

N.C. climbs on 'report card'

Media General News Service

North Carolina's fourth- and eighth-grade students topped the national and regional average scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2000 Mathematics Assessment. Results of the NAEP, often referred to as "The Nation's Report Card," were released last week by the U.S. Department of Education.

State education officials consider the news an endorsement of the state's testing and accountability programs. The latest results were released for two samples of students: one sample that did not allow accommodations for students with disabilities (the trend sample data) and one sample allowing accommodations for students with disabilities.

In both cases, North Carolina's performance placed the state's average score above the national average. Only a few states outperformed North Carolina in the percentage of students who were proficient or above. A total of 40 states and six jurisdictions participated in the 2000 Mathematics Assessment.

North Carolina Results

For the trend sample (the sample that did not allow accommodations for students with disabilities), the average scale score for fourth grade students in North Carolina is 232. This score is six points higher than the national average of 226 and exceeds the Southeast region's score of 220 by 12 points.

North Carolina's eighth grade students achieved an average scale score of 280. This score is six points higher than the national average of 274 and exceeds the Southeast region's score of 265 by 15 points.

For the sample with accommodations, North Carolina's fourth grade average scale score was 230. That is five points higher than the national average of 225, and nine points higher than the Southeast average of 221.

For eighth graders in the sample that allowed accommodations, North Carolina's average scale score was 276. The national average was 273, and the Southeast average State Superintendent Mike Ward called the latest NAEP report a validation of the progress being shown on the state's own end-of-grade tests in mathematics.

"The NAEP is a very rigorous measure of what students should know and be able to do in mathematics at a specific grade," he said. "North Carolina students' performance, compared to the nation and our region, verifies that we are continuing to make important progress in our schools."

State Board of Education Chairman Phil Kirk said that the latest NAEP information is a very strong indicator of the positive impact of the state's accountability program.

"The increased emphasis on academic achievement is working. Although some concern has been expressed about the pressures associated with the state's testing and accountability programs," this news clearly shows that emphasizing the fundamental skills of reading and mathematics yields positive results in student achievement."

NAEP Achievement Levels

North Carolina students also showed positive gains on the NAEP achievement levels. Student scores are classified as Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. The number of students performing below the Basic level at both grade levels has dropped considerably since

the NAEP mathematics tests were first given. Likewise, the number of students performing At or Above Basic (Proficient and Advanced) has increased over time.

Since 1992, when 4th graders were first assessed, the percentage reported Below Basic dropped from 50 percent to 24 percent. The percentage of students At or Above Basic improved from 50 percent in 1992 to 76 percent in 2000. In 1992, only 13 percent of North Carolina students were At or Above Proficient, but this year that total is 28 percent.

Eighth graders were given the NAEP mathematics assessment for the first time in 1990, and have shown no NAEP were allowed to use certain accommodations if they were classified as students with disabilities and the IEP documented the need for the accommodation.

In this second sample, only 5 percent of the students at both grades were excluded from the NAEP. The average score of the second sample, in which more students with disabilities took the tests, was a few points lower than the scores of the trend sample. Nonetheless, the scores of both groups topped the national and regional averages.

North Carolina's state testing program generally provides accommodations such as scheduled extended time, reading the test aloud, testing in a separate setting, and Braille and large print editions for students if they are specified in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). National officials have indicated that future reporting of NAEP in mathematics will use the sample allowing accommodations as the benchmark.

Lou Fabrizio, director of Accountability Services at the Department of Public Instruction, attributed the

higher exclusion rate to North Carolina's state and local educators' commitment to meeting the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

IDEA mandates that assessment accommodations be used where appropriate in the testing of students with disabilities.

NAEP scores provide a comparison of North Carolina students with students from other states. North Carolina's own end-of-grade tests for elementary and middle school students measure many of the same competencies in mathematics as the NAEP assessments.

North Carolina's performance on the NAEP mathematics assessments has shown gains each time the tests have been administered since the early 1990s.

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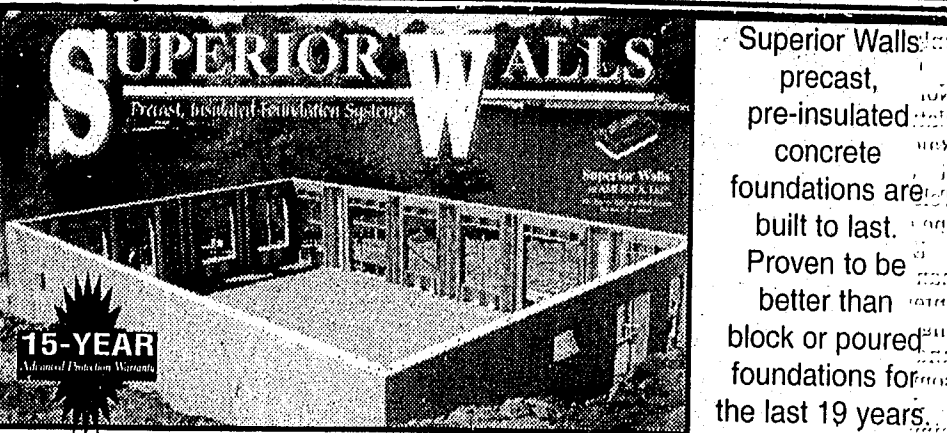
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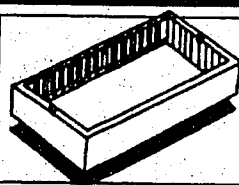
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New views of the universe

Hubble exhibit continues through Sept. 3 in Raleigh

By BYRON E. CROWLEY

When Jules Verne wrote a fictional adventure in 1872 about a trip around the world in 80 days, people laughed and made bets that no one could ever do it.

Today the Hubble, NASA's first space-based optical telescope, whisks around Earth every 97 minutes — that's 17,500 miles per hour or almost five miles per second. If an automobile could travel that fast, a coast-to-coast trip across the continental United States would take only 10 minutes.

Through Sept. 3, the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, located in Raleigh, is hosting an exhibit called "Hubble Space Telescope — New Views of the Universe."

Exhibit visitors gain hands-on experience with 16 interactive exhibits exploring the telescope's history and operations. Here are some things to do:

• Use the astronaut glove simulator to see how difficult it is to service Hubble in space.

• Try shooting comets at Jupiter to see — in animation — what happens from cosmic collisions.

• Guess the age of the stars by looking at their colors.

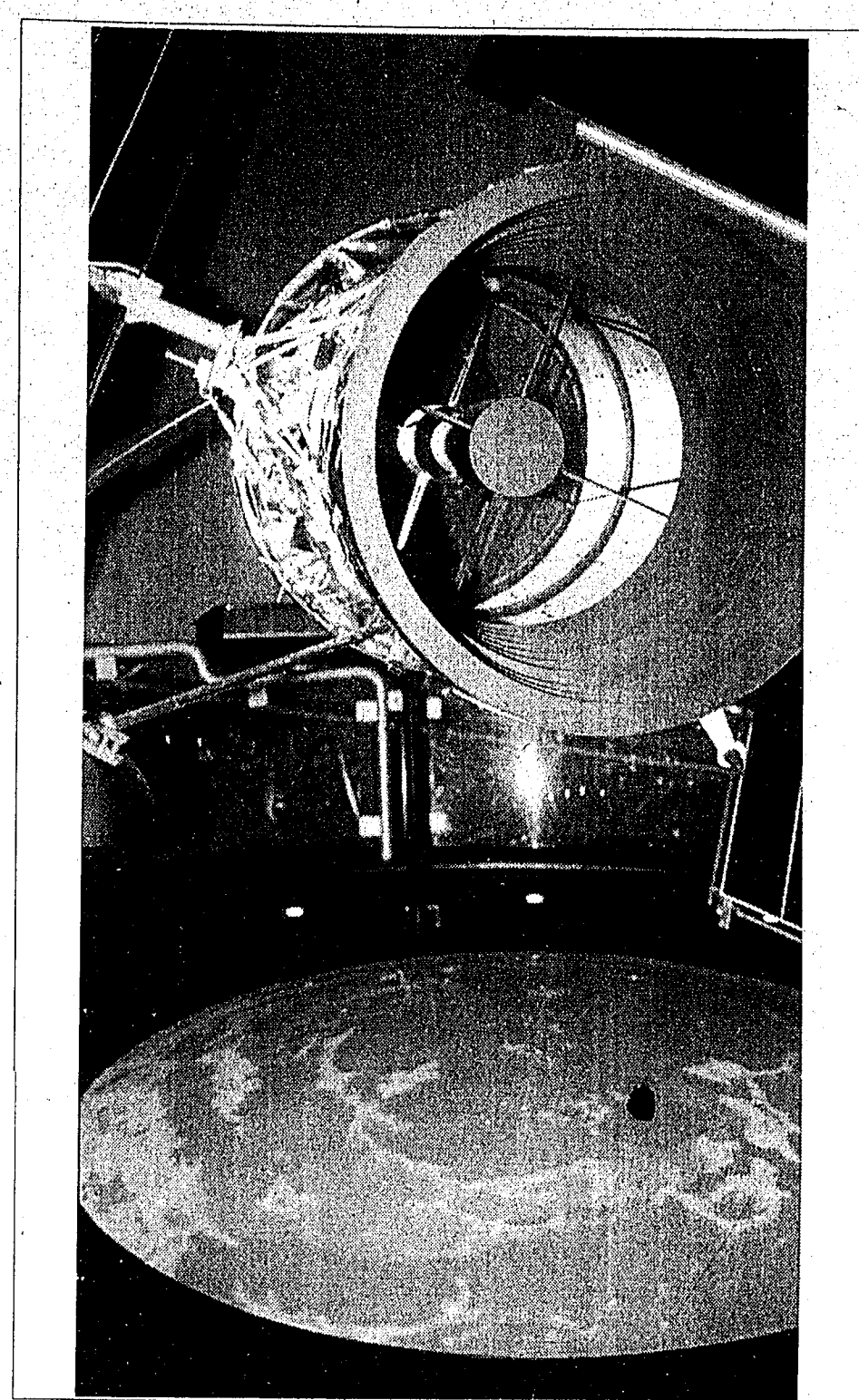
• Match images of galaxies before and after colliding — if you match them correctly you'll see an animation of the collision.

• View a video highlighting the life cycle of the stars — from gas to dust to stars and back again.

• Not since Galileo aimed a small 30-power telescope into the night sky in 1609 has humanity's vision of the universe been so revolutionized in such a short time span by a single instrument," says lead Hubble scientist David Leckrone, of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center.

Founded in 1879 as North Carolina's first public museum, the Museum of Natural Sciences is the only science museum in North Carolina with a full-time research staff. It is adjacent to the N.C. Museum of History and the State Capitol, and is within walking distance of a new children's museum.

Some Hubble facts: Hubble was launched April 24, 1990 from Space Shuttle Discovery and deployed the next day. It has provided humanity's first observation of a comet colliding with Jupiter. If all



Hubble model hovers over museum's exhibit. (Photo by Byron Crowley)

goes well it will orbit the Earth for up to 20 years. NASA astronauts serviced it in 1993, 1997, and 1999.

The telescope is as large as a school bus and fits inside a space shuttle cargo bay. It is 43.4 feet long, has a maximum diameter of 14 feet and weighs 24,500 pounds, the weight of 2 1/2 large African elephants. It collects energy from the sun with two 40-foot solar panels, and uses about the same amount of energy as 24 household light bulbs.

The images have helped astronomers measure galaxy distances more accurately than ever before — but many puzzles remain. These measurements are essential for determining the age of the universe. Observations of galaxy distances show that the universe is about 14 billion years old.

Mooreville's Byron Crowley writes about North Carolina travel for the Tribune.

If you're going The N.C. Museum of

Natural Sciences is located at 11 W. Jones St. in Raleigh (919-733-7450.) The Hubble exhibit is open during regular Museum hours: Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is free to the museum, but there is a charge for the Hubble exhibit (adults \$5; Children age 4-11, \$3, seniors 60-and-over, \$3).

Directions: From Mooreville, it's approximately 170 miles. Take I-77 north to Statesville, then I-40 east to Raleigh. Take Wade Avenue exit off I-40 in Raleigh to Capital Boulevard South, which becomes Dawson Street. Turn left on Jones Street and go three blocks east. The museum is on the right with parking underneath.

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Free prostate screening dates set

Hospital, FitCare will host sessions

All participants must register in advance for a screening. To register, please call

Amy Winecoff, RN, LNRMC Director of Community Outreach, at 704-660-4004.

Lake Norman Regional Medical Center will sponsor free prostate screening sessions in September. The first will be held Saturday, Sept. 8 from 10 a.m. until noon at the hospital. The second will be held Saturday, Sept. 22 from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. at FitCare Life Center in Huntersville.

LNRMC active staff urologists Dr. Clifford Kass and Dr. Michael Cram will conduct the screenings, which will consist of a PSA blood test and a digital exam. Both screenings are free and are open to the public.

September is National Prostate Health Awareness Month. Men with the following "high-risk" factors are encouraged to participate: African-American, and Hispanic-American men; men with a family history of prostate cancer; men with high blood pressure, no health insurance, or men with signs or symptoms of prostate cancer.

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Mooreville school menus

The following menus will be served in the Mooreville Graded School District during the week of August 13-17. A salad bar is available during lunch at all schools, and milk is served with all meals:

Monday
Breakfast — Cheese toast or choice of cereal with toast and jelly, choice of juice.

Obituary

Roscoe Freeze

Roscoe Hoyle Freeze Jr., 62, of Mooreville, died Tuesday, Aug. 7, 2001, at his residence.

Born in Iredell County, he was a son of Roscoe Hoyle Freeze Sr. of Mooreville and the late Mary Sherrill Freeze. A retired Mooreville magistrate, Mr. Freeze was a member of Fair View United Methodist Church and was retired after 21 years of service with the U.S. Army Paratrooper 101 Airborne Military Police.

In addition to his mother, he was preceded in death by a sister, Patsy F. Leonard.

Mr. Freeze was married to Petra Rivera Freeze, who survives.

Mr. Freeze is also survived by his father; two sons, Robert James Freeze of Kannapolis and Timothy A. Freeze of Mooreville; one brother, Ronnie Freeze of Mooreville; one half-sister, Carol Ann Lodin of Jacksonville, Fla.; and one grandson.

Funeral services are scheduled for 2 p.m. today (Friday) at Fair View UMC with Revs. David Christy, Jim Martin and Donna Smith officiating.

Memorials may be made to Fair View UMC Building Fund, P.O. Box 27, Mount Mourne, N.C. 28122.

Lunch — Pizza, combo sandwich with lettuce and tomato, tossed salad, oven browned potatoes, apple, carrot salad. (Middle and High Schools also have Kielbasa with beans on rice.)

Tuesday
Breakfast — Cinnamon pastries or choice of cereal with toast and jelly, choice of juice.

Lunch — Hamburger with lettuce and pickle, macaroni and cheese with ham, green beans, cantaloupe, blackeyed peas, applesauce, roll.

Wednesday
Breakfast — Ham biscuit or choice of cereal with toast and jelly, choice of juice.

Lunch — Chicken filet sandwich with lettuce and pickle, fish nuggets with

slaw and tartar sauce, turnip greens, french fries, corn, fruit cobbler, cornbread.

Thursday
Breakfast — French toast or choice of cereal with toast and jelly, choice of juice.

Lunch — Taco on soft shell, sweet and sour pork with noodles, green peas, buttered carrots, fruited gelatin, peaches, roll.

Friday
Breakfast — Breakfast Pizza or choice of cereal with toast and jelly, choice of juice.

Lunch — Pizza, turkey pie with cranberry sauce, tossed salad, sweet potato souffle, watermelon, baked apples, roll. (Middle and High Schools also have Sloppy Joe with slaw.)



Dr. Frank Avason, III

Dr. Randall S. Perry and his staff would like to welcome his new partner Frank Avason, III, to their practice, which specializes in periodontal treatment (gum disease) and the placement of dental implants. Dr. Avason graduated from Albany College of Pharmacy in New York in May of 1994. He then graduated with honors from the University of Kentucky College of Dentistry in Lexington, Kentucky in May of 1998. Dr. Avason was awarded the American Academy of Periodontology Student Award, International College of Dentist Achievement Award, and was inducted into the National Dental Honor Society. Dr. Avason then completed his residency training in periodontics at the University of Kentucky and graduated June 2001. Dr. Avason now lives in Mooreville, with his lovely wife Shannon and one year old son Byron. We feel honored and blessed to have such a talented and caring doctor join our practice. Dr. Avason looks forward to serving both you and your dentist in treating periodontal disease and placing dental implants. Dr. Avason has immediate openings in both our Statesville and Mooreville locations. Dr. Avason welcomes the opportunity in treating your periodontal needs.

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MPG (City/Hwy)	24/32	24/32	24/32	24/32
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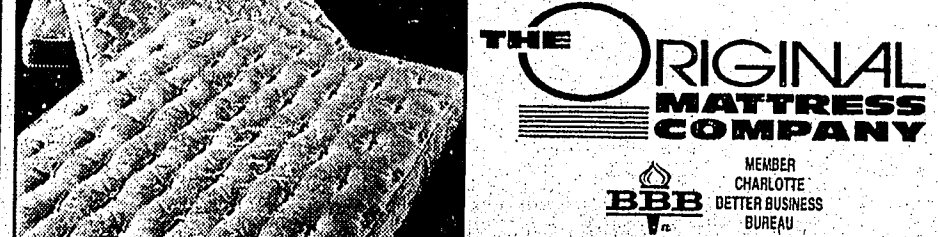
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