York, filed a lawsuit against McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's and Kentucky Fried Chicken, claiming the fast food industries are responsible for his obesity and related health problems. Barber weighs 272 pounds, has experienced two heart attacks and also has diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, but does he honestly have a case to claim that these four chains should be held responsible for his health?

Yes, the items served at fast food restaurants are often full of calories, fat and grease — this is a fact that few can deny. Fast food restaurants are not required to sell healthy foods, and they do not claim that their items should constitute a person's entire diet. Although apparently, Barber misunderstood this; Barber told Newsday, "They said '100-percent beef.' I thought that meant it was good for you. I thought the food was OK."

These four chains have been providing brochures for years that include nutrition information for their meals. Many restaurants also have framed charts outlining the specific nutrition information in each item, and one can also find these figures and compare them with dietary guidelines, both found on the Internet.

Barber merely represents those who believe that the legal system can be

used for personal profit. Although, with the precedent of former lawsuits against fast-food chains, Barber may have a chance of winning. These previous suits include the notorious McDonald's coffee case where Stella Liebeck originally won \$2.7 million dollars in punitive damages when she burnt herself on coffee that she claimed was too hot. (These damages were later reduced to roughly \$500,000.) If someone can win money for the temperature of their food, there is definitely a chance they can win money because of the caloric content.

American businesses are struggling in this economy, and it is unfortunate that issues this frivolous must be handled at this time. Unfounded lawsuits can only hurt businesses by diverting their attention; when businesses suffer, families can lose jobs and prices can increase. In turn, this weakens the economy as a whole.

Lawsuits such as this are not without their victims in the society — from businesses to the common citizen. But Barber's suit may achieve one positive aspect: It could possibly cause other people to recognize that a diet of strictly fast food does not make a healthy lifestyle and could inspire changes in their lives. Yet, regardless of the outcome, the initial fact remains that ignorance of an action's consequences should not be the basis of legal action.



Wondering about the truth



Karl Smith
STAFF COLUMNIST

John Scopes was tried and convicted for attempting to teach evolution in the public schools 77 years ago. Though Scopes was far from an evolutionist himself, he symbolized a struggle which was to rage until 1967, when Tennessee finally lifted its ban on the teaching of evolution.

Today, the battle has started anew. Only this time it is the fundamentalists who are fighting to be heard. Many of them argue that if evolution is to be taught, some form of creationism should be taught as well. Why should preference be given to one view over the other?

While that might seem a reasonable plea, the problem is that in the years since Scopes first went to trial, evolution has been woven into the very fabric of science. It is nearly impossible to talk about life in serious terms without bringing up the notion of evolution and how it has shaped the way biological organisms interact with their environment.

If students were not taught evolution, they would have a hard time understanding much of biology, anthropology and even psychology or economics to an extent.

More importantly, those who wish to include creationism have largely missed the point behind modern science. Nearly all scientists today have bought into the notion of positivism. As such, science is not about the search for truth, understanding the nature of our world or any similar metaphysical pursuits.

In fact, it is not even important whether there actually is a real world at all. What is important is that data can be collected and analyzed, and models can be built to explain that data. Are the models true? In most cases, such a question is hopelessly beyond the ability to know and in all cases beyond the interest of science.

Take our familiar model of the solar system. Does the Earth really go around the Sun? Certainly none of us have seen this happen. Few people have ever been outside Earth's atmosphere, and no one outside of its supposed orbit. How can we possibly know? Even if we could travel outside of the solar system and look down upon it, who is to say what travels around what? It depends largely on how you choose your frame of reference.

Certainly, we could choose to hold the Earth still and find a path in which each of the planets revolve around it. However, whether the Earth "really" travels around the Sun is of no importance whatsoever. What is important is that we have a model in which it does and that model is simultaneously tractable, accurate and consistent with the rest of our models.

RULE OF THUMB

Re-election support falls



The latest Zogby America Poll, conducted between July 19 and 21, shows that less than a majority of Americans (47%) believe that President Bush should be re-elected. Republican Party strategists dismissed the results saying, "Less than a majority? What's your point?"

O'Neill faces criticism



Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill has come under increasing criticism over the past two weeks for his low profile during the nation's current economic missteps. When asked in a recent survey, "How do you think Secretary O'Neill is handling the current crisis?" 87% of respondents cocked their heads slightly and said, "Who?"

Wake Forest fights Wal-Mart



Several prominent residents of Wake Forest, the rapidly growing town in northern Wake County, are expressing opposition to the plans for a new Wal-Mart on the grounds that it will take money away from local businesses. A spokesperson for Wal-Mart responded to these allegations last week, saying, "We are a juggernaut of commerce. We cannot be stopped. Join us, little people."

Inebriated pilot investigated



Security agents at the Wilmington, N.C., airport on Sunday detained a pilot who was scheduled to fly a 27-passenger plane to Atlanta because they smelled alcohol on his breath. The pilot registered a blood alcohol level of 0.16, four times the FAA limit. When questioned later, he belligerently demanded, "Man, give me my keys, I'm fine!"

ALE busts Johnston still



Alcohol Law Enforcement agents found 45 gallons of moonshine and 2,000 gallons of mash, the material used to make moonshine, in a still in rural Johnston County. This is the seventh such bust since January, and although the agency has not found the people who operated the still, one agent commented, "When we do find them, we're going to have a rad party."

Yale: Princeton hacked



Yale University admissions officials claimed this weekend that their counterparts at Princeton gained unauthorized access to Yale's online acceptance website using information from students that had applied to both schools. Princeton officials said that they were only trying to test the site's security — 11 times. "We're working for you!" said one such official.

Stock market rebounds



American stocks opened the week with strong gains as investors sought to cash in on what many perceived as bargain prices from the mini-crash of the last two weeks. The Bush administration was quick to capitalize on the recovery, with one spokesperson saying, "That's right America. Everything's fine. Go back to sleep. Yes, you're very sleepy."

Mercury in tuna



The Mercury Policy Project, a non-governmental food safety group, has recommended to the FDA that it add tuna, especially canned tuna, to the list of foods that should be avoided by children and pregnant women because of high mercury levels. The group says that it was first alerted to the problem when medical supply companies began offering edible tuna thermometers.

Asteroid to miss Earth



New observations of the asteroid 2002 NT7, which was reported to be on a possible collision course with Earth last week, have calmed fears of a Hollywood-style disaster in 2019. Doomsday cults all over the world were disappointed by the news. "We thought we finally had it right, you know? We had our special suits and everything," said one Australian cultist.

West Nile at White House



A dead bird found on the White House grounds last week tested positive for the West Nile virus, which has killed 18 people since its first U.S. appearance in 1999. When asked if he was worried about the virus, President Bush expressed bravado: "Of course not! This is America. The Nile's way over there in Egypt-land."ss

Karl Smith
STAFF COLUMNIST

Parents far too competitive



Ben Kraudel
STAFF COLUMNIST

board and glaring at the children sprint down the lanes. One man at this meet yells louder than anyone I have ever met. It's an indoor pool, with a high ceiling and great acoustics, and I know that I should expect my ears to be bleeding by the time the meet is over.

Meanwhile, the coach of the team from the YMCA where I work is smiling and pacing up and down the sides of the pool. He shouts encouraging messages to the kids in the water. He says things like, "Swim fast, but swim smart. Don't hurt yourself just to win." While the other coaches are throwing their clipboards at the 8-year-olds in the water, screaming, "Swim faster! No pain, no gain! Hurt yourself if you have to!" I always expect to hear a parent shout, "Santa Claus doesn't visit losers!" but it has yet to happen.

The kids on my boss's team do well. Those who don't win improve their scores and leave the meet feeling better than when they came in. The other teams' kids look like they expect to be downcast at any moment when they get home.

What I'm driving at is that, either as a culture or as human beings, we put far too much emphasis on winning. I'm not saying that winning is not fun or

important. I like to win. I like to watch sports and I enjoy seeing the teams I root for win. I like to read, as I did this summer, that N.C. State football is going to do great in the ACC.

Still, for small children who will not be in the Olympics after their stint at the Eden, N.C., YMCA pool, I think perhaps the pressure is unwarranted. Youth sports should be fun and keep children enjoying a lifetime of physical fitness. They should not teach children that all there is to life is winning and that parents are to be ashamed of children who didn't come in first.

If you still feel winning is far too important to let go of, I warn you, the need to always be the best and the feelings of inadequacy that follow are very heavy weights to try and carry across your water. Once they start to pull you under, it gets harder and harder to keep your head above water. When you finally start sinking fast, even the lifeguards won't be able to pull you back to the top until you let go of what is holding you down.

Ben wrote this column with his mother yelling over his shoulder the whole time. "Use more commas!" Talk to him about it at bkraudel@unity.ncsu.edu.

They came from nothing



Decker Ngongang
STAFF COLUMNIST
CEO who "made it" according to society's standards. I have always wondered what makes someone "come from nothing." As I thought about writing this column, I realized that the "nothing" we so loosely throw around is nothing but a figment of society's sensationalized imagination. I don't think there is a "nothing" in the sense of judging someone's success. To celebrate someone's achieve-

ments by saying "they came from nothing" is to say that at one time that person was worth exactly that — nothing. I don't buy into that being the idealist I am; I think that all people have value no matter their personal circumstances. Even if they are at the lowest of lows, it is that state that lets us judge what the highest of highs exactly is. Value lies within that.

An example can best be exemplified in the often-run ESPN sport century biographies detailing lives of sports legends. It is here I found the inspiration for my column. They were speaking about how Isaiah Thomas grew up in the inner city and rose from nothing to become a great basketball legend. I couldn't help but notice how much they played on the phrase of rising from nothing. I felt that disrespected those things of value in his life, no matter his circumstance. I heard him on the show talk about the strength of his mother and how she always influenced him to make the right decisions. He then

talked about his siblings and both the positive and negative affects they had on his life. That's something in my book, and those things were maybe more valuable to Isaiah than any book, teacher or after-school program. Those things did the job for him and helped mold the person that we celebrate in the media. I doubt he considers the first 15 or 16 years of his life "nothing," so I wonder why the media feels the need to portray otherwise?

"Nothing" has become synonymous with poor, financially strapped, broke and otherwise powerless. Money is not everything when you are growing up. A person's financial situation has a lot to do with the condition of their upbringing, but the value in a person is made and maintained by the environment around them as they mature. Too often media and society negate the positive aspects of a childhood environment. Wealth and power aside, if a person is in a condition without love and the support to grow as a human being, they are

at a disadvantage. Of course, some people have the luxury of more resources, but that has been the case since the dawn of existence. I think that more emphasis should be placed on how these celebrities grow up instead of what they materially have when they grow up.

I love to see the Williams sisters and the media attention they get whenever they win a championship. Besides believing Serena Williams is one of the most beautiful women on God's green earth, I think they are one of the best examples of a rich upbringing. Society and the media would have you think they were tremendously disadvantaged as youth because they were without the creature comforts of most tennis prodigies. I beg to differ as I see two young girls who grew up in an environment of tremendous love and comfort. They had a father who encouraged a talent and nurtured it until an apparent gift was present. This is a rarity, not a disadvantage, as others would have you

think. The Williams sisters are an example of riches beyond the conception of the world's currencies. The settings in which they grew up weren't the prettiest, but the home environment they had was one that allowed them to grow just as any other human being.

If the celebrities we consider disadvantaged really aren't, what do we use to show such condition? I think of the people who are orphans or homeless and how they are able to mature with the absence of outside support or a person to love them. Normally we don't think twice when saying rags to riches, but in this instance, I argue that maybe for some people, those rags truly are riches.

Decker believes his riches come from the fun letters he receives from readers. Let him know you care at dngongang@unity.ncsu.edu.

rat and guy by john west



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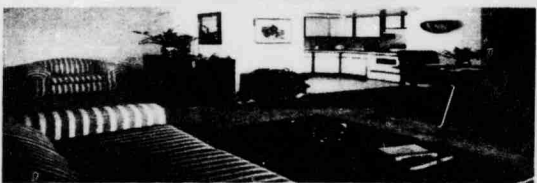
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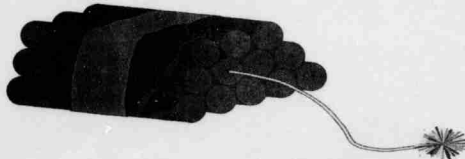
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Climbing Ingram Hill

Senior Staff Writer **Grayson Currin**

Pinpointing the origin of their band name is a simple question for the four musicians of the Memphis-based rock band Ingram Hill.

"It actually came from a road sign on Highway 78 into Memphis that said 'Ingram's Mill.' It was one of the last signs we always saw when we were all driving home to we played with the letters ... and now we have Ingram Hill," says Justin Moore, as he lightly strums Pete Yorn's "Life on a Chain" in the Cat's Cradle.

Pinpointing the origin of their sound, however, is a question that elicits four grimaces and a mess of musicians-as-lead-reaching as the band's pop-laden sound.

Bassist Shea Sowell immediately mentions Radiohead as an influence, followed by Ween and Queen. Singer and guitarist Justin Moore, whose frat-boy looks betray a fondness for Dylan, mentions the Black Crowes, the Barenaked Ladies and Tonic. Led Zepplin, the Counting Crows and the Rolling Stones are just a few among a myriad of others that enter into the equation that is Ingram Hill.

It all came together in 2001 following the departure of Moore and lead guitarist Phil Bogard from a band whose career path seemed inevitably and dreadfully hampered by an unwillingness to tour for any length of time. By the work of fortune (and university housing), Moore's roommate happened to be a drummer raised on jazz and endeared with the sounds of Jeff Buckley. With that, drummer Matt Chambliss joined Bogard, Moore and bassist Shea Sowell to enter into one of the South's most promising new sounds.

After exiting college early and hitting the road for numerous gigs across Tennessee and the Southeast, the band entered into the studio in October of 2001 to record its debut album, "Until Now." Jeff Powell, a bona fide studio expert whose engineering and production resume includes The Allman Brothers Band, The Afghan Whigs and Stevie Ray Vaughan, entered into the recording as the producer.

While working with the band, it was apparent to Powell that he was working with sheer talent. After talking to friend and collaborator Emerson Hart of Tonic about the band's potential, Ingram Hill opened for Tonic as Hart watched from the stage. Obviously, Hart was not blind to the charm of Ingram Hill. Hart entered the studio, co-writing three of the disc's eight songs and co-producing four of them



www.ingramhillmusic.com

with Powell.

Whereas Powell had shown the band exactly how to render sounds that they had once dreamt to be impossible, Hart was quick to offer his own advice on how to mold and refine their sound. With undeniable hooks fresh in the band's head, they listened to his own experience as a master of melody. Moore's voice became dramatic and driving, while Bogard's guitar playing found how to — at times — ride alongside the band for a moment before leaping forth for a gripping solo.

"It was really crazy having someone wh[om] you are used to having come out of your stereo sitting in your living room playing your own songs," says Bogard, still in shock of the opportunity.

The imprint of Tonic's front man is undeniable on the album. "Will I Ever Make it Home," the album's opening track and most obvious choice for a single, carries the same acoustic/electric path as "If You Could Only See," while "Brother's Keeper" reads much like a friendly retelling of 1996's "Casual Affair." Ironically enough, Hart seems to have found the piece of his own band that has been his Achilles' heel over the past five years by way of Ingram Hill.

Chambliss seems to guide and carry the sound of his own band remarkably well. Chambliss, for instance, skates just above the mix for "Almost Perfect," riding through the verses with a simple cadence before sailing into a steady barrage of brass that seems to stem from his childhood of jazz. "The Timing" grumbles with an onslaught of Sowell's bass guitar colliding with Chambliss' kit before Moore sails into a chorus that wallows in its own modern rock gimmick. This is a band riding melody, sailing sonically with a groove as contagious as the common cold.

Lyrical speaking, the band does not reach. It doesn't delve into anything too profound, poetic or philosophical, but Ingram Hill's writing is honest and effective. The real-world allusions are cleverly concealed, as with "Almost Perfect," a tale of bittersweet adoration for a guilty-in-love misfit.

"Maybe she's not quite honest with me! Almost all the time? Maybe I know there's someone else in her life! When I climb into bed with her at night," sings Moore in a tone of sincerity that smartly points out that we all know of the desperation from which he sings.

"Chicago" and "Maybe It Me" barrel down the same road of heartbreak and lost love, tugging at emotions by way of a six-string and Moore's evocative voice.

The lyrics are easy to identify with, a ready friend to the listener who needs a shoulder to think (or cry) on. They are molded out of and by experience; they mold readily to that of the audience.

Sadly enough, today's record industry allows little room for bands who live for the stage and build via that stage, instead going for formulaic success stories that find bands on short-lived espressos to fame more often than on touring circuits that demand hard work from devoted musicians. Ingram Hill is a worthy exception. Their attention to the live setting has given them a strong reputation while allowing them a laboratory in which to test themselves and to improve.

With each show they play and their apparent increase in maturity both as songwriters and as a band, Ingram Hill seems to be taking a more difficult road to success than major-label darlings. But with their contagious hooks and melodies, that road may not be quite as long as Highway 78 into Memphis.

Not so 'Amazing' after all

Features Editor **Joel Isaac Frady**

Lovely and Amazing

Starring **Catherine Keener**

Emily Mortimer

Directed by **Nicole Holofcener**

★★½

There's a lot to admire in "Lovely and Amazing," the story of three generations of women and the constant dilemmas they face while trying to lead lives that don't require settling for second best. It has some of the most interesting female characters to come along all summer; it's always refreshing to see the wonderful Catherine Keener (the object of desire in "Being John Malkovich") in roles that she's able to run free with, and writer/director Nicole Holofcener captures some absolutely hilarious moments.

The problem is that Holofcener doesn't seem to have any real notion of how she feels about these characters. There aren't any problems with the characters she creates, for each character could easily stand on their own and keep a theater full of people interested for an entire movie. But these characters and their lives are simply presented to the viewer — what happens is what happens, and that's it. While watching it, there seems to be an ocean of questions just waiting to be asked, things waiting to be commented on. But these questions are never asked and seem to be ignored.

Keener stars as Michelle, a 36-year-old "artist" who hasn't quite progressed past the mentality she had in high school. Not that any of the characters in "Lovely and Amazing" seem to possess maturity beyond that of a high-schooler, but Michelle is the special case. She's unemployed, and though everyone around her bugs her about it, she doesn't really know why having a job is so important. Certain social skills evade her, too; when approached with confrontation of any type, she just tells them to "buzz off" and even offers this approach as advice to people facing problems. Not that this lack of social skills is a bad thing because it's actually very intriguing.

She's surrounded by the other characters that make up her incredibly strange family. Her mother (Brenda Blethyn,

"Saving Grace") is a woman who has allowed her youthful crush on her liposuction doctor to go too far. Her sister's an aspiring actress who can't go a moment without questioning whether she has the looks and the persona to make it as an actress. Finally, there's Annie, who is by far the most interesting character in the film.

The intriguing aspect about Annie is that she has more maturity than the rest of the group put together, despite being 25 years younger than the rest of the cast. This maturity seems to come from the constant state of confusion she lives in: She's an African-American adopted by a white family, and she doesn't understand why she's different than the rest. She also has an eating problem, which causes her to do things like run off at night without permission to get some fast food. She knows that the way she eats is frowned upon, but only because Michelle keeps telling her that she's going to have to be a fat teenager.

She can tell her that because there's an innocent, child-like honesty that each of these characters possesses. It's rarely meant in a mean or vicious way, for these aren't mean characters. They just don't quite understand the concept of subtlety.

It'd be easy to go on all day about the complexity of the characters, and how great each of the performances are and how they come so close to saving the film. But the life they pump into "Lovely and Amazing" isn't quite enough to overcome the weakness of the male characters — characters not mentioned previously because they're barely there, and only fragments of each character seem to come out during the film. Maybe we were supposed to see them as the women see them, for it's a common fact that men and women have no clue as to what actually makes the other tick. But these men are bland and emotionless, managing only to ignore the women.

Their lack of emotion goes along with the lack of emotion shown by Holofcener toward her characters. She seems, in ways, like a little child that builds a calculator — she knows that it's good but has no idea how to use it. With "Lovely and Amazing," she introduces us to characters in situations that are impossible not to like, but she has no idea how to turn these people and situations into anything more than a documentary on their lives.

Prepaid credit cards — biggest scam ever?

Features Editor **Joel Isaac Frady**

In life, it has always seemed easier to just ignore large corporations when they come out with products or schemes that seem too stupid to actually work. These schemes are normally easy to ignore, for it's nice to think that this typical consumer isn't dumb enough to fall prey to the big corporations. Over time, it's been easy to ignore almost all of these silly corporate schemes, even ones like "free long distance." Abercrombie or McDonald's.

Despite all this practice ignoring all of these horrible ideas, one has risen that's just too stupid to ignore. This idea, released by Mastercard, is a "prepaid credit card," allowing anyone at any age to go out and get one of these cards. All you have to do is give Next Estate Communications (the company behind this smashing idea) your own money, plus a little extra here and there, and boom! You have a Mastercard.

This is a card you can get, as the advertisement points out in big letters, with: No application! No credit check! These were the only two sentences on the ad with any emotional pull to them, but like a good first date, it only showed the positive side. Now you, Mr. or Ms. Consumer with bad credit, can get an all-powerful Mastercard, too! Granted, you're giving up your money (that you can use anywhere) to get a card that only works at certain places ... but you'll have a Mastercard, Mr. or Ms. Consumer, and that's what everyone wants.

One-time new account activation fee of only \$9.95! This is the first of three catches that are listed on the personalized glossy advertisement cards they have at The Pantry (or online at www.mymccard.com), and sadly it's also the most reasonable of the three.

Sure, now you're paying almost \$10 of your own money so that you can spend your own money that they put on a card for you.

The second catch, in addition to being absolutely ridiculous, is one that the customer will be reminded of every time they add money to the card. For, "When you want to add more money to your Mastercard account, there will be a reload fee of \$3.95." With this in mind, noting that to have \$100 worth of spending on your card will cost you almost \$104.

The best of these catches also stands as the most humorous, for at the top of the glossy personalized advertisement cards, there's a small box full of numbers, with a tagline that says "Compare!" In this box, it shows that the prepaid card has "No annual membership fees," while other cards charge "up to \$50 per year." This sounds good for a second, until the third catch is noticed: "Each month, an account maintenance fee of up to \$4.95 will be deducted from your balance." You do the math.

Above and beyond all the obvious ways that this idea can screw you over, Mr. or Ms. Consumer, there's the one idea that seems to have been forgotten. Credit cards are appealing because it allows you, Mr. or Ms. Consumer, to spend someone else's money. Yes, there are charges involved, but by spending the corporation's money instead of your own money, the interest you're making is greater. If you're smart and pay off your entire bill every month, credit cards can actually be profitable. Plus, if you're one of the countless people who shops just because it's fun, credit cards can make life easier, allowing you to avoid the coins and dreads \$1 bills.

This idea of prepaid cards takes the worst of the credit card ideas and puts it all together. You still have the fees,

Mr. or Ms. Consumer, but now instead of having money in the bank to earn interest on, Next Estate Communications is earning the interest off of the money you gave them. But hey, you do get a Mastercard.

Do you see now why this idea is too incredibly ridiculous to be ignored, Mr. or Ms. Consumer? It's more than just a matter of a large corporation trying to get our money. This is the corporations laughing at us, smoking their fancy cigars while they hand out their fancy, glossy, personalized advertisements as they keep laughing. Then again, wouldn't you be laughing too if you figured out the easiest way to rob an unsuspecting public out of their money since roaming charges?

This is an insult to you, your neighbor, your friends, your enemies and your dog. Well, maybe not your dog. But it is an insult to all the normal consumers out there, who have enough to worry about without people in high places testing ideas out to see: (A) how much money they can make and (B) just how stupid the American consumer is.

So now, Mr. or Ms. Consumer, it's time to unite and show these companies that we're not as stupid or helpless or rotten or lazy as they think! We'll no longer fall for the brainless ideas they send our way! We're sick of being insulted every time we turn a corner with promises of free long distance, no credit checks or two burgers for a dollar. We're sick of ignoring it while they try to convince us with colorful, personalized, glossy advertisement cards. We're sick of their tricky schemes.

If you agree, Mr. or Ms. Consumer, let Next Estate Communications know how you feel by sending them an e-mail at customerservice@mymccard.com. And remember not to be pleased with them.



www.lovelyandamazing.com

Lovely and Amazing.

Where's the funny?

Staff Writer **Zack Medford**

It's eight o'clock on a Monday night, and while staring at the television, it suddenly occurred to me that there's a whole lot on television these days that isn't worth watching.

Monday night television is absolutely horrible. It used to be that you could grin and bear it through an hour-long episode of "Boston Public," but that's not even on tonight. Instead, there are about 30 sitcoms on, and not a single one is worth even considering.

Maybe television has lost its way since the days of "Seinfeld" and Phil Hartman, for 1998 was the worst year for funny in the history of the world. Jerry Seinfeld wrapped up nine years of hilarity with one of the most wrongly hyped-up series finales since "M*A*A*S*H." Phil Hartman ... well, you all know what happened. Humor just wasn't funny anymore.

Let's start with "Everybody Loves Raymond." Why the hell does anyone

find this show funny? The mind seems to melt just by watching it. "Seinfeld" was the original show about nothing, yet "Raymond" truly takes the cake at mediocrity. There are no jokes in "Everybody Loves Raymond." Every single episode is about the grandmother disliking Raymond's wife or Raymond's inability to show affection. Rather than make people laugh at the foibles of life, "Raymond" makes us fear the absolute blandness of adulthood.

Face it, America. No matter how many ways they dress up a show about a husband, wife and kids, it's the same show. And "The Simpsons" has already laid claim to all of the funny that can come out of the dysfunctional family. Maybe CBS needs to get back to dramas and leave the funny in the hands of those who understand it.

Actually, over half of the sitcoms on network television today are about a married couple, their kids and the dysfunctional family. **Funny** continued on page 5

Funny from page 4

function created by such relationships. Now sure, it was a funny premise 20 years ago. Don't you think that perhaps we've milked the family-funny cow to death? Yet, today the only sitcoms that survive their first season are the family ones.

Different sitcoms, like "Andy Richter Controls the Universe," are quickly shut down before anyone even has a chance to start watching. The writers of that show are actually nominated for an Emmy for best writing in a sitcom. Is the show still on? Well, is it about a dysfunctional family? The answer to both questions is no.

I'm a little jaded, having to waste another night watching "Fear Factor," a show that isn't really interesting, but watching people eat monkey testes is less disgusting than a "Raymond" marathon.

There are, however, a few places left on television today where you can still find a little laughter. Comedy Central's proven to be more than just good at buying funny shows like "The Critic" and running them into the ground.

"The Daily Show," "Crank Yankers" and "The Man Show" are some of the funniest shows on TV.

"The Simpsons" still holds the crown for consistent hilarity; there's not a single episode that isn't rife with funny quotes and situations that are worth talking about for weeks after it airs.

NBC's Conan O'Brien is a gold mine for great sketches and one tall, pale and skinny anchorman's self-deprecating jokes. NBC has always carried a couple good shows, "Scrubs" and "Friends" certainly don't make up for "Seinfeld," but they do come close.

It's pretty clear that we're in a recession, America; it's no laughing matter.

We have clung so tightly to the status quo that we didn't even notice that most of the unique flavor of prime-time television is being replaced with regurgitated, worn-out comedy. Until you stop pretending that "Everybody Loves Raymond" is hilarious, until you stop watching "According to Jim" because you have nothing else to do and until you stop finding constructive ways to spend your night instead of sitting in front of the TV, it's not going to get any more humorous.

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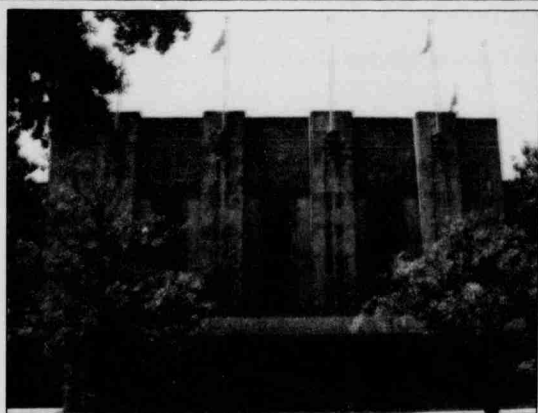
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Reynolds Coliseum, home to N.C. State volleyball, will host a team that will try to quiet the prognosticators that picked it ninth in the preseason poll.

Preseason ACC volleyball and soccer polls

Volleyball — by vote of the league's nine head coaches

1. North Carolina 78
2. Duke 69
3. Georgia Tech 63
4. Maryland 45
5. Florida State 42
6. Clemson 38
7. Wake Forest 36
8. Virginia 24
9. N.C. State 10

Men's soccer — by vote of league's seven head coaches

1. Virginia 45
2. North Carolina 43
3. Clemson 36
4. Wake Forest 26
5. Maryland 22
6. Duke 17
7. N.C. State 7

Women's soccer — by vote of league's eight head coaches

1. North Carolina 62
2. Virginia 57
3. Clemson 41
4. Florida State 37
5. Duke 32
6. Wake Forest 27
7. Maryland 23
8. N.C. State 13

WolfpackNotes

Football freshmen report

For N.C. State's freshman class, summer vacation is officially over. Preceding the earliest kickoff in school history, the Wolfpack's first-year players have reported to campus at about the same time many NFL training camps are just getting started.

Under normal circumstances, the freshmen wouldn't have been required to report for preseason duty until the first full week of August. But these are not normal circumstances. With State's opener against New Mexico looming on Aug. 24, Chuck

Amato and his staff are getting started a little sooner this season. Make that a lot sooner.

After going through the usual orientation process on Monday, the freshmen hit the practice field for the first time on Tuesday afternoon. The reporting date for State's veteran players is Thursday. And after going through a series of meetings on Friday, the entire squad will open two-a-days with an early morning workout on Saturday.

Trammel named cheerleading coach

Harold Trammel, a former two-time NCA All-American

cheerleader at N.C. State, has been named head cheerleading coach at the university.

Trammel has spent the last two seasons as an assistant coach with the State Red, or varsity, squad. Some of his responsibilities included leading portions of practice, teaching skills and running tryouts. Trammel was part of the coaching staff that helped State win the Grand National Cheerleading Championship in 2001 and finish fifth nationally this past spring.

He has also served for a year and a half as head coach of the White, or junior varsity, squad. With that team, he helped athletes progress to the varsity level by running prac-

tices and choreographing routines.

While a member of the State cheerleading squad, Trammel was named a two-time team MVP, ranked most dedicated, was rookie of the year and served as team captain his final two seasons. Along with being named an All-American by the NCA, Trammel was also a two-time NCA top-20 partner stunt finalist.

Trammel has also served as the head instructor and coach at Champion Cheerleading Camps Inc. in Raleigh from 1997-2000.

Trammel earned his degree in textile engineering from State in 2000. He graduated with a GPA of 3.3, and

his hands, dunks on him and goes out the back door. It was great, it was hilarious."

It's moments like that which have made the Chavis League what it is today, which is even more of a competitive environment than it once was.

Lamont Burgess, head coach of Hodge and the rest of the Top of New York team, thinks the league has gotten tougher since his first year six years ago.

"This year, it seems like the competition has picked up," he said. "Last year, there was competition, but this year every game is a competitive game and everyone is out to win it all."

Burgess, who stood throughout most of his team's recent game barking orders and shouting encouragement, feels lucky that he is able to work with Hodge, saying, "Sometimes, it's who you know, so we locked out and got Hodge, who is very talented. He's helped us out a great deal, and being from New York myself, I can appreciate the type of player that he is."

Burgess is also involved with Foundation Entertainment and the rap group Ill Beings, and he has to be one of the few, and possibly the only, coach that utilizes a videographer at the games. The coach states that he'll have film sessions with his team and critique what went right and wrong.

He believes organization is the key to success in the Chavis League.

"It is a little bit of a playground-type atmosphere, but at the same time, you're trying to win," said Burgess. "So you have to play with some type of organization. If you play rugged and wild and crazy, you're not going to be very successful in the league."

Perhaps the best thing about the Chavis League is the fact that, on any given night, an attending fan is bound to be entertained — be it by the action on court, or, more commonly, the commotion off it. Several regulars at the gym make their voices heard, particularly one gentleman whose voice booms as if he's speaking from an invisible bullhorn. But his chatter and incessant cheering is part of what makes the league what it is special.

After all, any league where an NBA All-Star like Stackhouse can get dunked on by a high schooler is bound to be so.

"The night Jerry Stackhouse got dunked on was pretty funny. He got dunked on by a high school kid," said Matthews, laughing. "That's the thing about this league, you may be a superstar, but there's a lot of superstars out here that people don't know about or maybe didn't get the breaks. One thing we like about this is that every year probably one or two guys that plays in here ends up going to school somewhere [because of the exposure they received]."

But as far as a comparison to the ACC? Hodge says it's not even close.

"It doesn't really compare to the ACC," said the skinny kid from Harlem. That's it? Well what about pick-up games back home, does it compare to that? "It doesn't really compare much. New York City is much tougher," Hodge said. "Guys go out there, it's no blood no foul. Here, I'm just out here having fun and playing my game."

Because really, that's what the Chavis League is all about — two teams, five-on-five, each one playing their game, and only the game.

league's 50th Anniversary Committee.

N.C. State led all league schools with 13 members on the Golden Anniversary team while North Carolina was second with 12 honorees. Clemson had 10 runners selected, followed by Wake Forest (7), Duke (6), Maryland (3), Virginia (2) and Georgia Tech with one.

State's honorees are Abdul Alzindani, Chris Dugan, Steve Francis, Bob Hones, Dave Honea, Patrick Joyce, Pat Piper, Chan Pons, Corby Pons, Tony Riley, Brendan Rodgers, Anderson Smith and Jim Wilkins.

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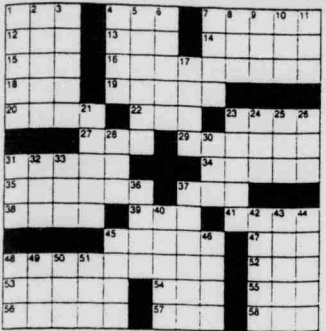
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Crossword



- ACROSS**
- 1 Urban transport
 - 4 A welcome sight?
 - 7 Photographer Diane
 - 12 "Chances —"
 - 13 9mm sub-machine gun
 - 14 Unfettered
 - 15 24 hours, to Jose
 - 16 Polly's nephew
 - 18 Doctrine
 - 20 Vivacity
- DOWN**
- 21 Pack to the future?
 - 23 Nimble
 - 24 Go up and down
 - 25 Coquettish material
 - 28 Clear the tables
 - 30 Erstwhile ring champ
 - 31 "Platoon" locale
 - 32 Ivy League letters
 - 33 Pinaflore's rejoiner
 - 34 Llama territory
 - 42 She gave a policeman a hand
 - 43 Remark to the crowd
 - 44 Old-hand
 - 45 Off-patented place
 - 46 Bohemian
 - 48 Bill
 - 49 Bulling bravo
 - 50 Thou squared
 - 51 Avial of Val

Look below for today's crossword answers.

Classifieds

For Sale

\$2,500, TOYOTA CAMRY WAGON '89 130K, A/C, power, win/locks, cruise, auto trans., 4 cyl., some repairs needed, current inspection, good condition, call Scott/Lauren at 919-363-3641.

Furniture

2 dresses for sale. One w/mirror, Solid wood. Get both for \$150. Head and foot board also available \$175. All part of 1 set. 816-0510

Homes For Rent

Historic property for rent in downtown Raleigh. Five rooms, two upstairs, three downstairs, 1.5 BA, \$1250/mo, no pets. Call Lisa at 829-1006.

4BD/2BA house for rent. Walking distance to NCUA Laundry room, sunroom, large back deck and patio. \$1375/mo. Available 8/102. Call 781-1382.

Caryl 1159 Manchester Dr., close to Crossroads, 3BD/2BA, 1750 sq. ft., ranch, 1/2 acre private, \$1155/mo call Barker Realty 859-0344 or 971-9225. www.ncsurentalhomes.com

House for rent! Shelly Lake 3BD/2.5BA. Fenced yard, pets allowed, great neighborhood. \$1025/mo+utilities. Call 489-8428.

Western Blvd 4BD/2BA stove, refrigerator, A/C, W/D, \$1250+deposit. Also, 1-2BD apt near Cameron Village near NCSU, stove refrigerator, A/C, water included \$495-\$550. Call 271-0679

Near NCSU. Renovated 3BD/1BA deck, hardwood, fenced yard, all appliances, \$975/mo. Call 543-8889

2BD/1BA Home. Large fenced yard and convenient location. 2313 Glascock, \$650/mo and \$650 deposit. Available mid August. gloriadmorrigas@aol.com 239-945-0159

NEAR NCSU. 810 of a mile from campus. 4BR/3A All appliances. Fenced in backyard. \$950/mo. 787-4434, 851-8681, 637-1249

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3800 Marcom 3BD/2BA House with deck and yard \$950 New 1BD Apartment, Private Yard \$550. Call Barker Realty 859-0044 or 911-9225. www.ncsurentalhomes.com

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Roommate wanted, Lake Park Condos, \$300/mo + 1/4 utilities. Free cable. Looking for clean, mature college M/F student. Please call Patsy 252-456-2697.

M/F roommate wanted to share private house \$275/mo + 1/3 utilities. Near ESA, Refrigerator, W/D, central air, RoadRunner deck. Nonsmoker please. Call 854-5465 or trinity16001@ncr.com

Neat, clean, student to share 2BD/1BA cool house in Oakwood, \$425/mo+1/2 utilities. Call 838-1482 after 8/4

Near NCSU & Wolfline 3 students/professionals to share 4BR/4BA condo near NCSU. Responsible roommate (male or female). \$400/mo for everything. \$85-1611.

Female roommate needed. Near NCSU. Available August. \$425/mo including everything. Call Jen 919-656-4321.

1-2 male Christian roommates wanted to share quiet 4BD/2.5BA house. Good, post doc, or professional preferred. Furnished, sat, basketball. \$325/mo+share utilities. 1-2 semesters 919-866-0904 caracas@up.net

Female roommate wanted to share 4BD/4BA w/ laundry, alarm, off street parking, next to utilities. \$350/mo+1/4 utilities. Call 754-0181.

Seeking 3rd roommate to share 4BD/2BA house near NCSU. Great location, large kitchen, A/C, deck, front porch, \$425. Call Chris or Ian 828-1622.

Up to 3 roommates needed. 4BD/4BA condo. Group discount. W/D, pool, basketball, volleyball. Call Carol at 274-7669

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Roommate Wanted in 2BD apartment with young Chinese couple. \$250/mo + 1/3 utilities. Call 829-5894.

Up to 3 male or female roommates wanted to share 3BD/2.5BA townhouse. 1 block from downtown. Approx. \$333/mo+1/3 utilities per person. Available 8/1. Call 859-1782

Wanted female roommate to share University Woods room. Furnished living room, sunroom, & kitchen; W/D, & central air. Bedroom with full bath. \$399/mo+1/4 utilities. Water, high-speed internet access, cable TV, and renters insurance paid for you. Nonsmoker. Friendly roommates. Available August 5. Call Barb at 460-7475 or Carolyn at 280-7052.

Mom w/ child seeking roommate to share 4BD home in private neighborhood near NCSU. W/D, deck, \$500/month. Graduate students only. Call 832-2512.

Male Roommate Wanted Share 4BD/4BA Condo with graduate students in Lake Park. \$300/mo +1/4 utilities. Refrigerator, dishwasher, microwave, W/D, pool. Available Aug 16th. Call Edie anytime at 859-9569

1 female roommate needed to share 4BD/4BA apt in Lake Park. Pool, basketball court, volleyball court, w/d, etc. \$395/mo+1/4 utilities. Call Deanne before 5:30PM 252-291-2712. After 5:30, call 252-3175-8516. Available 8/3

Roommates wanted to share 2BD 1BA Cameron Village Condo. Five minutes from NCSU. Available mid-August. Preferably graduate student. Call Walt at 247-9217.

2 Rooms for rent: University Woods. 4BR/4BA, fully equipped kitchen, living room, laundry, sunroom, Available August 1. 3550/room. Call Brian 601-0518

Condos For Rent

3 or 4 Male/Female Student Roommates Needed at University Woods. 4BD/4BA new condo. Large common area. \$320/mo + 1/4 utilities. Call 543-6390 and leave a message.

4BD/4BA condo at Lake Park available immediately. \$300/mo + 1/4 utilities. Color w/d, \$285/mo+1/4 utilities per person. Group of 4 preferred. Newly renovated. Rent specials available. 847-2669

Lake Park Condos 2BD/W private baths. High-speed cable hook-up in bedrooms, W/D, microwave, dishwasher. \$300/mo+1/4 utilities. Call 919-851-4510 or 704-392-1506

4BD/4BA condo available 8/1. W/D, A/C, volleyball, basketball. Pool. Call for details. 662-5178

Roommates Wanted

Roommate wanted for 4BD/4BA cool apt. in Oakwood, \$425/mo+1/2 utilities. Call 838-1482 after 8/4

Near NCSU & Wolfline 3 students/professionals to share 4BR/4BA condo near NCSU. Responsible roommate (male or female). \$400/mo for everything. \$85-1611.

Female roommate needed. Near NCSU. Available August. \$425/mo including everything. Call Jen 919-656-4321.

1-2 male Christian roommates wanted to share quiet 4BD/2.5BA house. Good, post doc, or professional preferred. Furnished, sat, basketball. \$325/mo+share utilities. 1-2 semesters 919-866-0904 caracas@up.net

Female roommate wanted to share 4BD/4BA w/ laundry, alarm, off street parking, next to utilities. \$350/mo+1/4 utilities. Call 754-0181.

Seeking 3rd roommate to share 4BD/2BA house near NCSU. Great location, large kitchen, A/C, deck, front porch, \$425. Call Chris or Ian 828-1622.

Up to 3 roommates needed. 4BD/4BA condo. Group discount. W/D, pool, basketball, volleyball. Call Carol at 274-7669

2BD/1 private baths at Lake Park condos. High-speed cable hook-up in bedrooms, W/D, microwave, nonsmoker. \$300/1+1 utilities. Call 919-851-4910 or 704-392-1506

Male seeking roommate to share 2BD/1BA apt. at Marcom St. Furnished location, pool, internet/cable, excellent living room and kitchen. \$285/mo+1/2 utilities. Call anytime 834-6366 leave message.

Roommate Wanted in 2BD apartment with young Chinese couple. \$250/mo + 1/3 utilities. Call 829-5894.

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No games scheduled

No games scheduled



Wednesday Sports



• A LEAGUE OF ITS OWN •

FEW BASKETBALL ATMOSPHERES CAN COMPETE WITH THE CHAVIS LEAGUE, SUMMER HOME TO SOME OF THE AREA'S BEST CURRENT AND FORMER COLLEGE BASKETBALL PLAYERS.

Andrew B. Carter

Assistant Sports Editor

No cameras. No press row. No jumbotron uniforms or advertisements or jump-boitrons. No cheerleaders. No Entertainment and Sports Arena or Dean Dome or Cameron Indoor Stadium. No gimmicks and no bull. Just basketball.

A list a mile long could be written of what the Chavis League is not about, but it's the two things that the league stands for — basketball and the love of it — that make it one of the most unique and satisfying spectacles an area basketball fan could dream of.

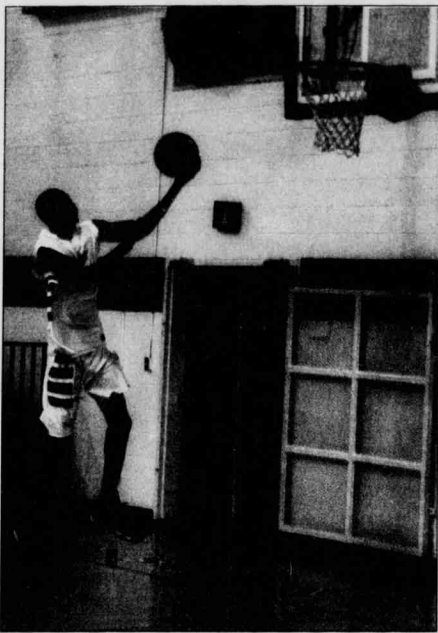
From an energetic, almost hysterical, uncommon fan atmosphere to the legions of ACC stars past and present that compete in a grueling eight-week regular season, the Chavis League simply has no rival outside of the ACC.

A fixture in area summer-league basketball competition for 18 years, the Chavis League, named after the local community center where it first debuted, has acted as a sort of mini-ACC in the summer for some of the biggest names in college basketball. N.C. State greats Chuckie Brown, Vinny Del Negro, Rodney Monroe and Chris Corchiani have all competed in the league. As did North Carolina's Rasheed Wallace, Jerry Stackhouse and Vince Carter. Currently, Duke's Chris Duhon is getting accustomed to the loose whistles, tough action and pure atmosphere the Chavis League has to offer.

Additionally, countless more players from State, Carolina, Duke, St. Augustine's, Shaw and N.C. Central have suited up for the Chavis League over the years. This year, Central actually has its whole team signed up and playing.

Organized and operated by the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation department, the Chavis League has grown tremendously. League director Kirk Matthews, a 1988 N.C. State graduate, has seen that first hand since he took his position 11 years ago.

"The league has a reputation of its own," said Matthews at a recent game. "It's been around so long, we don't do any recruiting or advertising anymore. We only accept the first 24 teams that sign up, and most of the coaches — they've been around for awhile — they



N.C. State guard Julius Hodge is one of many players with ACC ties that spent the summer competing in the Raleigh-based Chavis League.

go out to the different schools and get the players."

Matthews says that in a given year he'll have to turn away five or six teams due to lack of availability.

Over the past two seasons in particular, the Chavis League has experienced a boom in popularity. With the emergence of Internet fan message boards dedicated to ACC basketball that help publicize the league, combined with the fact that more and more high-profile athletes are joining in, fans have

flocked to see what the Chavis League is all about.

And they've come to realize that it's something all about the game.

Housed in a tiny, undersized shoebox of a gymnasium on the campus of St. Augustine's College near downtown Raleigh, Chavis League headquarters appear from the outside like a worn-out warehouse. Cracks and jagged breaks in the glass decorate the windows and the paint is carefully peeling as if it were sun-burnt skin. But inside the

gym, which will overflow for some of the bigger games and especially the upcoming playoffs, it's impossible not to feel the excitement and passion.

And judging from the play on the hardwood, it doesn't take an NBA GM to see that talent is abundant — it's no wonder that the Chavis League has a reputation for being the premier league of its kind in North Carolina.

"In the summer," said Matthews, "this is the league to play in around this area; this is where you want to be." Certainly, the players can attest to that. This summer, five returning N.C. State players can be found on a given weekday hooping it up in the Chavis League: sophomores Julius Hodge, Josh Powell and Jordan Collins; junior Scooter Sherrill and senior Cliff Crawford. In addition to the Wolfpack returnees, State's entire freshman class, consisting of Dominic Mejia, Cameron Bernerman, Justin Platt and Adam Simons, is also playing.

"There are some good players playing in this league," said Hodge after a recent outing with his team, Top of New York. "The guys from State, we're just coming out, having fun and working on our weaknesses."

While Hodge may say it's all about the fun, make no mistake about it: these guys want to win — almost at all costs. When the playoffs start on Aug. 6, the laid-back, playground-style feel will be gone, says Matthews, as teams will start playing for the ultimate prize.

"It's fun now — until the playoffs start. It won't be fun starting Aug. 6 anymore," he said. "It's kind of funny because everyone always asks, 'Well, what do you give away as a prize?' Well, we give away trophies, but that's not the real prize. The real prize is the bragging rights. You get bragging rights for a whole year."

Teams are usually in place long before play begins in June, and some players, such as former State standout Chucky Brown, come back year after year. The returning faces add an element of familiarity and loyalty that is rare in any sport these days. And that's certainly appreciated by Matthews.

"The ones that come back every year, they'll know you," said Matthews, who runs a community center and coaches mighty mites basketball when he's not swallowed by the Chavis League

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FOOTBALL

Closing the gap

OK, so Florida State is once again tabbed as the preseason favorite to win the ACC football title. I know, I know, in related news, the Cubs aren't going to win the pennant, O.J.'s guilty and Tiger Woods is a good golfer.



Matt Middleton

Seeing FSU as the lead car in the ACC football race is nothing new to the other eight institutions that were present long before of Bobby brought his team into the quorum that had long been branded as a "basketball conference." Sure, Clemson, Georgia Tech and Maryland had won national championships on the gridiron, but the Seminoles took league dominance to a whole new level by winning nine straight league titles in addition to taking home the national title in 1993 behind Heisman winner Charlie Ward.

Needless to say there are three sets of teams in the ACC speaking in terms of talent and ability to win: FSU, everyone else and Duke. But just how big is the gap between FSU and everyone else? Not as big as it was say, five years ago. Heck, it's getting smaller by the year.

Take last year for example. The mighty Noles started the season by routing Duke and Alabama-Birmingham, then walked into Chapel Hill of all places and promptly fell with a 41-9 drubbing? 41-9? Carolina couldn't even score 41 points against Northern Durham High in 2000, much less against a Mucky Andrews-led defense.

Then the unthinkable happened. Florida State isn't very good at basketball, Florida State has been involved with a couple of scandals involving football players, but above all, Florida State does not lose home ACC football games.

Apparently, N.C. State didn't get that memo. So after 2001 the team that owns the worst loss in ACC history to the Noles (62-3 in 1993), also owns the ACC's lone victory in Doak-Campbell Stadium.

As if the league wasn't crazy enough last year, the conference champion Maryland Terrapins owned the league's longest bowl drought until punching their ticket to the Orange Bowl last season.

Just because Florida State was picked first by 95 percent of the media doesn't mean their quest for a tenth title will be a cakewalk; in fact it will be anything but.

Sure, the talent is there as always. On paper, the offense is as dangerous as any in the nation, but it still must learn to take care of the ball. At times last season, Chris Rix was a turnover machine, and his carelessness with the ball led directly to both league losses.

If the sophomore can learn to take care of the football and a premier running back emerges out of the Greg Jones-Nick Maddox combination, this will be a scary, scary team.

But the Noles will face a test almost every week of ACC play. Every game save Duke and maybe freshman-oriented Virginia figures to be a challenge, even a trip to Winston-Salem. There are also games at College Park, Raleigh and Atlanta in the mix — all teams that have the combination of talent and coaching to run with FSU.

The contenders are spread out across the map of the conference; from Georgia to Maryland and outside the Durham city limits there is a strong parity of teams that all have the ability to give FSU trouble in at least one facet of the game.

As much frustration as FSU has enjoyed in the ACC, they may now have finally helped to significantly improve the product on the field.

"I think that not only with our [Maryland's] success, but the fact that N.C. State and North Carolina beat FSU speaks for our conference," said Maryland head coach Ralph Friedgen. "FSU is going to be tough again this year, and them being in the league has raised the level of play of all our teams."

Just how much they have done so will be evident by season's end. Until then, sit back and enjoy; it's going to be a fun ride.

Matt is anxiously awaiting the return of college football ... and tailgating. In the meantime, he can be reached at matt@techniciansports.com or 515-2411.

Ticket policy announced as football season approaches

◆ Student ticket distribution will be much the same as last year, with only slight modifications and exceptions for the BCA Bowl.

Dustin Choe

Special to Technician

With less than a month remaining until kickoff for Wolfpack football's season-opening game against New Mexico, many students have raised concerns about this year's ticket distribution policies.

The New Mexico game will be the preseason Black Coaches Association (BCA) Bowl. Since this is not a regular season game, it will not be free to N.C. State students. Wolfpack Athletics will cover most of the cost for only State students. Price for students will be \$10

and the cost will be \$35 for guests. The ticket revenue generated from this game goes to the BCA, not State.

Some other changes have been made to the student ticket distribution policy for the football season. First, the price of guest tickets will increase by \$1. Guest tickets, except those for the BCA, will now be \$23, to be consistent with the group rate the State ticket office offers. Also, registration for block seating will now be online. However, students who register for block seating will not be eligible for lottery vouchers.

General Procedures

On the first day of distribution, lottery vouchers will be handed out from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., with the winning vouchers to be announced by 8 p.m. The following day, tickets will be distributed to students with winning vouchers. Any remaining tickets will be given out on the third day.

Students will stand in line in front of windows 1 and 2 at Reynolds Coliseum. One student may receive, at most, six vouchers or tickets with a valid AllCampus Card(s) and/or guest ticket requests.

Only one guest ticket per valid AllCampus Card is allowed. The number of guest tickets cannot exceed the number of student tickets. However, the BCA game will have unlimited guest tickets; the Florida State game will have no guest tickets; and for the Parent's Weekend game against Massachusetts, two guest tickets will be allowed per student ticket.

Block Seating

Groups may be from 25 to 100, including guest tickets (except FSU). As mentioned above, block-seating registration will be online. The form can be accessed from the official student ticket distribution Web site.

www.tickets.ncsu.edu, and must be submitted by 8 a.m. on the due date listed on the Web site. The form must then be turned in at Reynolds Coliseum by 10:30 a.m. of the due date with payment for guest tickets inside a large manila envelope. Winning groups will be announced by the end of the week and the tickets will be ready to pick up on the same day as voucher distribution.

The form will be filled out by the group leader online and will require all member's Unity IDs, date of birth and last four digits of their student ID number.

Distribution dates and the complete policy can be found at <http://tickets.ncsu.edu>. All announcements will be made through this Web site and the tickets listserv. Instructions to register for the listserv are also available on the Web site.

Choboy named men's tennis coach

◆ The Wolfpack dipped into the coaching ranks of the Ivy League to find its next head coach.

Sports Staff Report

Jon Choboy was named head coach of the men's tennis team at N.C. State last Thursday, filling a position that had been vacant since late April, when former head coach Eric Hayes abruptly resigned following a disappointing 5-20 season. Choboy comes to the Wolfpack from Brown University, where he served as head coach for the past four seasons.

While at Brown, Choboy compiled a record of 53-37, enjoying his greatest success last season when he led Brown to its first-ever Ivy League championship, completing a perfect 7-0 regu-

lar season and earning an NCAA Tournament berth. For his efforts, Choboy was named the Wilson ITA Region I Head Coach of the Year for the 2002 season.

Brown qualified for the 2002 National Team NCAA Indoor Championships as one of the top 16 teams in the country, a first-ever feat for the school.

Prior to his stint at Brown, Choboy served as an assistant coach at Florida for two years. While with the Gators, Choboy helped Florida to a No. 9 and No. 15 national ranking.

Choboy also has head-coaching experience at Charleston Southern and Springfield College. While at Charleston Southern, he coached both the men's and women's teams, and he was named Big South Coach of the Year in 1995 and 1996. At Springfield,

Choboy's team won the conference title in 1991, and he was named Northeast Conference Coach of the Year that same season.

The Youngstown, N.Y., native is a 1989 graduate of Canisius College with a bachelor of science degree in physical education. Choboy also obtained his master's in psychology from Springfield in 1992.

At Canisius, he was a three-year, all-conference selection, going 75-10 at the first and second singles positions. He competed on the Canadian Satellite Circuit from 1987-88 and in USPTA sanctioned tennis tournaments from 1989-92. Choboy has been a Professional I member of the United States Professional Tennis Association since 1989.



Choboy will try to turn around a program that was 5-20 last year.