

UNCC to host Spirit of India fest

UNC Charlotte will host a Ratha Yatra Parade and Spirit of India Festival Sunday, Monday, Sept. 9-10. The event will begin at 11 a.m. Sept. 9 with the parade, which will depart from Scott Residence Hall and make its way across campus to the area around the university's Bell Tower.

The public is free to observe or join in the parade, and Charlotte Mayor Pat McCrory will begin the parade with a formal ribbon-cutting ceremony. The parade is a commemoration of an ancient festival held in Orissa India for the past 5,000 years.

The festival itself is scheduled for noon-6 p.m. Sept. 9 and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sept. 10 in the area around the Bell Tower. Each day, 15-20 exhibits will be on display, and a free Indian feast will be available.

Exhibit topics include: The Science of Reincarnation, Higher Dimensions in Science, Transcendental Art, India—Another World, and Food For Life.

On Sept. 9, a full schedule of entertainment is planned: 12:15 p.m.: Bharat Natyam Dance; 12:30 p.m.: Mayor Pat McCrory's remarks; 1 p.m.: Band, Chakra (billing itself as "World Beat Explosion"); 2 p.m.: Campa's Dancers (classical Indian dance); 2:30 p.m.: Puppet show; 3 p.m.: Indian dance; 3:30 p.m.: Gauranga Bhajan Band; 4 p.m.: Indian fashion show; 5 p.m.: Engelhart Sisters Band; 5:30 p.m.: Arotika (ancient offering ceremony with live music, drums, chanting and dancing).

On Sept. 10, there will be no live entertainment in the Bell Tower area. However, Chakra will perform at noon in the University Center's McKnight Hall.

The Spirit of India Festival is designed as both a gathering place for the local Indian community and as a place for people from other nations and cultures to learn more about India and the ancient Vedic culture.

All activities are free and open to the public. Rainsite for the UNCC event is the Rowe Arts Building. Local sponsors are: Binaco Inc., the Hindu Center of Charlotte, and UNCC's Bhakti Yoga Club.

Indian Students Association, Student Government Association, Resident Students Association and Multicultural Resource Center. Details: Call 704-549-4603, email syamadas@yahoo.com or visit the websites www.FestivalofIndia.org or www.bhaktiyoga.org.

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HEART-SMART TEA

A new study suggests a link between drinking black tea and healthy arteries in people with heart disease.

A report in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* says that black tea offers some of the same benefits as other foods rich in the antioxidants known as flavonoids, which are found in purple grape juice, red wine and onions.

The major antioxidants found in tea, flavonoids have been shown to prevent the breakdown of low-density lipoproteins or LDLs, the so-called bad cholesterol that leads to the formation of plaque in artery walls. The report adds, however, that large amounts of tea flavonoids are needed to combat LDLs.

Researchers measured the immediate and longer-term effects of black tea vs. water consumption on the arteries of 50 individuals who had coronary artery disease. They found that tea improved dilation in their arteries but water had no effect.

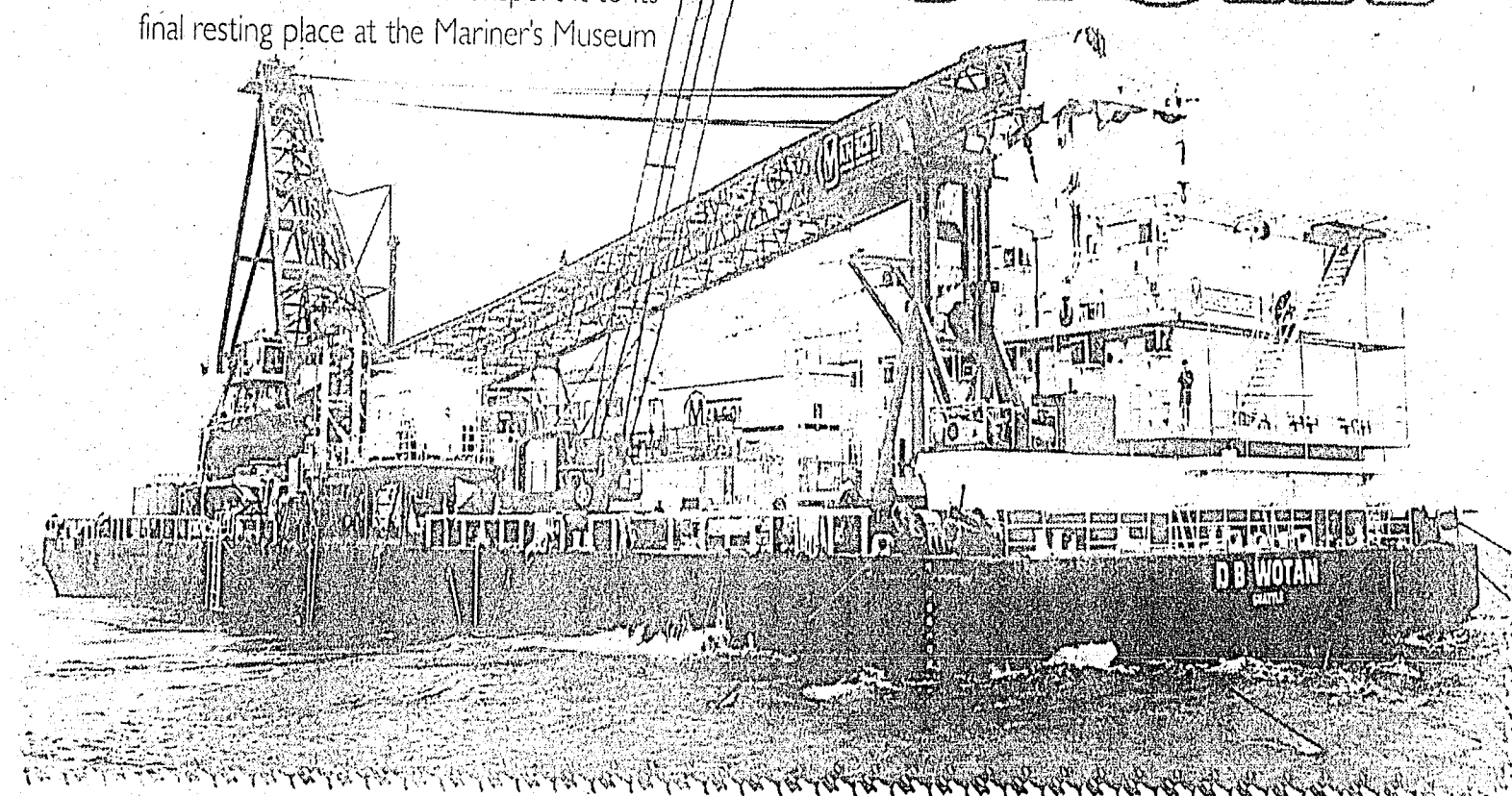
The study provides an alternative explanation for the heart benefits of tea. It explains how flavonoids improve the cells that line the blood vessels, cells that help expand vessels when a person needs increased blood flow.

Our findings fit well with the growing appreciation that diet and lifestyle are important approaches to the prevention and treatment of atherosclerosis," says Joseph Vita, the senior author of the study and a professor of medicine at Boston University.

News briefs compiled by Kurt Loft, Media General News Service.

Raising History

A talented team is working to bring up the remains of the Monitor and transport it to its final resting place at the Mariner's Museum.



The barge is floating above the wreckage of the Civil War ironclad Monitor, about 17 miles southeast of Cape Hatteras. It is used as a platform from which U.S. Navy divers descend to the site of the wreckage. The Monitor sank in a storm in 1862 while being towed.

By Bill Geroux
Media General News Service

Two hundred forty feet beneath the ocean, U.S. Navy divers whacked with hammers and picks at the layer of gunk encrusting the hull of the Civil War ironclad Monitor.

Their every blow was captured on digital video cameras on their diving helmets and transmitted with remarkable clarity to TV screens on a barge moored overhead, where archaeologists, officers and other divers watched and offered directions.

Their mission was to detach the Monitor's 30-ton engine, raise it from the depths of the Graveyard of the Atlantic and transport it to the Mariner's Museum in Newport News, Va., for future display. Next summer, the divers plan to return for the Monitor's gun turret.

The recovery techniques were unusual. The work was a mix of archeology, marine salvage and exploratory surgery. The floating platform for the dive and recovery work was the Wotan, owned by Manson Gulf. It is a big, weathered barge that spends most of its time servicing offshore oil rigs. It is roughly the size of a football field. For the Monitor project, the Wotan was puffed from stem to stern with cranes, electronic gear, scores of pressurized gas tanks, decompression chambers and temporary quarters for more than 100 people, mostly Navy divers working in teams around-the-clock.

The Monitor is one of the most famous vessels in U.S. history. It represented the Union against the Confederate CSS Virginia, formerly known as the Merrimack, in the first battle between ironclad warships on March 9, 1862, in Hampton Roads. The four-hour battle ended in a draw, but almost 10 months later — on New Year's Eve 1862 — the Monitor sank in a storm while being towed south for blockade duty.

The wreck was rediscovered in 1974 and later placed under the protection of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which discovered that the Monitor was deteriorating fast on the ocean bottom. The wreck apparently had been depth-charged during World War II — its sonar signature resembled that of a German U-boat — and was later damaged by the anchor of a fishing vessel. In recent years, NOAA divers have begun harvesting some of the Monitor's vital organs.

Getting to the engine was simplified by the way the Monitor sank. Its cylindrical gun turret fell off and sank first, landing upside down. The hull followed, and the stern landed on the turret at an angle, also upside down.

In order to capture the engine, the divers had to break through the bottom of the hull; cut away several pipes and fittings; support the engine in slings and

secure it to a large metal frame that the Wotan's largest crane would lift out of the water.

The Monitor's hull is encased in 138 years' accumulation of rust and aquatic life, which obscured the points at which the engine was mounted to the hull. The only available blueprints of the Monitor have not always jibed with what the divers found after chipping away the crust.

The divers were divided between two distinct systems. "Surface-supply" divers visited the wreck in pairs, attached to the ship with long umbilical cords that provided a mixture of oxygen and helium to breathe, warm water for their dive suits to counteract the upper-50s temperatures in the diving zone, and audio-video links to the barge.

Each two-man surface-supply team could spend only 30 minutes on the wreck

before having to start back up because of the need to pause for long periods at pre-established depths to adjust to the lessening pressure. Ascending too quickly can lead to decompression sickness, or "the bends," a painful and potentially deadly buildup of nitrogen bubbles in the blood or body tissues.

But the Monitor mission also employed teams of "saturation" divers, who live under deep-ocean pressure for nine-day stretches, both in and out of the water. First they entered large tanks on the barge where the pressure on their bodies is gradually increased to 95 pounds per square inch — the approximate pressure at the Monitor's depth. Then the divers were sent below in two-man teams in a diving bell. Each spent four hours working on the wreck while his partner stayed in the bell, monitoring the equipment and standing by in case of emergency. Then the men traded places. After a total of eight hours they were brought to the surface and moved into a pressurized chamber while two new divers went down in the bell. Each saturation dive team would work that schedule for nine days.

The ocean bottom off Hatteras is also a tricky place to dive. It is a meeting place for the warm, blue Gulf Stream and the cold, gray Labrador Current, and sudden shifts in the boundary between the two can have dramatic effects on diving. On the surface, the current sometimes races along at three knots (about 3 mph), playing havoc with the divers' umbilical cords. On the bottom, visibility can change in an instant.

"Sometimes the water is so clear that on your way down you can see the whole wreck stretching out before you," said Navy Chief Andy McKaskle, a surface-supply diver. "Other times, you can hardly see a thing."



U.S. Navy divers are brought aboard the barge where they quickly remove their diving gear, and immediately go into a decompression chamber. Divers work in shifts around-the-clock at the site.

Bill Geroux is a staff writer for the Richmond Times-Dispatch.



Turns on a dime & parks on a nickel

What may be the world's smallest robot is being developed by researchers at the Department of Energy's Sandia National Laboratories.

At 1/4 cubic inch and weighing less than an ounce, it is possibly the smallest autonomous untethered robot ever created. Powered by three watch batteries, it rides on track wheels and consists of an 8K ROM processor, temperature sensor and two motors that drive the wheels.

"This could be the robot of the future," says Ed Heller, one of the project's researchers. "It may eventually be capable of performing difficult tasks that are done with much larger robots today — such as locating and disabling land mines or detecting chemical and biological weapons."

The miniature robots will be able to go into locations too small for their larger relatives. The mini-robot has already maneuvered its way through a field of dimes and nickels and travels at about 20 inches a minute. It can sit easily on a nickel.

For more information, visit www.sandia.gov/media/News/IR/2001/minirobot.htm.

Free Internet-service providers are quickly becoming things of the past

Two years ago there was no shortage of companies willing to provide free Internet connections in exchange for personal information about your income and interests.

These Internet-service providers planned to make money renting your eyeballs to advertisers whose messages would hit you over the head whenever you logged on.

In the midst of the heady days of the high-flying dot-com, the business model seemed plausible enough. That was then. Free ISPs struggled to take in enough



advertising revenues to cover what they were spending on providing Internet connections to customers.

Among the failed companies are WorldSpy, Freeweb and 1stUp, which provided service

in partnership with AltaVista, Excite@Home, Lycos and others. Today, there are just three large national providers left, and a recent merger will cut the number to two.

United Online, the company formed by Juno's merger of two of the largest free providers, Juno and NetZero, continues

to offer free service under the Juno and NetZero brand names.

In the future, United Online intends to market NetZero as a free provider and Juno as a subscription service.

BlueLight, Knart's Internet arm, is the other large remaining national provider.

Together, Juno and NetZero have 7 million active subscribers — people who have logged on at least once in the past month — giving them a larger base than any ISP except America Online.

Only about 1 million of those active subscribers pay Juno and NetZero for premium service. The newly formed company hopes to convert many of its free customers into paying customers.

On the surface, the free ISP shakeout means that people who can't afford to pay for Internet service have fewer choices.

But the implications run deeper. The prevalence of free ISPs put pressure on paid companies to hold the line on pricing while also improving service, technical support and features.

If having fewer free ISPs means there will be fewer people of modest means online, the wired community loses the benefit of these voices.

If you or someone you know is interested in free Internet access, you can download the free Juno software (at least, for now) at www.juno.com or call

1(800)654-5866 and order it on CD for less than \$10.

The NetZero software can be downloaded for free at www.netzero.com or by calling 1(800)333-3633. A CD is about \$10.

BlueLight's software is available for download at www.bluelight.com.

In March, the company began restricting its 6 million customers to 12 free hours a month. To get more online time, customers have to pay for access or buy merchandise online.

Doug Stanley writes about computers and the Internet. Write him at dstanley@tampatrib.com or The Tampa Tribune, P.O. Box 191, Tampa, FL 33601.

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