



October 4, 2002  
Volume 38 Number 2

# THE Oracle

West Springfield High School 6100 Rolling Road Springfield, Virginia 22152

## Added sections create schedule changes for students

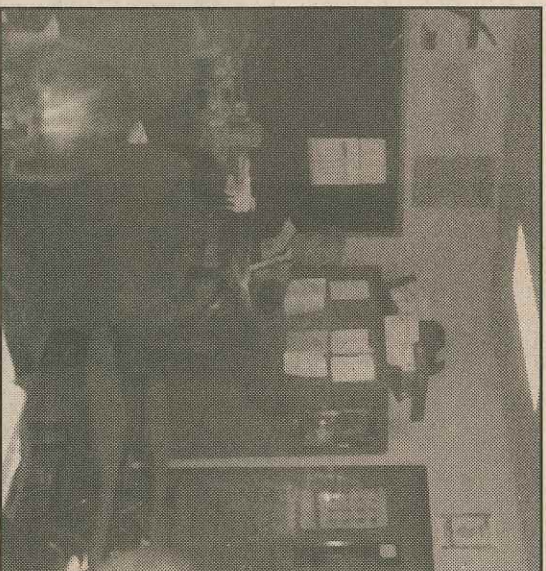
By Jenn Carlson  
Managing Editor

After students spent a full three weeks bonding with and getting used to their teachers, nine periods were added to WS's schedule causing about 300 students to switch classes, periods and teachers.

"I do not think that anybody likes a change," said Eleanor Saslaw, the Director of Student Services. "We get used to the teachers in the first two weeks of school because we have bonded with them. In another two weeks, they will bond to that new teacher as much as the did before."

Every year the county staffs public schools according to the number of students who will be attending that school in the fall. The problem began last spring when that prospective number was reported.

Over the summer, an unexpected number of families moved into the WS district. When the student population was reported back to the county during the second week of school, there was a huge difference between the number



Jen Stomaccio

Sections of AP Government and math classes were added to ease the overflow of students in some classes.

reported in the spring and the actual number of students. Extra funding from the county for overcrowding allowed for this change.

"The money came from the central administration of Fairfax County Public Schools," said guidance counselor Gerald Jackson. "There were savings that came from cutbacks because of managing money well and because of effective planning."

Principal David Smith talked to department heads who relayed the message on to teachers. They were told that extra teachers were needed to teach additional classes.

"The teachers are doing it on their own volition," said Saslaw.

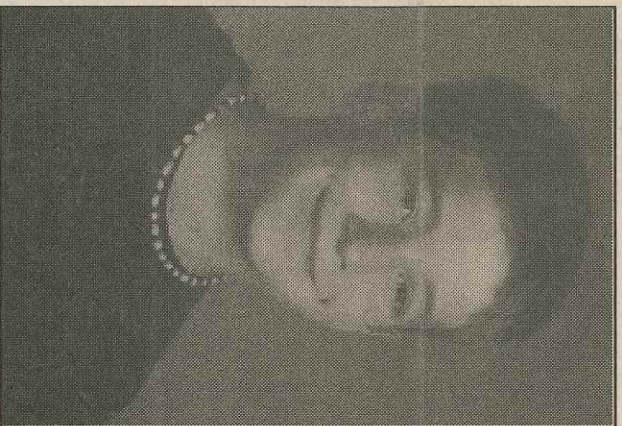
History teacher Lillie Brown is one of those teachers who volunteered to teach an extra period of US government. She views this as a positive experience but recognizes that it will be extra work.

"Nothing is good or bad, it is just how the individual perceives it. Attitude can color any picture," said Brown.

See SCHEDULES, page 5

## Cancer claims WS freshman

By Nayna Gupta  
Oracle Editor



Freshman Kevin A. Cook died September 24 after a two-year battle with cancer.

Friends and family attended Cook's wake at Demaine Funeral Home the next day. Cook's friends and teachers from Rolling Valley Elementary School, Washington Irving Middle School, and WS were present.

"There were tons of people there," said freshman Ashley Arneson. "I don't think he knew how many friends he had."

Cook's funeral also was held at the Demaine Funeral Home. During the ceremony, Kevin's sister Caroline read a poem she wrote for her brother. In addition

to saying a few words about their friend, Cook's friends helped carry his casket. "They tried really hard to include all of Kevin's friends," said school psychologist Janis Johnson. "I think it was very helpful in letting his friends get through the grieving process."

Cook was first diagnosed with a rare form of cancer in his leg when he was in seventh grade. After several months of chemotherapy, the cancer began to disappear. Soon, however, the doctors diagnosed Cook with leukemia.

"People would always ask him about his cancer," said freshman Kelsey Williams. "But he was always open and willing to talk about it."

In 1998, when Cook was in fourth grade, his mother died of breast cancer. At

the time, Rolling Valley Elementary School planted a tree in her honor. Now, the school will plant a second tree for Cook.

Cook's family has also set up a "Kevin A. Cook Memorial Fund," which will help the family pay for hospital bills. Donations can be made at any branch of United Bank.

In his free time Cook enjoyed playing SYC soccer, riding his bike and fishing at Burke Lake.

"He never hesitated to help a friend," said senior Mike DeMarr. "He was the nicest kid I've ever met."

Besides an easygoing spirit, Cook's friends and family will remember him for his positive attitude.

"He was very strong through it all," said Williams. "He never stopped smiling."

## SATs may affect Spartanfest turnout

By Nayna Gupta  
Oracle Editor

For the sixteenth year in a row, the PTSA will sponsor WS's craft show, Spartanfest.

This year, however, the event will be held on October 12, two weeks earlier than in the past.

For those clubs and teams using Spartanfest as a fundraiser, the early date may be a source of conflict because it is on the same day as the October SAT I and SAT II tests.

For seniors planning to apply early decision

to college, the October date is the last time to take SAT's.

"We're losing a lot of senior volunteers because a majority of the class is taking their SAT's at

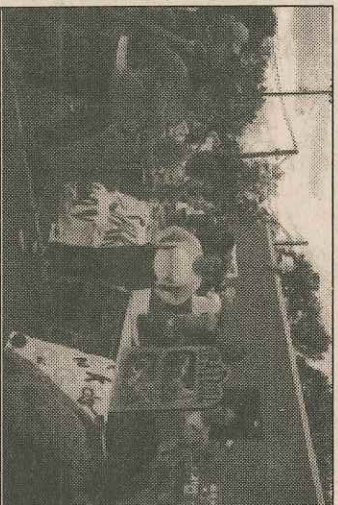
we're losing business because so many kids won't be able to come at all."

Working with the football and homecoming schedule, the activities department chose the date for Spartanfest early in the year.

"The activities department gave us the date in early February," said Spartanfest organizer Melissa Wangsgard. "PTSA really has nothing to do with the scheduling."

When Spartanfest first began in 1986 it was strictly a craft show that helped bring in money for the

PTSA. Overtime, it evolved into See SPARTANFEST, page 5



Jalpa Vas

Spartanfest is one of the biggest fundraisers opportunities in the year for many clubs.

schools in the area," said senior class officer Jen Welsch. "Plus,

### Freshmen

Cindy Paloma  
Gauri Sarin  
AJ Grillo  
John Sieger

### Sophomores

Lisa Leonard  
Marilee Greene  
Scott Price  
Danny Tinsley

### Juniors

Amanda Neff  
Christine Rimi  
Kyle Hayne  
Stephen Kalletta  
Brian Weinberg  
Mike Davis

### SENIORS

Nayna Gupta  
Mikki Martinez  
Lisa Marvin  
Erica Repa  
Carla Rodriguez  
Krista Roper  
Courtney Uram  
Marshall Ausberry  
Justin Baker  
Charlie Beekman  
Joshua Wilson  
Jonny Styron  
Derrick Deese

—Compiled by Erika Kim



6 Did somebody say McDonald's fries?



11 The "American Idol" craze.



12 A magical night in Old Town.

## Viewpoint

## Early Spartanfest causes problems

Between school, college applications, and Homecoming activities, seniors are feeling the pressure to plan, organize and succeed. There is little time to complete everything.

In years past, Spartanfest has always occurred after Homecoming week and all its accompanying activities.

This year, however, this is not the case. The set date for the Spartanfest fund-raiser has been changed to October 12, which happens to be the same date that most WS seniors are registered to take the SATs.

For many of the seniors who are applying early decision or early action, this is the final test date that they can attend. This presents a problem because many of these seniors who must take the SATs are the people who are involved in the planning and volunteering to help different clubs and activities raise money, especially the senior class.

With so many students preoccupied the morning of October 12, this means that there will be a lack of volunteers to work the various fund-raisers such as popcorn, crafts and

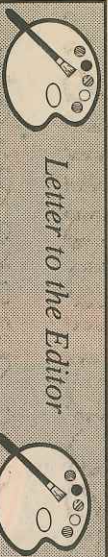
## Editorial

entertainment that has attracted WS students of all grade levels as well as parents and adults of the community.

The conflict with the SAT test does not mean just a shortage of volunteers. There will be many fewer people to come and support the activities that WS has to offer.

The senior class officers, most of whom are among those students taking the SAT on October 12, are especially feeling the many stresses of the poorly pushed-up date for Spartanfest.

Between planning for Homecoming and building the senior class's float, Spartanfest is just one more thing to worry about.



To whom it may concern:

We are the 5th period Visual Communications class that is made up of all seniors. We were extremely disappointed to find that our artwork on display at the main entrance of the school had been vandalized. Considering the fact that our artwork is a reflection of our thoughts and inner emotions, it should be obvious that we have taken personal offense to this act of disrespect. As an entire class and as part of the WS art program, we were willing to put our art on display for your enjoyment and ours. It is at that helps brighten the hallways of WS. However, the treatment of our artwork has caused many of us to be hesitant to display our future works. We would appreciate the consideration that we deserve, so that we in turn, can continue to share our art with the entire school.

Sincerely,  
Tara Austin and Karen Burnett

## Self-defense means attacks to counter Iraq

By Jason Gillis  
Business/Systems Editor

Before the worst day in America's history, the US would react to acts of violence against America or allies. Now the idea is to catch the terrorists before they attack. The containment strategy will be seeded in history as a great tactic, but now preemptive attacks are the new policy that needs to be taken by the US to continue to prosper the way the US has done in the past.

When the small country of Kuwait was invaded by Saddam Hussein's Iraqi military, he took over 40% of the world's oil reserves, threatening the world, and a divided UN organized a coalition.

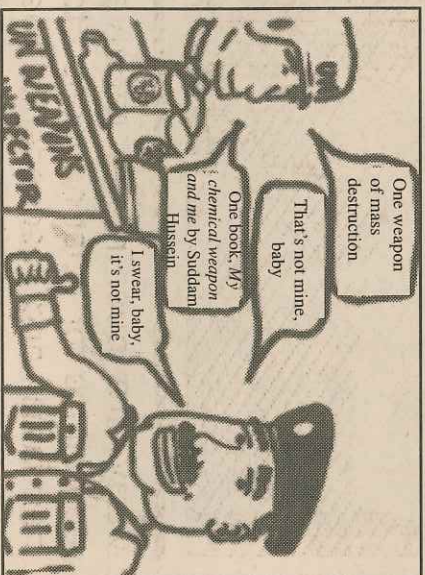
During Operation Desert Storm, the coalition's goal was to push Iraq back into their own border to contain Hussein, which led to just under 300 men and women of the US armed services sacrificing their lives to protect America from Hussein. The coalition pushed Hussein back and made Iraq agree to a cease-fire and to resolutions created by the UN that included Iraq allowing weapons inspectors inside their borders to make sure Iraq would not produce weapons of mass destruction.

The 1991 UN security resolution 688 demanded that Saddam end the repression of his people, which was and still is completely ignored by Hussein. Iraq agreed to return all Kuwaiti prisoners and others, but more than 600 people remain unaccounted for, including one American pilot. Iraq agreed to break connections with terrorism, another broken promise.

The divided UN could not take the next step in eliminating the main problem, solving their own problem that they had at the time leaving Saddam in power, steaming over his defeat and planning his next move.

To this day, weapons inspectors have not been in Iraq for many years thanks to the great reasoning skills of former President Bill Clinton. American and British pilots face danger every day patrolling Iraqi no fly zones, created after Desert Storm in 1991, where they face many dangers.

When inspectors were kicked out, Clinton had many small scale air attacks on Iraq to change the headlines in



Adam Buckley

the news from his scandalous presidency to the attacks on Iraq, but nothing was accomplished. Inspectors were not even let in and Iraqi hatred for America increased.

Saddam still rules today and he has been free of weapons inspections because of Clinton's lack of interest in Iraq and George Bush's failure to eliminate him in the beginning.

Now all Americans live in fear of being attacked. There is news that Saddam is assembling the parts to build a nuclear bomb. Khidir Hamza helped to start Iraq's nuclear bomb program before he left and defected in 1994, he said in an interview with The Times today that Iraq could have three nuclear weapons before the end of 2002. Even worse, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice said that al-Qaeda personnel had been spotted in Baghdad.

Democrats in the US Senate and House have not supported current President George W. Bush, but in 1998 during the Clinton administration most Democrats supported Clinton in his small scale attacks to get the heat off of his administration.

This is not a political affair. This is war. All Americans should be united in eliminating a major threat before it becomes too late.

President Bush tried to open the eyes of the UN in his speech and attempted to remind them of the resolutions that Saddam has willingly broken and the danger that he poses to everyone.

Hopefully, President George W. Bush knocked some sense in those knuckle-heads in the UN and maybe the US and Britain will have their support. If they do not, the US still should attack because Iraq is a danger with or without UN approval.

For the freedom of the US population and the oppressed Iraqis, Hussein should be eliminated as soon as possible before its too late.

## Student learns lesson from schedule switch

By Leigh Johnson  
Senior Staff Writer

I towered above everyone in my new AP Environmental Science class.

There were not any more desks or even a normal chair. So I sat perched on an unstable lab stool. Somehow, by transferring into this class where I did not even have a spot, I was helping to solve the overcrowding problem at WS.

At least I was sent to an Environmental Science class, unlike several precalculus students who found themselves moved to one of math teacher Marty Eisinger's geometry classes.

According to the counselors, however, these changes created a "better learning environment" for us all. FCPS blessed WS with nine new class sections. We were so lucky to receive this gift three weeks into the year. Now 300 students had to shuffle their schedules.

I was told that I was chosen to move not only because my schedule would allow for an easy switch, but also because I was a high-achieving and well-adjusted student. Lucky me! I should be flattered. I worked hard for the past three years and three weeks of my high school career, and now I was finally being recognized.

I hate change and for about 24 hours I was determined to keep my old schedule. The counselors gave me the promise that after three weeks of this new schedule, I could reclaim my old routine if I was not happy. It was not the new schedule I was strongly opposed to, it was the unfair nature of a change.

The counselors gave me this "option" knowing I would fall in love with Jamie Morris's government class and would not want to make another switch. Well, I did enjoy the class and I am staying with my new schedule.

In August we receive our schedules and grumble about certain teachers or having math in the morning. However, we generally accept our fate and for the next ten months are slaves to our schedules. It never occurred to me that they could be changed against our will.

But I have learned from this experience. Isn't that why we're here? I learned that my Dad was right all of the times he had used the tired cliché "life is not fair." I also learned that whoever made the saying, "change is good," must have been a high school counselor.

## The Oracle

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# Slavery reparations for descendants... ...are inappropriate

By Lauren Kondo  
News Section Assistant

In the 1600s, Africans started a brutal, torturous journey to the New World to be met with humiliation and degrading conditions. Four hundred years later, African Americans are ridiculously suing firms for reparations to descendants of slaves.

At the Capitol on August 18, thousands of descendants of slaves rallied to get their compensations. While compensation has been questioned for 13 years, in the past year it has gained momentum.

Descendants of slaves do not deserve compensation for injustices done years ago. They were not the ones laboring on fields in harsh conditions.

African Americans in New York and San Francisco are suing big corporations, like Almea Corporation and CSX railroad, for working slaves without being paid, claiming they are entitled to the "forty acres and a mule" free blacks were promised after the Civil War, but never got.

While I am not being insensitive to all of the wrongs done to slaves, reparations for descendants of slaves will not make it right. Though apologizing is appropriate for the wrongdoings, giving reparations in the form of money to descendants. In giving reparations, lawmakers should commemorate the way actual slaves were treated and honor slaves.

Reparations should also not be paid because it is unclear who would be responsible for paying. Not every taxpayer was involved in enslaving Africans or were supposed to pay freed slaves their compensations after the Civil War. And descendants of those that were responsible for paying the freed slaves should not be held accountable for something they themselves did not take part in.

Some people argue that Japanese-Americans were given reparations after their internment during World War II. But this was only given to those actually interned, not children or grandchildren that never had to experience being shunned from society. The people that were paid for internment and the government that paid were directly involved. So in this way, it was correct to apologize to those involved in the horrors.

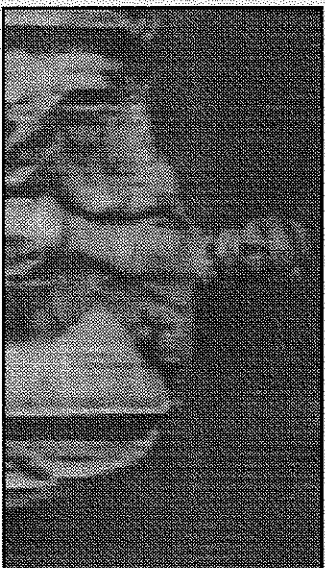
To give reparations to descendants of slaves is wrong because they never experienced inhumane treatment. Giving them money will not change what happened years ago. Maybe their descendants never got their forty acres or their mule, but that does not entitle them to it.



**Descendants of slaves do not deserve compensation for injustices done years ago. They were not the ones laboring on fields in harsh conditions.**



**Many are pushing to receive reparations for what happened to their family and descendants. The money will not stop how they were treated back then, but it will be some repayment for the event.**



**...are appropriate**

By Dennis Ing  
ETC Editor

Sixteen hour days. One maybe two meals a day, and a handful of whippings. This would have been the usual day for a slave. And what did they get for it? A place to stay and a few meals; they did this not by choice but because they were forced.

Taken from their country in Africa and forced onto boats, chained down, dying from disease, and waiting to get off and be sold for work because of their differences, African-Americans were held as slaves for centuries. Now many are rightfully pushing to receive reparations for what happened to their family and descendants. The money will not stop how they were treated back then, but it will be some repayment for the event.

When President Abraham Lincoln abolished slavery, a Civil War began. Even though slavery ended, the pain continued. Blacks were held as lowers in communities, they were beaten for looking at whites, killed for walking at night, and treated with no respect because of their past.

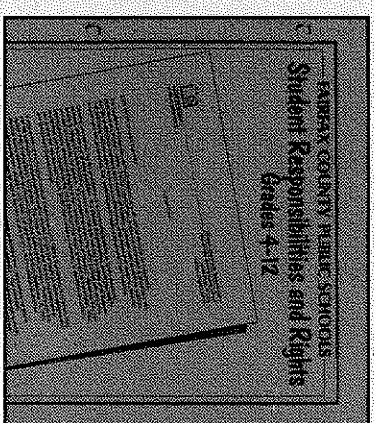
I believe if they have descendants or family who were slaves they should get reparations. They deserve to be paid for how their people and ancestors were treated. Whites still treat African Americans like trash in some places in the US.

I know someone who visited a school in Georgia, where these two kids she met were in awe that she knew blacks. They could not believe that she had blacks in her school. Some people are even afraid that black people will hurt them because of their skin color, not letting their kids look at them or walk down the street by themselves. The pain this causes is unimaginable.

They should not be treated as lowers because of their ethnicity or family traits. Now we have African Americans in high ranking positions across the United States because we now see them as equals as many good Americans have been doing for ages.

Others, on the other hand, have been treating them like garbage. There have been best selling books out about slavery and how blacks were treated, including *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee.

This is how everything was in the past. Blacks were hung for looking at a white woman or charged for murder that a white man actually committed. Now our society is much better and we treat everyone equal and our court system is actually a jury of our peers. I do believe reparations should be given to African-Americans for how their ancestors were treated.



**The SR&R booklet devotes seven pages to rights and responsibilities, the rest of the pages relating the consequences.**

Ah, the Students' Rights and Responsibilities unit. As surely as summer shall turn to fall and the school year will begin, there shall be the SR & R. Students' Rights and Responsibilities. Funny name for a booklet that dedicates no more than seven of its 34 pages to its namesake. The rest of the book is mostly dedicated to what happens to the unfortunate student who violates his responsibilities.

In addition, there are some regulations concerning student activities crammed in the back, as well as updates-which are generally associated with harsher punishments-from last year's edition, a

glossary of terms, and a handy-dandy reference guide on how students can be punished if they dare break the rules. Going into middle school and high school, I always thought it funny how the administration always insisted that I was earning rights, but that with those rights came responsibilities. Apparently, I have gained a lot more responsibilities than rights. Plus, many of these rights are not even of the sort that I want. More of the "right to remain silent" category rather than, say, "the right to party hearty."

And of course, some of these "rights" are, at best, a little hazy in their definition. Take the right to expect "courtesy, fairness, and respect from...other students." Sure, students can expect this right. But will they get it? There is no feasible way of totally

## Unethical grade changes hurt everyone

By Emily Ryan  
Senior Staff Writer

OK, I admit it. I had one of my grades changed. My reason for having it raised didn't have anything to do with being valedictorian though and I never asked my teacher right out to raise it, unlike some other people who do.

Fourth quarter freshman year I had six "A's" and a "B+." I went to my teacher whose class I had a "B+," in and asked if I could do any extra credit work I could do. She decided to just give me the A for good behavior.

No one should get an "A" for just good effort. If you get it you have to deserve that "A" and earn it.

I still ended up with a "B+," for a final grade in that class and I didn't care enough have it changed.

If it means the difference in my acceptance to college or into some honor society, then oh well.

I have earned each one of my final grades and I think that it is unfair when students go to their teachers to change a final grade.

If you wanted a higher grade, you should have tried. It will not affect your college

acceptance since valedictorians aren't announced until June. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that the grades on your report card should be set in stone. When a teacher messes up or something, then the grades should be able to be changed, but only if there is a significant reason.

Wanting to be valedictorian is not a good enough reason. If that grade is bringing down your GPA, then work harder in your present classes to make up for it.

If you want an "A", then work for it. For those people who

have an "F" and are trying to at least get a "D", take the class pass/fail, or do some work. Don't stoop to a lower level and crawl to your teacher.

While some teachers may change grades, others will not and counselors and administrators can not.

If I may raise your GPA, but it does not make you look good. Everything seems to go back to the honor code and frankly, changing grades is probably some violation.

If a classmate of mine has a grade changed, then I expect mine to be changed too.

## SR&R gives more rules, less rights

By Evan Anderson  
Senior Staff Writer

Responsibilities unit. As surely as summer shall turn to fall and the school year will begin, there shall be the SR & R.

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And of course, some of these "rights" are, at best, a little hazy in their definition. Take the right to expect "courtesy, fairness, and respect from...other students." Sure, students can expect this right. But will they get it? There is no feasible way of totally

The problem with many of these rights is that they are difficult to enforce without assuming broad or intrusive powers. Working out a better, more clearly defined list of students' rights and responsibilities would require the sort of interaction

GRADE	DESCRIPTION	REMARKS
A	90-100	Excellent
B+	80-89	Very Good
B	70-79	Good
B-	60-69	Fair
C+	50-59	Fairly Good
C	40-49	Fair
C-	30-39	Fairly Poor
D+	20-29	Poor
D	10-19	Very Poor
D-	0-9	Unsatisfactory
F	0-9	Unsatisfactory
F	0-9	Unsatisfactory
F	0-9	Unsatisfactory

**Grade changes by some teachers are often against the honor code for other students who earned a good grade.**

# Seniors enjoy new and old privileges

By Leigh Johnson  
Senior Staff Writer

It's not about the parking passes anymore. This year seniors are lobbying for more privileges to celebrate their last year of high school. Students and administrators are working together to increase the quality of life at WS for seniors.

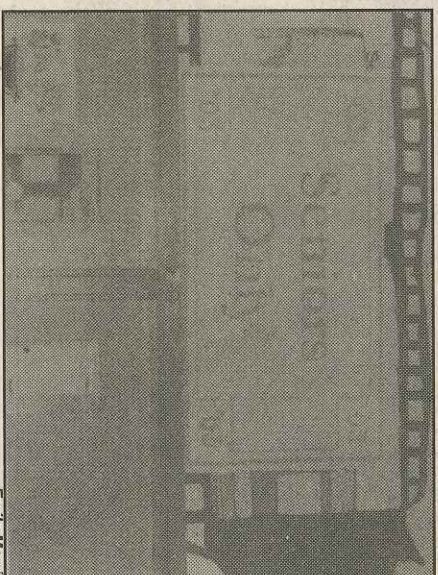
Senior delegate Eugenie Ko was responsible for gathering ideas and presenting them to the administration. With the other class officers, she talked with students from different schools and took suggestions from WS students. Then Ko sent a formal request to senior administrator Richard Griffin.

"If [the requests] are reasonable I will approve them. If it's something we can work with we will grant [the students] these wishes," said Griffin.

A lunch line exclusively for seniors in the cafeteria was the first new privilege to be approved this year.

"It is something that we could easily do. We just hope only seniors will use the line," said Griffin.

Last year seniors were granted a three-minute early dismissal on Fridays. Seniors requested to increase the



Emily Morris

Seniors enjoy new privileges like an exclusive separate lunch line.

early release to five minutes, but the idea was not approved. Seniors were also not given early dismissal from

classes during AP testing in the spring. However, the process is ongoing and some suggestions are still going through approval. Seniors are trying to receive discounts for sports tickets, but the idea has not yet been accepted or rejected.

"Griffin was really supportive. He encouraged us to get unique ideas that the administration hadn't heard before. There was sort of an understanding that we wouldn't be able to get *all* of the privileges," said Ko.

While seniors are enjoying their lunch line and early release on Fridays, a spot in the student parking lot remains an favorite traditional senior privilege.

"I appreciate having a parking spot because I have to drive to a from school and practice. Without my pass I'd have to depend on someone else for rides," senior Humna Hussain.

Along with more privileges, the class of 2003 bulletin board was relocated across from senior rail. This year two senior students, a boy and a girl, will be featured as the "Seniors of the Week." The students are chosen by class sponsor Allison Kopkau.

## Three new clubs created for student involvement

*Koinonia, Pep and Spirit Club and Botball added to a list of 70 clubs*

By Erika Kim  
News Section Editor

From the Computer Outreach Club to the Oceanography Club, WS has it all. Last year WS had 70 clubs including new ones such as the Environment Club. This year the number rose to 73 with the addition of more new clubs Botball, Koinonia, and the Pep and Spirit Club.

Botball was founded at the end of last year by physics teacher Deborah Roubesh. Botball is a club in which students build a robot with a sensor out of legos. They program the robot to do specific tasks and enter it in a competition against other schools.

Botball club members meet once a week to work with the robot. They practice programming the robot to accomplish certain tasks such as moving ping pong balls from one place to another without any

intervention in order to prepare for the competition.

Koinonia is another new club that was started at the end of last year. Koinonia, which means fellowship in Greek Hebrew, is a Christian organization for Korean students. Although students of all ethnicities are encouraged to join, the club is mainly geared toward Korean Christian students.

"It originated with students who wanted to unite different generations of Korean students," said sponsor and ESL teacher Hannah Chang. "The purpose of the club is to worship and honor God. It's an extension of faith brought into the school setting."

Koinonia holds weekly prayer meetings on Wednesday mornings and tries to encourage students spiritually through guest speakers and fellowship at its meetings.

The Pep and Spirit Club was founded by junior Theresa Ohanian. The new club consists of students who want to encourage spirit and be more involved.

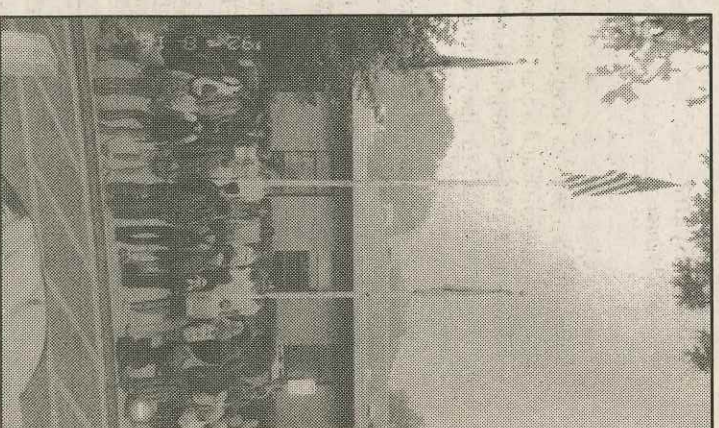
"We want to represent all the activities and functions the student body puts on," said Ohanian.

The purpose of the club is not only to show school spirit through cheering at different sports games and school events but also to work to get more people spirited and involved in the school activities.

"We want to make you happy to be here," said Ohanian.

In order to encourage involvement in school activities, the club plans to hold bonfires, dances, movies nights, give aways at school events.

"Our purpose is to make sure that our school has pride," said Ohanian. "Pride in each other and in what we do."



Students in the Koinonia Club gather at the pole to pray with fellow Christians.

## WS Students Honored

The WS IT'S ACADEMIC team of junior captain Adam Boltik and seniors Laura Pilkington and Lauren Riedler played valiantly, but lost to Walter Johnson.

Art teacher John Adams's work will be featured in the "2002 All Media Juried Exhibition" at the Ellipse Art Center near the Ballston Metro Station. The Arlington Art Center sponsors the exhibition, which runs through October 26.

Seniors Deanna Colton, Quang Nguyen, Marybeth Schiarretta and Alex Sohn were four of 690 nationwide attendees to the George Washington University Science and Engineering Summer Apprentice Program.

The National Symphony Orchestra Youth Fellowship Program selected sophomore harpist Sara Franke and senior violist Timothy LaCrosse for the 2002-2003 season.

The National Association for College Admission Counseling presented Career Center Specialist Susan Rexford as a winner of the 2002 Rising Star Award for developing a program that shows excellence and dedication to serving students headed towards college.

The Governor's School for Humanities and Visual Arts at the University of Richmond awarded English and journalism teacher Brooke Nelson a Presidential Citation for excellence in teaching.

The Math Honor Society elected Mathew Stramppe president, Jie Lee vice president, Quang Nguyen secretary, Tiffany Luong treasurer, and Esther Kim historian

—Compiled by JD Kaleem

## College application deadlines approach

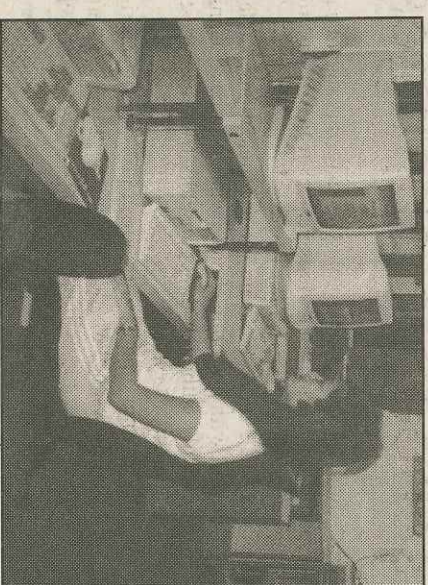
By Ruchika Malhotra  
Managing Editor

October 1, November 1, and January 1. They may not mean much to underclassmen, but to seniors, these are monumental days. The October and November dates are the main college deadlines for early admission and the January date is the regular admission deadline.

"[Deadlines approaching] don't bother me, because I'm not doing the early application process," said senior Alex Chaves.

Seniors that are applying early have a different outlook on the deadlines.

"I know there are a lot of people stressing about it, because they want to do early application," said senior Jessica Agudelo.



Emily Morris

Senior Amy Rivera looks at colleges on the internet at the Career Center.

Certain universities offer early action, applying before the regular January deadline and not being bound to that college if you are accepted. Universities also offer early decision for those students who know 100% that that's

where they want to go and it is binding. If a student gets in through the early decision process the student has to go to that university in the spring.

"I don't like early decision because I think it's forcing student to make a decision before they can research properly," said Career Center specialist Susan Rexford. "By applying early students rush the application process."

Right now seniors should be getting their applications or applying online.

"Online is the best way to apply," said Rexford. "It's faster, easier, neater, and many colleges are preferring it."

The Career Center can help students get applications. But there's more to the admissions process than just getting in few forms.

"It's an intensive process," said Rexford. "Student's can get more than just admission into a college from the admissions process."

"It teaches you responsibility too because you have to know how to manage your time and take time out from whatever your doing to fill out applications," said Agudelo.

The essay is also a major component of certain college applications. Admission into a college can ride on the students' essay. The senior essay program will be held October 7-8, but seniors shouldn't wait 'til then to start their essays.

"Essays aren't written on the spur of the moment, but after a lot of writing, rewriting, and editing," said Rexford. "The essay is extremely important and they need to take the time to do a good job on it."

From the Career Center to guidance counselors, there are many different places and people seniors can go to for help on essays and the applications.

Using the available resources and managing time is crucial to this process.

"Ask for help and work a little bit everyday," said Rexford. "Do not procrastinate, that would be the key thing."

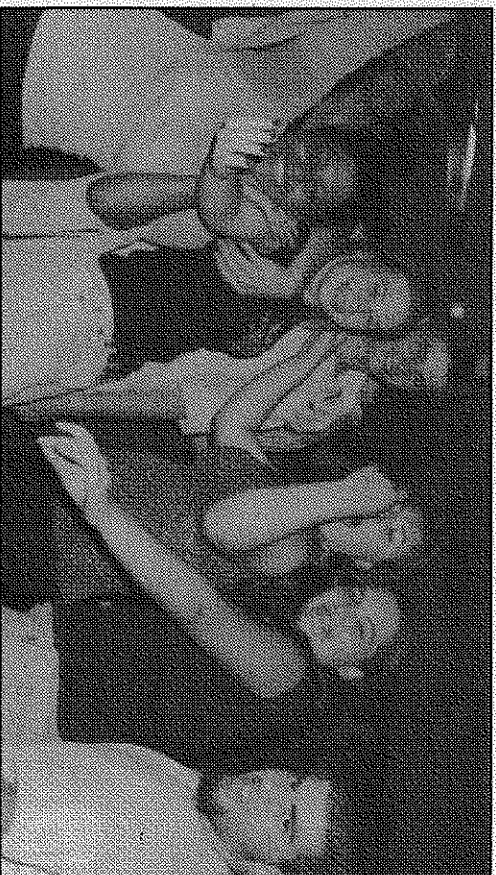
# Hee Haw: Students get wild at Back to School Dance

By Jenn Carlson  
Managing Editor

Students donned their cowboy hats and boots on September 14 as WS's cafeteria was transformed from a high school lunchroom into a western howdown for the annual Back to School Dance, which had traditionally been held on Saturday night.

"I liked getting decked out like a cowgirl and expressing my inner desires to be a hitch," said senior Lianna Carrera.

The wild, wild west theme was successful as students were seen sporting bandanas, cowboy hats and belts and decorated themselves with other western accessories. The cafeteria was also decorated with cacti, streamers and other cliché western sayings. The theme was a



Mayra Gupta

Students, decked out in cowboy gear, enjoyed the Wild Wild West theme of the dance. popular choice when it came time to choose the theme for the dance.

"When we had the student council retreat, my group came up with the idea

and when we voted, the regular student council voted for it, overwhelmingly," said senior Laurie Doton and Back to School dance committee chairperson. A mix of rap, techno and Top 40 music as well as requests was played by the DJ's whose setup also included a screen that featured the music videos of the songs being played.

"We had a really good DJ," said Doton. "He brought the screen. It made the dance really fun."

There was another element added to the video screen to make the dance a little more personalized for the people in attendance.

"I liked when one of the guys walked around putting the camera in your face so people showed up on the screen," said senior Lindsay Beeler.

## Middle Eastern administrators visit WS

By Emily Ryan  
Senior Staff Writer

WS attracted visitors from across the world because of its good reputation and warm, friendly, and welcoming environment. A group of administrators from Oman chose the school as one where they could visit to learn more about education in America.

Oman, located next to Yemen, is a country in the Middle East.

A group of headmistresses and headmasters from Oman have come to the United States as a part of the Fulbright Administrators. This is an international program that offers administrators the chance to travel and share ideas with schools in other areas of the world. The 12 people that came to WS spoke English fluently and sat in on classes to observe WS's teaching methods.

"The visitors would like to visit classes to see what

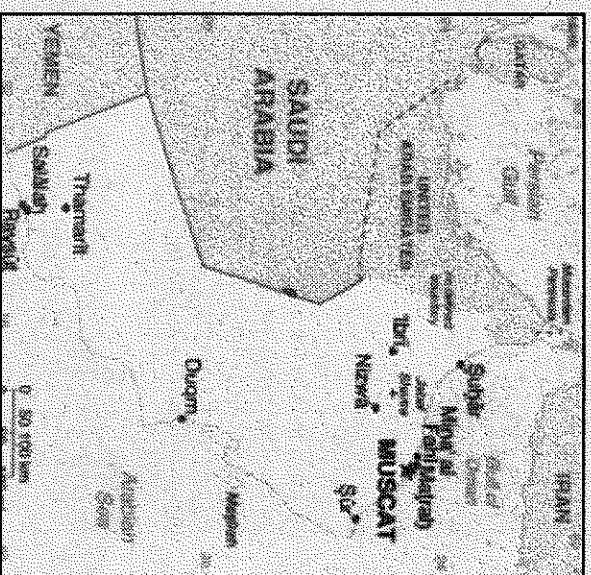
methodology(s) we use in our classrooms, strategies for students who excel [honors] how we use resources that are available," said administrator Ioan Galdi in an email to the teachers.

Guitar and band became two classes of interest to the headmistresses and headmasters. The visitors entered the classes with videocameras and cameras in hand to capture the learning environments of the music classes. As the students played, the Omans took pictures and videotaped while listening to the music.

"It was cool that they came all this way to see us," said sophomore Laura Fawcett.

The visitors spent September 16 and 17 at WS before moving on to Thomas Jefferson High School of Science and Technology and observing the teaching methods over there.

"I hope they learned a lot from us that they can use back in their schools," said senior Meghan Thompson.



The Middle Eastern administrators from Oman came to WS in order to observe the education system in the US.

### Homecoming Week 2002

**Monday, October 14—Columbus Day- No School**

**Tuesday, October 15—Half Day- Beach Day**  
Spartan Games 7:00 pm at the stadium

**Wednesday, October 16—Red, White and Blue Day**  
Mr. Spartan 7:00 pm in the auditorium

**Thursday, October 17—Luan Day**

**Friday, October 18—Orange and Blue Day**  
Homecoming Parade  
Varsity Football vs. West Potomac 7:30

**Saturday, October 19—Homecoming Dance-**  
Lost in Paradise 8-11:30 pm in the cafeteria

—Compiled by Rachel Wohlers

## Students protest schedule changes

SCHEDULES from page 1

"My job is to work with students, parents and the community to make sure that all are winners and that their possibilities are endless because they are the future. I'm just looking forward to a great year."

When students were notified of the changes, there were mixed emotions.

"I was just angry because they didn't even ask us," said junior Christine Rini. "Also at the beginning of the year I tried to change my schedule but they said I couldn't because it was an AP class and now that is exactly what they are doing: switching AP classes."

For some students, this was not the first time students had to be uprooted from their original schedule and change classes and teachers.

"This is my second year having a schedule change without my consent. My AP government and my precalculus classes switched and now I have two new teachers," said senior Emily Hatch. "I am bitter."

"I was just angry because they didn't even ask us."

—Christine Rini, junior

## SATs conflict with fundraising

SPARTANFEST from page 1

an event that involved WS students too.

"Robinson and Fairfax High Schools have craft shows too," said Wangsgard. "But we have a lot more involvement and participation from the kids and community."

This year, the guitar department will once again become involved with Spartanfest by selling chili and cornbread and raffling off a Yamaha guitar. To provide entertainment for the day, several guitar students, including winners of last year's Battle of the Bands, will be performing.

"It's a great chance to get on stage in front of everyone," said senior Tyler Christensen. "It's a feeling you can't get from doing anything else."

Like guitar, the Step team will also once again be fundraising at Spartanfest. Last

year the team sold bandanas and caramel apples. This year, just for a change, the team plans to sell nachos and cheese.

"We're trying to raise money to buy new uniforms for the team," said senior Jessica Agudelo.

The drill team is also using a new fundraiser to help pay for uniforms. The team plans to sell light-up pens with "Spartan" written on them.

"Spartanfest will be a good way for us to make money to help pay for the fees of all the competitions we're planning to go to this year," said senior Kristin Foye.

Last year's Spartanfest brought in \$8,000 for the PTSA alone. This year, the PTSA plans to make just as much if not more.

"Around \$7,000 is good," said Wangsgard. "Whatever we make ends up going right back to the kids and school."

### CLASS OF 2006 FRESHMAN OFFICERS

President: John Lui

Vice President: Cindy Palomo

Secretary: Dan Ragen

Treasurer: Peter Kapuscinski

Historian: Lauren Brown

*Congratulations!*

—Compiled by Lauren Kondo

## McDonald's aims at being healthy The restaurant chain changes the famous fry recipe

By Heidi Stillgoj  
Features Editor

McDonald's: eat fresh. Now all the world needs is a new Jared.

The Golden Arches have changed their ways. After receiving much criticism for offering such a high-calorie diet they have produced a new, more healthful, recipe. The food chain will replace the trans fatty acids found in their french fries, which increase the risk of heart disease, with a new soy-corn oil.

A supersized order of the old McDonald's french fries filled customers up with 600 calories—that's almost a quarter of the recommended calorie intake for one day. McDonald's believes that this new oil will fix the problem.

"I love the idea of the new healthier recipe," said senior Vanessa Evans. "It makes me feel like I'm not being so bad and unhealthy for eating there."

A supersized order of the new french fries, however, contains just as many calories as the old; the grand 600. The new recipe

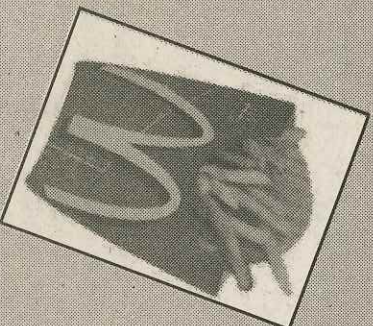
may be better in the prevention of heart disease, but not in terms of gaining weight.

The new fries are obviously just a marketing tool out to trick the world into buying the famous McDonald's fries. While there may be a definite reduction in blocked arteries and deaths caused by heart disease, there will be no such reduction in the number of US citizens suffering from obesity unless another change is made.

"I think McDonald's should reduce their calories too," said junior Stephanie Patton. "It

### Whose french fries do you prefer?

McDonald's	34.5%
Burger King	26%
Wendy's	22.5%
Other	25.5%



Poll of 200 students

—Compiled by Emily Miller

## Christopher sponsors freshman cheerleaders

By Rachel Wohlers

Inside Story Editor

When varsity cheerleading coach Kathleen Lynch needed a freshman coach, there was no one in sight—until she spotted guidance counselor and soccer coach Ken Christopher.

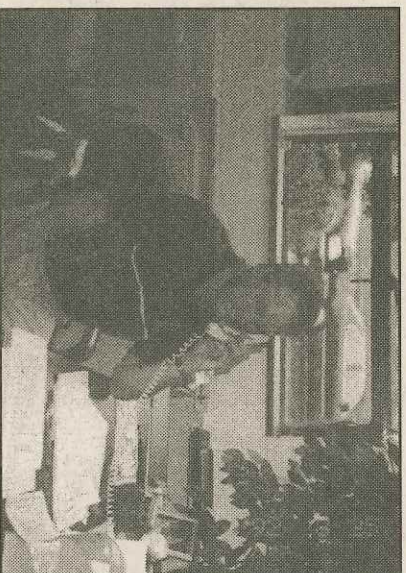
"She had to be very desperate for a coach to ask me," said Christopher.

It turns out that Christopher may not be as unqualified as some may think. His wife was a cheerleader in high school as well as in college at West Virginia Wesleyan.

"She comes to the games, and she helps out with the girls some," said Christopher.

And even though Christopher is termed the "coach," he remains just a sponsor for now. The freshman team practices with the Junior Varsity team to learn the routines.

"They are all athletes and the captains take over the practices," said Christopher.



Ken Christopher, the new sponsor for the freshman cheerleaders, takes time out of his busy schedule to answer a phone call in his office.

Although Christopher doesn't have to go to practice, he still recognizes his responsibility to the team. He went to one of the beginning practices just to get to know the

girls on the team.

Being a male, and cheerleading being stereotyped as a female-only sport, Christopher receives his fair share of teasing because of his new found job.

"I really don't mind. I get teased but I just laugh it off," said Christopher.

The freshmen don't compete at competitions as a team since there is a special competition team, but they spend their afternoons preparing routines for the freshman football games that take place on Thursdays.

But despite enjoying getting to know the girls on the team and getting paid for the job, Christopher doesn't think he will be the sponsor again next year.

"I don't think Lynch will be as desperate next year as she was this year," said Christopher.

In the meantime, Christopher still has a whole season of practice and games to support the girls at.

"I plan on having a great time," said Christopher. "They work hard, and I appreciate them as athletes. It's a pleasure to work with them."

## Pamphlets step in for counselors

By JD Kaleem

Features Editor

It's found hanging in the halls, on the floors and in students' hands as they hunch over it giggling and reading this series of literature. No, they're not finally doing their homework. Instead, they are skimming over self-help pamphlets provided by the Guidance Department on topics ranging from "Test Anxiety" to "Grief and Loss" to "Maybe I Have an Eating Problem" and even "Maybe I Have A Friend With an Eating Disorder."

A few years ago the Guidance Department, in an effort to help students cope with problems, distributed more than 10 different self-help guides for issues teenagers often deal with.

"Sometimes a student doesn't want to come and speak with his guidance counselor about a problem he is having,"

said guidance counselor Laurie Phelps. "If he saw a pamphlet about this problem and read about it, it might make it easier for him to seek help afterwards."

Especially in high school, guidance counselors are often not seen as people students look towards for emotional and personal support. Instead, students use them for assistance with college selections and applications. The pamphlets are one of the ways counselors reach out to students.

"[A student] can always come to discuss his or her problems with a counselor," said Phelps. "We also offer support groups on topics similar to those in the pamphlets."

Students often stand in the halls poking fun at the pamphlets, but they do garner appreciation from some.

"[The pamphlets] are great," said senior Amy Rivera. "They're very beneficial, especially for teenagers because they may



Sophomore Bryan Roberts tests the new taste of the McDonald's french fries, now containing a new oil which reduces the risk of heart disease.

already tastes nasty, so why not change something else for the better?"

12 years ago, McDonald's made a similar change when they replaced beef tallow as their preferred cooking oil with corn and soy oil and shortening. They did so after receiving complaints from the Food and Drug Administration, as well as environmental groups and animal welfare advocates. The change took care of some health concerns, but left customers to take care of others on their own.

This past year, however, a man weighing 272 pounds sued the restaurant chain, claiming them

responsible for his obesity; not himself.

"[McDonald's] isn't looking out for the customers' best interest by giving them pounds of fat," said sophomore Rudy Telson. "A reduction in the risk of heart disease alone won't keep them coming back, but hopefully it will help."

One sign of hope resides in Europe. The new oil has been used in McDonald's all over Europe for several years; a continent much healthier than ours. By this February, officials hope to have it in 13,000 restaurants across the United States.



Hanging in the Guidance Office and by the Library are many self-help pamphlets such as "Loneliness," "Committed Relationships and School," "Maybe My Parent Has a Mental Illness," and "Stress Management." They serve to help students in need, but are usually the punch lines of lunch time jokes.

feel a little embarrassed to share their problems with an adult such as a counselor. This is an independent way to seek a resolution to your problems."

The pamphlets are located at the end of the library hallway, as well as in the guidance office.

"[The guidance office] should put them up in places where people can actually see them, as opposed to the spots where they are right now," said senior Mahlet Hailu.

Junior administrator Martha Chandler agrees with the purpose of the pamphlets, but thinks the are often misused.

"My feeling is that kids grab them and play with them. When I'm monitoring the hallway during lunch, I see the pamphlets on the floor and in the trash cans," said Chandler. "The idea of it was good, but students make a joke of it."

# Brandt abandoned family and friends for cult

## Technology specialist once gave up college life for frightening experience as a Moonie

By Nayna Gupta  
Oracle Editor

Until she was 17, technology specialist Becky Brandt was considered the "goody-two shoes" of her family, especially compared to her two rebellious sisters. Then, in 1974, Brandt decided to sever ties with her family, college, and Nebraska home to join the Unification Church, a religious cult referred to as the Moonies.

"I didn't know that this [the Moonies] was bad," said Brandt. "My dad was always telling me that if you weren't part of the solution, you were part of the problem, and I thought the Moonies were a solution."

Revered Sun Myung Moon founded the Unification Church in South Korea in 1954 after he allegedly had a vision of Jesus Christ in 1936. Claiming to be the second Christ, Moon began recruiting American followers during the '60s

and '70s. Looking for new members, the Moonies targeted college students, especially ones living away from their families or in a transition period like freshman year.

The summer before her freshman year at the University of Nebraska, Brandt was recruited when walking across the campus. Two Moonies approached her and invited her to a party later that night with other members of the cult.

"I didn't know it at the time, but they had carefully picked me out," said Brandt.

In addition to targeting vulnerable people, the Moonies used brain-washing techniques to convince recruits like Brandt to join their cause. The cult used a two on one technique in which Brandt was always flanked by at least two Moonies. Later, Brandt used these same techniques to bring in other members.

"With them all around me, I couldn't meet other

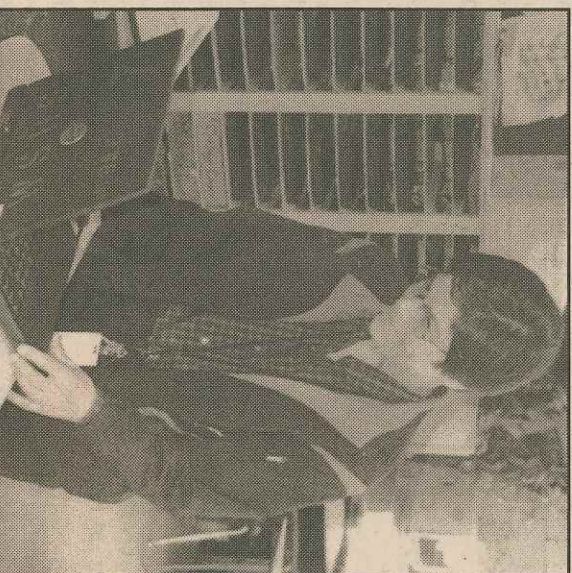
newcomers who had some of the same doubts I did," said Brandt. "They acted like everything I said was important and dismissed any doubts I had."

Taken in by the Moonies' alleged ideals of serving others and giving up individual needs for a bigger cause, Brandt made the final decision to join the cult. Besides cutting off contact with her current life, Brandt's initiation also included giving the group

no matter what, she could always come home. These last words from her father would later help Brandt escape the emotional abuse of the cult.

"There were other people who wanted to leave but couldn't because they had thrown their past lives away, I was really lucky," said Brandt.

As a Moonie, Brandt traveled to a new city every week with a new group of people so she could never



**No longer a Moonie, technology specialist Becky Brandt works with technology equipment like the wireless lab.**

all her personal belongings and money.

"They took everything I had including my car. I didn't have a dime to my name," said Brandt. "They returned only the things they thought I needed."

During the '70s most Moonies ran away from home or didn't have families to run from. Brandt, on the other hand, informed her shocked parents of her decision. Before she left home, her father reminded her that

establish solid relationships with other members.

Brandt traveled with one other person, her "subject." Under a "subject-object" relationship, Brandt, the "object" was expected to be subservient to her "subject" always a man.

Under the direction of their "subject" and a "group father," the new Moonies were expected to sell carnations at airports, malls, and streets to make money for Moon and his



**Reverend Sun Myung Moon runs the Unification Church through front organizations such as the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification.**

space," said Brandt.

"They paid us nothing; we were free labor," said Brandt. "They made 97 cents on each flower and we had an expected quota of 100 flowers everyday." In Rapid City, South Dakota, Brandt recruited new members using a technique the Moonies referred to as "heavenly deception."

"I told outrageous lies about all these good things that the Moonies weren't even doing," said Brandt. "The whole thing was about power and money for them."

In August 1974 thousands of Moonies went to New York City to attend a Moon speech at Madison Square Gardens. Brandt and other Moonies lived at the Hotel Paris in Harlem, a decrepit building with unsanitary living conditions.

With no rat-eaten mattresses, and bugs crawling on the walls, the building was a cheap way for the cult to house its members.

"We, the 'objects,' had the honor of cleaning out the 'subjects' room so that we could occupy the

needed money.

"First, they made us cut off contact with our family," said Brandt. "After we had been converted, we reestablished contact to try to get money from our parents to give to them."

**Next issue: Brandt escapes from the Moonies.**

## Students strut creative hair styles

By Camilla Casillas  
Entertainment Editor

People marveled at her long blond hair, they raised their eyebrows at her mohawk, and now there is nothing.

"My friends gave me a mohawk at Fresh Fields, but my dad was so embarrassed," said sophomore Carlyn Wuckovich. "He made me shave it off."

A girl with a mohawk is not common in Springfield, and even more rare is a girl with a buzz cut.

"I did it [got a mohawk] because it was just hilarious. It was something different," said Wuckovich.

Some girls joke about shaving their hair off when they get frustrated, but they

would never let a razor near it. But having almost no hair can have its benefits.

"It's easy to take care of in the morning. I don't have to do anything, but I'm going to grow it out," said Wuckovich.

Another student with head turning hair is sophomore Rosie Kerberos, who sports liberty spikes most days of the week.

"I started doing it two months ago because I just always liked it," said Kerberos.

Students express themselves in different ways and are inspired for many reasons, even when it comes to hair.

"I got it from the chik from The Distillers," said Kerberos.

Sophomore Nick Melas dread-locked his hair by himself about a month ago after



**Sophomore Carlyn Wuckovich had to shave off her mohawk after her father disapproved and now has a buzz cut. She hopes to grow it back out soon.**

being influenced by professional skater Frankie Morales.

"I took a day or two. I put bee's wax in my hair and back combed them," said Melas. "I had to grow my hair out all of last year."

As Melas found out, dread-locks are linked with some filthy myths.

"Most of my friends like them, but some think they're dirty," said Melas. Even with such a unique hair style, Melas still craves more.

"I was thinking about dying the tips, but I think I'm going to cut them and redo them," said Melas. "So they're the same size."

Wuckovich dreams about the day she can pull her hair into a pony tail again.

"I hate it because I look like my brother," said Wuckovich. "I'm going to spike it, and I'm going to grow it down to my back."

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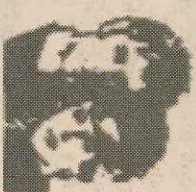
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By Camilla  
Entertainment Editor

# Step Team

Hoping for new steppers filled with passion and commitment, the step team prepares for a new year. "For tryouts we're going to be a lot harder on girls because last year a lot of girls didn't show us that commitment," said senior Jessica Agudelo.

This year the step team tried holding a clinic for new steppers on September 18th and 19th. Tryouts began September 25th after school in the cafeteria.

"We are holding a clinic on Wednesday and Thursday to show the girls the routine,"

said senior Tanesha Router. "Then the same girls come back and try out; pretty much everyone has to try out."

Many people think the team is limited to the Hispanic or African American race, or that the team is only for the ladies, but the team welcomes everyone to come and try out.

The captains and the team's sponsor, Gloria Gilliam, chose the team. Gilliam also brings the team the organization and focus.

"They [our sponsors] make sure we have somewhere to practice after school, budget our money, and make plans for us to go to competitions," said Router.

The team has to keep in unison with the other girls on the team. They create the beat with hand and foot movements, instead of using music.

"Step is all about the beat and how it sounds," said Agudelo.

By Nikolai Wajda  
Sports Editor

Some dance for video games. Some dance to impress other boys or girls. Some dance because their girlfriend made them. And some dance for a grade. These students are members of the Personality Show Choir. "Personality Show Choir is a class," said junior Derrick Brazziel. "It is easy to get into because where students learn to sing and dance while performing. Personality entertains at school functions, and in the community and at a special Breakfast with Santa in December.

"Performing for the kids is the best," said junior Scott Clapsaddle.

Personality usually performs a mix of Jazz, Swing, Pop, and Oldies with an occasional 80's hit.

"Last year we did Michael Jackson's 'Smooth Criminal,'" said senior Thomas Eismann. "It was madly hard, insane."

The class gets help on the dances from choreographer John Gonzalez. He [Gonzalez] is hired from the outside to help the students. Gonzalez simplifies the steps by breaking them down move by move, as opposed to learning the whole piece at once, this approach helps them to learn faster.

"He helps on a personal level, that makes it easier," said senior Emily Petty.

Only Petty has taken private dance lessons, but the lack of dancing experience within the group has not hindered them.

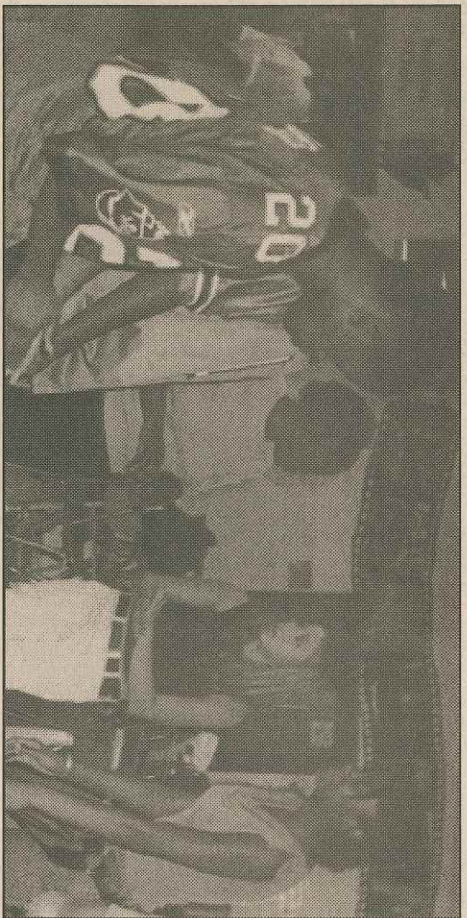
"Practice helps. I do it in the kitchen, in my house, even in

"We have a big group of girls and we all have to keep the same beat."

The team gets their steps from all different colleges or make up their own," said Router.

The steppers plan to be more active this year. Their goal is to be invited to more

# Team



(Below) Senior Jessica Agudelo and sophomore Candice Lewis discuss different techniques while freshman Calvin Barber attempts a stepping move. (Right) Sophomores Desiree Roberts and Sabrina Anderson practice before tryouts.

competitions and raise money to buy new uniforms.

"We're doing Spartanfest this year. We're going to sell nachos to raise money for costumes, and the SGA wants us to do some half time shows

for basketball and maybe football," said Router. Steppers stress commitment and passion from everyone on the team.

"The step team is fun because the girls stick together like a family," said sophomore Azurde Greenhill. "We hope to have a great year with lots of commitment."

# Personality



public places. It is sometimes embarrassing," said Petty. Repetition and practice helps with their stage coordination, so when they perform they do not have to think about what move to do next.

"It's hard at first, but you get used to it," said Brazziel. "Any average coordinated person can do it, and I consider myself coordinated."

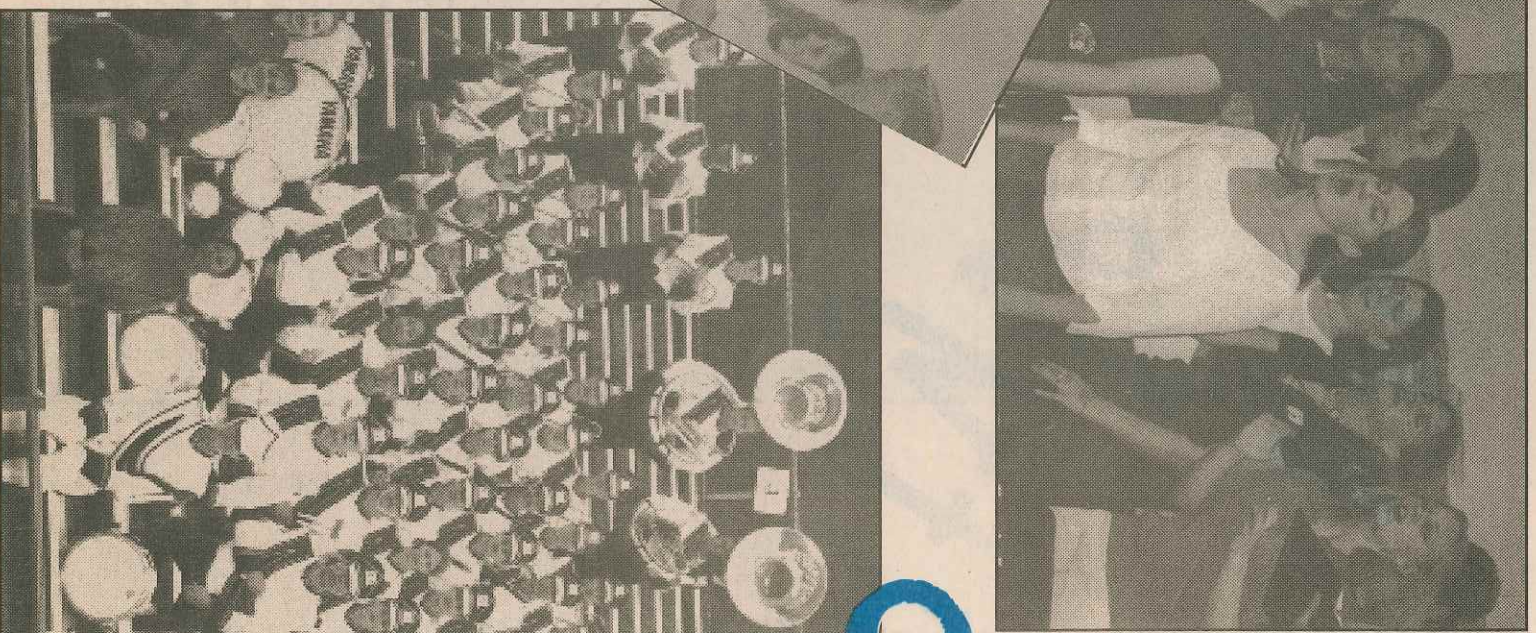
"It's hard at first, but you get used to it. Any average coordinated person can do it."

—Derrick Brazziel, 11



The Personality Show Choir has help from a professional choreographer, who simplifies the dance steps.

All photos by Jen Siomacco



During the year each musical group in the band was in possession of the highly coveted stick, which is



# Drummers

# Drummers

**By Emily Sommerfeldt**  
*Inside Story Editor*

Underneath the pretty smiles and the music, it never seems to start on cue. Drill team works hard to put on an entertaining show that wows the audience.

To learn the many moves for each performance, the team has three practices a week, a change from the five practices every week that they had in the summer. During these practices, the drill team gradually works up to putting the entire dance

## Drill team

together. "We practice and work on specific moves. Then we work on the dance as a whole and junior Kristin Williams. Some of our members are able to learn the moves at a much quicker pace.

"Some people who have had dance in their background pick it up quickly," said Williams.

Learning the moves requires practice and team captains Kristin Foye and Christina Johnson provide the help the girls need.

"The captains are really good in teaching us stuff," said sophomore Jessica Aysanora.

With the varying skill of the girls, the dances can't be too hard. Coaches Alana Stanley and Brandee Stuart keep this in mind when they determine how long it will take for the girls to learn each dance.

"The dance they're working on right now will take about two weeks [to learn] and that's just for the football game, not the competition," said Stuart.

Before performing in a competition, the teams work on perfecting their technique. In preparation, the drill team often has to give up some of their free time to fit in a few extra hours of practice.

"We haven't done it yet this year," said Williams. "But last year, practices would go over an hour."

All the hardwork is due to the teams devotion to their dancing. And it is easy to see in their performances at football games. So instead of taking that half time break to buy food, wait until after the music starts playing - the second time.

Jazz, will be held in the spring. The group is also planning to travel to Florida for a competition. This will require extra

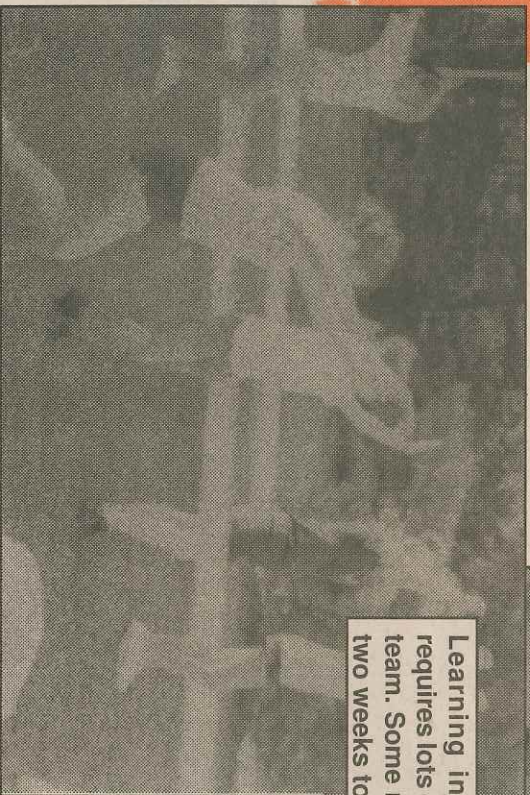
drumming. "The practices and drill [the routines], and when it gets to the game, we play games with it and have a lot of fun," said Benjamin.

Since Pizzazz is an eighth class, all of the practices are held after school from 2:30 - 3:30. This allows the group to dance in the hallways without worrying about interrupting other classes.

The group is under new direction this year, and is now led by Michael Dombrow. He already has high expectations for the girls.

"It's still a fairly new group and we just want to keep increasing

Learning intricate dance moves requires lots of practice for WS's drill team. Some routines can take up to two weeks to learn.



**By Leigh Johnson**  
*Senior Staff Writer*

The all-girls show choir Pizzazz has become more than just singing. Their dance moves are a vital part of their pop and energetic style.

"We do a

lot of show tunes from Broadway so [the dancing] makes it more entertaining for the audience. It makes the music come alive,"

said senior Cari McCluskey.

The two student directors, sophomore Lissa Bellacicco

and senior Ashleigh DeWitt,

along with two other students, are responsible

for learning the dances from a choreographer, John Gonzalez.

They then teach the routines to the rest of the girls.

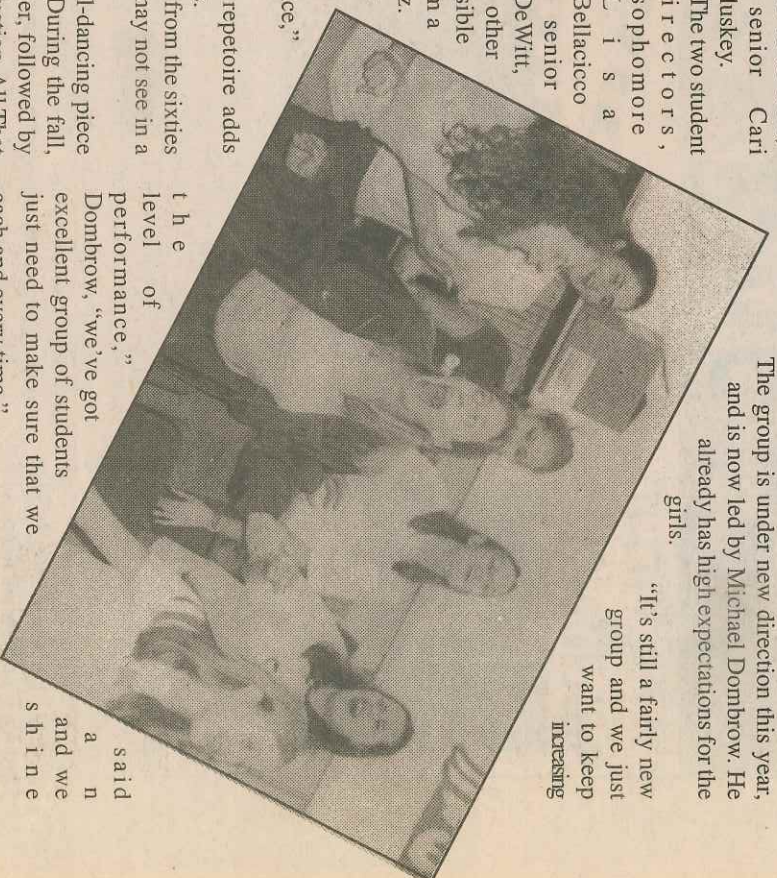
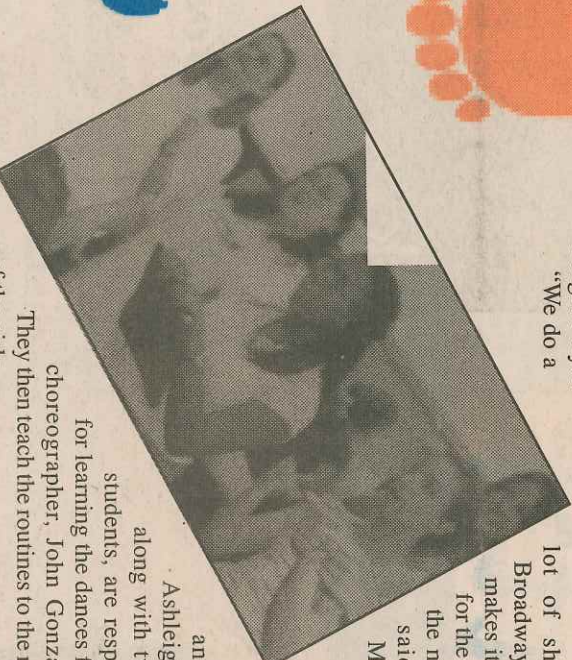
"[Using a choreographer] is a lot more professional. It boosts our level of performance,"

said Bellacicco.

Incorporating dancing into the choir's repertoire adds variety to the song choices and performances.

"It's fun because we get to sing cool songs from the sixties and seventies. It's interesting stuff that you may not see in a choir that's just singing," said DeWitt.

The group is also considering doing an all-dancing piece during one of their performances this year. During the fall, Pizzazz will be hosting an informal chili supper, followed by holiday shows in the winter. Their major production, *All That*



**By Adam Rosen**  
*Viewpoint Assistant*

In band there are many obstacles you have to overcome. In performances the bands feet have to follow the drum majors Niki Adoteye and Rachel Tucker.

You really have to concentrate and stick with the music or the routine timing can be thrown off," said Adam. Band is not just any "race" or "har" activity, it's a sport. The band practice every Tuesday and Thursday at 2:45 to 5:00 on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 to 9:00 on the football field.

"The band team practices more than the football team," said junior Meredith Schindler.

One of the most successful groups in band is the percussion. Most of the people that play percussion also are in indoor drumline. Indoor drumline is coached by Chris Martin. The

## Marching

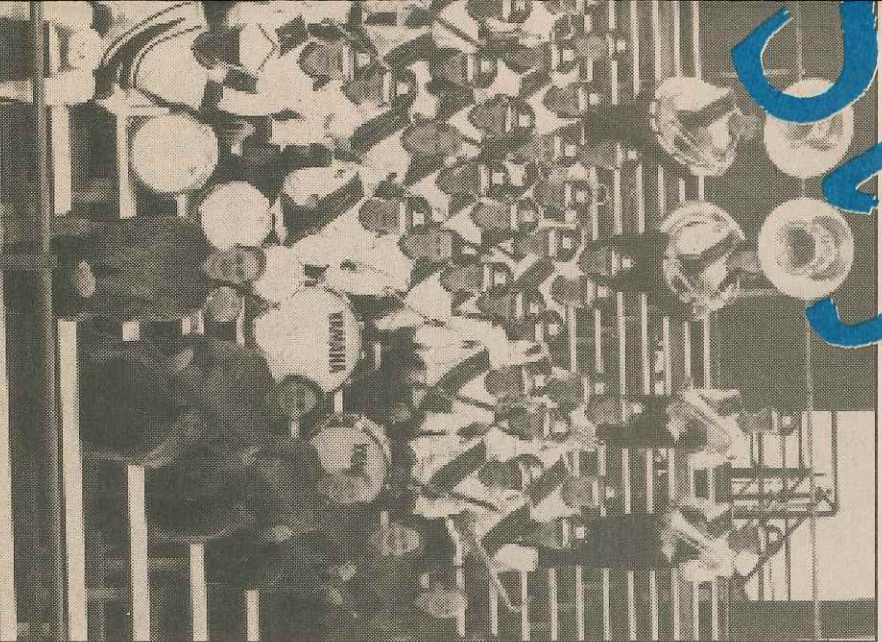
drummers

Indoor drumline team won 2nd place in nationals, losing only to Richmond. In drumline the percussion would work on marching and on drumming techniques. The percussion performs extremely well under coach Martin.

"He is amazing," he is one of the best coaches I have ever had," said sophomore Jackie Wilson.

In preparation for band kids would of have to go to band camp. August 14 from 8:00-9:00 the band would prepare their marching drills. During the camp, Jeans would make the kids work on their marching techniques as if though it was in an actual performance.

"At band camp we work on fundamentals, and for the first two days the drum majors prepare the rookies," said Schindler. During the year each musical group would try to work their hardest for a spirit stick. Right now the tubas are holding on to the stick by working the hardest of all the musical groups. The stick goes everywhere with the band to practices and to tournaments.



Works hard for a spirit stick. Right now the tubas are everywhere with the band.

# Independent movie “Donnie Darko” is oh so disturbing

By Emily Miller

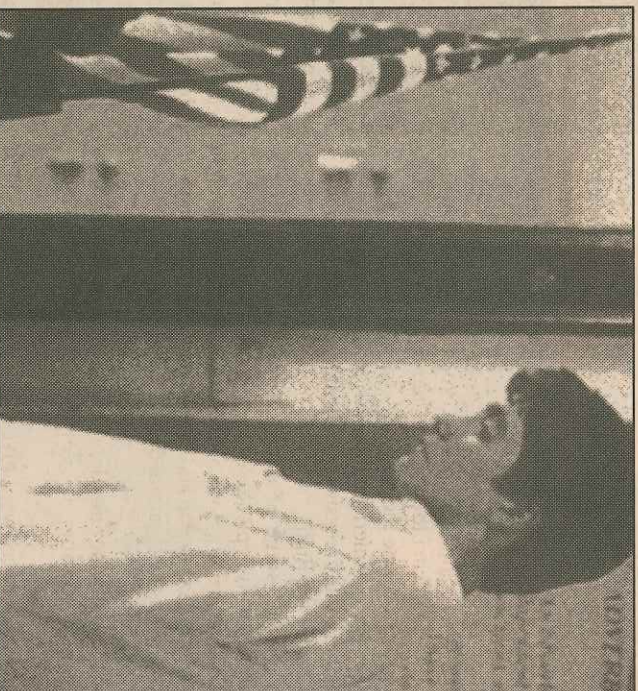
Weekend Editor

The theory holds true. Behind the making of every great movie, is a great director. Twenty-six year old Richard Kelly began his career as a writer-director with what could be the most popular independent film ever made.

Kelly wrote the script of “Donnie Darko” back in 1997, but it didn’t release until 2001. He says it is not a autobiography account, but it does take place in Middlesex Virginia where he is from. Jake Gyllenhaal (October Sky) plays Donnie Darko, a teenager diagnosed with schizophrenia and possesses supernatural powers dealing with time travel. Jenna Malone (Stepmom), Donnie’s girlfriend, and Drew Barrymore, his teacher, both help him realize what he has to do to fulfill his fate. Also, Patrick Swazie is the founder of “Fear Control,” an inspirational movie series about conquering fear, and Noah Wyle (E.R.) is Donnie’s science teacher.

This movie has a surprise twist ending, so some scenes seemed irrelevant until the end.

“After watching the movie the first time it made very little sense to me, but after seeing the ending the entire movie came into play,” said junior Steven Spinosa.



Jake Gyllenhaal tries a dark and challenging role in independent movie “Donnie Darko,” and TV star Noah Wyle plays his supportive physics teacher.

Independently made films are supposed to be low-budget movies to help young inspiring directors get their careers started. Hollywood Media Corporatio

bought IF, so it has connections with major corporations, like the WB. The press covered and advertised the movie well. It got high reviews in the *New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*. The movie was perceived especially well with younger teens.

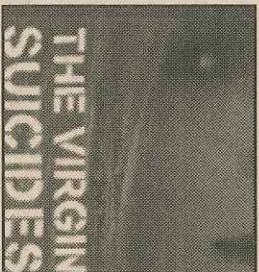
“Donnie Darko is one of the coolest movies I’ve seen this year,” said junior Andrew Rapoza.

Kelly’s success with “Donnie Darko” helps lift his career off to a great start, and he has more work coming. Right now, he said he has six or seven scripts in his head.

“I loved Donnie Darko,” said senior Lindsey Carter, “and I’m looking forward to more movies like it.”

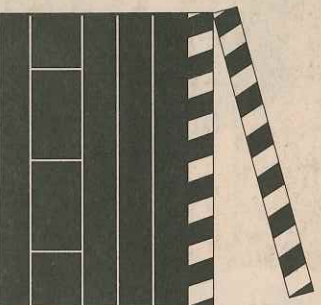
## Oracle Picks

### “The Virgin Suicides”



When 13 year old Ceceilia Lisbon attempts suicide, the Lisbon family soon becomes the focus of their neighborhood’s attention. Through the eyes of local teenage boys, the viewer watches the average 70’s family in “The Virgin Suicides” spiral out of control and affect the lives of everyone around them. Only a few weeks after being released from the hospital, young Ceceilia again attempts to kill herself, but this time is successful. Forced to cope and grieve over the horrifying way their sister met her end, the remaining four Lisbon sisters begin to fall apart. After their daughters death Mr. and Mrs. Lisbon become extremely overprotective and forced to live their lives as recluses.

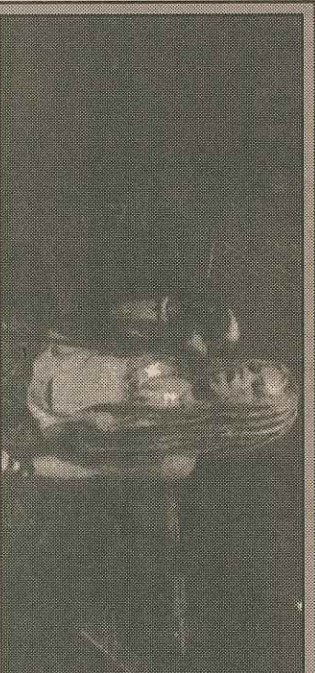
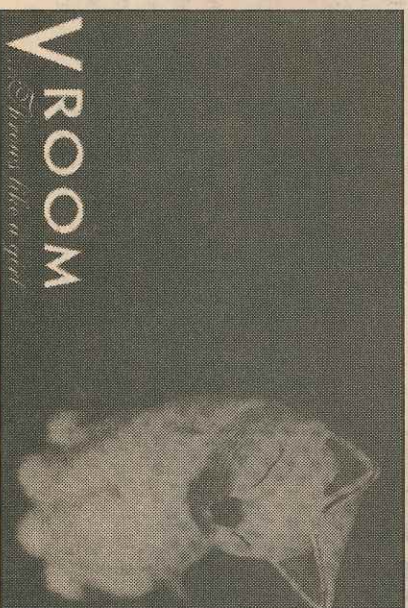
The movie is based on the novel by Jeffrey Eugenides, which captivated Sofia Coppola, who directed the movie. With outstanding performances from Kristen Dunst and Josh Hartnett, the movie is an entertaining and thought provoking tale of teenage tragedy.



### Throws Like A Girl

The world of rock and roll is sometimes hard as rock to break into. It’s full of thousands of lesser known bands that, though they don’t get as much radio play or profit from their art, are just as talented as any other. This band is four guys from Vienna, Virginia, who have spent the past few years traveling around the east coast and promoting their music. The songs are full of powerful lyrics and instrumental

works. And, like popular band P.O.D., they are also Christian based, and are talented enough to make it in the secular world. Though they are not well known, the band is easily accessible, playing tons of local shows and with their albums sold in Borders book stores. WHFS, 99.1 FM, also has been known to play their music when requested. For a taste of this band see their humorous website, [www.vroomrock.com](http://www.vroomrock.com), which is full of video, music clips, tour dates and a list of ways to request their music on the radio.



## Stars stuck in past

By Emily Miller

Weekend Editor

Briney Spears already ruined some of the greatest rock and roll songs ever recorded. Keith Richards probably wanted to get out of his grave and smack her after Spears spat out a version of “I Can’t Get No (Satisfaction).” Then Spears continued with Joan Jet’s “I Love Rock and Roll.” Now she dresses like a hippie destroying everything once wonderful about the ‘60s.

“I thought Briney Spears is supposed to be wearing Abercrombie and Fitch, not bohemian skirt,” said junior Erin York.

Singer Shakira and actress Kate Hudson copy the 60’s as well. Shakira resembles a hippie with her suede pants and oversized belts. Hudson sports a flowered shirt matching her short red skirt topped.

Maybe instead of living in the past, celebrities should be creative and invent a new style.

“Celebrities are so afraid to try something new, so they just

stick to what was once cool,” said senior Sonia Simpson.

Hippie, Bohemian and peasant clothes have slowly been drifting into WS.

“I think it’s cute. It’s comfortable,” said junior Alicia Rollins.

Senior Vanessa Evans works at Contempo Casual where brown hues in peasant shirts are in constant demand.

“I don’t wear them personally, but they do look cute on some people,” said Evans.

Fashion about.com lists some of the biggest fashion trends for teenagers today. Among these are hobo bags. “Rock and roll hobos” are only \$88, “Vintage look hobos” are \$119 and “Designer hobos” are \$750.

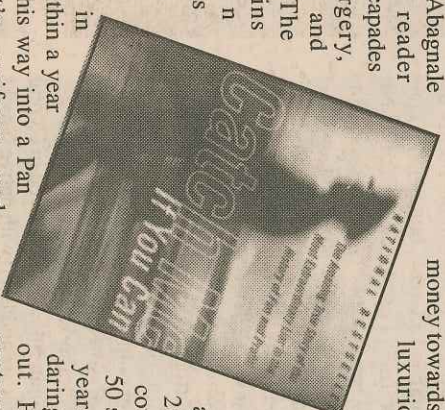
Since these are out of the reasonable price range for WS students, the creative ones make their own bags. Junior Kathleen Prevost made her own bookbag/purse with her mom.

“My mom did most of the work,” said Prevost. “But it’s still cool.”

## Catch Me If You Can

It takes a lot to be known as the best con man in history. But before Frank W. Abagnale was 21 years old he had already received this title. In his gripping autobiography *Catch Me If You Can*, Abagnale leads the reader through escapades of forgery, imposture, and escape. The book begins with h e n Abagnale is 16 years old and discovers his talents in larceny. Within a year he coaxes his way into a Pan Am pilot’s uniform and commands a 707 jet full of 104 unknowing passengers to Rome.

Abagnale’s charades don’t stop here. He also poses as a supervising resident of a hospital, a lawyer all without any professional training. The true tales of Abagnale’s life keep pages turning until two A.M. The reader begins to feel like he



knows Abagnale and starts rooting for him to succeed in his evil ways.

By the time he is 21 he has cashed over \$2.5 million in forged checks. He uses that money towards “fine threads, luxurious lodgings,

[ a n d ]

fantastic

foxes.”

A f t e r

running

from the

authorities in

26 foreign

countries, and all

50 states, for five

years, Abagnale’s

daring escapes run

out. He is finally

captured and taken

into custody. Currently,

Abagnale has changed his ways

and aids the authorities in

capturing other criminal

masterminds.

While many other books have to build up to a dramatic climax, *Catch Me If You Can* shows action in the very first chapter and maintains the suspense until the last page.

—Compiled by Jen Siomacco and Emily Morris

# UK success becomes US phenomenon

By Marianne Shaddrix  
Managing Editor

They sang and America voted... 100 million times. Drawing in millions of anxious viewers each week, "American Idol" was one of summer's biggest hit TV shows.

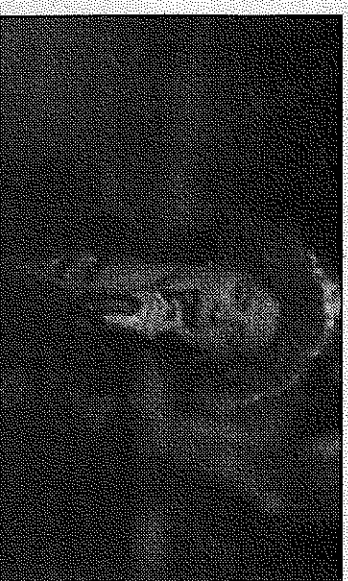
The "American Idol" phenomenon began in the UK as "Pop Idol." In February, 23 year-old William Young instantly gained celebrity status when he was named Britain's Pop Idol.

This summer Fox executives brought the show to the US and gave it a new name.

In seven cities across the country, thousands of talented, and not so talented young adults waited for hours to show off their vocal skills to judges Randy Jackson, Paula Abdul, and Simon Cowell, who have each had many years of experience in the music industry.

Many viewers were shocked by the harsh critiques that came from the judges, especially Cowell.

"When [the contestants] sucked, Simon told them," said senior Amber Snyder.



Though he didn't ultimately win the "American Idol" title, Justin Guarini wowed audiences with his amazing talent and good looks

Others believed his honest remarks are simply an example of the type of criticism the winner would receive once they got involved in the music industry.

"Simon just spoke the truth," said senior Mikiki Martinez.

From the seven auditions held across the country 100,000 eager hopefuls were chosen to come to Hollywood and compete for a chance to win a recording contract with a major record company immediately following the show's finale.

Once the contestants performed again in Hollywood, Abdul, Cowell and Jackson narrowed the competition to only 1000, and later the top 30 contestants. At this point, the viewers became the judges.

Each week "American Idol" fanatics called in to vote for their favorite contestants, ultimately selecting their top 10 picks for the finals.

In the last stage of competition, the 10 finalists performed on live episodes, each with a particular theme. The finalists sang a wide variety of music, everything from 1940's jazz to pop and rock. At the end of the show the phonelines were jammed as fans called in to vote for their favorites.

On the following episode, also live, the contestant with the fewest number of votes was removed from competition.

Though viewers were given the power to choose the newest American Idol, many were shocked each week at the shows results, especially when twenty year-old Tamyra Gray was voted off, wheeling the competition to three.

"[Tamyra] should have gone a lot further than Justin," said Martinez. "She was really good."

On September 3, 14 million Americans tuned into the final sing-off. Kelly Clarkson of Burlington, Texas and Justin Guarini of Pennsylvania performed live in front of



"American Idol" finalist Kelly Clarkson performs for the chance to win a record contract and instant stardom.

a full house at Hollywood's Kodak Theater, the home of the Grammy award show. Abdul, Jackson and Cowell predicted that Clarkson would be voted number one.

In the last five minutes of the program, Hosts Brian Dunkelman and Ryan Seacrest announced that Kelly Clarkson had won, receiving over 40 million votes.

"Kelly has a good voice but she'll probably end up singing the type of music that I don't enjoy, like pop," said junior Jessica Campo.

As promised, Clarkson was named America's newest idol and rewarded with a recording contract. Her single appeared in stores on September 17. A Final 10 compilation CD is due in stores on October 21.

"American Idol" is also seeking to further profit off the shows success by marketing "American Idol" merchandise.

Fox has already planned "American Idol 2."

"I think American Idol was a great way to introduce us to some new and different talent," said Campo

## A big, fat wedding story scores big at the box office

By Priyanka Tandon  
Oracle Editor

June movie listings included "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," "Spider Man" and "Minority Report."

July movie listings included "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," "Men in Black II" and "Austin Powers III."

August movie listings included "My Big Fat Greek Wedding," "Signs" and "XXX."

The low budget film, "My Big Fat Greek Wedding" has beaten all the big budget films and has been in theatres for 22 weeks and at number two at the box office for the last three weeks.

The movie is about a very traditional Greek family. Everyone in the family has always married a Greek, but then the main character, Toula Portokalos, played by Nia Vardolos, wants to marry a non-Greek, and the humor just doesn't stop after that.

"I saw it with a lot of my friends and it was funny and entertaining and true to life," said junior Theresa Ohanion.

The movie appeals to all ages with its intense and endless humor. The movie does make fun of Greeks, but it wasn't exclusively aimed at Greeks.

"It was so funny," said senior Kathy Wager. "I almost peed in my pants."

Freshman Julia Wohlers lived in Cyprus for three years and lived with native Greeks

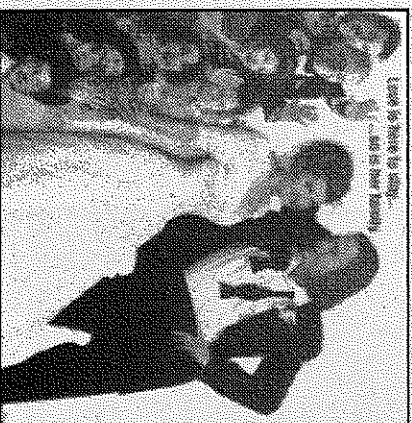
for three years.

"It was so typical of Greeks," said Wohlers. "The movie portrays them like they really are, and it showed how they interact with their families really well."

The movie started as a one-woman stage show performed by Vardolos. Rita Wilson, Tom Hanks's wife partially Greek herself, saw the show and decided to produce a movie.

"I basically took every Greek wedding I've ever been to, including mine, and on a scale from one to ten, turned it up to an 11," said Vardolos.

The film has already grossed \$110.7 million and has broken the mold in the field of low budget films.



"My Big Fat Greek Wedding" spent 22 weeks at number one of the box office this summer.

## All you need is love... and a copy of "Moulin Rouge"

By Eugenie Ko  
Senior Staff Writer

I have the video, DVD, and both soundtracks. I know every line of every scene and I belt out the songs while I clean my room. My friends call me obsessed, a fanatic, hopeless romantic, and let's not forget, nerd-pants. I guess for me, watching "Moulin Rouge" for the 50 millionth time is as normal as brushing my teeth.

Granted, it is a musical so it may not appeal to everyone. But for those of us who crave a little break from reality and enjoy a little unusual creativity, "Moulin Rouge" is a great choice.

Director, producer, and co-writer Baz Luhrman is the genius behind it all. "Moulin Rouge" is the third and final movie in his Red Curtain Trilogy. Also included in this trio are "Strictly Ballroom" (1992) and "Romeo and Juliet" (1996).

Luhrman takes an imaginative but different approach while creating each movie in the trilogy. "Strictly Ballroom" tells its story through dance, "Romeo and Juliet" focuses on the Shakespearean vernacular, and "Moulin Rouge" uses the universal language of music.



"Moulin Rouge," starring Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor, is the third and final movie in his Red Curtain Trilogy.

Luhrman recognizes that movie plots have become more and more predictable and lack that special element of surprise. He responds to this by adopting more theatrical techniques; he focuses more on the "how" of movies rather than simply concentrating on the plot.

What sets "Moulin Rouge" apart from other movies is the unique music. The soundtrack is almost entirely made up of popular songs that convey the movie's message: "The greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love, and be loved in return." Sounds corny, but when you throw in an operatic version of Madonna's "Like a Virgin," and a tango dancing Argentinian singing a sultry "Roxanne," the movie has a great mix of fun and drama.

The set of the Moulin Rouge itself is an amazing feat. The entire movie was shot indoors, including the few shots of a turn-of-the-century Paris. Luhrman's incorporation of computer graphics and animation make "Moulin Rouge" an interesting step out of the norm.

Music lovers, sappy romance enthusiasts, and theater buffs: this is the movie to rent! Not only are the creativity and effort put forth by Baz Luhrman entertaining, but Ewan McGregor is just too gosh darn cute.

### PSAT / SAT PREP

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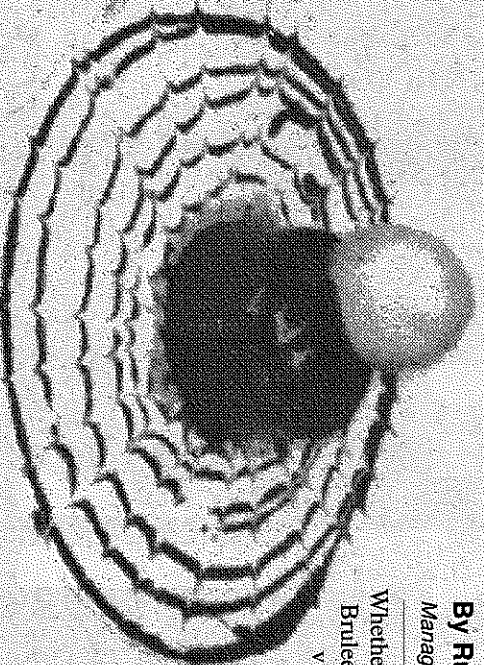
703-425-7656

\*Private instruction is available on a space available basis\*

# A night in Old Town

*Pick a dessert, any dessert*

**By Fuchika Malhotra**  
*Managing Editor*



French desserts, like chocolate mousse, are one of the French delicacies served in Old Town.

Whether you prefer a fancy French creme Brulee or a plain, old fashioned scoop of vanilla ice cream, Old Town Alexandria has all the desserts.

"If I was being spontaneous I'd go there just for dessert," said junior Emily Payne.

Other people do not go to Old Town just for dessert though.

"Most people go to Old Town to eat dinner and then go to an ice cream shop," said senior Mahiely Zurita.

The Scoop Grill & Homemade Ice Cream offers old fashioned style ice cream while Ben & Jerry's offers over 50 not so traditional flavors such as Chunky Monkey and Fish Food.

"I love Ben & Jerry's ice cream," said German teacher

Christine Bonheim. "It's the best souffle aux choix (La Bergeries ice cream there is.)"

Along with ice cream, Ben & Jerry's serves Vermont frozen yogurt, fresh fruit, fruit juices and sorbet. Because of such a long list of desserts and beverages, Ben & Jerry's fits the dessert cravings of many people and is usually very busy.

"If Ben & Jerry's is crowded then I'll go to the Scoop Grill & Homemade Ice Cream, because there's more places to sit down," said Zurita.

Old Town has more than just ice cream for dessert. La Madeleine and La Bergerie are two French bakery/cafes that serve french desserts like le galeau des prelates (Chocolate mousse cake) or les

souffles aux choix (La Bergeries famous souffles).

French desserts, such as la creme brulee, are also offered at Cafe's Bistro, an Italian Bistro with a French flair, where all the desserts are made from scratch.

If eating dessert and walking at the same time are one too many things to do, then just eat dessert after dinner at one of Old Town's restaurants like the Chart House.

"The Chart House has great desserts," said Bonheim. "The lemon meringue pie is great."

From pies to ice cream, Springfield is not a match for Old Town's variety of desserts.

"It's not like what you get everyday," said Zurita. "It's different."

## Shop 'til you drop in stores of wonder

**By Nick Nelson**  
*Sports Editor*

When the hassles of school, parents and life in general get to be too much to handle, then a trip to Alexandria can be a perfect escape. It costs a mere \$2.50 and can be a great way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

From art to music, books to decorations, it is impossible to find a store that's not out of the ordinary.

Artcraft is just a store that's filled with unique items. American artisans create every single piece of merchandise inside. Owned by Adam Winer, Winer's mother started a second location three years ago. Business has always been good for

Artcraft, but, according to Winer, "the rate of growth has lessened compared to before it happened. It has always held steady though."

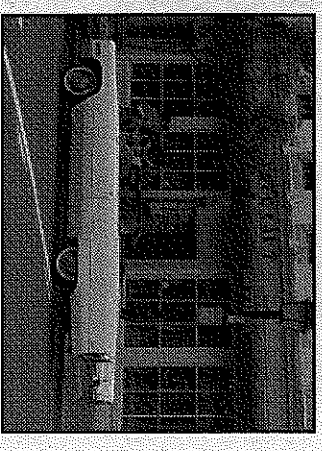
Despite the target market of women between 25 and 55 years of age, people of all ages and gender can enjoy this particular store.

After searching for a wacky addition to your room, stop by the Record Mart on 217 King Street. This is a very unique music store in that they still sell actual records, as well as CDs. If you still own a tuntable and love bands like The Doors, The Jimi Hendrix Experience, Led Zeppelin and the Grateful Dead, this place will definitely hit the spot.

Finally, The Pineapple, Inc. is, in a sense, a supplement to the aforementioned Artcraft. Paintings, sculptures, doorknockers and other interesting items can be found here. The items are elegant and a bit pricey, but are all tasteful and never gaudy.

Only a sampling of stores have been mentioned here, so it is left up to the customer to discover all that Alexandria has to offer. The stores are never too expensive, and can complement any interest.

The Artcraft is an expensive store on King Street that sells original homemade crafts. The Record Mart sells priceless records and CDs for cheap.



Nick Nelson



Nick Nelson

## Alexandria serves up a restaurant variety

**By Heidi Stiligoj**  
*Features Editor*

The wind is blowing and the kilt is up. Scotland Yard seemed a little too friendly, so I decide to continue my journey.

I ventured into Old Town on a Friday night with my friend Rachel on a mission to find the perfect restaurant. We had no problem passing Scotland Yard, the first place to draw our attention, due to some inappropriate circumstances.

We walked along King Street under the dim lit street lamps and oak trees and past the couples holding hands and reading menus posted on brick walls. It was a peaceful atmosphere at 7:30 P.M., except for the occasional show-off in his Mercedes convertible blasting 95.5.

Thai Peppers, located on 1743 King St., seemed appropriately friendly, so we decided to step in. Colorful Christmas lights outline the windows, and the bar, and traditional Thai music plays softly in the background. It's a small place perfect for a quiet evening. It didn't get our cash, however, since I don't exactly crave Thai food after an interesting experience I once had with my father while eating at a Thai

restaurant in New York City.

An hour later I was now desperate to dive into any somewhat appealing restaurant, to escape my hunger. I almost couldn't resist the grand smell of Popeye's as I noticed Rachel pulling me away.

After stopping in a few shops to distract our hunger, we came up on a courtyard full of fountains and benches. American flags, hanging from lampposts, blew softly in the breeze. A saxophonist laid out his case for money well-deserved.

Clearly this is a spot for romance.

And what better way to start that romance than to eat at Two-Nineteen Restaurant, located conveniently on 219 King Street. Visitors can eat in the dining room or on the outside terrace bordering the sidewalk. Trees are decorated with

white Christmas lights, and white candles accompany the tables. The menu consists of mostly shrimp and chicken, as well as a few specialties. The environment was a bit fancy for us, as well

as our wallets, and seemed like a couples-only type of place. We were forced to move on.

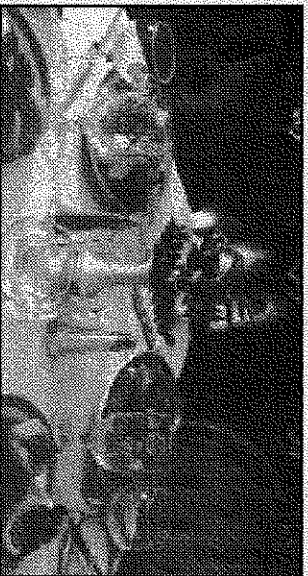
About one block down, is the Fish Market Restaurant. It holds a short, narrow balcony which barely sticks out over the sidewalk and only holds five tables. To occupy one of those tables seems like a charm, as long as you don't knock the fish

bowl over the balcony into the doorman's head. People are seated inside as well, and the waiting line makes up half of Old Town. Fish Market Restaurant is full of every kind of person. Men in button-down shirts, a teenage girl in a Britney-top with her confused looking boyfriend, and of

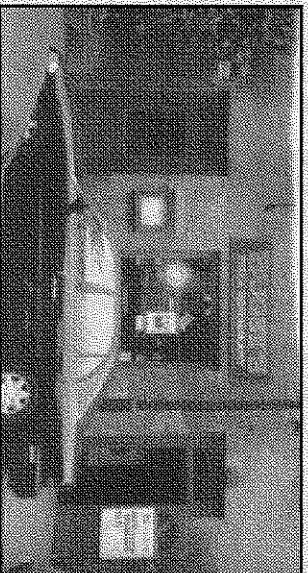
course, the average family are just a few examples. That Saturday night its main audience was a motorcycle gang. The only reason we didn't stop there was the reminder that we don't like seafood.

Next stop: the riverside. Restaurants, artists, and musicians fill the docks. Boats decorated with Christmas lights cruised by as their passengers waved to those standing on the dock. We would have stayed, but the specialty was seafood. We were forced to backtrack.

We made our way back to Il Porto located right on the corner of 121 King Street. The restaurant provides many tables, and we were seated right away. The hanging lanterns, shutters on the windows, and a fireplace made of cobblestone set off an old-fashioned mood. The Italian artwork and waiters give the feeling of being in another land. An Italian man stands outside selling roses, adding yet another touch of romance to the scene. We now were in the mood for Homecoming. The four restaurants we observed that night were all beautiful. Each featured reasonable to expensive prices. And for those of you with less pocket change, well, there's always Popeye's.



The Two-Nineteen restaurant specializes in Creole food.



Bugsy's is a family-oriented pizza parlor.

Emily Morris



La Bergerie is famous for its seafood and souffles.

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# Basketball brought down after long time at the top US embarrassed in world finals with loss to Argentinian team

Adam Rosen  
Viewpoint Assistant

Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, and Larry Bird all played for the US Dream Team in 1992. That year the Dream Team won the United States gold in the 1992

Olympics in Spain.

Since then other stars on the dream team like Baron Davis, Michael Finley, and Ben Wallace who led this years United States Dream Team to nothing but elimination. The United States finished sixth out of the sixteen team field.

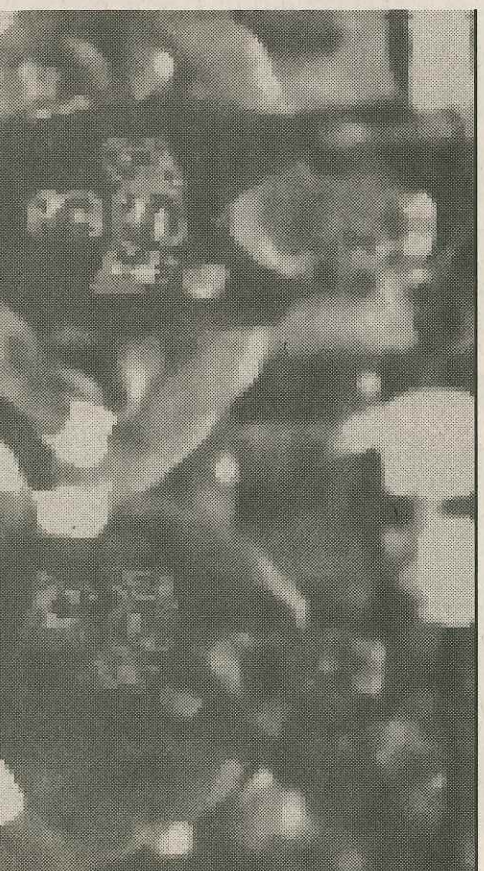
This was the first time ever that a dream team with NBA players on it lost. One explanation for the defeat is that stars such as Kobe Bryant, Jason Kidd, and Ray Allen were hurt and could not participate for the United States Dream team.

This team consisted of more of second tier stars such as Raef LaFrentz, Jermaine O'Neal, and Andre Miller instead of the first rate NBA players usually representing the United States. Ever since the team from 1992 won gold for the US, dream teams have gradually been getting worse and worse.

"It seems like none of the top premier players in the NBA want to play for the



Michael Finley was left with plenty to think about after the loss to Spain.



Paul Pierce and Ben Wallace look shocked after the Dream Team's loss to Argentina. The US was expected to finish better in this year's competition, but ended in sixth.

Dream Team like Kobe Bryant, Jason Kidd, and Ray Allen," said junior Matt Gibson.

The United States would have extended their 58 game winning streak but they lost to Argentina 87-80. 15,424 people watched the United States lose at home to defending champion Yugoslavia, silver medalist Argentina, and to even fifth-place Spain.

The United States was defeated by there three point shooting. Other Europeans teams had players who could consistently hit the three like Dirk Nowitzki of Germany and Predrag Stojakovic of Yugoslavia. European players are known for being tall and able to shoot the ball.

The next competition will take place in the 2004 Olympics where the US hopes to show better.

## Hail to the Redskins..but not the chief

By Russ Waddell

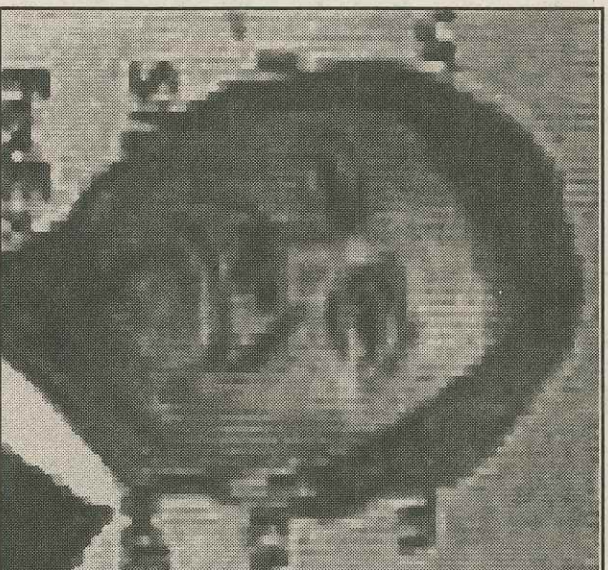
Oracle Editor

Once every few days I won't hear anything about Steve Spurrier in the news. Most of the time, though, he's a step or two above Dubya on the ladder of importance. If the hype is any indication, things will be different this year in Redskinsville.

The team got a new coach. Again. But this time, the coach cost \$25 million. And this time there's some chance he'll last more than a season. He brought with him the "fun and gun" offense. He's never coached in the NFL. He stripped naked and rolled down Capital Hill after the Skins beat the Cardinals. Well, he didn't really do that, but he did have Danny Wuerffel kick. That deserves a round of applause in my book.

The real reason Steve Spurrier is cool is because he's going to make the NFL more like "NFL Blitz." The plan is simple: no defense, go deep. Never, ever run the ball. Down with the lead left: long live the triple-reverse flea-flicker quarterback throwback.

Coaches with chutzpah make the game more



Coach Spurrier: looking worse every game.

interesting to watch, and Steve-o's middle name might as well be "spunk." I like it.

At least not after the season opener. After the defensive debauchery against the Eagle, however, "Spunk" should be "spanked."

As Thomas Boswell pointed out in *The Washington Post*, the Redskins seldom make it to the playoffs after losing even just one home game by thirty points. Actually,

### Commentary

the Redskins haven't made it to the post season after losing a home game by thirty since 1937.

If anyone can defy 65 years of history, it's Steve "Spanked" Spurrier (ha ha ha ha).

Nobody knows where Spurrier is going to take the team. For \$25 million, watching the next five years of "Skins pigskin better be as good as playing "Blitz." Then again, it's not my money. I don't really care what happens at all. Way to go Spurrier!?"

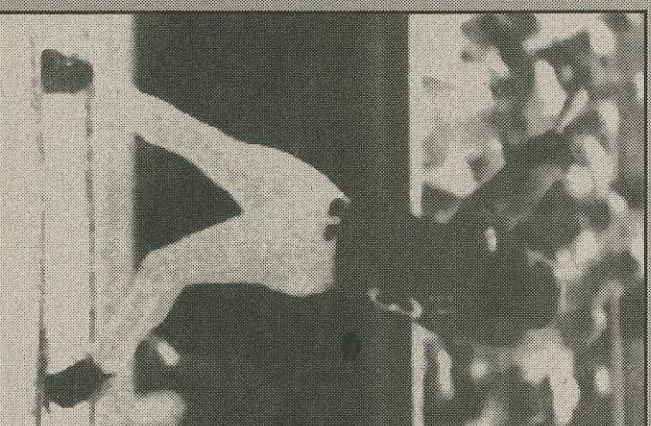
## Players don't deserve more

Nick Nelson  
Sports Editor

Random fact of the day: if the player's association had chosen to strike, it would have been the third one in 21 years. The only thing more disgusting than players depriving the fans of nine innings of baseball every day is the fact that these millionaires are asking for more money. Hey, don't get me wrong, plenty of them deserve to be paid well, such as the Alex Rodriguez's and Sammy Sosa's of the baseball world. They go out each game play for last place teams every year not necessarily because they have to, but because they want to. Not because it's their job, but because it's fun for them. They're not in it for the money; in fact Sosa donates buckets of his yearly salary to charities in the Dominican Republic.

The thing is, if you're getting between \$5,000,000 and \$20,000,000 to go out and hit a ball with a bat, shouldn't you actually be good at it?

"I don't think most players deserve



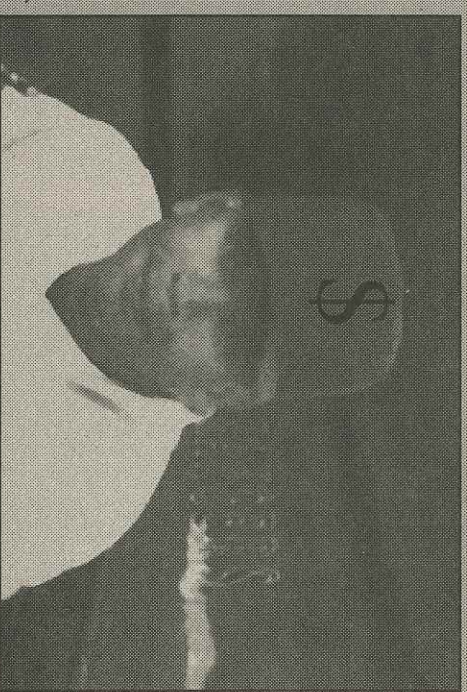
Ken Griffey, Jr. is another one of those greedy baseball players with nothing better to do than whine about his salary.

that much money. I think the ones that are good, like Barry Bonds and Alex Rodriguez deserve what they make because they can back it up on the field."

said freshman Dan Finerfoc

Now lets compare the performance of a couple of these players. Alex Rodriguez has a \$22,000,000 salary for 2002. Through September 15, he has hit a league leading 54 home runs, 134 runs batted in and has yet to miss a game this season. He makes a case for deserving the money.

Now, on the total opposite side of the spectrum is Ken Griffey, Jr. Griffey has played only sixty games this season with seven home runs. His 2002 salary is \$8,557,223. Now I'm all for paying a



The players' strike devastated the game and showed many of the players' true colors.

player \$8.5 million dollars a season if he can go out and produce every single day. But when a guy has missed 88 of 148 games, why do the Reds pay such an injury prone "slugger" millions of dollars to do little more than wear the jersey?

So next time you sit down to watch nine innings of pro baseball, pay close attention to every player on the field. Examine his performance and ask yourself: "Does this guy really deserve everything he earns?"

# Spartans run towards state titles

By Priyanka Tandon

Oracle Editor

With strong senior captains, both the girls and boys cross country teams are looking towards the state title.

The girls team has six senior captains, Angie Arabia, Emily Hatch, Huma Husain, Meredith Nitzberg, Kelly Ann Osborn and Jen Powers.

"We're very pleased to have a strong senior leadership this year," said girls cross country coach Ed Linz.

On September 21 the teams went to a Virginia Tech Invitational.

The boys finished ninth out of 19 teams, and senior captain Jeff Day finished third overall. Day competed with John Cruise, one of the best runners in the country.

"I led the first mile, but it was too fast for me," said Day. "From that point on my legs hurt. But it was a good race."

The girls finished fifth out of 20 teams. The varsity had some bad luck when Husain got sick, and Osborn was disqualified.

Freshman Rosemarie Kelley did exceptionally well by finishing in ninth

place.

At the Monroe Park Invitational on September 4, where the girls were awarded first place. Husain did exceptionally well; she received ninth out of about 100 runners.

"The course was interesting; it was new," said Nitzberg.

The first six runners only had about a minute in between, demonstrating a strong team.

The varsity boys lost first place by only one point and Day won first place in the whole race.

"He's got a real cross country mentality," said boys coach Vic Kelbaugh.

There are many promising young runners on both teams. On the girls team sophomores Andrea Delgado, Robbie Nitzberg and Carry Carfagno have excellent potential. Junior Steven Tobin, sophomores Dan Beale and Stefan Cecelski, and freshman Chris Benton have shown strength as well.

"I believe we have all the talent and heart to win states," said Husain. "But it's going to take a lot of hard work."



Captains Jeff Day and John Cook run in search of a State Championship.

Adam Buckley

## Team expects good results in rebuilding year

By Evan Anderson

Senior Staff Writer

Fall has come, and with it a multitude of new sports seasons. Another shot at victory. Another shot at glory.

One team with ambitions for victory is the varsity field hockey team. With a fresh coach, only in her second year, and a strong new team, they hope their prospects are better than ever. A young team can be a liability, but they make up for it.

"We have good team unity," said senior Brin Lukens. "We measure up to some of the [rival] teams pretty well."

Working well together is critical out on the field. Teammates cannot concentrate only on their own performance, but have to constantly look at the state of the team as a whole. This is necessary to maintain coordination out on the field.

Fortunately, working together is something that the team is skilled at.

"When we get motivated and play together as a team," said senior co-captain Marybeth Sciarretta.

Behind the team is their coach, Shannon Matheny.



Jen Starnocco

Junior Amanda Neff fish fights for the ball in a game against Lake Braddock, which the Spartans lost.

It is her second year, and she has worked hard to build up the team. Training under her is not easy, but the results are worth it.

"She's hard, but she's earned our respect," said senior Alex Grillo.

Matheny is also pleased with their progress this year. "We are pretty competitive against most teams," said Matheny. "We're very young this year. It's really a rebuilding year. I'm pleased where we are right now."

Of course, the team not only faces challenges from within, but from others as well. The competition is shaping up to be tough, but certainly conquerable with the right approach.

The key to success is the ability to analyze an opponent. If the team is to win, it must be able to adapt to its opponents and not just stick to a rigid strategy.

"Every team has their own strengths," said assistant varsity coach Colleen O'Kelly. "It's just knowing how to play against all the teams."

No easy task, but not an impossible one. The team is currently 2-4, and their September 24 game against Hayfield was a great example of what the team is capable of doing.

The Spartans dominated the first half, and most of the second half, but with only two minutes left in the game, Hayfield tied up the game, 2-2.

Although the team lost with a final score of 3-2, they never gave up, taking the game past double overtime to strokes, similar to penalty kicks in soccer, where they were defeated by one stroke.

The team is currently ranked number six in the district, but hopes to improve their standings.

## Volleyball looks to improve on 2-14 year

By Michael Arai

Viewpoint Editor

With hard work and practice, the WS volleyball team is setting in motion the possibility of a great season.

"I think we have a solid team," said senior captain Michelle Anderson. "Everybody can play volleyball."

This year, the team has a record of six wins and two losses, but have high expectations for the remainder of the season due to strong players and a will to win. This, however, is not their only goal.

"I want to go and be one of the top five teams," said junior Ashleigh Wesche.

The team fell in a close match to both Lake Braddock and Robinson 13-15 in all three sets. The team also played Hayfield and won all three sets.

"They [Lake Braddock and Robinson] have strong teams and good hitters," said Anderson.

Despite this, the team remains optimistic and recognizes the need to learn from their mistakes and the tactics of their opponents. The team also sees the need for

improvement in their play.

"Our serving [needs improving]," said Anderson. "We need to get our serves in."

Among these improvements, some on the team wish they could change one quality on the team.

"We definitely need some more height on the team," said Anderson. "If [is] one of our biggest obstacles."

**"I think we have a solid team."**

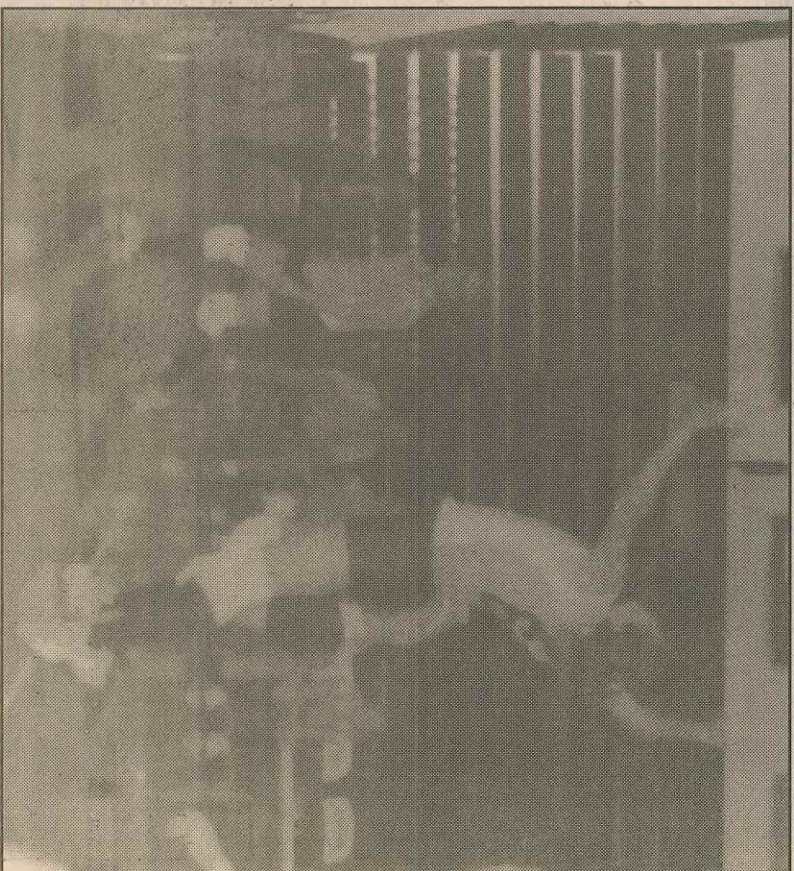
—Michelle Anderson,  
senior

This is not the only hurdle in the teams way to success.

"I think we just need to learn to work together by getting to know each other better," said Wesche.

Beside these changes, though, the team believes they have many good qualities to lead them to victory.

"Diversity [is the best aspect of the



Emily Morris

Michelle Anderson looks on as Dianna Massie goes up for a spike in a victory against Annandale. This win put their total over last years 2 victory season.

team because]," said Wesche. "We have The one change the team truly believes in is beating last year's record of only two wins and fourteen losses.

"I think it [the record] is going to be much different [from last year]," said Anderson. "I think we just work well together."

# Russ' is ready for some change in names...

By Russell Waddell

Oracle Editor

The winds of change are upon us. They blow like a warm spring breeze, piercing the bitter cold of September. They waft across the parking lot, gently tossing about a pink cafeteria tray, freed forever from the oppression of a big gray rolling trash can.

The wind of change blows right up to room 215 and the Oracle office. The wind symbolizes the end. The end of an era. When the column becomes the legend.

"Russ's Ramblings" needs a make-over. I don't want to ramble any more. I want quality commentary. Good, old fashioned humor writing. Don't get me wrong, a change in the name won't mean that I start to slip.

In fact, I expect that the quality will increase as I ramble less. The problem is that once I have a direction, the name "Rambling" will be ridiculous. It just won't fit.

It's up to you, loyal readers, to find a name that fits. You've stuck by me for a year now, and it's time for you to do your part. Writing a column is not easy. I bust my butt trying to be funny and what does it cost you? Nothing. The time has come to pay.

I could easily come up with a good name myself, but then I wouldn't be able to have contact with my fans. It's all about the fans. Without you guys, I would be nowhere. Seriously, I feel so lucky to be so loved. Like, to know that I'm so really, really, ridiculously good-looking makes me feel all warm inside. Uh, did I say good-looking? I meant humble. Really, really, ridiculously humble.

So you have your challenge. Cut loose. Let the creative juices flow. Jot down an idea on our handy-dandy "Oracle instant column renaming submission slip," cut it out, and drop it by Room 215. Submissions are due October 31.

Thank you for your time.

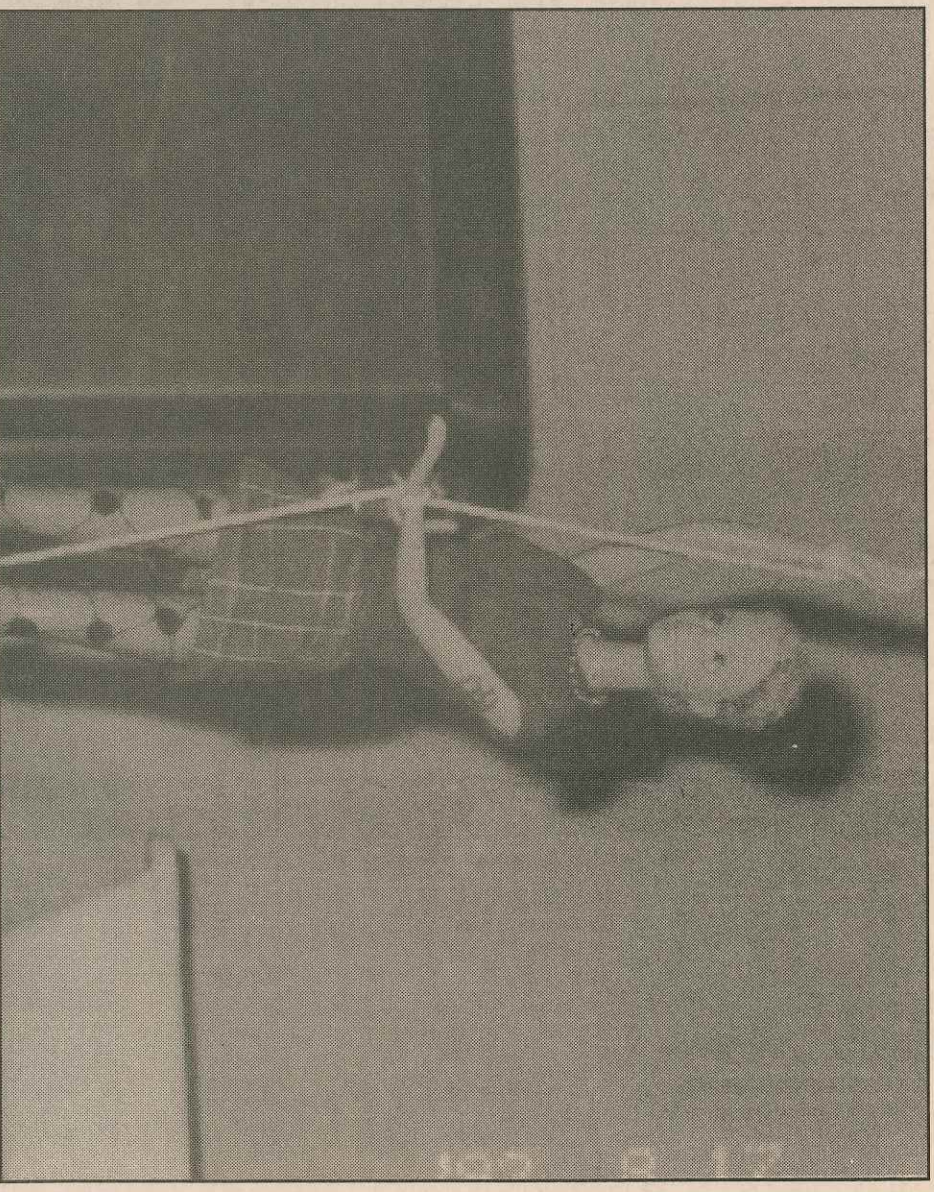
Oracle instant column renaming submission slip

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Fifth Period Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Name for article: \_\_\_\_\_



Here's our cutline, Punk rock Barbie takes a trip on the wild side to see if she can find any connections with Tarzan. Well if you can write anything funny, make sure it's clean, but send them in on a sheet of paper with your name and we'll add it into the paper next issue. So if you have any ideas that are funny, or just plain dumb that we can use... well send them in and I'll use them.

## Did you know...

- Cross country won three of four team titles at Mid-Atlantic cross country Classic? The boys varsity took second in the fourth trailing by only one point of the leader.
  - Jeff Day set a course record at the Mid-Atlantic cross country Classic with a time of 16:27 in the 3.1 mile course?
  - The Varsity football team took Centreville to overtime in a 38-31 loss?
  - Centreville is 23-4 in the past two years with a state championship.
  - 11% of the people in the world are left handed? (That means that 89% are right handed for all those people who failed algebra)
  - The average smell weighs 760 nanograms?
  - Brain waves can be used to run an electric train?
  - Two golf carts drive around the parking lot everyday?
- Compiled by Denis Ing

# October/November

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday/Sunday
					6
seniors writing essay, career center 7:30- 2:15pm	Field Hockey v. Annandale	Special education, career center 7-9		Spartans Fball @ Robinson	Spartans Fball @ TC- 1:30 Redskins v. Titans
14	15	16	17	18	19
COLUMBUS DAY	Spartan games 7:30@stadium	Mr. Spartan 7:30 @ the auditorium	Freshman fundraiser @ Mcdonald's	Homecoming Parade-4 Homecoming game v. West Potomac	Homecoming Dance
21	22	23	24	25	26
College night @ Hayfield			Volleyball v. West Potomac	Spartans Fball v. Hayfield-senior night	Auditorium blackout
28	29	30	31	1	2
			Halloween	Spartans Fball @ Westfield	Chimaya mission, spartan hall 10-1
					3
					27
					Counting Crows@Smith Skins V. Center Indianapolis
					20 Redskins @ Green Bay College fair at Fair Oaks mall