

**WAFFLE HOUSE ARREST** Cook charged with selling marijuana at Rock Hill restaurant. **3B**

**WEATHER** The forecast for Charlotte and the Carolinas: Sunny and warmer today. **8B**

**WEST HIGHLAND TERRIER IN BIG SHOW**

Charlotte vet's dog headed to Westminster Kennel Club dog show. **2B**

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# UNC system facing deep cuts

**Universities warn state officials of job losses, fewer courses, bigger classes, other woes if budget is reduced to likely level.**

BY JANE STANCILL  
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North Carolina's universities could face the elimination of more than 1,600 jobs, the cancellation of hundreds of courses and scaled-back library hours as the recession worsens. UNC system leaders said Friday that a 7 percent cut in their budget, which seems increasingly likely, would have painful consequences. They warned they would lose 1,679 jobs, including 660 faculty positions. One-third to one-half of those jobs are currently filled, UNC system officials

estimate. Students would feel the pain in the form of bigger classes, fewer available courses and less counseling and advising. More classes would be taught by part-time instructors rather than full-time professors. Building repairs would be put off and technology purchases delayed. Such dire predictions are often deployed to drive home the importance of protecting education from budget cuts, legislators say. But UNC leaders say it will be impossible to avoid touching classrooms if they have to

slice as much as 7 percent out of their budgets. They pointed out that 70 percent of the universities' state appropriations go to instruction, academic support and student services. The UNC system this week sent to the state budget director three budget cut scenarios – based on reductions of 3 percent, 5 percent and 7 percent. Gov. Bev Perdue has asked all agencies to prepare such reports as she deals with a \$2 billion hole in the state's budget. A deepening recession suggests the

7 percent level is likely, state budget analysts say. Rob Nelson, the UNC system's vice president for finance, made a strong plea for any cuts to be temporary. "President (Erskine) Bowles wants to make it as clear as possible to you, the Governor, and the legislature that imposing permanent cuts would be equivalent to sacrificing the future of North Carolina," Nelson said in a memo accompanying the report to the state budget director. UNC campuses have reduced their budgets by 6 percent already this year. UNC leaders say the system can sustain another 5 percent cut during the next two years. But, Nelson said in his

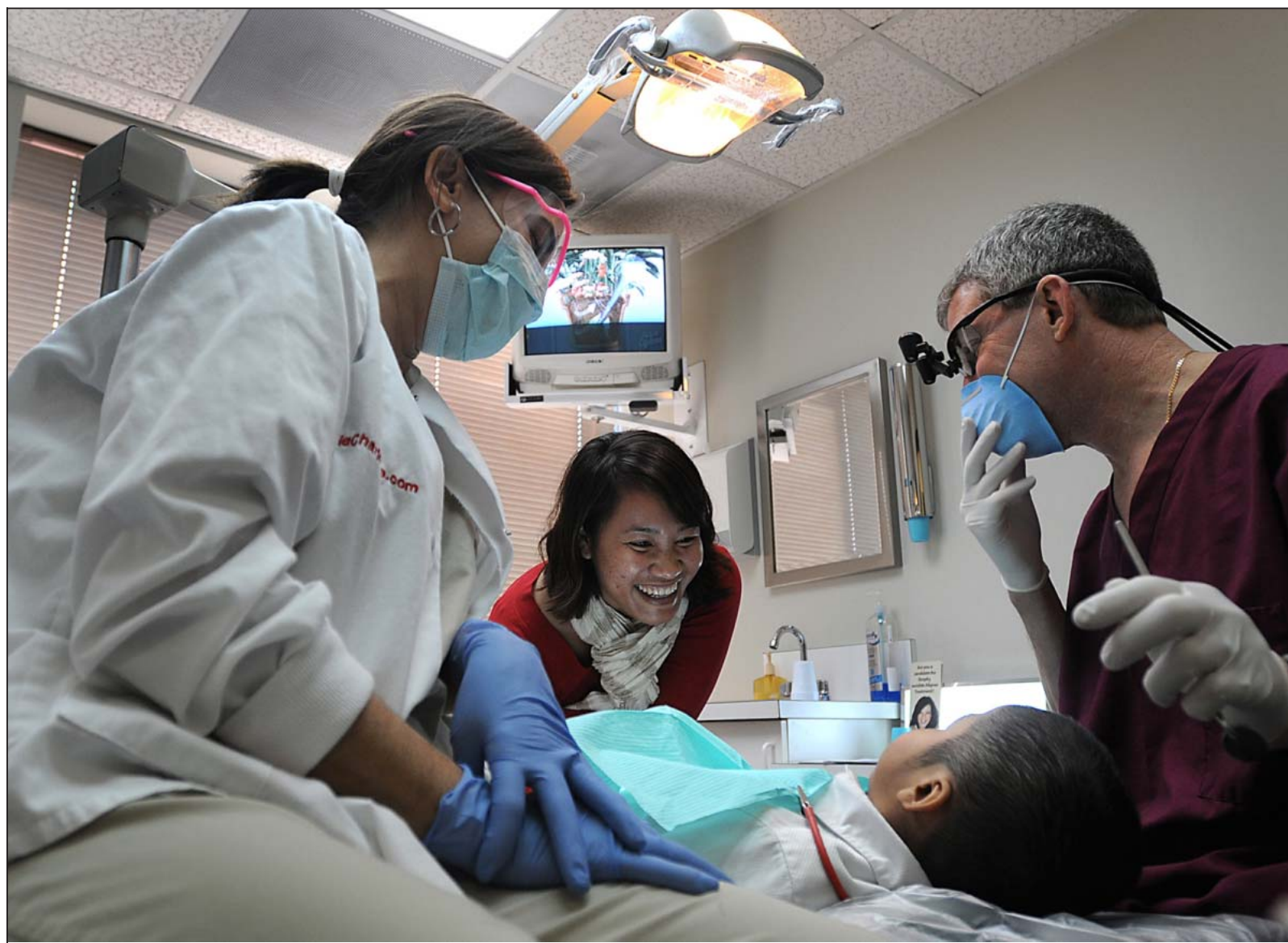
memo, "cuts of this magnitude cannot continue permanently if we are to preserve the quality of education our students need and deserve." UNC officials said a 7 percent cut would result in a loss of 232 teaching jobs at UNC Chapel Hill, which could warrant an enrollment reduction of 3,426 students. The UNC Board of Governors will vote next week on tuition increases. Bowles had directed campuses to limit the increases because of the recession and, last week, he said he would ask the legislature for permission to order furloughs, or unpaid time off, for employees.



Bowles

SEE UNC, 3B

## Giving a smile, in more ways than one



PHOTOS BY DAVIE HINSHAW - dhinshaw@charlotteobserver.com

Going to the dentist for the first time can be harrowing. There's the sound of that drill, the masks, the gloves, that bright, white light focused on all the times you ate candy corn and forgot to floss. It's estimated that as many as 75 percent of U.S. adults experience some degree of dental fear. Another 5 percent to 10 percent are so fearful of receiving dental treatment that they avoid dental care at all costs. So imagine what going to the dentist must be like if you're only 5 years old – and you don't speak English.



So for this new patient, Charlotte dentist Dr. Scott Menaker (above right) and his dental assistant Lisa Culp (left) called in interpreter Hayley Eban to comfort and prepare the new patient. Menaker is one of about 40 Mecklenburg County dentists who provided free care to some 400 children from low-income families Friday as part of the American Dental Association's annual "Give Kids a Smile" initiative.

**OPEN WIDE**  
See a video of the "Smile" project.  
charlotteobserver.com/local

## Guns in car not loaded, no ammo, police say

**Officials see no signs a group from Independence High planned to harm anyone at the school.**

BY ANN DOSS HELMS  
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There's no sign that a group of Independence High students caught leaving school Thursday with a 15-inch sawed-off shotgun planned to harm anyone there, a Charlotte-Mecklenburg police officer said Friday. Two of the four students in the car – the driver and the person in the front passenger seat, which had the illegal weapon stuffed underneath – face felony charges. The two in the back seat were not charged. Eighteen-year-old Micheal Wilson, the driver, and 19-year-old Michael Smith, the front-seat passenger, each face felony charges of having a gun on school property and possessing a weapon of mass destruction, a charge based on the fact that the gun was illegally modified, making it easier to conceal, said Sgt. David Schwob. "It's a pretty potent weapon to be able to stick under your coat," he said. Both also face a misdemeanor charge of carrying a concealed weapon. Wilson faces a second charge of having a gun on school grounds, because police found a Mossberg 12-gauge shotgun with a pistol grip in the trunk, Schwob said. Neither gun was loaded and there was no ammunition in the car, he said. "There's no indication that there was anything going to be done at school," Schwob said, adding that neither student is known to be affiliated with any gang. A search of N.C. criminal records shows no significant previous charges against either student. Nonetheless, police and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools security guards were stationed prominently in Independence's parking lot and lobby Friday. Principal Mark Bosco said the incident started when a school security guard noticed a student outside

SEE SHOTGUN, 3B

## Buy my seat, please, says N.C. lawmaker

**The price on eBay: Tickets to Carolina-Duke basketball game next Wednesday. (OK, folks, he's joking.)**

BY RYAN TEAGUE BECKWITH  
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N.C. Sen. Eddie Goodall of Matthews is offering his seat in the legislature on the popular auction site eBay – in exchange for basketball tickets. The Republican wants tickets to next week's Carolina-Duke game. "I'm not sure how it works, but I'm just going by what Gov. (Rod) Blagojevich did as a guideline," he said, tongue planted in cheek, referring to the former Illinois governor. "He made me aware that these seats are valuable." He isn't really selling his post – or

even his chair. Goodall bought his chair when the Senate chambers were renovated in 2005, but state law prevents him from selling it. Goodall went to UNC Chapel Hill for a year in 1965, transferring to UNC Charlotte when he didn't make the basketball team. The eBay auction continues until Sunday, but Goodall was getting worried. If he can't get tickets, Goodall said he'd have to watch the game from his hotel room in Raleigh. He said he hopes people understand he's kidding. "If politicians could laugh at themselves more," he said, "people would laugh at them less."



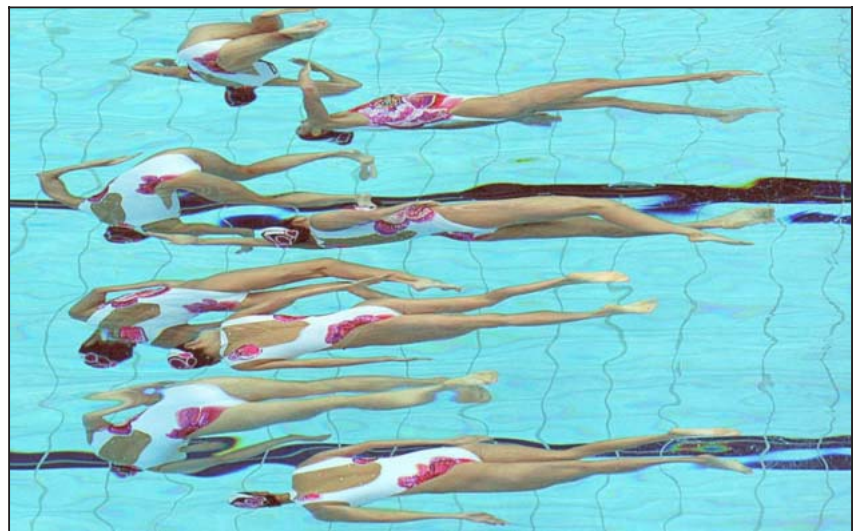
Goodall



COURTESY OF EDDIE GOODALL

Eddie Goodall of Matthews has his N.C. Senate chair for sale on eBay.

## N.C. PICTURES OF THE YEAR



JEFF SINER - jsiner@charlotteobserver.com

This photograph of members of the Chinese synchronized swimming team performing their technical routine during the 2008 Olympics in Beijing won first prize in the sports category for Observer photographer Jeff Siner in the N.C. Press Photographers Association Pictures of the Year competition. **STORY, 8B.**