



THE RACCLE

JUNE 15, 2001 VOLUME 36 NUMBER 14
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CONCERTS SIZZLE



WEST SPRINGFIELD HIGH SCHOOL 6100 ROLLING ROAD SPRINGFIELD, VIRGINIA 22152



Seniors enjoy end of year festivities

By Jenny Askin
Managing Editor

With the final week of their high school career approaching, the senior class gathered together for perhaps the last time before their senior graduation. They gathered to watch fellow seniors receive scholarship money and scholastic awards.

The ceremony kicked off with a general commentary from Principal David Smith and brief summaries from the guests who awarded the 18 scholarships. Over 100 seniors received full or partial scholarships from their colleges. The assembly concluded with the handing out of departmental award medal, as well as the presentation of the candidates for the AP diploma and for valedictorian.

As the year dwindled down the senior class and their families were invited to the annual Baccalaureate which was held at St. Bernadette's Catholic Church on June 14. The ceremony

from the senior class officers. This year graduation will be held on June 19 at the George Mason Patriot Center. The National Honor Society will usher the event, and the WS

teacher John McMenamin as the keynote speaker.

"I am really excited to get my diploma and leave WS," said senior Nate Carter.

With all the upcoming senior activities one event seems to take importance over the others. That event being the senior prom. This year the prom will be held at the Westfield hotel on June 15.

"I can't wait for prom, I have a really great date," said senior Joe Parker.

On the night of graduation, all seniors are invited to attend the All Night Graduation Party. The party will have tons of things for the seniors to do, including 'gambling' tables, and award drawings.

"I heard they are going to have hair stylists cut people's hair, said senior Katie Hammer. "I think it is going to be a lot of fun."



Stephanie Morris

History teacher Brad Davis presents Springfield Rotary Club awards to seniors Mark Burton, Allison Bouley, Ginny Horner, and Karlena Sakas.

encompassed many songs and readings as well as remarks class band will play. The senior class chose Government

Lunar Dawn lands Spartan Jam victory

By Melissa Lipman
Oracle Editor

This year's winner of WS's annual Spartan Jam Battle of the Bands was metal band Lunar Dawn.

"Everything was a blur," said senior Stephen Juliano, guitarist for the group. "All that I remember was that the feeling of being onstage was amazing. I want to do it again."

After Lunar Dawn, the second and third place winners were Dark Haven and OTIS respectively.

"The sound onstage [turned off]. That was very unprofessional," said junior Tejas Singh, lead singer and guitarist of OTIS. "But the crowd's response to our band was really good. I really appreciate that."

Other bands that played the show include Jarellwood, McPhly, The Fallen, the EPP Word, and winner of Robinson's Battle of the Bands, Jungle Crumb.

"It's [the show] meant to celebrate the music of the students of WS," said Keith

Owens, the guitar teacher.

Battle of the Bands is designed to allow students in bands a chance to perform their music for their peers.

"It's cool because you know people," said sophomore Tyler Christensen, a member of The Fallen.

Spartan Jam is supposed to be a safe, positive event for students. Consequently moshing is not allowed, and some students had to be asked not to crowd surf during the show.

"A lot of people aren't crazy about it [the show] because they think it is tied to a lot of negatives," said Owens. "I do have faculty who support us though."

Among the new aspects of this year's show are the performance of Robinson's winner, as well as the fact that the guitar department elected to buy and operate its own PA system, this year instead of renting equipment as they have in past years.

"It's awesome," said Owens. "More people should come out and support it."



Amy McKeever

Junior Ashley Hoffman and senior Karina Adams proudly display their awards.

WS captures two Cappies

By Amy McKeever
Entertainment Editor

Grammy, Emmy, Tony...Cappie?

On June 10, two WS students were honored at the Cappies Gala, held in the Kennedy Center Concert Hall, for their extraordinary performances in the spring musical, "Hello, Dolly!"

Junior Ashlee Hoffman won for Comic Actress and senior Karina Adams won the Cappie for Lead Actress in a musical.

"I seriously didn't expect to win, I was shellshocked," said Adams. "I had heard how good my competition was so I was nervous."

These awards indicate that the critics of the shows found Adams and Hoffman to be the absolute best actresses in their categories out of all of the participating schools in the area.

"It was a really big honor to be recognized out of all of those people," said Hoffman. "I felt like it was the Grammy's or something, which was cool because I hope to actually be there someday."

The Cappie Award is a recent addition to the plethora of award shows that recognize the fine arts. However, Cappies is unique because it is entirely devoted to recognition of high school theater arts. The program was founded last year by Bill Strauss, co-founder of the Capitol Steps. Although Hoffman and Adams

See CAPPIES, on Page 4



Russ Waddell

Lunar Dawn guitarists seniors Steve Juliano and Pedro Seminario give an award winning performance.

Let the music play on

We here at *The Oracle* would like to congratulate the guitar department for keeping the school entertained during lunch. During the two weeks prior to the seventh annual Spartan Jam Battle of the Bands, West Springfield's finest bands rocked out in the sports lobby to help promote the big show on June 1.

The dull lunchtime routine was broken by the sweet music flowing out around the infamous big wooden Spartan statue. The bands of Spartan Jam 2001 provided a soundtrack for our munching from the pink styrofoam trays and brown paper sacks.

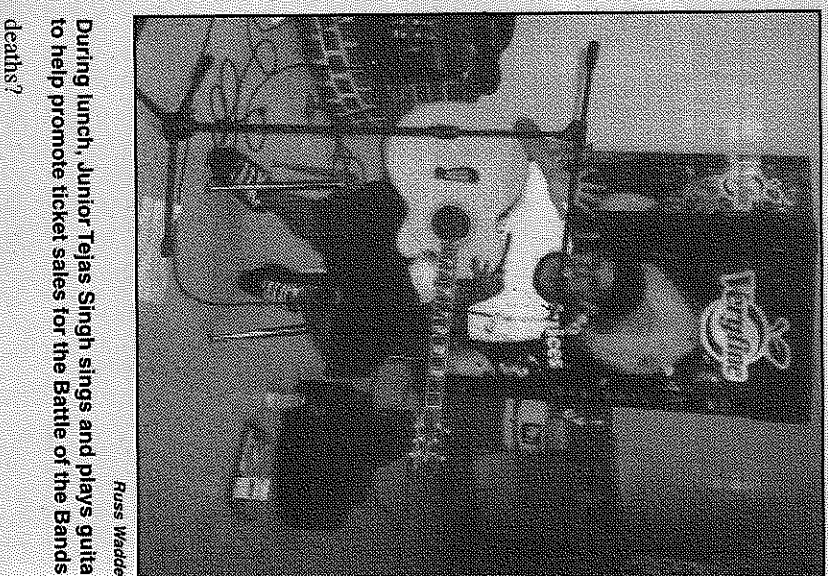
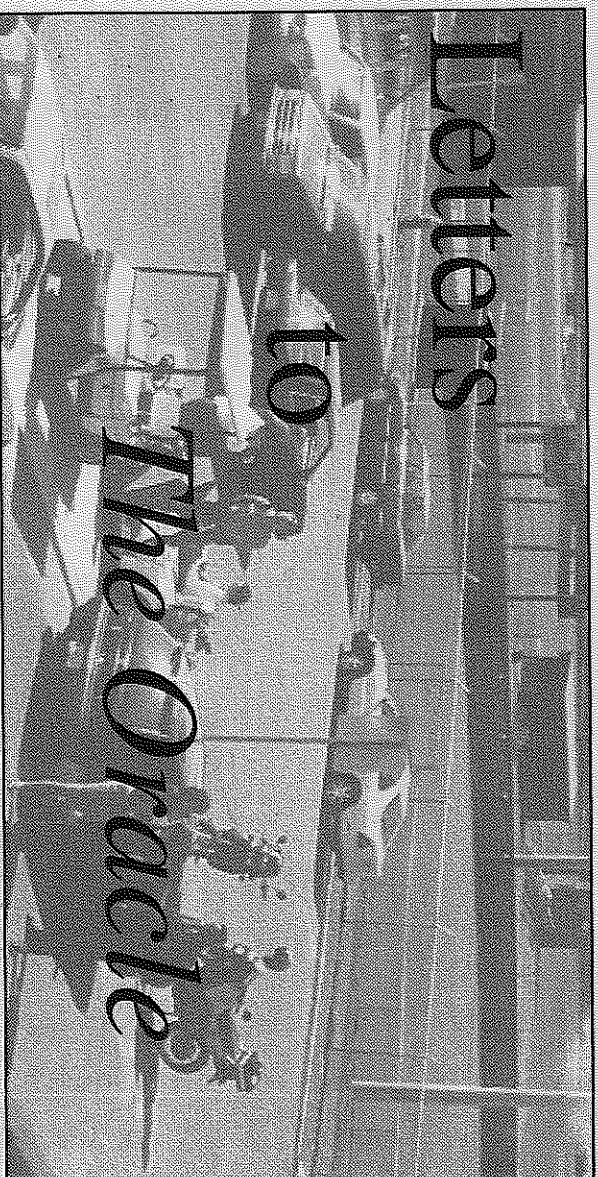
While it is common knowledge that WS has a guitar department, the jam sessions were a welcome opportunity for us to hear the products of the department for free. Spartan Jam is great, but the convenience of hearing some stuff during the school day at absolutely no cost has a certain appeal for the masses. At least for the masses who aren't hard-core enough to dedicate some of their time and return for the actual battle of the hands.

Editorial

Not only was the student body entertained by the performances, but the guitar department got some great publicity. With any luck, the teaser performances will make for a bigger crowd at Spartan Jam. Also, students could even be inspired to sign up for guitar and later become rock stars, bringing fame and fortune to our beloved school. If not, the guitar department could at least gain some popularity and do better with fundraisers.

The lunchtime shows should be continued even after Spartan Jam because they are so cool. With a catchy name like "The Lunchtime Musicbox," they could turn into a school tradition. The possibilities are endless, with room to expand to non-guitar department bands and bongos-wielding beatniks.

Once again, we commend the bands and the guitar department for their high quality musical entertainment. We hope that the fun will continue for years to come, and be one more happy memory for WS students to look back on forever.



Russ Waddell
During lunch, Junior Tejas Singh sings and plays guitar to help promote ticket sales for the Battle of the Bands.

Dear Editor,

I am deeply disturbed by the propaganda being printed in the last edition of your acclaimed school newspaper. While I am not opposed to freedom of speech, I am deeply opposed to injustice, and I find the article "Catch problems, not skippers" a gross injustice to the men who willingly put the lives of every tantrum-throwing student before their own.

That's right, they put the students' lives before their own, and they don't need children pretending to be adults advertising opportunities to assault the school and the students and teachers it is shelter to. I am disturbed by the statements that "obviously we are aware of the fact that it is permitted to leave school grounds without a pass" when they are followed by "But really now, is it necessary to have all four members of our security staff survey each and every single entrance to the school?" I believe this is a statement of fact that the students are willfully and openly violating Fairfax County Public School Policy of Student Rights and Responsibilities. I believe that in the security staff's efforts to not only make what attempt they can to protect the students who have blatant disregard for school policy from putting themselves at risk off school grounds, they are also preventing trespassers, who do not belong in their school, from coming INTO the school through every single entrance during the time of day when it would in fact be easiest to do so.

What is the feeling in your students' stomachs when they think about a bullet or knife entering the body of

the girl who was quiet, shy, and so polite, but nobody ever spoke to her, or the boy whose mother and father just died of cancer? What is the feeling when your security staff leaves behind a wife and a 15 year old daughter because he stepped in front of that bullet so that one of those innocent students might live to have a full life?

My daughter and I have lived for 15 years knowing that any day my husband and her father might not come home from work because the lives of people he didn't know were more precious than his or ours. Although retired from his professional firefighting career, we now live with that same understanding of self-sacrifice every day and he works at a local high school. The only difference is that he stood a fighting chance with the public at large, he doesn't stand a chance when school newspapers publish opportunities for destruction through narrative tantrums written by spoiled wanna be adults who aren't allowed to buy a McDonald's cheeseburger for lunch.

If you want to know why the security staff will not comment when interviewed, it is because they are preserving their own safety from the almighty pen publishing propaganda that is as damaging as the newspaper articles we are all recently aware of that told the American public that the Japanese would never attack Pearl Harbor. How many of the parents who so boldly support the quality of this fine high school newspaper grew up knowing how the propaganda published by Adolph Hitler persuaded the German people into ignorance that resulted in millions of Jewish and Russian

deaths?

I agree with freedom of speech and the right to understand why and how politics are enforced, but freedom of speech does not include advertising opportunities to one student or one adult who had a "bad day" to come in "whenever you want without suffering any consequences" and shoot bullets or wave knife blades or cut class for a... cheeseburger. The security staff and their families would all like to see every single student live to graduate from their high school with honor and pride.

With Deep Concern,

Valarie A. Parry

The writer is the wife of Security Specialist George Parry.

Dear Editors,

Several months ago we had reason to believe that a student, who had made threatening statements to other students the previous night, might bring a gun to school (thankfully, that did not happen). A member of the Security Team was the first staff member to learn of the potential threat. Early the next morning, he informed the Security Specialist and within minutes, each and every member of the security staff and several administrators were on the perimeter of the building ready to intercept the student in question and face whatever arose.

The editorial "Catch problems, not just skippers" unfairly suggests that WSHS Security Staff would not respond in a crisis: "...they wouldn't react because they would be busy catching the real culprit: the students skipping school." Yes, part of their routine duty is to prevent students from leaving the property without permission during the school day. To suggest they would not respond during a crisis is absurd.

While I do understand that editorials are by their nature one's opinion, it appears to me that the opinion of the author of this editorial was influenced more by frustration that security staff declined the opportunity to to speak with *Oracle* staff than by the facts. That is unfortunate. *The Oracle* is a fine student newspaper. Editorials that are not informed are not worthy of *The Oracle*. If *Oracle* staffers find that members of the WSHS faculty and staff do not care to speak with them, they can always come to me. If I am not able to answer their questions when we talk, I will find out the answer and get back to them. In the future, I hope your editorials reflect informed opinion rather than uninformed frustration.

Sincerely,
David G. Smith, Ph.D.
Principal

THE ORACLE

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A student-run publication for the West Springfield High School community. Opinion is expressed in Viewpoint and in reviews and columns. Editors also represent the opinion of at least two-thirds of the Editorial Board, and do not reflect the views of the adviser or the administration or the Fairfax County Public School System. *The Oracle* reserves the right to reject advertising. Signed letters and commentary will be considered for publication, but could be edited.

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To die or not to die; McVeigh's question

Justice has been served

By Roberto Garcia

Oracle Editor

He has never apologized. The 19 children he killed—collateral damage. The final score, as he sees it—168 to one. Yet, he might get a new trial.

He's Timothy McVeigh, and on April 19, 1995, he set off a bomb in front of Oklahoma City's Alfred P. Murrah building, killing 168 innocent people, including 19 children in the building's day care center. He was tried and convicted for the worst terrorist attack in American history, and then sentenced to die.

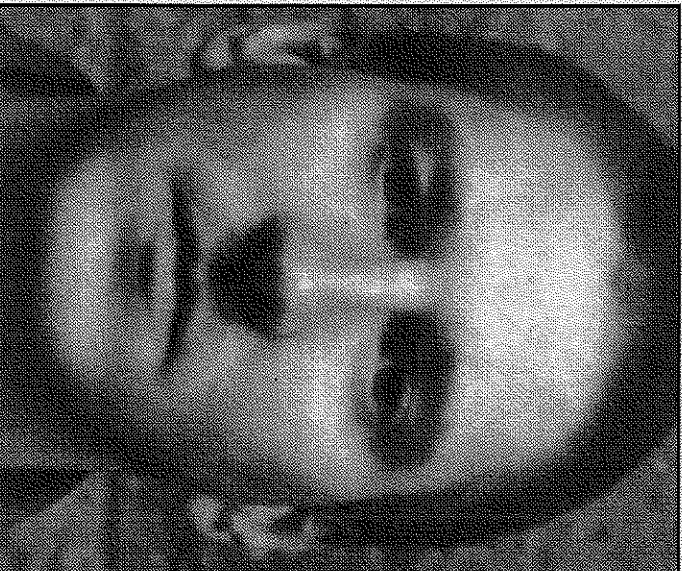
In January of this year, he waived his right to appeal and asked to be killed as soon as possible. The Federal Government planned to grant his request, scheduling a May 16 execution date. Then on May 10, less than a week before his execution, the unimaginable occurred. Attorney General John Ashcroft announced that the FBI had failed to turn over approximately 4,000 documents relating to the McVeigh case. Ashcroft was forced to delay the execution until June 11, giving McVeigh a chance to file an appeal and even request a new trial.

Since McVeigh confessed to the bombing, he wasn't able to get a new trial, and if he had, the outcome would have been the same. However, the real question is why he was given this chance and who's responsible for it.

As of late, the FBI has gained a reputation for committing small blunders with large consequences. From sending trucker Joseph Salvati to jail for 30 years to protect one of its own agents, to having been penetrated by a Russian Spy for over 25 years, the Bureau has been under intense criticism for its carelessness. Now, even in its biggest case ever, it seems to have committed a terrible mistake which has only led to the pain and anguish of the families of the 168 bombing victims.

McVeigh never had anything against his victims. His aim wasn't to kill as many people as possible. His goal was to prove the high level of ineptitude within our government. McVeigh hated, and would still hate our government, and has for sometime been waging war against it. He just saw his victims as the innocent bystanders of war, and as he put it, every war has casualties.

There's no doubt in my mind that McVeigh is guilty, and that he deserves to die for what he did. His disregard for the lives he destroyed is amazing, and the pain many will not reach closure until his death. However, if by some little technically he manages to get a new trial, then maybe McVeigh has been right all this time about our government—no guilty person, not one who has confessed to his crime, deserves the pity or justice which he has denied his victims. Granting him a retrial would have been the biggest display of ineptitude and injustice the government could commit.



Timothy McVeigh, responsible for the deaths of 168 people in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, has been sentenced to death.

Overall, do you support capital punishment?

YES 41%
NO 38%
UNDECIDED 21%

Do you support it in the case of Timothy McVeigh?

YES 56%
NO 31%
UNDECIDED 12%

—Compiled by Heidi Stiffgoj

Death is not the answer

By Heidi Stiffgoj

Entertainment Assistant

Murder. It's everywhere in the world today. It's all over the news. Somebody might even witness it firsthand. It has taken over our society, and it takes innocent people everyday. Sadly, for many people murder is their greatest fear. This only shows our society's downfall.

It is true, however, that the government has taken action against these animals who torture their prey so harshly. The government uses capital punishment to get rid of the killers and to make sure they will never kill again. The electric chair is used in six states; lethal injection has replaced it in 32. Virginia, South Carolina, and Ohio give the condemned person a choice between the two. More than 4,300 people have been killed by capital punishment in the United States.

In the case of Timothy McVeigh, convicted Oklahoma bomber, many people believe he needed to be killed in order to grant justice to the many victims of his crime. The Oklahoma bombing took 168 lives and injured more than 500 people. McVeigh was condemned to death by lethal injection and was executed on June 11.

I, however, do not believe that McVeigh should have been killed. What he did was absolutely horrible, but that does not mean he should die too. He should definitely suffer, but there are other ways. If he were sentenced to life in prison, then he would be forced to live the rest of his life with his crime, and the world can only hope that someday he will eventually realize what he did was wrong and begin to repent. That, to me, is more powerful than just sticking some needle into his arm. Killing McVeigh is almost like letting him get away. He suffered for about 10 minutes, and then it was all over.

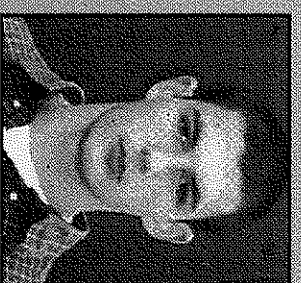
By enforcing capital punishment, the society is beginning the process of murder all over again. The killer goes out and kills 200 people, then the government kills him making it 201. We have always been taught that killing is wrong, but look what we're doing through the death penalty. The exact same action we've been taught not to do. Capital punishment is killing people and nobody, not even the State, has the authority to play God. The public doesn't respond for the most part. Some people kick back and laugh at the idea of this man dying by lethal injection. The world might even be able to watch him die on pay per view. Now, if that doesn't say something bad about our society, then what does?

Yes, murderers are wrong in what they do. Yes, they should suffer for it. But, no, they should not die for it. It is against our morals, our teachings, and our status as human beings. It is against our way of life.

We don't rape those who rape. We don't steal from those who steal. So, tell me, why do we kill those who kill?

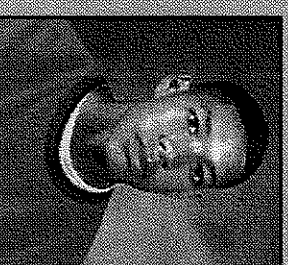
Do you think celebrities have an obligation to be good role models?

"Yes, because their lives are always in the media and little kids look up to them."
Natalie Fuentes, 9



"No, because they did not ask to be role models."
Mike Lennington, 12

Spartan Spotlight



"Yes, because they set examples for young people."
Jared Butler, 11

—Compiled by Stephanie Morris

Don't let stars off easy

By Ruchika Malhotra

News Assistant

With the fame and fortune of being a celebrity comes the responsibility and obligation to be a good role model for the fans. By conveniently bending the law for themselves, Bobby Brown, Whitney Houston, Tim Allen, and other stars are being unethical and bruising their image, values, the public's opinion of them, and the industry's opinion of them.

Ex-"Ally McBeal" star, Robert Downey Jr., was recently charged twice with cocaine and Valium possessions, and once for being under the influence of a controlled substance. Now this 1997 LA County Jail resident is free on a \$15,000 bail. If convicted, 36-year-old Downey will be sent to state prison. However, this will never happen. Prosecutors aren't filing criminal charges, even though tests found cocaine in his system, and deputy district attorney Tammy Capone has said that the most they're going to do is put him in treatment rather than send him to jail.

I don't see how we can let a repeat drug abuser, property damager, and alcoholic just go back into rehab. If rehab and jail

haven't worked for him since he was eight, more rehab isn't going to work now. He needs to be cruelly punished instead of running around high just because he's an actor who has \$15,000 to dispose of.

Fellow rehab patient and actor Matthew Perry, has had treatments for acute pancreatitis (associated with alcohol abuse and prescription drugs), and dependencies on Vicodin, methadone, and speed. Vicodin launched him into rehab in 1997, and now the 31-year-old "Friends" star's greatest punishment is rehab again.

Since excessive rehab just sunk Perry into a deeper hole, he can't just be put back on this bad roller coaster ride again. He needs a harsher and more real punishment to help him get control of his life.

Our own constitution says that, "all men are created equal." It does not say that everyone's equal except for celebrities. Letting stars get away with such crimes spots the representation of our country's ethics and everyone's opinion of the celebrity and the enforcers. It's just not right, fair, or moral. So if a celebrity can't handle the obligation of being a responsible icon, then they shouldn't be a celebrity. It's that simple.

Six WS teachers nominated for Disney award

By Priyanka Tandon
News Editor

Six nominations have been made and the applications have been sent. Disney's serious side shines once each year to honor America's 30 best teachers.

Disney's American Teacher Award was created in 1989, and this year six teachers from WS were nominated: Laurie Fischer, Ann Lam, Cindy McIver, Brooke Nelson, Andrea Schlegel, and Aldra Sirott.

"I was really flattered by the nomination and am happy to know that I'm making a difference in one student's life," said biology teacher Lam.

Teachers can be nominated anonymously by students or community members. In order to compete for the award

teachers must teach full time, be able to attend all the events, and complete an application.

The application includes basic forms, three recommendations, and requires the teacher to write four essays about how she teaches.

"The most worthwhile thing [about the application] for me was being able to think about how I teach," said Sirott, a photography teacher.

Out of the thousands of applicants who apply, 30 teachers, three from each of the 10 categories, are selected as honorees. In addition, from the 10 finalists only one is chosen as the Outstanding Teacher of the Year.

All 30 honorees receive cash prizes of at least \$10,000 and \$5,000 for their schools. Finalists and the Outstanding Teacher of the Year are given additional cash prizes.

The group of 30 must attend a professional development program focused on helping them explore and develop their creativity and share their experiences. The six day workshop will be held in July 2002 in Orlando.

In 1993, WS history teacher Jim Percoco was named Outstanding Social Studies Teacher of the Year by Disney. "It was one of the highlights of my career," said Percoco. "It allowed me to understand educational issues on a national level."

The award is based on creativity and innovation in teaching, which each teacher does in her own unique way.

Fischer, who teaches American Civilization, dresses up as an immigrant on Ellis Island, a flapper from the 1920s, a prohibitionist, and Rosie the Riveter.

"It's been a pleasure teaching with her [Fischer] because she has such a passion for history," said Faye Bousel, who team-teaches American Civilization with Fischer. "She really makes history come alive for the students."

On the other hand, Sirott's creative edge is her collaboration of photography with other subjects. She has constructed projects with foreign languages and English. More recently she has incorporated web page technology with photography, however one project stands out.

"Several years ago, we directed a team of English, Spanish, and photography students to interview Latino community leaders," said Sirott. "The work was professionally published in a booklet."

Schlegel, a social studies teacher, is known for her loud voice and enthusiasm for her curriculum.

"She makes history interesting," said freshman Theresa Ohanian, "even if you don't enjoy history."

McIver, who teaches German, has a special activity that is especially creative.

"We go around the classroom and each add a sentence to a story," said sophomore Aisley Neary. "It helps me understand German and keep thinking in German in my mind."

Nelson, an AP English teacher and journalism advisor, has had experience outside the class room. Before her teaching career of seven years at WS, Nelson spent 20 years as a professional journalist.

"I want to give my students a voice," said Nelson.

Exotic animals and exciting labs make Lam unique. She also likes being there for her students.

"She's made it really clear to us that if we ever had a problem we could go to her," said freshman Heather Decot.

Other teachers recognize the significance of being nominated for this award.

"Teachers don't get corner offices, company cars or other extraneous validation," said history teacher Allison Kopkan. "This Disney Award is that validation."

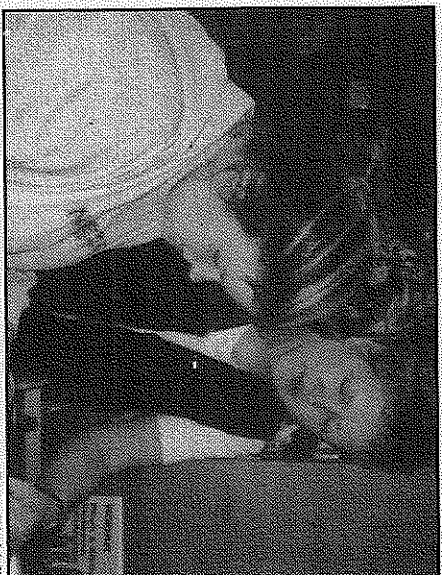
Thespian awards presented at Kennedy Center

CAPPIES, from Page 1

were the only trophy winners, several WS theater students had the opportunity to be honored for their contributions to "Hello, Dolly!" through the Cappies program.

"I appreciate the Cappies for the way they are giving us the recognition for theater that we need to survive," said WS theater teacher Mary Jo Levesque.

Photography teacher Aldra Sirott helps sophomore Emily Mishoe with her negatives.



Russ Weddell

The Cappies Gala gives out awards for both acting and technical parts of plays and musicals of the participating schools. The awards are determined by the Cappies critics' reviews of each show and through their year-end evaluation process.

On May 15, Levesque was notified that her students were nominated for 13 of these prestigious awards. This was

more nominations than any other school had received.

"It was exciting, just being recognized as one of the top five in the area," said junior Gillian Ramsey, who was nominated for both student choreographer and team of critics.

Furthermore, each participating school's theater teacher was given the opportunity to submit a list of four

students from their own programs to be named as Cappies Commendees and be acknowledged at the Cappies Medallion Celebration.

The four commendees chosen from WS were seniors Peter Thaxter and Meg Reilly, and juniors Sarah Kaye and Edward Gattis.

"I am exceedingly proud of WS students," said Levesque. "To me, the Cappies is one way of getting the world's attention and saying 'Look what we can do.'"

NASA awards students trip to Florida with science competition

By Laura Robinson
Managing Editor

Over four days, three WS students and one teacher had a behind-the-scenes tour at Epcot, a presentation in front of NASA scientists, a look at the Discover Shuttle and their own awards banquet.

And they didn't have to pay for any of it.

Sophomores Cathryn Broome, Devin McKenzie, and Jonny Styron went on an all-expense paid trip to Cocoa Beach, Florida after receiving first place awards in the NASA Student Involvement Program (NSIP).

NASA has 10 centers across the United States that recognize high school winners in four categories: Watching Earth Change, Aeronautics and Space Science Journalism, A Mission to Mars, and Space Flight Opportunities. Broome was a winner in the Watching Earth Change category, and McKenzie and Styron placed first in Aeronautics and Space Science Journalism. Students had their works ranked at a regional center before taking the trip to Florida.

"Langley is our center and represents five states," said the students' chemistry teacher Maria Clayton, "Out of the three first places they gave out we got

two and Lake Braddock got one."

Broome's project was titled "El Niño's Increased Precipitation on the West Olympic Coast of Washington State." Her research and analysis consumed over two weekends of work.

"I had to record sea-surface temperatures over a 20 year period and precipitation over 20 years," said Broome, "I found the year with the highest precipitation and then looked at the relating temperature."

McKenzie and Styron created a video about the International Space Station. They attempted to make it informative and also enjoyable.

"Jonny and Devin dressed up in Halloween costumes and put up a big sheet," said Clayton. "When the class watched it, we were all rolling in laughter."

To appeal to younger students, they added jokes and often strayed from the script.

"We had fun with it and didn't make it all scientific facts," said Styron, "We wanted to make it interesting."

Students enjoyed their busy four-day trip.

"The whole thing was really cool," said McKenzie, "I liked meeting all the new people and walking under the Discover Shuttle. It was about 20 feet above our heads."

Clayton hopes that next year more students will participate in the competition.

"I must say when I taught at Lake Braddock they were very big into doing this," said Clayton. "I'm hoping more teachers are going to take part in this because all grades can do it and students really have a lot of fun."



Maria Clayton

Sophomores Cathryn Broome, Devin McKenzie, and Jonny Styron enjoy Florida's sun and warm weather.

Class 2002

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Vice President Lisa Marvin

Treasurer Jonny Styron

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Historian Katie Rice

Congressional Representative Jennifer Welsch

Class 2004

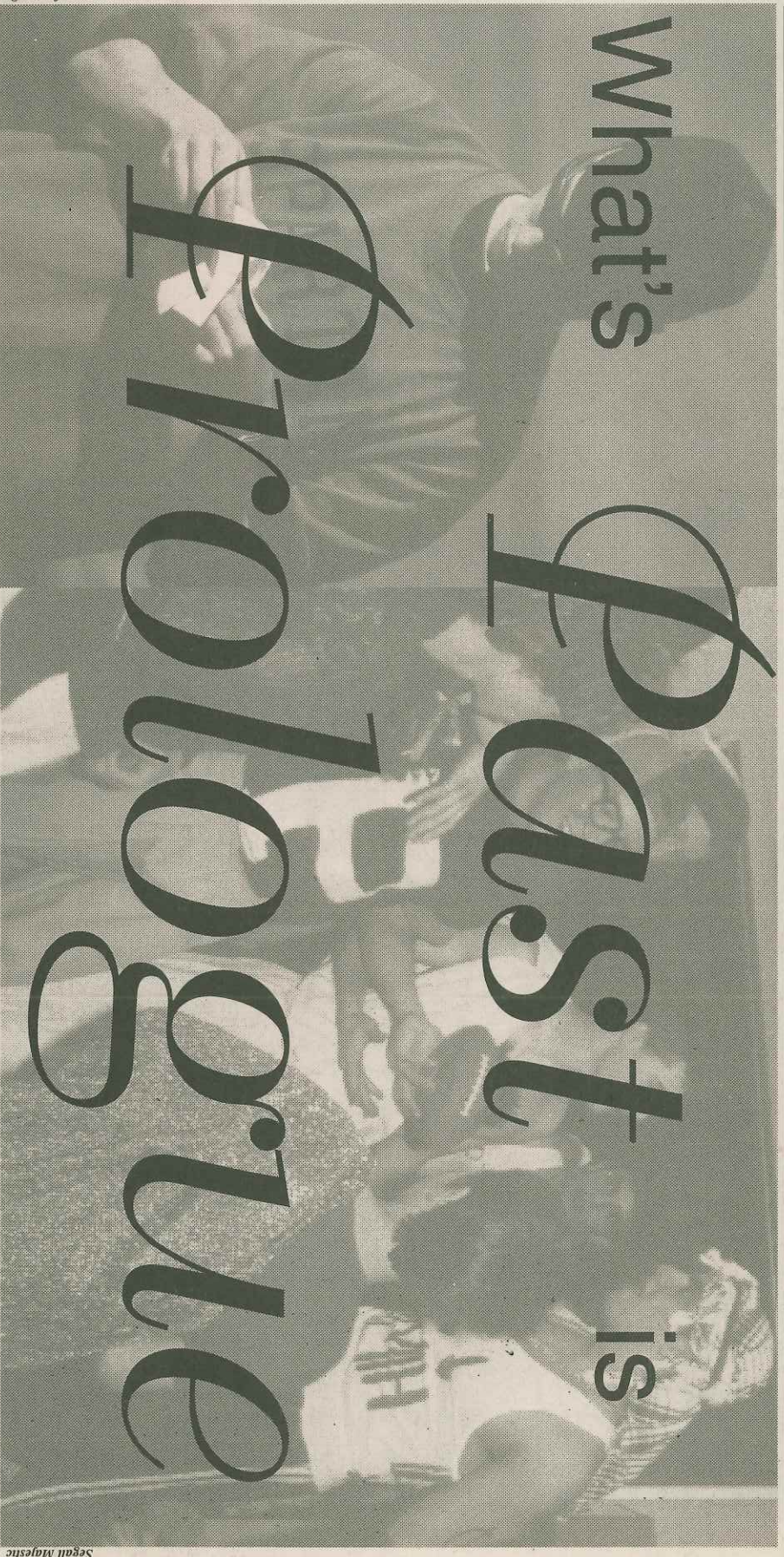
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Vice President Christine Rini

Treasurer Lisa Gioranna

Secretary Theresa Ohanian

Historian Kristin Williams



Segall Majestic

Segall Majestic

What's Past is Prologue

By Mark Burton
Special to The Oracle

Forget the fact that we live in Springfield, Va., the capital of Suburbia, USA. I admit: Springfield's not much of a town to call home, and while that may cause some problems to those of you with a license still pending, the rest of us have nothing to complain about. I know we hate to say it and it's so much easier to whine about our high school experience, but the fact is *WS ain't that bad* if (and it's a big if) we take advantage of our opportunities.

First off, let's consider location. We've got DC, the nation's capital. Sometimes I think, no... sometimes I *know*, we take that for granted. Stop and think about it for a second. We live 15 minutes away from the White House, the Capitol, the Supreme Court, the Washington Monument, the Jefferson Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Smithsonian museums, the Kennedy Center, the National Theatre, and so much more. Although millions of tourists come to visit our own backyard every year, some of us choose not to even visit it ourselves.

If you're still crying from boredom, try Old Town Alexandria, Georgetown, or Reson Town Center. Those of us who

enjoy the great outdoors have a wide variety of places to visit, from Great Falls to Skyline Drive to Old Rag, and the beaches are just a couple of hours away. Then of course, we have Burke Lake, South Run, and Lake Accotink. And all of this is merely of small taste of what is available to those of us who attend high school in the metro area. Do you think the kids living down in Farmville, Va., have all this to choose from for their after-school and weekend activities?

Granted, the majority of these activities require a car, but undergrads without their licenses should be studying anyway, boosting their GPAs before they hit the difficult courses. I didn't do this freshman year, and I've had to work my butt off to get my GPA back up where I want it to be. If I had to do it all over again, I'd work just a little freshman year in order to save some hardships junior and senior year.

But back to why *WS, ain't so bad*. As much as we all like to talk smack about our teachers, we've got some of the best in the nation. If you're one of those who hates every teacher in the school except the one who lets you watch movies all the time, then maybe you should take yourself down to Chattanooga, Tenn. I'm sure they teach a whole lotta nothin' down there. While there will always be a few bad

weeds in the garden, the majority of our teachers truly care about our education. They want to challenge us, stimulate our minds, and contribute to our mental growth. So before I move on, I'd like to thank a few of those great mentors who positively affected my life. Thank you Mr. Percoco, Mrs. Latour, Mrs. Nelson, Mr. Mathews, Mr. Harpman, and Mr. Yan Brocklin.

The greatest thing about *WS*, though, beyond its location and its strong faculty, is its ability to offer an abundance of opportunities to every student who walks through its doors. It's got art and computer science, varsity sports and drama, honor societies and clubs, serious student publications, and student government. It's got Mr. Spartan and the rest of Homecoming Week. It's got the step team and the drill team, the marching band and the jazz band, and a variety of choral groups as well. There really is something for everyone, and if there's not, you can create something new.

If there's one thing that I would tell incoming students to *WS*, it would be to **GET INVOLVED**. High school is not just education in the classrooms; it's socializing with friends and competing on a varsity team. It's running for class office or writing an article for the school newspa-

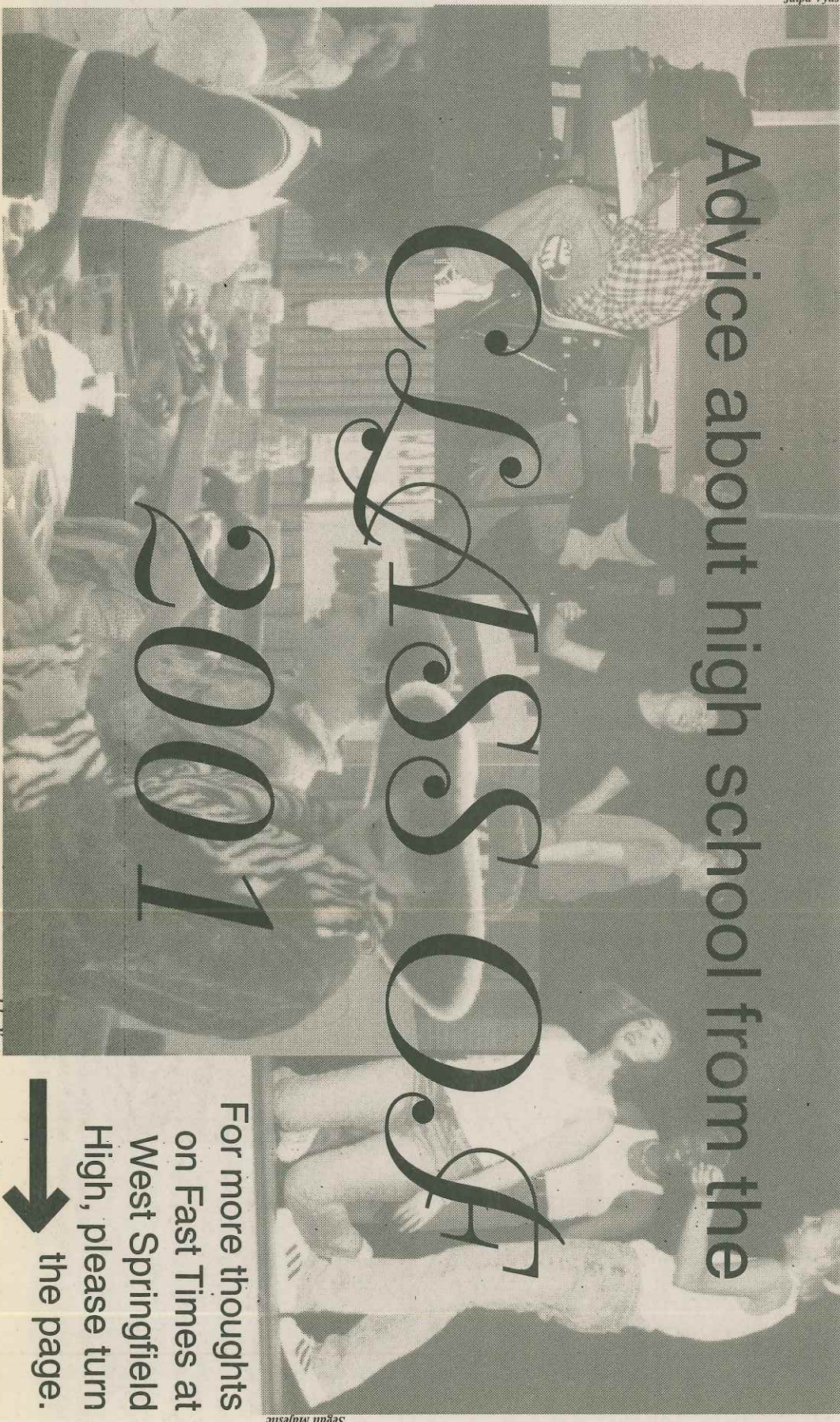
per. It's playing the lead role in the school play or performing throughout the community with a school choir.

WS has been a great place to spend four years before heading off to the **BIGGEST ADVENTURE OF MY LIFE**. It has prepared me well. Not every high school in America could give me the opportunity to sing for the President and First Lady of the United States of America, or talk with Representative John Lewis for over an hour in his office, or tour Germany and Austria. Not every high school would offer me a civil rights trip down south with my history teacher and seven fellow classmates, which taught me more than any textbook ever will.

So, the next time you say, "I can't wait to get out of this place," ask yourself where it is you'd rather be. If you've got to go to high school, which we all do, this place *really ain't that bad*. But if you still feel like complaining (which I know all of you do), call up a student in Flat River, Ark., and inquire about his high school experience. I'm sure that'll make you feel a whole lot better, real fast.

Mark will attend The College of William and Mary in the fall.

Jalpa Vyas




Jalpa Vyas

Advice about high school from the

CLASS OF

2001

For more thoughts on Fast Times at West Springfield High, please turn  the page.

Segall Majestic

Sarah Kelbaugh

Stand up for yourself— no one will do it for you

By Emily Fischer
Special to *The Oracle*

Underclassmen of WS,

Let me be honest with you: Though it is a cliché, high school is definitely *not* the best years of your life. So you've got to put significant effort into making yourself happy during your prime teenage years. Here is how to start the process.

In order to succeed in high school, you have to change your frame of mind. Forget the threats and ridiculous elementary comments that you hear from teachers and administrators. *You* are in control of your life, so if you want to go out to lunch, go out to lunch. In perspective, it is really *not* that big of a deal; you are just programmed to think it is.

And if you are having a traumatic or emotionally stressful night, don't do your homework. Trust me when I say it makes you feel worse. They are just grades you are striving for; just letters on paper. It'll be hard to get through assignments you deem as unnecessary, but when something does spark your interest in the least, put your full 100 percent effort into it. Those engaging topics or assignments, though, emerge infrequently.

I don't know you, but you probably worry too much. I know all my peers have for four years of high school. It's really not worth it, though. Take things as they come and focus on things that make you happy, and you'll be a satisfied, more relaxed person. One of the most important things to remember: Don't focus on what other people are thinking. In the grand scheme of things, *nobody* cares what you're wearing or the stupid questions you ask in class. You'll be

stuck with the inadequate or superior feelings for the rest of your life and it's not worth warping your personality. You may thank that Joe Schmoie spends every moment thinking about how pretty/ugly you are, but I can tell you he doesn't, or he sure won't next year.

Make sure to interact not only with Joe Schmoie, but talk to people who surround you in class; they are probably different from your friends and can teach you a lot. The more diverse your friends, the better. You will find out who you are most compatible with. And your friends are going to be what gets you through those difficult days when you "just don't want to be here."

The one thing I have to say about the classroom is stick up for yourself. If a teacher refuses your request to go to the bathroom, WALK OUT. Don't let someone else tell you when you can or can't go. That is one personal right that you should never let be taken away. By taking a stand and sticking up for yourself, you'll gain the respect of your peers, and quite possibly the respect of the teacher as well, though he or she may not let you know.

High school is a battle you're going to have to face every day. You probably won't take my advice to heart, or at least you won't make an effort to change. My bet is that by the time you'll want to take my advice, you'll be a senior like me, and it will be too late. But at least you can make those last few weeks count.

Emily will attend the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the fall.

Segall Majestic

A word to the wise—or at least to my brother

By Adam Walsh
Special to *The Oracle*

Dear Brenden:

In two more years, you will be starting high school. Chrissy wasn't as lucky as you or I. She had to go through high school without knowing anything—the right classes to take, the good teachers, and all about college applications. Now, you're even luckier because you have watched both of us go through high school, so you will be prepared.

My first piece of advice is that you do your work. Failing to do an assignment should never be an option. Sometimes I have gotten lazy and thought about just quitting. But you can't do that. Sometimes you just have to shut off the TV, sit down, and do your work.

Always do a good job. Your work, no matter how small the assignment, is a direct reflection of who you are. That might sound like a terrible thing, but it's true. Teachers value neatness, effort, and a strong work ethic. Another thing teachers value is good writing.

One of the most important things to learn is the ability to write well. Your writing style will change over the next four years. Don't be discouraged if you don't find your voice right away. Even though my writing has improved this year, I still don't feel completely comfortable with every essay I write.

Find what you're good at. When you start your freshman year, you might not know what your strengths are. You may discover, like I did, that you

are not meant to be a scientist.

Don't ever feel like you have to take a class. A lot of my friends thought they had to take calculus, and struggled through it. Most of them have no interest in math and shouldn't have taken it, but they felt pressured into doing so. Your brother and sister are proud that you can get into a good college without ever taking calculus. So, if you think you can't handle a class or it doesn't interest you, then go with your instinct.

Even though I've been criticized for it, I think the real point of high school is to do as best you can so that you can prove to colleges that you're a good student. That should always be your focus. You'll meet new people whom you think will be in your life forever, but that's just not true. After high school, you move on to a new chapter of life. You will meet new people, and your high school friendships will fade away. Friends are always good to have, but the only relationships that will remain constant are those between you and your family.

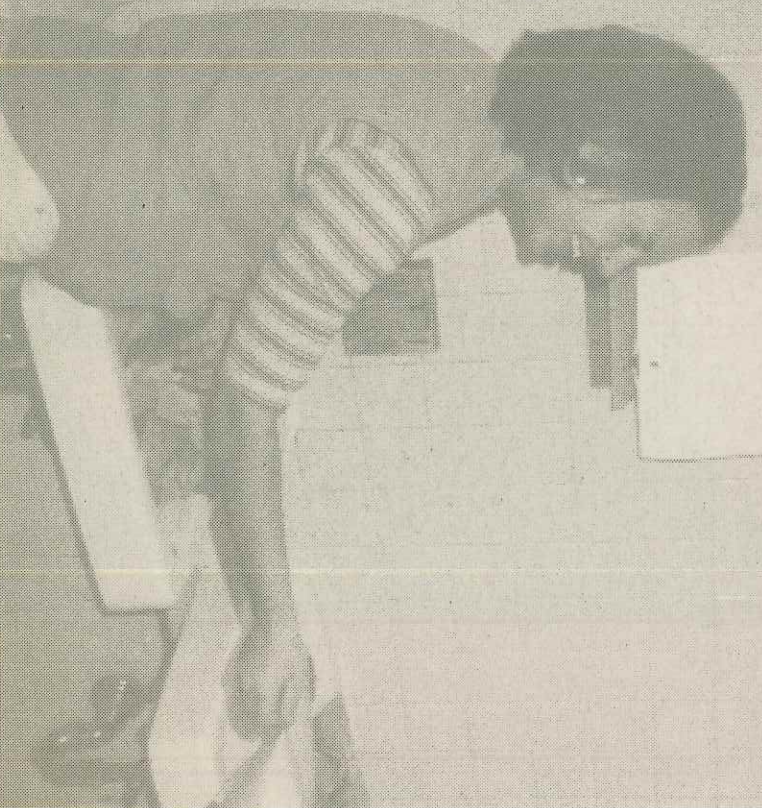
Finally, the most important advice I can give you is don't let anyone make your decisions. Nobody can set you on the right path, because you have to do that. Do what feels right. If you don't want to skip a class, then don't. If you can justify your decisions, then they must be correct.

So, don't worry about high school. It's not that bad, and it goes by quickly. If you ever need any help, you know to whom you can go.

Adam wrote this letter to his 6th-grade brother. He will attend Duke University in the fall.

Jennie Bookle-Mantel

STAY WOW you





Paulina Razi

'90210' it's not, but we create our own reality

By Michelle Ragnetti

Special to *The Oracle*

Television didn't do much of a job depicting high school.

I came to high school in 1997 after a forgettable foray into Irving. I didn't know what to expect, but there were things I thought for sure I would see, and they all had some way of relating to either "Saved By the Bell" or "Beverly Hills, 90210."

My first day of school wasn't that bad; I rode with an upperclassman who lived by me, and when he asked me how my first day went, I exclaimed, "It was fantastic!" He asked me the same question on my second day, my first blue day, and I had the same reaction.

Actually, I had come to school that first orange morning with shaky hands. I looked around all day for the guys in football jerseys tossing their footballs around, the cheerleaders running around flashing their pom-poms, and the classic group of geeks huddled around a locker playing with their calculators. So far, "Saved By the Bell" hadn't served as much of a basis for what high school was like.

"90210" wasn't doing too good of a job, either. I didn't see people driving their BMWs to school every day, nor that blonde coming back to school with a new nose. Teachers and administrators formed personal relationships with students instead of shrugging them off. And the setting? I've never seen a beautiful pavilion in the middle of WS, nor the walkways to class that are outside. "90210" bit the dust in my book.

Since neither show did a good job teaching me the ins and outs of high school, I had to find out on my own. Over the course of my four roller-coaster years at WS, I have come up with some basic "rules," if you will, on how to get by without a hitch:

1. **The Sibling Factor:** Having a teacher who had your older sibling is a plus if the teacher enjoyed him. If he was a pain, you're going to have to work harder than originally planned.

2. **Parking Lot Warfare:** If you drive to school, try to drive an SUV. They always get out of the parking lot faster.

3. **Locker Logic:** At some point in your four years, your locker will jam. House and/or car keys can be extremely helpful in opening it.

4. **Stay Warm.** Try to bring a sweater or a sweatshirt to football games; those autumn nights can get mighty chilly.

5. **The Order of Things.** Taking physics after algebra II is a very wise move.

6. **Hallway Hustle.** You will be bumped in the hallway, or delayed in some fashion. Take it in stride, and just know that somewhere out in those halls is someone smaller than you in much more pain.

7. **All Locked Up.** Know which bathroom stalls lock, and which bathroom has sinks with hot water.

8. **A Fine Suggestion.** There is always a week when the library waives fees for overdue books. Likewise, there is a time when fees double. Pay attention.

9. **Last-Minute Tip.** When writing an essay or doing a project the night before it's due, it's usually convenient to have a table nearby where you can place your drafts, encyclopedias, pencils, Frappaccinos...

10. **The Best Advice.** High school has had its share of joys and sorrows. Freshman year is a blast; sophomore year is a waste of time; junior year is time to buckle down and work harder than ever; and finally, senior year. It's the time to remember what you did right and wrong those last three years, put them down on paper, and turn it in for a grade.

Michelle will attend George Mason University in the fall.

The wonder Mrs.?

Dream, love, and even set limits in high school

By Jennie Adams

Special to *The Oracle*

I arrived at WS with high hopes, open eyes, and dreams to fulfill. I was 14 and my knowledge of the world included my family, my friends, and afternoon cartoons.

I already had a heads-up from my older brother on what teachers to get, where to eat lunch, and what kinds of activities I should do to fill my time. Some of the most memorable teachers are Mr. Mac, Mrs. Nelson, Mrs. Robbins, Mrs. Leary, and even Mrs. Harris, with whom I've never had a class. You can eat wherever you want, but you should always spend your time with the people you really care about. Try anything that doesn't have consequences, but stick with what you do best.

Personally, I broadened my horizons freshman year by joining the cross country team. This was one of my wisest high school decisions. Doing sports is possibly the easiest way to make great friends. I joined a number of teams at this school, and with each team came new friends, all of whom I love dearly.

With these new friends I went to countless movies, games, and just about everywhere else. I made mistakes, but I learned from them, and I know that I have countless new mistakes ahead of me. I also learned that I am human and imperfect in the most humbling of ways, and I also learned to love the imperfections in others.

I came into this institution a moldable piece of clay,

Segall Magestic

Allison Molan

people will let you down, there are some things that I have no control over, and most of all I found out who I am, and who I want to be, while surrounded by the support of my peers.

Top 10 things to do in high school

1. Get involved.
2. Choose your friends wisely.
3. Listen to your parents.
4. Set limits for yourself and keep them. Some things aren't good to try even once.
5. Love. Feel passionately about at least one thing at all times.
6. Dream. A life without aspirations is nothing.
7. Take school seriously, but not too seriously.
8. Don't miss out on the fun stuff. Accept invitations and enjoy yourself. Never again will you be so carefree in your life.
9. Take care of each other. All we have in the world is one another.
10. Learn. Learn all you can in high school. Pay attention in and out of class. Ask questions, make statements, and form your own opinions. Don't ever sell yourself short, and if you do, then learn not to do it again.

It's been an incredible four years.

Jennie will attend Virginia Tech University in the fall.



Seniors Nate Carter, Brandon Bert, and Danny Holloway pause during a crew competition to pose for a quick picture.

WS rower controls nation's top spot

By Navyna Gupta
Viewpoint Editor

To keep in shape for wrestling, senior Nate Carter decided to join crew his sophomore year. Now, with crew as his only sport, Carter is ranked number one in the nation.

"It feels really great to be ranked at one, but it also hasn't registered with me yet," said Carter.

To be ranked as number one, Carter had to reach the national standard of 2000 meters in six minutes on an ergometer, a rowing machine crew members use for practice.

"Erging is the most physical activity I've ever done," said Carter.

Because of his ranking, Carter has been invited to be a part of the national team in Philadelphia this summer. If Carter chooses to go, he may have the opportunity to compete in Germany.

With a scholarship to Rutgers University next year, Carter will stay in shape this summer by rowing with 54 other boys at Occoquan. While Carter

plans to be a computer science major, he has still set high goals for his future as a rower.

"I'm working towards making the 2004 Olympic team," said Carter.

In addition to practicing 16 hours a week, Carter prepares for races by wearing his orange and blue Hawaiian shorts.

"It's not like other sports," said Carter. "You can't miss a play because the races are so quick."

Besides races, Carter enjoys working with his other teammates. At nationals last year, his team was the closest to finals they had ever been.

"We had six sophomores and we only lost to TC Williams, which is the number one team, by two seconds," said Carter.

After trying sports like football and water polo, Carter finds it easy to focus his time on crew and rowing.

"I play a lot of sports, but this is one I really like," said Carter. "The motivation to stay on top of everyone else keeps me going."

Relatives tour DC, for WS it is all a re-run

By Margaret Santiago
Staff Assistant

The White House, the Capital and the Washington Monument are all household names for WS students and staff. On a good day someone can drive to DC from WS in 15 minutes. Living so close to the United States capital gives students and staff amazing opportunities. However, some don't take advantage of it.

"I didn't even know some of this stuff was even here," said junior Casey Berson after a recent trip to DC with her cousin from Arkansas.

Friends and family often come to visit WS people because they live close to the capital. There are some places that are more popular than others because of how the media has portrayed them. Whenever a new movie or TV series comes out that revolves around a monument in DC, there is a great increase in the popularity of the monument.

"Whenever I have company they always want to see the White House, the Capital, the Vietnam memorial, and the Washington monument," said senior Meg McLelland. "I get bored of seeing the same places over and over."

Having to see the same monuments and memorials can turn students away from going to DC on a regular basis. People

might not be open to all that DC has to offer. There is much more to the city than the famous memorials that are mentioned in text books. Text books don't even begin to talk about the many museums, which often change the exhibits frequently to keep people interested.

"I used to hate going downtown and having to see all the monuments, but now that I've found the museums I've come to enjoy going downtown," said Berson.

Some of the more popular museums are part of the Smithsonian Institution. Both the Air and Space Museum and the history museums provide hands-on exhibits for people of all ages.

However, it's not possible to please everyone. Some dislike the museums and find them boring.

"I hate art museums! Since my mom is an art teacher every time we have guests she insists on taking them to the art museums. I get so incredibly bored," said McLelland.

Just 15 minutes away decisions that can affect this country's future are being made. People are traveling thousands of miles to see amazing historical achievements that WS students and staff have access to every day. Famous places are just minutes away, and some students don't even realize that these precious treasures are there.

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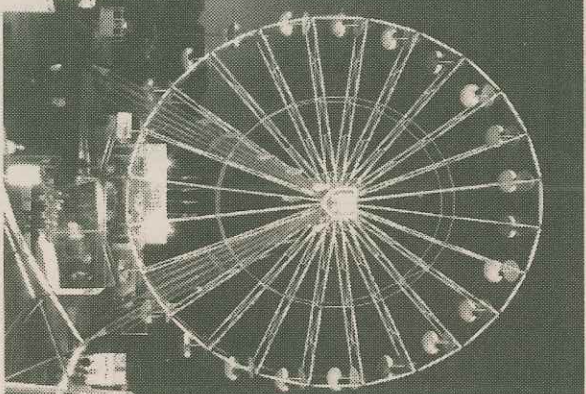
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Summer 2001: a concert odyssey

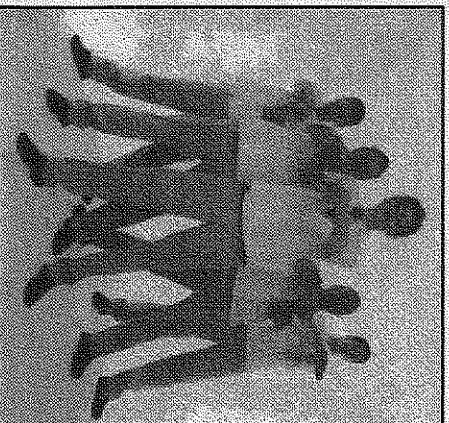
By Erika Kim
Inside Story Editor

Not only is the well anticipated three-month long summer vacation finally here, but the season full of some of the hottest concerts has also arrived.

But before the vacation officially begins, take a break in between the long hours of exam preparation and head out to the U2 concert. U2 will be at the MCI Center on both June 14 and 15. The lovable Backstreet Boys will also be in town on June 15 at the Nissan Pavilion on their Black and Blue tour.

"I really want to go to the Backstreet Boys concert because I love their music and Nick Carter is so hot," said sophomore Alexia Lulushi.

For a different style of music, however, Kingsfest at Kings Dominion is the solution. There is not only the awesome roller coasters, but also the chance to listen to some of the most popular Christian bands and singers. Kingsfest will be held on July 5, 6, and 7 and will feature Third



Barenaked Ladies is one of the many bands visiting the area this summer. They will be at Merrweather Post Pavilion on July 29.

Day, Raze, Earthsuit, DC Talk, Point of Grace, SonicFlood, John Reuben, Newsboys, Jennifer Knapp, FFH, and ZOEgirl.

"I'm going to Kingsfest at Kings Dominion because it's an awesome way

to spend your day, listening to people witness through their music," said sophomore Heather Bouley.

Also in July is the anticipated Ozfest 2001. Ozfest will feature the musical stylings of Marilyn Manson, Black Sabbath, Slipknot, Papa Roach, Linkin Park, and Crazytown. It will be held at the Nissan Pavilion on July 20.

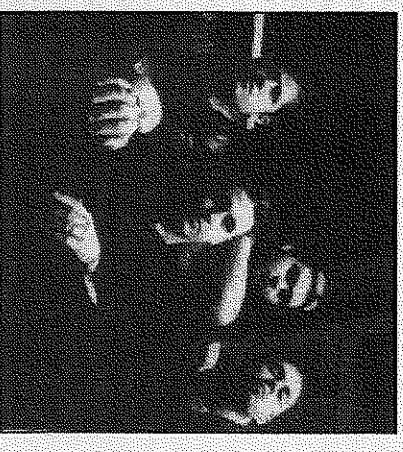
"I'm looking forward to going to Ozfest this summer," said freshman Tina Collins.

For some more music and excitement, catch Blink 182 at the Merrweather Post Pavilion in Maryland on July 24, or see the Barenaked Ladies at the same venue on July 29.

If you are looking for both music and a place to have a good time, however, Hershey Park is the place to go. The Dave Matthews Band will be performing on August 1 at the Hershey Park Stadium in Pennsylvania. But for a concert closer to home, the young pop star, Aaron Carter, will be at Kings Dominion on August 5. Before the summer comes to an end,

boy band N'SYNC will perform at RPK stadium on August 13. Two divas will also be coming to the Metro Area to wrap up the summer. Madonna will be center stage at the MCI center on August 10 and 11 and Janet Jackson on August 17 and 18.

"I tried to call in the radio station for Madonna tickets," said sophomore Jenny Jeon. "But they were always busy, and the tickets are sold out."



Papa Roach will be coming to Nissan Pavilion in July with the Ozfest crew.

Students juggle WS and community theater

By Marianne Shaddrix
Features Editor

The schedules are hectic and the hours long, but for WS theater students, it is all worth it.

In addition to spending long hours on various school productions, several of WS's aspiring actors and actresses enjoy spending their time putting on plays through other organizations as well.

"The schedule can get really hard closer to production. Everything gets a lot more stressful," said freshman Christy Denny, who enjoys acting both inside and outside of school.

Bernadette's Catholic Church, has been a part of several of her church's productions, including "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," "The Song of Bernadette," and "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat." St. Bernadette's casts and presents a play every summer, and will be putting on "The Wizard Of Oz" at the end of July.

Another aspiring actor, Billy Henline, has been in several plays for Sydensstricker United Methodist Church and WS.

"It's fun because I get to meet

a lot of new people, but it is also difficult because my role was challenging and a big undertaking," said Henline.

Community and school productions are in many cases performed within days of each other. As a result, many of the students participating in both would have to manage their time.

"I would have to leave 'Hello, Dolly!' rehearsal with all of my prosthetic makeup on and go to Sydensstricker rehearsal with all of it still on," said Henline.

Some of these students can't help but compare the two experiences; Denny, for instance, prefers performing in St. Bernadette's plays because she and her fellow cast members have been working together longer and she knows them better.

Another theater organization this is popular among many WS students is the Kids Musical Theater. KMT attracts WS students because of its friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

"Working with KMT you get to meet really cool people," said junior Jessie Chesnut. "It attracts lots of talent."

Chesnut has been in various KMT productions including "The Secret Garden,"



Junior Jessie Chesnut performs "Godspell" with KMT.

"Godspell" and "Oklahoma." KMT does a production at the beginning of the school year and one at the end of the school year.

"Anyone can be a part of KMT, but you have to try out, and get selected for parts in the plays," said sophomore Jay Bryant, who has been a part of KMT for the past year and, like Chesnut, has been in "Godspell" and "Oklahoma."

Despite the craziness that can come with performing in two plays at the same time, many of the actors and actresses think all the hard work is all worth the effort.

"In the end when you know everyone loved the play, it is a really good feeling," said Denny. "You immediately get such a natural high."

TV shows that leave you hanging

By Rachel Wohlers
Oracle Staff Assistant

Joey's best friend in the whole world is leaving for college the next morning and all she wants is for him to stay. As "Daydream Believer" plays in the background, Joey and Dawson end the season finale with the expected, and somewhat romantic kiss.

This is a typical season finale cliffhanger. A former couple who still secretly like each other resolve their problems, get together, and the show ends. This leaves the entire summer to wonder what will happen next season.

"I can't wait until the season starts again so I can find out what happens," said freshman Meghan Kelleher. "I don't want Joey and Dawson to get together!"

In another season finale, Felicity, the usual conflicts between couples and friends continue. The cliffhanger is that while Felicity's boyfriend Ben is away for the summer, Felicity and Noel are left alone to watch the apartment. Since Noel is in love with Felicity, this causes

In the season finale for "Friends", Monica and Chandler get married. For the cliffhanger, it is assumed that Rachel is pregnant but the audience has to wait until the season starts again to find out if it is true.

Most season finales seem the same, as if there was some kind of outline for all scriptwriters to use, some minor conflicts, possibly a major conflict, one upbeat event and then a couple either coming together or moving apart for the cliffhanger. Although the plots can sometimes be predictable and sappy, they do their job.

Cliffhangers can be fun to watch, but having to wait until the next season while you are dying to find out what happens can be annoying.

"I hate season finale cliffhangers. I hate having to wait all the time just to see one episode," said freshman Maria Hayinga.

So, at the beginning of the new season, people will be glued to their television sets just to find out what happened to Joey and Dawson over the long summer.

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Waterparks soak summer blues

By Katie Walker
Oracle Editor

Once the warm summer weather comes, there is no better fun than enjoying a day at a local waterpark. There are a handful of waterparks near the Springfield area. Each waterpark is essentially a variation of the basic waterslide and wavepool combination.

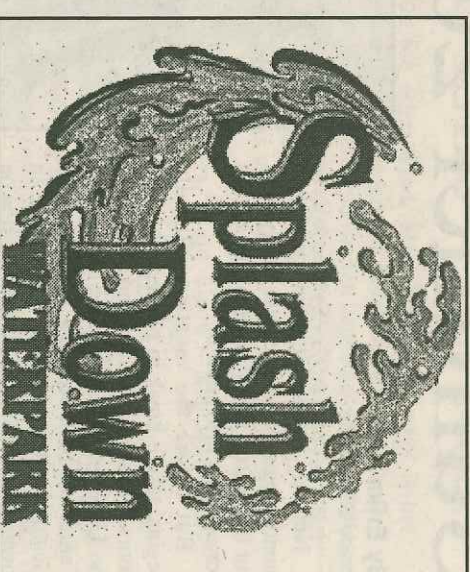
The closest waterpark to this area is Cameron Run regional park located on Eisenhower Avenue in Alexandria. Cameron Run has a 3-flume waterslide and a wavepool with 4 foot waves. It also has lap lanes and a bathhouse. The park costs a mere \$10.50 daily for adult admission and \$3.25 for raft rentals. Cameron Run also has batting cages, miniature golf, and fishing on park grounds. Call the pool at 703-960-0767 for more information.

Splash Down Waterpark is an 11 acre park in Manassas and is the largest waterpark in Northern Virginia. There are waterslides, cannonball slides, and a 770 foot lazy

river. There is also a lap pool and log and lily pad walks. Splash Down offers tennis and volleyball courts as well. The adult admission price is \$12.25. For more information call 703-361-4451.

Water Works is the waterpark on the grounds of King's Dominion. It spans 19 acres, however admission is not separate from the theme park. Admission for the entire theme park is \$40 for adults. Water Works has an array of waterslides, including a fiberglass speed slide. There are inner tube rides, the Wave Bay wavepool, and the Lazy Rider river for lounging rafters. Also, the park features Pipeline Peak's Night Slider, the world's tallest enclosed dark tube slide. King's Dominion is in Doswell, Virginia and less than a two hour drive from Springfield.

Water Country USA is in Williamsburg and is approximately a three hour drive from this area. Admission is \$29 for adults. There are flumes, tunnels, and innertube rides. Water Country has a wavepool and a river for innertubes called the Rambling River. A unique feature of Water Country is Adventure Isle, a water



Splashdown is one of the many waterparks in the DC area that attract students during the summer months.

obstacle course. Water Country also offers Aqua X-Treme, a high dive and gymnastics show. The newest attraction is Meltdown, a four person toboggan race where riders travel a course at 22 feet per second. Water Country is also home to Aquazoid, the world's largest special effects raft ride.

Miniature golf hits a hole-in-one

By Clint Crosier
Special to the Oracle

Miniature golf may be the only sport that you can be terrible at, yet have a great time playing.

For those who do not enjoy real golf, or are terrible players, miniature golf is an excellent alternative. Miniature golf, (also called put-put) consists of putting the ball around courses (often themed) while avoiding the many objects on the way to the hole.

"I like mini-golf because I am miniature too," said freshman Larissa Rimm.



Miniature golf as well as regular golf has become popular among students.

The courses usually include bridges, waterfalls, mini sandtraps, and occasionally loops, as well as the traditional hills and traps covered with the fake, green grass. Sometimes windmills also dot the landscape of golf courses. These obstacles make the courses more fun and challenging.

"I love to play put-put because of all the cool things they have on the courses," said sophomore Minh Nyguen.

Located in Centreville, Islands in the Park offers an exciting course at a fair price. Adults can play for \$6 and children get in for \$4. Islands in the Park offers 18 holes of thrilling mini-golf filled with

almost every obstacle (sorry no loops here). There are also several ballfields and bathing cages located at Islands in the Park, yet another option for visitors.

There are some other good places for miniature golfing action, including the new course at Accotink Park, and some smaller ones in the DC area.

DC mini-golf places include Metro Miniature Golf (\$5) and Capital Greens (\$8). With summer coming, miniature golf will be a fun activity to spend some time on.

"I love miniature golf because I have a great time playing with all my friends," said freshman Betsy Miller.

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Boys soccer conquer the state with 1-0 win over Chantilly

Limnington scores winner as team wins first ever state title and finishes undefeated

By Angela Florino
Etc. Editor

As they take out the picture of Lawrence Wilson and participate in the pinky salute, the boys varsity soccer team prepares for another win.

Going to States with a victorious record of 21-0-1 after a tie to arch rival Robinson, the boys were completely prepared.

"We are the best, no one can stop us," said junior Matt Davis. "I told everyone from the beginning that we were going to bring home the title and we did."

They arrived early on Friday afternoon at the University of Richmond's soccer stadium and nerves were racking as they warmed up for the game. They were faced by the 15th ranked team in the nation, Frank Cox High School Falcons from Virginia Beach. The first goal was scored early in the game by regional All-net player and defender senior Jason McCoy. The score remained 1-0 until shortly before the end of the half when Cox scored their first goal to tie the game.

Baseball strikes out swinging as team loses in regionals to Langley

By Denis Ing
Sports Assistant

The final out is recorded and the game ends. Robinson defeated the Spartans 2-1 for the District title. The Spartans finished runner-up in the Patriot District Tournament.

The team's regular season record was 13-6.

"I think the team expected more in the beginning of the season but it went okay. Dame Whitworth came off the bench really well for us and Jake Glanzmann pitched some phenomenal games."

In the first round of the district tournament, WS pounded West Potomac 15-0. Glanzmann pitched a solid three innings. Mike Straub pitched the fourth, with John Kunzman pitching the final three innings. Almost all members of the team played in the thrashing.

In the second round of play they defeated rival Lake Braddock 6-4 in nine innings. Mike Straub pitched four innings of good baseball, with Greg O'Neill pitching three innings and Bianchetta pitching the final inning and the two extra innings of play. Shortstop Jimmy Freund was the hero with a two run homer in the ninth.

Against Robinson it was close to the end, but WS ended up on the losing side.

The fans sat through halftime nervously anticipating the rest of the game. The game remained tied for the majority of the second half until McCoy scored his second goal in the 77th minute to win the game. The players went crazy as did the fans. Press and photographers flooded the field questioning McCoy and second team all-net player senior Mike Limnington as well as other players.

However the team was only half way there. After a healthy dinner at TGI Fridays and a good night's sleep at the Richmond Marriott the boys spent all day Saturday getting in the night mind frame for the second game at Richmond's stadium.

"I was so happy about Friday's game and going into Saturday's game I was confident about winning because we beat Chantilly twice before and I knew our team could do it," said McCoy.

Facing Chantilly, the Spartans had fifteen more shots than the Chargers in the first half, but had missed them all. Finally with an assist from junior All-Met mid-

The Spartans lost 2-1 with Straub pitching a strong six innings.

"We did really well in the districts but we fell just a little bit short in the Robinson game. We just have to hope that we do well in the Regional Tournament and then make it into States and do well there," said sophomore Tony Jenkins before the regional tournament.

In their first game of Regionals the team defeated South Lakes 3-0 with All-Met pitcher Glanzmann pitching a one hitter with 13 strike outs.

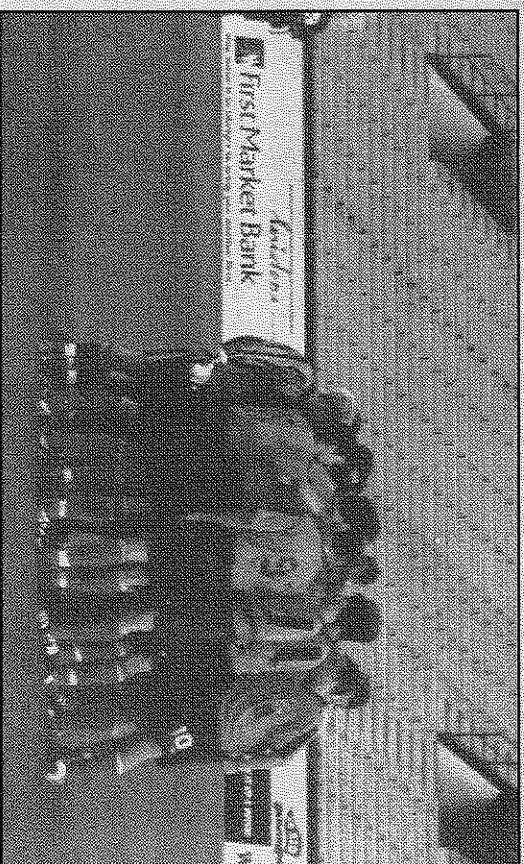
"We really started coming on strong in the end of the year, and when Jake came back prospects of the Regionals just kept getting better," said Senior Brian Melain.

The season came to an end in the second round of regional play. Despite a strong overall game, the team could not prevail and lost 7-5. A two-run homer for Langley in the fourth was the nail in the coffin, as the Spartans could never respond to the home run.

"Everyone played really hard that game," said Coach Munoz.

Straub pitched four innings with Kunzman and Bianchetta each pitching one. Glanzmann ended the game 3-4 with a 2 run homer.

The team started off the beginning of the season 1-3 and had some disappointing



Stephanie Morris
The boys soccer team got together to pump each other up before their state title game versus Chantilly. The boys won the game 1-0 to capture the state title.

fielder. On Jeff Carroll's beautiful corner kick, Limnington headed the ball into the 40th minute, leaving the score at 1-0 at halftime.

"We were killing them in the first half but we just couldn't put the ball away," said Carroll to the Washington Post. "We would have been real upset if we didn't score that goal, it was real big."

The Spartan defense stayed strong in the second half, which kept the Chargers from scoring. However in the 71st minute, Chantilly forward Nich Bach celebrated after he scored what he thought was a goal but was waived off six minutes later by

the officials because of a hand ball, leaving the final score at 1-0, Spartans. "I remember looking over and seeing a flood of orange coming at me, it was the greatest feeling in the world," said McCoy. "For years we wanted to win states, that was our goal, and this year we finally brought home the title."

The team celebrated as a rush of fans buried them on the field. "I told the team in the beginning that if we brought Lawrence Wilson to every game and passed him around before the game started, he would never witness a loss, and well, he didn't," said Limnington.



Oracle File Photo

Greg O'Neill gets ready to field a grounded playing third base. The team showed well in districts, but lost in the second round of regionals to South Lakes.

Then they did a 180 and reeled off eight straight victories with several wins over ranked opponents including Lake Braddock and Gonzaga. The team also won the Eddie Hoke tournament.

"We really struggled in the beginning of the season with some key losses but then our pitching really picked up with that 8 game streak. Our pitching was like red-hot then." Melain said. "I'm kind of disappointed at myself. I had a season of my career at the plate and when it really mattered I couldn't finish."

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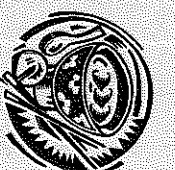
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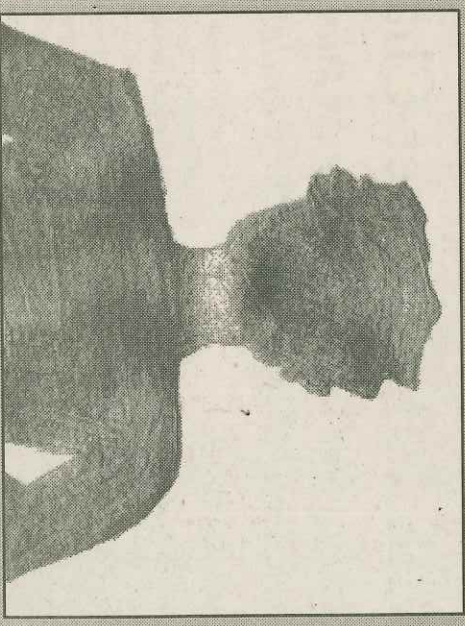
TOP 10

things you'll miss over the summer

10. Reading The Oracle during fifth period.
9. Sleeping during the "moment."
8. The great SOL tests.
7. The wonderful final exams.
6. The look on your teacher's face when you don't have your homework.
5. The look on your parent's face after the teacher called home.
4. The look on your parent's face when you say you lost your report card.
3. Being grounded for your report card.
2. The smell of the cafeteria.
1. Waking up six hours before you want to.

—Compiled by Jason Gillis

TAKE 'EM TO THE POOL!—Rolling Forest, Rolling Hills, Rolling Valley, Hunt Valley, Fox Hunt, Cottontail, Orange Hunt, Shannon Station, Daventry, Springfield Country Club, Saratoga, Village, West, South Run.
...OR TO THE BEACH.—Ocean City, Rehobeth, Dewey, Nags Head, Hilton Head, Myrtle, Virginia, Duck, Bethany



The Oracle's LAST Mystery Person!

By Emily Miller
 Inside Story Editor

Freestyling to Dr. Dre and watching "Waynes World" are some of the activities this mystery person enjoys in his free time. Twisting and turning on his snowboard, he goes to Snowshoe every winter to show off his mad snowboarding skills. Over the weekends, he simply relaxes and chills at different parties. Watching the Redskins is the highlight of his weekends during football season. He grew up right here in Springfield and is now a sophomore. Buffy and Warren, his dog and older brother, are his idols. His summer plans are still hazy, but he promises he will most definitely be at the beach soaking in the sun.

More fun in the sun!

Let's avoid boredom this summer...
...keep these dates in mind for a good time

- Destiny's Child June 22 @ Nissan Pavillion
- Pat McGee July 5 @ Wolftrap
- R Kelly July 8 @ Landmark Theater
- Tim McGraw July 12 @ Nissan Pavillion
- Whoopi Goldberg July 12 @ Carpenter Theater
- Mystics vs. Los Angeles Sparks July 14 @ MCI
- Baltimore Orioles vs. Texas Rangers July 18&19 @ Camden Yards
- Mystics vs. Charlotte Sting July 29 @ MCI
- Enkiah Badu August 4 @ Landmark Theater
- Girls Night Out country festival August 5 @ MCI



- Mystics vs. Miami Sol August 8 @ MCI
- Madonna August 10-11 @ MCI
- *N Sync August 13 @ RFK
- Kenny Rogers August 23 @ Ntelos Pavillion
- Baltimore Orioles vs. Oakland Athletics August 28-30 @ Camden Yards
- Crosby Stills and Nash August 29 @ VA Beach Amphitheater
- 93.9 Summer Jam August 30 @ MCI
- Baltimore Orioles vs. Seattle Mariners September 1-2 @ Camden Yards

—Compiled by Angela Fiorino

JUNE/JULY

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
11 Last Required Day for students! 5th & 6th Period Exams	12 WS Writing Competition Awards Ceremony	13 1st Period Exam	14 2nd & 4th Period Exams Baccalaureate @ St. Bernadettes	15 3rd & 7th Period Exams Prom!	16 DC United vs. Colorado Rapids @ RFK	17 Fishbone @ 930 Club
18 Graduation @ Patriot Center-7:30 You can come today and get your grades if you want...rrrrright.	19 Styx @ Nissan Pavillion	20 Mary Chapin Carpenter @ 930 club	21 Dido and Travis @ Merriweather	22 The Baron Brothers @ 930 Club	23 Greeneday w/ the Living End @ Bender Arena	24
25	26 HAPPY 4th OF JULY Independence Day	27	28	29	30	July 1
3 Illustration of a person surfing	4	5	6 Illustration of a person on a beach chair	7	8	