

HOME & GARDEN  
GOES GREEN



DÉCOR THAT WILL  
SAVE THE PLANET

A HOUSE THAT  
POWERS ITSELF

# THE NEWS & OBSERVER

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CAROLINA  
ROMPS OVER  
GONZAGA

The Heels rolled over the hapless Bulldogs, 98-77, to become one of the tournament's last eight teams. The Tar Heels have a date with Oklahoma on Sunday. **3A**

PERDUE PROMISES TO  
FIGHT LARGER CLASSES

She said saving money by adding one student to a class would soon mean many more. She said education would suffer. **3B**

DURHAM ARCHITECT  
FINALIST FOR D.C. JOB

Philip Freelon is among six finalists vying to design the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture. **1B**

PAKISTAN BOMBING  
KILLS 50 AT MOSQUE

Near the Afghan border, a man blew himself up at the climax of a Friday service. It was the worst attack in Pakistan this year. **3A**

ISRAEL: GAZA CHARGES  
ARE EXAGGERATIONS

Officials say most soldiers acted honorably, and that the story of the killing of a woman and her children seems to be a myth. **8A**

EBOLA-TAINTED NEEDLE  
PRICKS SCIENTIST

Within hours, colleagues cooperate to rush a vaccine to the German woman. She remains healthy so far. **6A**

HEY, BUDDY, HOW MUCH  
FOR THE ELECTRASOL?

In Spokane, where many detergents are banned for environmental reasons, homeowners take desperate measures. **3A**

CORRECTION

A front-page story Friday incorrectly stated that Dr. Charles Drew died at St. Agnes Hospital after being denied treatment at Raleigh's white hospital. He died in Burlington, and race played no role in his treatment.

WEATHER

**Today:** Mostly cloudy with late-day storms. High 69; low 60.

**Sunday:** Mostly cloudy, windy and mild. High 68; low 40. **10B**

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AB ● ● ●

## Joblessness leaps to record 10.7 percent

THE STATE'S FEBRUARY RATE JUMPED A POINT TO NATION'S 4TH-HIGHEST



Jason Sents of Garner, center, goes over information about starting a small business while waiting to see an employment consultant at the Employment Security Commission office on Carl Sandburg Court in Raleigh.

STAFF PHOTO BY COREY LOWENSTEIN

**Among the causes: Newcomers lured by glowing reviews add to an already crowded labor market.**

By JONATHAN B. COX  
AND SUE STOCK  
STAFF WRITERS

North Carolina's economy is looking more like Michigan's.

Joblessness in North Carolina surged a full percentage point in February — the country's biggest gain — to a record 10.7 percent. That was the nation's fourth-highest unemployment rate and only a few ticks behind Michigan, which had the highest rate at 12 percent.

Employers in North Carolina shed 27,900 jobs during the month, as the number of unemployed workers rose to 491,067.

"The labor market continued to unravel in February," said John Quinterno, research associate at the N.C. Budget & Tax Center in Raleigh, which works on issues affecting the poor. "The numbers are simply atrocious."

Even so, North Carolina is still winning accolades as a top place for jobs. Just this week,



Employee Cyndi Day, right, with Tammie Smith at hhgregg in Apex, worked at Linens 'n Things until it closed.

STAFF PHOTO BY SHAWN ROCCO

INSIDE

**IBM cuts:** 334 workers will lose their jobs at RTP. **►5B**

**Hospitals trim:** Triangle facilities are cutting some benefits. **►1B**

Forbes magazine, in its annual ranking of the best places for business and careers, put Raleigh at the top of its list. Durham was No. 3.

That's part of the problem. Such attention draws people

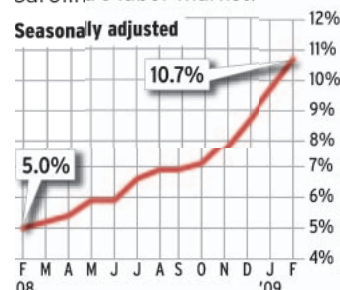
from other places to chase opportunities here. In February, the labor force increased by 34,174 people, the second-biggest monthly increase in records dating back 33 years.

For job seekers, it's a troubling phenomenon, because outsiders add to the competition in an already too-crowded labor market.

Danny Hicks, 45, lost his job as a parts manager at the GM Superstore in Durham in early

JOBLESSNESS UP

Statewide unemployment jumped to 10.7 percent in February, a new record for the state, as the recession continued to pummel North Carolina's labor market.



source: N.C. Employment Security Commission, Nachovia

The News & Observer

November. He found another job as a parts manager at a dealership three weeks ago. In Rocky Mount.

"I put my stuff out on the Internet, and it took that amount of time for someone needing someone in my position to actually contact me," he said.

Hicks lives out of a suitcase during the week and goes home to Moncure on weekends to see

SEE **JOBLESS**, PAGE 14A

## Courts are still soft on speeders

DA's, judges work  
around new laws

By MANDY LOCKE  
AND DAVID RAYNOR  
STAFF WRITERS

In the 16 months since legislators tried to close loopholes that let the fastest speeders avoid harsh penalties, some judges and prosecutors have ignored the new laws or found ways around them.

Nearly 12 percent of those charged with driving more than 25 mph over the speed limit got breaks that legislators tried to outlaw, according to records from the Administrative Office of the Courts. Prosecutors since December 2007 have been forbidden from allowing those speeders to blame their indiscretion on broken speedometers; also, they forbid judges from granting "prayers for judgment continued," a forgiveness of sorts, in these cases.

Across the state, the rate at which these high-speed drivers were found guilty as charged hasn't improved. In most districts, there was a surge in another type of deal: reducing the charge to 10 mph or less over the limit. That break spares insurance rate increases and points on a driver's record.

Sen. Tony Rand, a Fayetteville Democrat who helped shepherd the legislation in 2007, was flabbergasted.

"What do they want me to do? Pass another bill this session saying I really meant the one we passed in 2007?" Rand said after being presented with the findings of a News & Observer analysis.

"Unbelievable."

The legislature's action in 2007 followed an N&O series that found speeders are rarely punished in North Carolina. Overall, only about 17 percent of speeders are found guilty as charged; that rate didn't change after the law did. Conviction rates are even lower for the fastest drivers.

North Carolina courts have long been overwhelmed by the volume of speeding tickets. Since December 2007, law enforcement officers ticketed more than 779,562 speeders. In some district courts, hundreds of drivers report each morning seeking painless resolution to their ticket. Prosecutors and judges oblige, saying they don't have the resources to try even a handful of speeding cases a day.

All the while, North Carolinians continue to die in speed-related crashes. Across the state, an average of more than eight people died each week in speed-related

SEE **SPEEDERS**, PAGE 15A

## Bulbs save energy by not working

Many people  
are turned off

By LEORA BROYDO VESTEL  
THE NEW YORK TIMES NEWS

**SAN FRANCISCO** — It sounds like such a simple thing: Buy some new light bulbs, screw them in, save the planet.

But a lot of people are finding the new compact fluorescent bulbs anything but simple. Consumers who are trying them say they sometimes fail to work, or wear out early. At best, people discover that using the bulbs requires learning a long list of dos and don'ts.

Take the case of Karen Zuercher and her husband, in San Francisco. Inspired by

watching the movie "An Inconvenient Truth," they decided to swap nearly every incandescent bulb in their home for energy-saving compact fluorescents. Instead of having a satisfying green moment, however, they wound up coping with a mess.

"Here's my sad collection of bulbs that didn't work," Zuercher said the other day as she pulled a cardboard box containing defunct bulbs from her laundry shelf.

One of the 16 Feit Electric bulbs the Zuerchers bought at Costco did not work at all, they said, and three others died within hours. The bulbs were supposed to burn for 10,000 hours, meaning they should

SEE **BULBS**, PAGE 15A



Some say the quality of fluorescent bulbs went down with the price.

## The bill may be sexy, but the title's a snore

By RYAN TEAGUE BECKWITH  
STAFF WRITER

State legislators are considering teaching contraception in schools, allowing concealed handguns in restaurants and letting illegal immigrants into public colleges.

You would never know that, though, by reading the titles of the bills containing those proposals.

Under a long-standing practice, state lawmakers sometimes give innocuous or misleading titles to their bills to sell them to their colleagues and the public. Consider these:

■ "The Healthy Youth Act." While it sounds like a bill for bet-

ter school lunches or more time in P.E., this bill would put most students in comprehensive sex education classes, with an option for abstinence-only at parents' discretion.

■ "Personal Protection in Restaurants." Thicker napkins at Olive Garden, maybe? Nope. This one would allow people with concealed weapons permits to bring handguns into restaurants and bars.

■ "Access to Higher Education." No, it's not for more scholarships. This would prohibit community colleges and state universities from asking students

SEE **BILLS**, PAGE 14A