

Features

{ Campus Scene }

America loses four icons

in less than a week

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THE EAST CAROLINIAN

Weird coincidence or not, four famous celebrities have died in less than a week. First was Ed McMahon, then Farah Fawcett and the King of Pop (both on June 25th) followed by Billy Mays, aka the true “Infomercial King.” This is perhaps one of the most bizarre turn of events that has happened in recent years to the “big-wigs” in entertainment. A “Tonight Show” sidekick, a ’70s glamour idol, one of the biggest-selling musicians in recording history and an infomercial guru are all dead within a week. Crazy.

Ed McMahon is most famously known for being an announcer and co-star on the “Johnny Carson Show,” the show which he was a part of for 30 years. According to a recent article by Entertainment Weekly, he was considered one of television’s “greatest sidekicks.” McMahon could be heard laughing through many portions of the Johnny Carson Show, which gained him the nickname “The Human Laugh Track.” He’s also famous for his “Here’s Johnny” opening line that had also resonated to the big screen, thanks to Jack Nicholson, in the horror film “The Shining.” McMahon died on June 23rd from natural causes at the age of 86.



Charlie’s Angels star and sex symbol passed away at the age of 62.

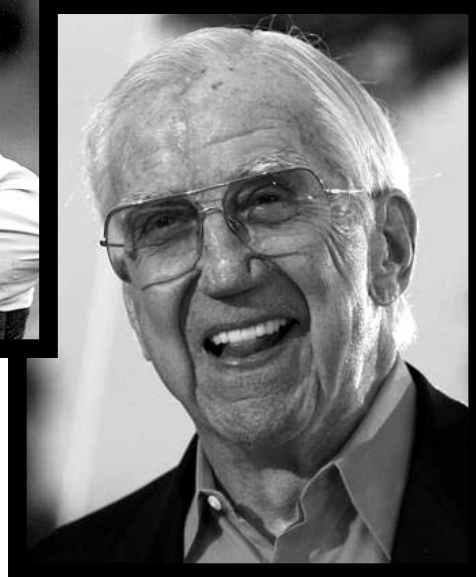
As a star on the hit ’70s show “Charlie’s Angels”, Farah Fawcett became an American sex symbol. Men lusted for her and women desperately wanted to look like her. She had beautiful, blond flowing hair, a gorgeous smile and a wonderful pair of legs. Her tremendous screen presence garnered her roles in the film “Extremities” and the TV movie “The Burning Bed.” After having a long, three year tenure with anal cancer, Fawcett tragically passed away on June 25th at the age of 62.

Michael Jackson’s passing has been the most widely publicized death of this week and has overshadowed the other celebrities.

With his death, there have come some bizarre conspiracy

theories, such as that he staged his own death (very similar to the Elvis conspiracy theorists who thought he was abducted by aliens) and even the possibility of murder. Jackson’s personal doctor had been in hiding up until just recently and has hired a big-shot lawyer. Whether or not the guy is guilty, he still has the potential to be blamed for the death of Jackson. Jackson’s exact cause of death, up until now, is unknown. He is thought to have died from cardiac arrest and this may have been drug-induced.

His Oxyclean commercials will forever be remembered for his bombastic voice.



His “Here’s Johnny!” tagline has become an enduring part of television history.



The King of Pop lives on after death.

Jackson received a daily dose of Demerol, a pain-killer which he had been addicted to for several years. Jackson died on June 25th at the age of 50.

“If only you [Michael] knew how much love you were getting, after all those years of paparazzi abuse,” said senior Chris Thompson. “You will be missed. [Michael pose]” said Thompson as he struck a Michael pose.

Other’s feel pity for Jackson and are even still mesmerized by his oddity. When asked about Jackson, junior biology major Megan Vann said, “He was very

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New bill signed to restore common sense

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THE EAST CAROLINIAN

On Friday, June 19th, North Carolina Governor Beverly Perdue signed a bill into law which bans drivers from text messaging and emailing on their cell phones while behind the wheel of a vehicle. Perdue, who is best known for her fight to advance education and improve

healthcare, hopes that this new law will further help to reduce the amount of unsafe driving practices taking place on North Carolina roads.

Perdue had her spokeswoman, Chrissy Pearson, send out the news of her decision through a text message, which read: “This msg 2 u was composed while I was behind my desk, not behind the wheel. Hope u r not driving

now.”

The law, which goes into effect Dec. 1st, 2009, is going to be difficult to enforce. However, North Carolina Republican Senator Jim Forrester hopes that the law will promote highway safety. As reported by the Gaston Gazette, Forrester claims, “If this bill can save one life or prevent one accident, it’s well worth it.”

While this violation does not

increase insurance rates or add points to drivers’ licenses, those who are caught texting while driving will face a \$100 fine, plus the cost of court. Regardless, some students feel that this new law will not make a huge impact in their lives. Chandler Hatcher, a rising sophomore, admits to frequently texting while driving and claims she doubts her habits will change a lot after Dec. 1st.

“Since it will be very difficult for police to catch drivers texting, I don’t think I will stop doing it,” she said.

Daniel Walton, also a rising sophomore, feels much the same way. “I think it is a really great idea, but I don’t think it will have too much of an effect, simply because it will be too hard to be

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caught [violating the law].”

However, Walton hopes that the law will reduce the amount of wrecks around the area. “Hopefully, many drivers will follow the law

and will wait to send text messages until they are stopped,” he said.

With any luck, Walton’s wishes will come true. Nationwide Insurance Company recently released a study that an overwhelming 37 percent of

people age 18 to 27 text message while driving.

While Perdue’s assessment that texting and driving should not mix is entirely correct, many continue to wonder if the law will have any impact. Barbara Harsha, executive direc-

tor of the Governor’s Highway Safety, shared her opinion of texting behind the wheel with the Gaston Gazette by saying, “We need to restore some common sense to driving.”

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talented, but at the same time he creaped me out. I don’t blame him entirely for this because I think his father had a lot to do with his strangeness for making him work extremely hard at a young age.”

The last, but not least, celebrity passing of this week, Billy Mays, happened sometime in the early morning hours on Sunday. He was pronounced dead on Sunday at 7:45 a.m., apparently having died sometime during the night. Mays had been on a plane the night before his death, in which a front wheel blew out. Mays mentioned to a local news station in Tampa, Florida,

WTVT-TV, saying that some of the objects “hit me on the head, but I got a hard head.” Investigators still do not have enough information as to whether or not this incident had anything to do with the “Infomercial King’s” death. Like Jackson, Mays died at the age of 50 on June 28th.

“All of these deaths were a big shock to everyone and they were all definitely strange. Despite all this, I think it’s a coincidence though,” said Kayleigh Smith, a junior exercise and physiology major.

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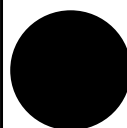


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