



THE

RACCLE

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West Springfield High School 6100 Rolling Road Springfield, Virginia 22152

One door closes and another opens Dobson retires and Mukai moves to Thomas Jefferson

By Jenny Taylor
Sports Editor

The past four years of WS athletics have nearly always been associated with its Director of Student Activities, Mike Dobson.

Dobson came to WS in 2002, a turbulent year for Spartan athletics. 29 varsity soccer players had recently been suspended for alcohol-related violations and the basketball program was under investigation for alleged recruiting abuses. When the current DSA Tod Chappell announced his retirement, Dobson was recommended by the county to fill the vacant position.

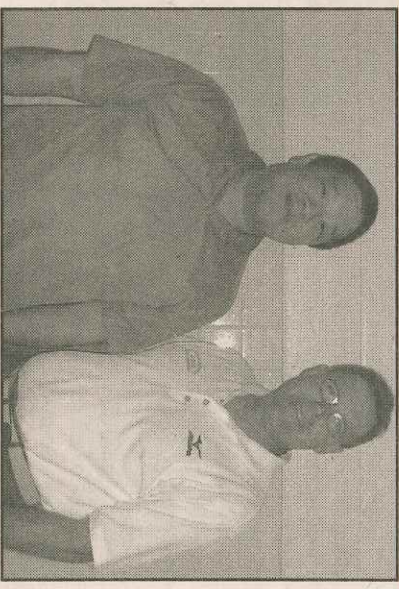
"It was a good career move four years ago," said Dobson. "The opportunity was open and I fit the situation well."

Dobson began his career coaching at Centreville HS. In 1995, he was named girls cross country coach of the year by *The Washington Post* after leading the Wildcats to a Virginia AAA state championship.

"I coached for 20 years at Centreville," said Dobson. "I was given the opportunity to become an AD [athletic director] assistant there, so I tried it and I liked it."

Dobson then transferred to Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, where he continued his work as assistant Athletic Director.

After arriving at WS, Dobson advocated that Spartan athletes represent themselves to the best of their abilities. Since then, the school has excelled athletically. Nearly 30 Spartans have been honored as first team All Met members by *The Washington Post* in the past four years. Highlights of Dobson's career at



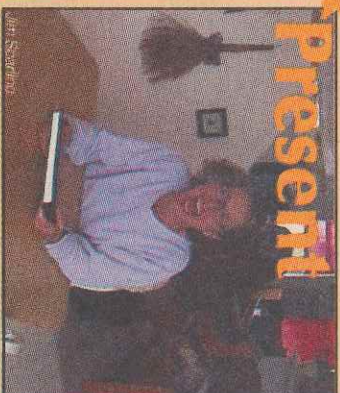
Sara Kofahl, Mike Mukai, and the Director of Student Activities, Mike Dobson, will not be returning to WS next year.

WS include the signing of standout athletes such as Laura Haskins, Marshall Ausberry, Pat Carroll, Steven

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Sparling showed his wife the yearbook and e-mailed photos of the cover to both his and his wife's siblings who are WS alumni. "I was surprised when Mr. Sparling told me that his wife was the Homecoming queen in the photo we chose for our cover," said *Olympian* Editor Junior Kristin McGregor. "We didn't want a picture of ants on a field; we wanted a picture up close and personal with a lot of emotion. Sparling's wife has that."



Jim Sparling is a substitute history student who knows WS well. A '69 graduate of WS, Sparling always finds a way to share stories of the past. When *The Olympian* Editors were selecting photos for the cover of the 2006 yearbook commemorating the 40th anniversary of WS, they wanted pictures that displayed emotion. No one knew that 1971 Homecoming Queen Tina Foster, featured on the cover, is also Tina Sparling, Sparling's wife.

Bands fight for first

By Nicole Simpson
Entertainment Editor

Five heartbreaks resulted in choosing the contestants of Battle of the Bands, but what a battle it was. Friday June 2nd proved to be a night of priceless energy, more than a few aching eartrums, and was filled with surprises.

Keith Owens and the Guitar Ensemble officers weren't too picky in choosing who would compete this year.

"It didn't matter what style they were," said Owens. "As long as they captured that style well."

The judges, compiled of all local professionals, including local private teachers, and a guitarist from a band named Boogieclawg, came up with some

shocking and slightly controversial results. Putting the well-known senior band, The Supreme Quartet third, Springs Final Hour second and Puppet, a band made up of completely

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Senior Max Brooks and Junior Eric Highfill perform at Battle of the Bands.

SOLs create headaches

By Zohra Alnoor
Senior Staff Writer

Three weeks ago, 500 students filed into their assigned classrooms or labs to take their third period SOLs.

After being given their directions, students tried to log on to their accounts but many failed. Only a handful were able to get through the SOL testing program, TestNav, hosted by NCS Pearson. Even the few of those who logged in could not even finish their test.

"Every time we clicked on [the program] it wouldn't pop up and we had to restart the computers a bunch of times," said junior Raquel Carrera.

Students were confused and annoyed by the technical difficulties wanting to know what the dilemma was. "It was a waste of two hours of my life," said Carrera.

As students sat in their assigned classrooms, some mingled, while others were forced to keep quiet for 120 whole minutes. Teachers tried to keep the kids calm while administrators rushed to repair the issues.

"There was a problem with the group policy settings at WS," said principal Dr. David Smith. "We called four assistants centrally to fix the problem, but when they tried while testing, it made the problem worse."

Though the problem affected the tests of 150 to 200 students on Monday morning, the rest of the SOL testing week went by smoothly. While there can be failures to load the TestNav program online, there are rewards with this high-tech testing tool.

"We could get people who missed one or two questions, and have them taking the test the next Wednesday when

it's fresh in their head, instead of taking [the test] in October," said Smith. Besides being able to retake the on-line tests if they do not pass, students can receive their test results the week after their test, versus getting the results towards the end of the summer.

"When it works properly, you get immediate feedback and results," said assistant principal Becky Brandt. Evidently, there are both advantages and disadvantages to taking the SOL test on-line.



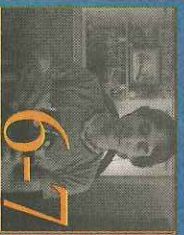
Sophomore Heather Campbell concentrates during her SOL test.

Students throughout WS experienced technical difficulties, causing their tests to fail, or even not start in the first place.

"If there's a technical difficulty, you're vulnerable to the technology," said Brandt.

A good amount of teachers proctoring exams went through difficult times yet some of those who did not have an eye for technology had a good thing to say about the new form of SOLs.

"To be very truthful, I thought it'd be difficult because we'd be at the mercy of the computers," said history teacher Ann Sauberman. "On Friday, May 26] we had a problem with one computer, we called in and got instant help. I really think it works well."



Students cut prom costs.



"Da Vinci Code" disappoints viewers.



Softball dominates Districts.

Staggered finals cause unnecessary stress

By Joshua Lipman
Oracle Editor

As I am writing, there are three weeks and two days left in the school year. The three weeks are fine, but the two days, the two lousy days, drive me nuts.

I'll admit that I'm a clock-watcher. I'm not going to pretend that I enjoy being at school and I am suspicious of anyone who implies other views. There are times when I count down the seconds to a bell. Still, those two extra days should annoy everyone else as much as they bug me.

Those two days keep us from going home one Friday afternoon for a two and a half month weekend. Those two days mean one more weekend studying. Of those two days, the latter does not require attendance and features nothing important, so let us focus on the former. The former is a day of testing, a final of finals, and an extra headache.

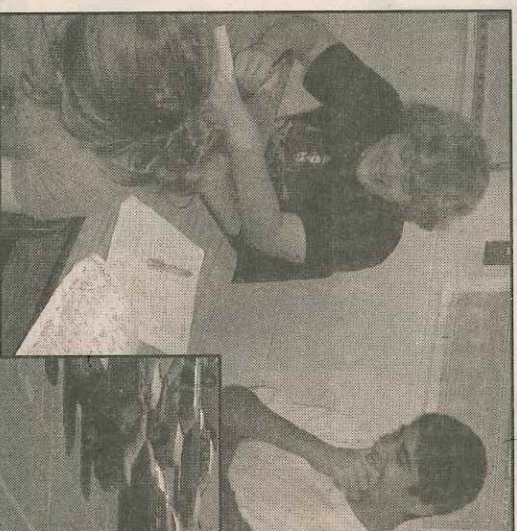
Four school days of finals are being stretched over two weeks. This method leans more toward torture than mercy. I don't need extra time to ponder the consequences of messing up finals in "the last full year of school colleges will

see on my transcript." At least that's what I've heard from the guidance office the last 642 times they told me. We've had a whole year to study. A few more days just postpones the inevitable cramming.

So if the extra-long testing period doesn't help the students, it must allow the teachers or administrators some advantage. Maybe some of them want to gaze upon the carpets tramped with a year of memories for one last moment before closing time. But the sooner testing is over, the sooner grades can be filed and teachers can relax.

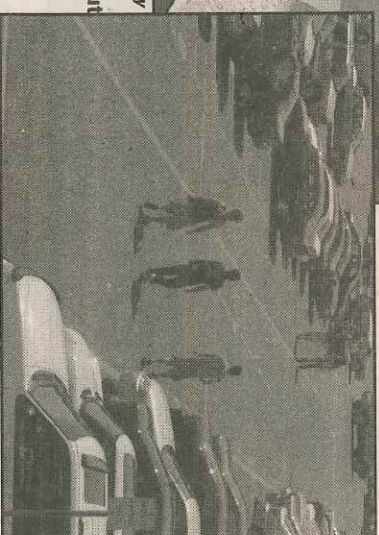
I am left with one possible conclusion as to why finals are being drawn out: Virginia state law mandates that we must spend a certain number of days in school, and this is what WS came up with to fill them.

I will not stand for such a boring dry end to my rant. Great social reformers like Gandhi argued for and practiced a rule stating if a law is wrong it must be disobeyed (my apologies to the history department). I therefore urge WS to have the courage to stand up to authority, fit finals into a week or less and end the school year early.



Colin Embrey

Students leave during fifth throughout the school year, but by the end of finals week all students will be able to leave school at 9:30 and enjoy the privilege of leaving early.



Sara Kofalt

Freshman Ryan Erbe and Danish Bashir prove that studying and working hard doesn't always have to be a monotonous task; laughing is necessary when the stress of finals becomes overwhelming. As long as preparations are taken and students work responsibly their success is ensured but never at the expense of fun.

Extra weekend for finals studying helps

By Lindsay Bruhn
Senior Staff Writer

As of this issue there are six long, long days left of school. Seems like a lot, but when you break it down, there are only about four whole days combined.

Some students may not understand the concept of the distribution of the tests over two weeks because they want to get out of school a day or two early. If the tests were scheduled for one or two days, however, we would all be tired and aggravated. The spread out test periods give students more time to study for each.

We are even given a whole weekend to study for the second period exam on Monday the 19th. My second period being Spanish, I need that time to study.

The stress of the exams is lessened by the fact that we only have two subjects, or one, to study for each day instead of three or four.

The school is catering to those of us who have absolutely no tolerance for

stress. Some of us, when extremely stressed out, tend to have nervous breakdowns.

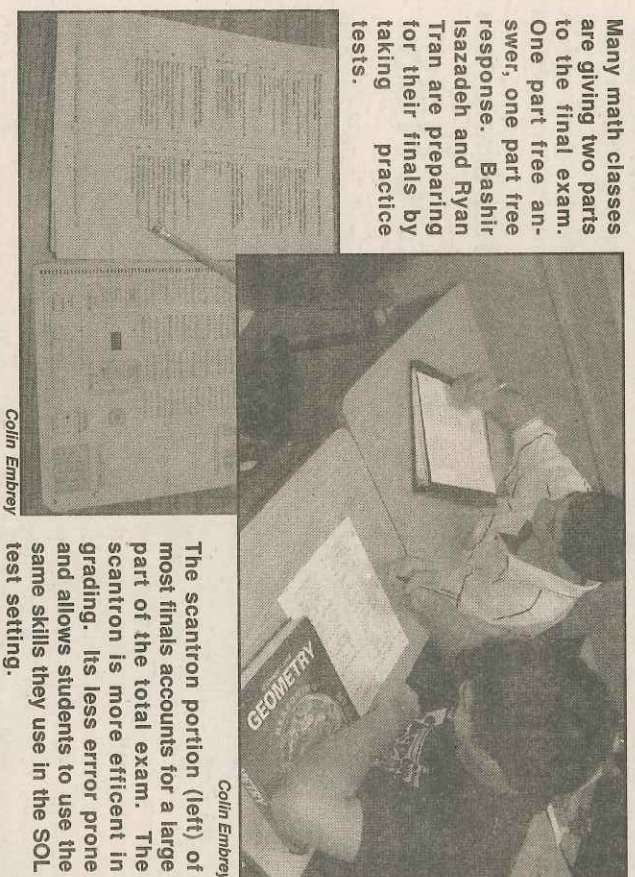
The testing schedule makes a huge difference for those of us who tend to sleep all day long (until 11 or 12). By having half days the last few days of school, we are required to wake up in a timely fashion.

While seven o'clock may seem a bit to early for "almost summer," by the time we get out of class, which is eleven on two days and nine-thirty on the last day of exams, we would most likely still be asleep.

Thanks to the exam we have the whole day to chill with our friends and be "productive citizens."

To complain about being in school for only half a day is ridiculous because the day is just as short when we sleep in.

The addition of study time and longer waking days contribute to the fact that the "dragging out" of the final exams is completely beneficial to students. Teachers are the ones who have to remain and work long after we are gone.



Colin Embrey

The scanttron portion (left) of most finals accounts for a large part of the total exam. The scanttron is more efficient in grading. Its less error prone and allows students to use the same skills they use in the SOL test setting.

Colin Embrey

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Ctrl+alt+delete!

Computerized SOLs receive a failing grade from WS students

For nearly four hours every day in the last week of May, the state is testing us. But they're not just testing our knowledge, they're testing our patience.

Back in the day, we used pencils and scantrons to show our brilliance to politicians in the form of standardized testing commonly known as the SOL. Oh wait, that was just last year.

With new technology allowing us to bubble in answers with the click of a mouse rather than the tip of a number two pencil, we thought our "bubble phobia" days were over. But now there's "clicking phobia." Now you have to worry about moving onto the next question and the computer malfunctioning.

We thought testing would be easier with technological advances.

Instead we hear P.A. announcements from administrators telling us "not to worry" because a majority of students taking the tests was experiencing technical difficulties. It's not like we should stress over the exams. We only need them to graduate high school.

It's kind of hard to take a high-stakes test while sandwiched between two giggling freshmen playing tic-tac-toe or concentrating on your math question as your proctor speaks with a technician on the phone trying to fix yet another kid's problematic test.

Maybe administrators found it easier to make kids take their SOLs during the actual class they have the SOL in. The block period is beneficial to classes who

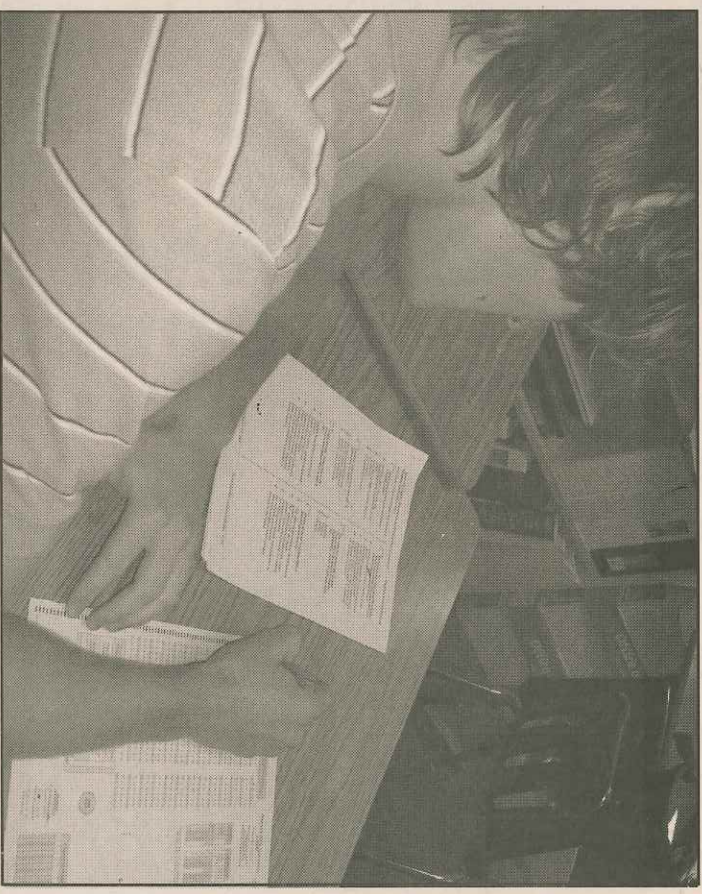
Editorial

are not interrupted by SOLs, however, two hours is a long time. And we don't have an SOL for every subject. It's not that we don't

enjoy two hours of yearbook, gourmet foods, or chorus.

It's when we're supposed to be "test taking" and the on-line tests are not working that put both teachers and students into a frenzy.

It is hard enough for a teacher to put together a lesson plan for a regular class let alone for two hours or for 50 minutes for one week. In many of our classes teachers popped in a movie to keep students' attention. One wonders how



Sara Koziell
Junior Daniel Pedersen, shown taking a practice US/VA History SOL, prefers the scantron to the computerized SOL because, "it's never crashed on me."

"Finding Nemo" and "10 Things I Hate about You" have to do with math class or how "Mean Girls" relates to history, but hey, we're not complaining.

It is also an adjustment for teachers and students when they are prohibited from using the Internet and tampering with the network. It puts a strain on a teacher who has to give up their classroom to SOL testing or forced to use their planning period to proctor a test. It is sad that the computer-savvy people

Lights, camera, awesome!

'The Caitlin and Beth Show' makes Viewpoint debut

By Beth Stinson and Caitlin Kenney
Viewpoint Editors

Hello and welcome to the first edition of *The Caitlin and Beth Show*. In this column, two amazing girls (Caitlin and Beth) will lead you on a mystical journey through awesomeness. Why? Because we can.

For the next school year, you will have the opportunity, nay the privilege, to read what will become the most important piece of literature you will ever read: *The Caitlin and Beth Show*. But first, an introduction.

We are Caitlin and Beth – two people, two contrasting personalities, one explosive column.

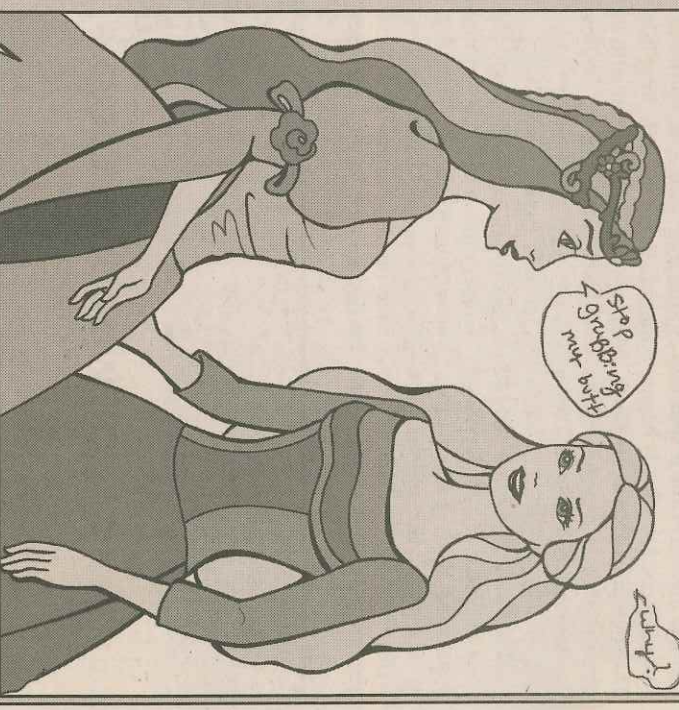
I am Caitlin, the name ahead of both "and" as well as "Beth" because mother nature made it sound better. Honestly, does *The Beth and Caitlin Show* have the same ring? If we were twins, I would be the more laid-back, rational twin while Beth would be the crazy, off-the-wall twin. I express my funky side through spastic dancing. That's about as wild as I get. I'd like to think my dancing style is old-school slash hip-hop slash funky fresh. A multitude of my closest companions, however, suggested wearing a reflector vest so others can see the danger before it strikes. Apparently my flailing limbs smack oblivious strangers and send them into a coma. My insurance is working on that. I look forward to expressing myself through this column. Luckily, no one can get physically hurt while reading, unless you manage to get Oracle ink in your eye. I am Beth. I like to think of

myself as the mother of this eggs and waste product.

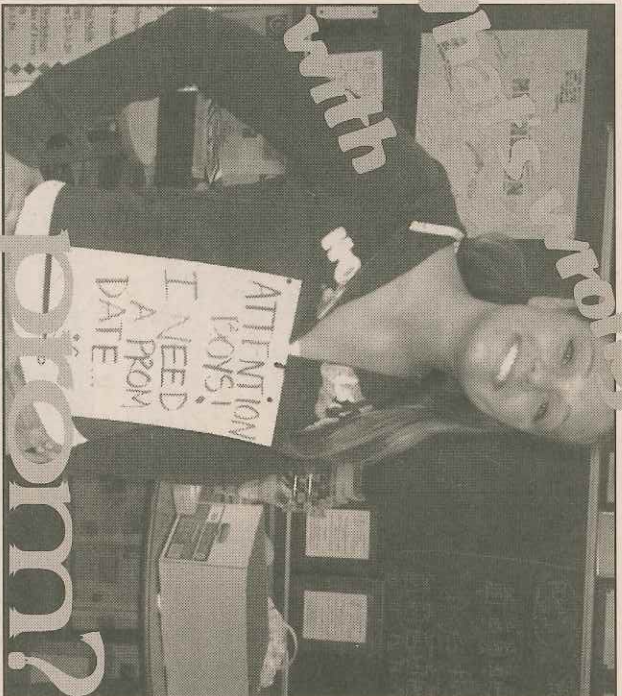
In this column, we will write and draw about the things we raise the child as if it were her care or don't care about. I spend most of my time dancing and asking people where Beth will write. Sometimes Caitlin will draw and Beth will write. Sometimes Caitlin will write and Beth will go to lunch, but whatever they do, it is guaranteed to bring a smile, frown, or grimace to your face.

In conclusion, we hope you enjoy our unsurpassed draw stick people on English assignments. I like to think of myself as a golden goose of sorts. Once and a while, I excrete something precious and rare, but by in the form of a yearbook most of the time it is just regular sign: HAAGSI. See you next year!

The Fairy Queen warns Odette about her cousin ^{godfather} ~~godfather~~ who wants to ~~take~~ the forest Long ago, he used his magic ring to take some of the Fairy Queen's ~~fairies~~ ^{fairies}, and he turned ^{5 lovers} ~~fairies~~ and elves into ^{5 lovers} ~~fairies~~



Beth "edited" a Barbie of Swan Lake coloring book after the SOL's. This is but a sample of our creativity and artistic ability, and next year you will experience Caitlin's excellence as well.



File Photo

Senior Tina Wajda poses with a sign that says "Attention Boys! I need a prom date!" Many seniors share in Wajda's plight this year.

By Beth Stinson
Viewpoint Editor

What's wrong with prom? Underclassmen. Prom is supposed to be the perfect end to a not-so-perfect high school experience. It is a night for seniors to bask in their seniority and bathe in the rich glow of loud music and other sweaty seniors. This year, however, seniors will not be bathing in the sweat of their fellow '06 classmates, but with '07, '08, and even '09 students.

This prom is going to be thickly smeared with the odious presence of... *underclassmen*. I know that I am an underclassman myself, but our *Oracle* seniors are currently busy with the senior issue. I am sure I speak for all of them when I say this: We (underclassmen) do not belong at prom. Prom is for seniors. Seniors are for prom.

The number of dateless seniors is staggering. Many have lost the arm of a senior boy to the hand of a junior or sophomore. God forbid any unfortunate soul lose a date to a freshman.

Even the senior girls have even decided to bring underclassmen instead of a lone, dateless senior. I do understand that in the event a senior should be dating an underclassman, the senior has the obligation to bring his/her date to prom. But why do so many seniors have younger lovers? Are seniors going bald and getting wrinkles? No? Okay, then.

In addition, the underclassmen didn't work for the seniors' prom. The class of '06 has been working for four years to ensure that their prom was not held in a bingo hall or even *the gym* (entire student body shudders). After countless fund-raisers, car-washes, and school events, the class of '06 has earned their prom. We have not. It is not fair that a select group of underlings gets to waltz into a prom they did not help pay for.

If you have checked your calendar lately, you'll notice that it is the year 2006. And if you are aware of the Unwritten Dogma of High School, you'll also notice that this prom (held in the year 2006) is for the class of 2006.

Administrators say goodbye

DEPARTURES from Page 1

Tobin, and Amy Ballew to Division I colleges. Team success also stood out during this period, in which the boys varsity soccer program captured three state championships in just four years.

"There have been so many good memories," said Dobson. "I still remember a few years ago when Justin Baker scored 17 points in the last 2 minutes and 39 seconds of a district semifinal [basketball] game vs. TC Williams. It was unbelievable."

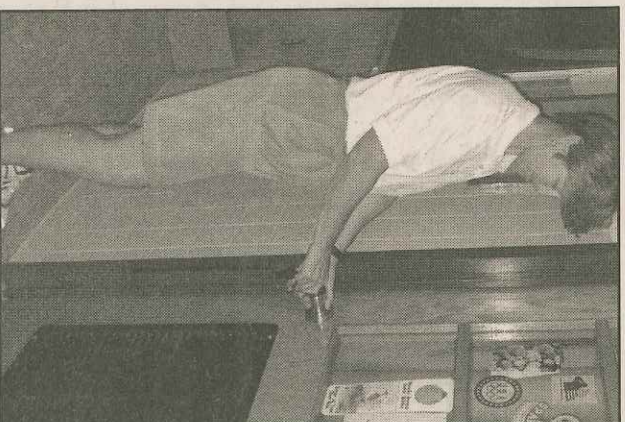
Dobson recently declared that he would retire at the end of the 2006 school year after working in the county for three decades. Former Thomas Jefferson Assistant DSA Tim O'Reilly will replace Dobson as the DSA of WS.

"The county's pension system is so good after 30 years that you're almost working for free if you don't retire," said Dobson.

Although his plans for life after retirement are not yet concrete, Dobson is looking forward to trying something different.

In addition to Dobson's departure, Assistant Director of Student Activities, Mike Mukai, will also leave WS this June. He will serve as AD at Thomas Jefferson.

"Dobson and Mukai are moving on to bigger and better things," said junior WSSSSAAA member Nick Andrews. "I want to thank them for their kindness and patience. We will miss them both."



Sara Kofalt
Susan Spatcher can open up her door in the girls' locker room, but declines to tell what her lost key opened for security reasons.

Got Keys?

Inquiring minds (Susan Spatcher) want to know

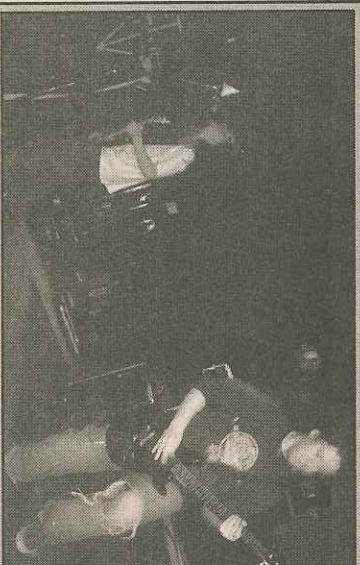
By **Chrissy Regelski**

Oracle Editor

WS has yet to unlock the mystery of Physical Education and Driver's Education teacher Sue Spatcher's missing key, which is presumed to be stolen.

Spatcher has offered her students the chance to be exempt from participating in running her 30 minute, 3-mile final if they find the key for her, depending on the incentive's effectiveness in past years.

"I had my gradebook stolen about eight or nine years ago and I did the same thing," said Spatcher. "It was in my hands again within days."



Nicole Simpson
'Puppet' band members Chris Teran, Will Donovan perform at WS' rendition Battle of the Bands.

BANDS from Page 1

sophomores first.

More than the members of The Supreme Quartet were surprised at their placement,

"I was really surprised when we got 1st place," said Puppet's guitarist, Chris Teran. "I definitely thought Supreme Quartet would win. I can't even believe we placed 3rd last year." A audible gasp, reverberated throughout the auditorium at the announcement of the results, but not everyone could agree.

"They had a lot of energy," said drummer Dean Christesen. "That definitely put them on top of us. We had a lot of energy too but there's not much you can do behind the drums." Christesen proved

otherwise playing with his shirt over his head at the Talent Show this year.

"I thought Puppet was amazing," said freshman Dan Tobin. "The crowd's response to them was amazing." The crowd's response was more than amazing, a portion of the crowd could have gotten Puppet disqualified, but the band didn't mind the enthusiasm.

"You have to discourage it though," said Will Donovan, the bassist for Puppet. "But it feels great to know that people are actually into what you're playing."

If the mosh-pit had continued during Puppet's performance, and the judges determined that they were encouraging it, they could have been disqualified.

With a professional soundman, most problems during the show were quickly repaired, except some miscommunication on stage during One Eyed Buddy's performance.

Between performances Tommy Beekman, Dean Christesen, Chris Douglas, David Eargle, all took turns at entertaining the crowd, doing things like, mocking 'emo' Myspace pictures, telling children stories and singing Briney Spears songs. The 2006 Battle of the Bands was WS' first year having all WS participants, except for the opening band that acted as a replacement for one that failed to show up. Inevitably, the show as a whole was a success.

The key has been missing since May 17, after two of Spatcher's students told her they had left the key on the tennis courts after they retrieved equipment for her.

Spatcher believes that preventing a similar incident from reoccurring would prove difficult.

"The obvious answer would be to never give [my keys] to anybody," said Spatcher. "We all multi-task and it's just a matter of needing kids to help with things. I got busy with my 38 students and forgot to get the key back and they forgot to give it to me."

This is a unique incident for Spatcher, however, even after 30 years of teaching.

"[Having a key stolen] has never

happened so I think that I have a pretty good track record," said Spatcher.

Not wishing to reveal the use of the key in case it has fallen into the wrong hands, Spatcher defends her claim that no punishment will befall the student who returns the key to her, an unlikely possibility if WS Security finds the culprit.

"If Security finds out [who took the key] there will be consequences," said Spatcher. "Personally, I just want my keys back. There wouldn't be any consequences on my end."

If the key is never returned, Spatcher has a simple plan of action for the future.

"I will keep my keys very, very close to me," said Spatcher.

Juniors sign up for V.I.P. spots

By **Aaron Snow**
Senior Staff Writer

Welcome to the world of juniors. In this world it's 5:45, and the mad rush for a spot on Rolling Road has already begun. The sounding of the alarm clock, like the shot of a pistol, marks the beginning of this race for a space.

This race is one that juniors must endure daily, in pursuit of a parking spot within close proximity of the school. The winners of this race triumphantly claim their spot for

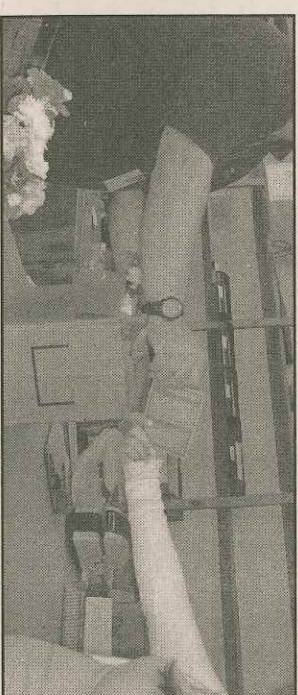
the day, the less fortunate are relegated to the outer reaches of the galaxy, also known as Hillside. It is here where a gathering of despondent juniors begin the mile long hike to school, a trek that allows students ample time to wallow in self pity, and wonder "why I just didn't take the bus?"

As the days lengthen and the temperature rises, hope springs anew for brighter days ahead. Promise arises, that in just a few short months a small fee of \$150 will ensure that carefree

lackeradical mornings replace the automotive battle, fought throughout the previous year.

"By getting a spot I can save like 40 minutes every day," said junior Daniel Pedersen. "No matter what time I leave and what time I get to school, I will always have a spot."

Information and paying \$150 before 4:00 pm on August 21, students earn a berth in a lottery for parking passes. The winners gain a spot, and the losers must show up at school August 30th-September 1st to

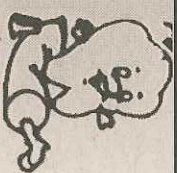


Sara Kofalt
Mike Ukelele hands junior Dominique Sideleau an application receipt for a parking pass.

purchase additional passes for themselves. Applications for students are available in the security office during A and B lunch, and by following the simple steps found on the application, students ensure far less stressful mornings, and the right to laugh at those running the all too familiar race for a space.

"I can't wait for Dora, my Ford Explorer, to have her own space," said junior Tyler Woolf. "Only the best for her."

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PEDIATRIC DENTIST

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The altar is in the house!

Fire station holds Sunday church services

By Christina Sohn
Managing Editor

The Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department has neither stained glass windows nor majestic ceilings. But each Sunday morning, churchgoers manage to turn the building's bingo hall into a place of worship.

The long tables with their black ashtrays are moved so that rows of chairs can be set up. A modest aisle is created and leads to a small area in front of the chairs where the priest preaches. A couple bingo signs are covered up with a religious banner.

Then, for a few hours, a room in a fire department turns into the St. Raymond of Penafort Catholic Church.

"It really teaches you to be humble," said sophomore Elizabeth Aguilar. "Not everything in life is perfect."

St. Raymond's Church is held in a fire department because its actual church building has been under construction since it split from Nativity Church seven years ago. After holding masses in the WS auditorium

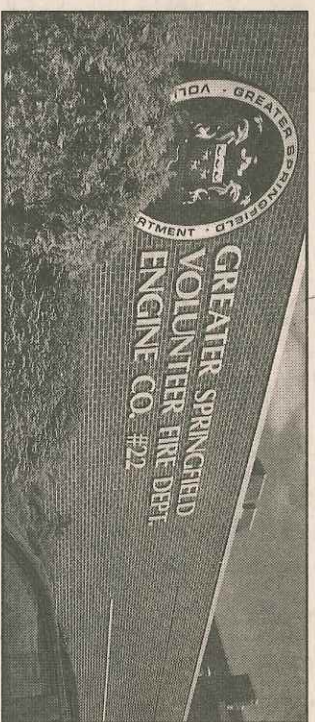
for a couple months, the church had to move to the fire department because the auditorium was too expensive.

"We have about 970 families in the parish and hopefully they divide up among nine different masses on a weekend," said Reverend James Gould.

Despite the lack of glamour, the fire department and loading dock provide its members with intimate settings that emphasize close relationships and dedication to Catholicism. When senior Rachel Alba, a member of St. Raymond's Church, visited other Catholic churches, she noticed that the firehouse setting contributed to the strong devoutness among the attendees.

"When you're in a place that's so beautiful, you sometimes get distracted by the beauty of it," said Alba. "Here, you have people at the parish that really care about each other and the success of our religion. You don't just get the Easter/Christmas Christians. You get the people who are going to consistently come to mass."

The sense of community in St. Raymond's Church is so strong that screens are not used during



Christina Sohn
The Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department serves as a place of worship on Sundays.

confession.

The church does have financial limitations. It is dependent on volunteer teachers and music directors. "[Our choir], we have our hearts in the right places but we don't have the money to get that talent," said Alba.

The church also has trouble attracting new members because of its modest settings. But after seven years of construction, the new church building is set to open in December 2006 in Fairfax Station. It will contain a real bell with a real rope and an aisle so long that Alba says it is like "a bride's dream."

"Children who have never had the experience of growing up with a parish church will find a wonderful home for both God and Man to meet at His Altar," said Gould.

Junior opts to graduate with Class of '06

By Bethel Habte
News Editor

Out of all the demanding years of high school, students find senior year the most bearable.

That's why voluntarily skipping a whole year of leaving class early, going to prom, and finally have the status of 'top dog', screams "crazy!"

But one graduating junior, Jason Coffey, has his reasons. Like a good number of students at WS, Coffey comes from a military family.

"My mom and dad are moving to Germany. My dad's in the army," he said. It was either moving with them for senior year or staying close to home by going to college early.

"They [my parents] said they'd support me either way. My dad had to

graduate as a junior because of the military so he understands," Coffey said.

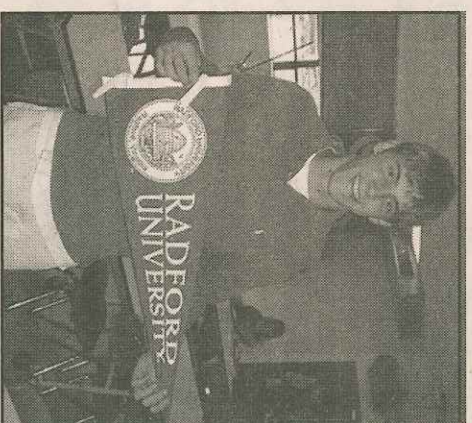
Coffey made his decision to graduate with the class of 2006 early this school

"I do a lot of work outside of school, 140 hours of night class."

—Jason Coffey, junior

year. Coffey will be going to Radford University in southwestern Virginia this fall. Radford looked like the prime choice for him. He could keep in touch with friends in the area and be with his brother and sister in college. He couldn't deny the fact that Radford was also a "party school," which he considers a plus. The choice came with some sacrifices.

"I do a lot of work outside of school,



Molly Cushing
Junior Jason Coffey proudly displays his future college's pennant. He's graduating this year with the Class of 2006.

Williams earns his first letter

Freshman striker gets to play with the big boys

By Sarah Alvarez
Viewpoint Editor

Freshman striker Jacob Williams hustled consistently and surpassed JV standards and was moved up to Varsity.

His soccer career started at a young age preparing him now for the arduous and intimidating task of playing varsity soccer. By the age of four he was already running up and down the field. His commitment to soccer has lead him to become a member of a division one travel team, Firegold. He was scouted by an Olympic development program and continues to improve with their assistance.

"I played really well on JV, so they moved me up," said Williams, who was moved to varsity before the district games started.

At first he was nervous about the change, but at the same time very excited. The level of intensity at practices was a

major change for Williams.

"Drills were a little harder and longer," said Williams. Williams had to become accustomed to the seriousness of practice, no one messes around at Varsity practices and they are a lot more physical.

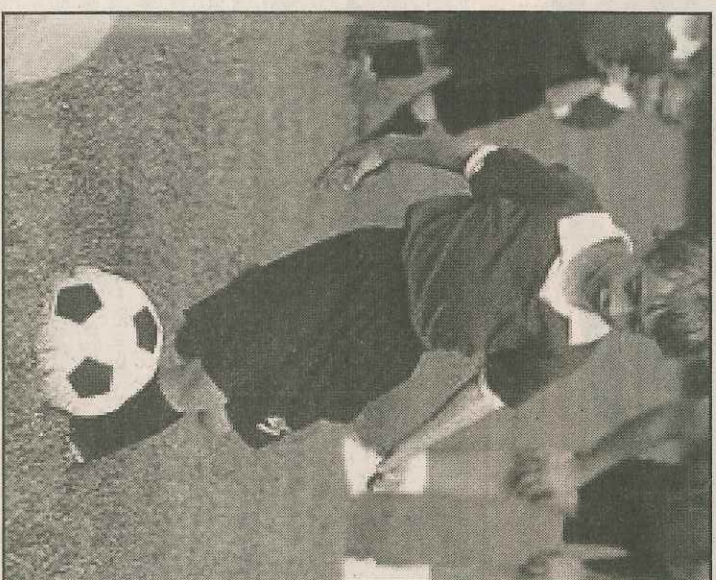
Not only were the practices more strenuous; Williams was also forced to get used to new team mates with different styles and skills.

"It's a change you have to get used to," said Williams. He adapted to the differences between varsity and JV and got to play in one game.

Williams success in being moved to varsity was largely attributed to his love of the sport.

"You have to have a lot of passion and sacrifice things like going out with friends," said Williams. For Williams his friends are supportive and understand his commitment to soccer.

"It's a great experience; playing with older people makes you better," said Williams.



SoccerClinics

Williams has been playing soccer since a very young age just like this boy.

Congratulations, Heather

Simon

Good luck rising seniors!

Class of 2007

My tux don't cost a thing

Senior Justin Brooks saves money for 2nd prom

By Jake Serwin

ETC Editor

The iron passes back and forth across the blue ironing board, smoothing the wrinkles out of a pristine white tuxedo shirt.

Taking a few steps to the kitchen table, senior Justin Brooks sits down with his soda as he notices the cabinet behind him.

"Oh, that's where those are!" he said, enthusiastically opening a cabinet and grabbing a bag of watermelon hard candies. "I've been looking for these since Memorial Day."

Justin Brooks has done this before, assuredly with the same enthusiasm. He wore the same one to Hayfield's prom on June 2. Brooks was asked to that dance by a close female friend, who paid for the limo ride and the tickets. Though he paid for dinner, picking up the tab for the whole night never occurred to him.

"I think it's the one doing the asking who should pay," Brooks said.

At WS, it is tradition for boys to ask girls to prom and for boys to pay for transportation, food and any other pre-dance festivities.

Brooks doesn't feel very strongly against the expectations.

"I'm fine with it," he said, swigging from his soda.

This rule can't apply in every situation. There are a number of cases at WS in which senior girls have asked juniors or even younger boys to go with them to prom. In this case it can be difficult to tell who should pay for what. According to him, it is more of a class expectation than a gender one.

"If a female senior invites an underclass male, maybe the female should pay," Brooks said.

For the WS prom, Brooks is going with a group of four and is paying for tickets for himself and his date, sophomore Allison Call. The cost per person for a sedan for such a small group would be expensive, so Brooks has re-ceived some help

from family members to save money.

To complete his outfit, Brooks' mother made his vest and bowtie for him. His older brother has agreed to dress up in a tuxedo and rent a Cadillac from a family friend who owns a dealership, and he will escort them to the dance.

"It's cooler because he's not some weird limo driver who doesn't speak English," Brooks said.

Though this is his second try at prom, Brooks is still excited.

"I'm going all-out," he said.

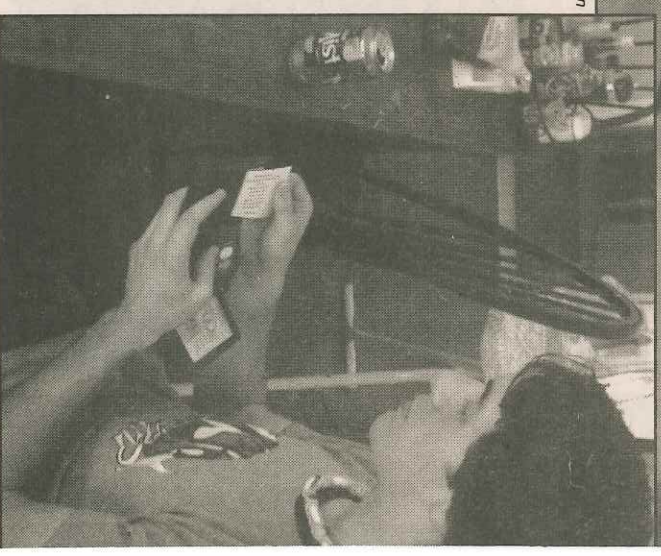
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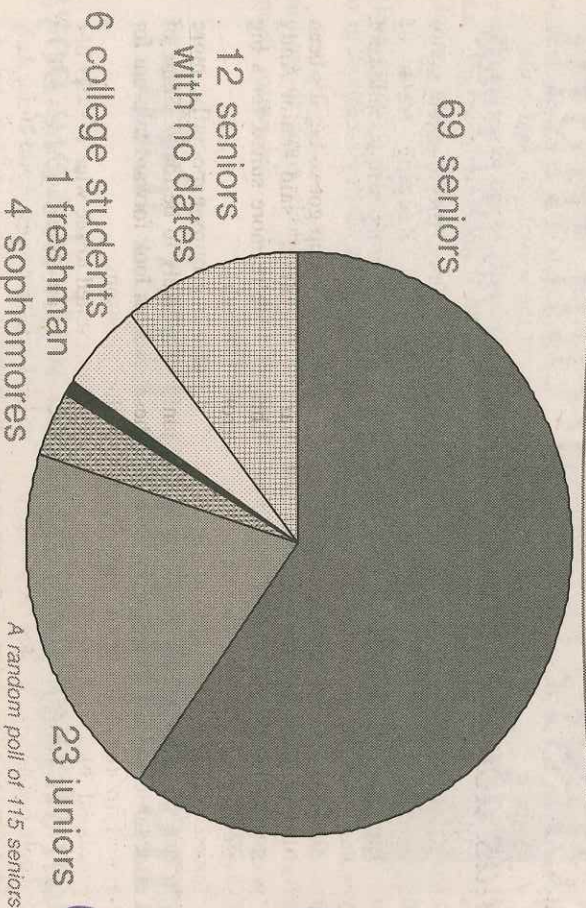


Jake Serwin

Above: Senior Justin Brooks irons his tuxedo shirt. Right: Brooks pulls his prom tickets out of his wallet.



WHO'S INVITED, WHO'S NOT...



Handwritten notes in blue ink:

- DATE ✓
- GROUP ✓
- DRESS ✓
- TUX ✓
- Tickets ✓
- APPO ✓
- 20 PRO ✓

Handwritten text:

Prom, Prom Prom. Come June, that's all we hear clutter the minds of not just seniors but under some wonder if this will be for the right

Don't bother asking

Craig Stephenson isn't going to prom

By Libby Bursley

Oracle Editor

Not going to prom is not a problem for senior Craig Stephenson.

Although prom is considered by the majority of seniors to be an essential component of the last year of high school and the Class of '06 has been fundraising for four years to be able to pay for a dance at the Mayflower, not all the students are choosing to participate. Stephenson is one of those students who is not going to spend June 16 dancing the night away.

"It was mostly poor planning on my part, but it's really just another dance, and I don't like to dance that much," said Stephenson. "I can think of a thousand other things to do instead of going to prom."

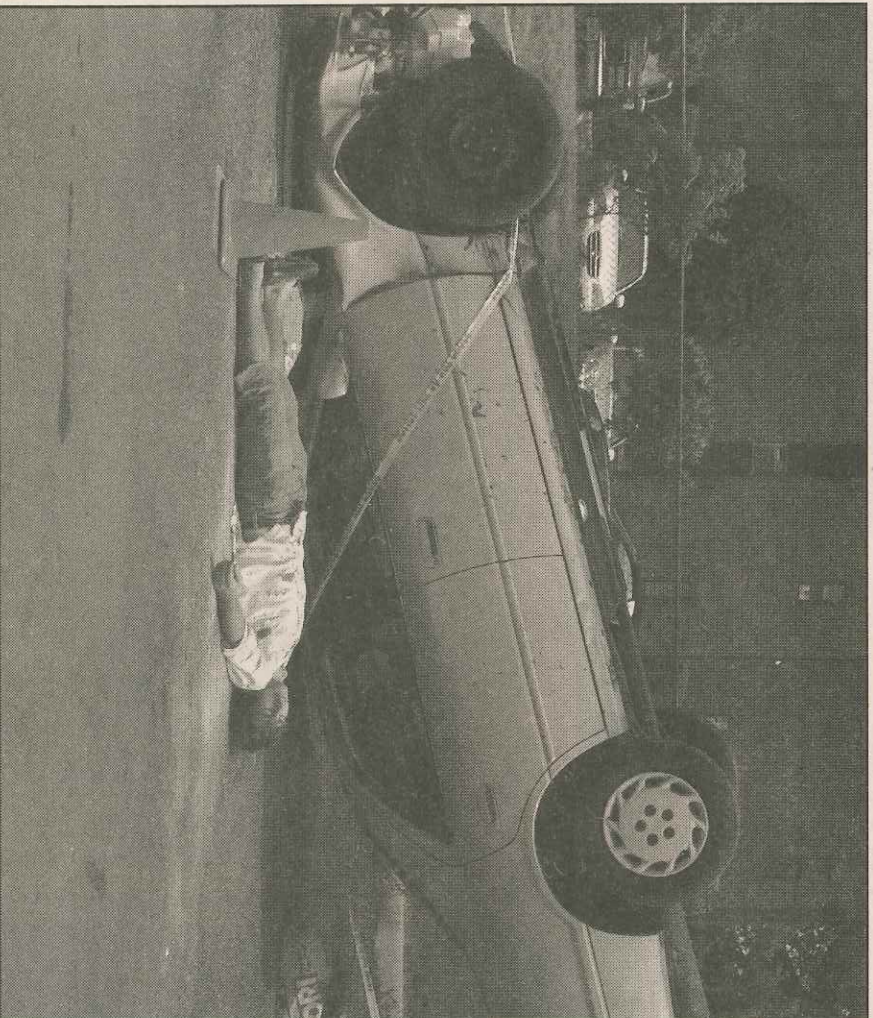
He was not asked to the prom, but might not have gone anyway. He pointed out that he has been to two previous Homecoming dances, and that these have filled his quota for school dances.

"I don't feel that I'm going to miss out on anything at all," said Stephenson. His family has accepted his decision, but his peers, on the other hand, have not. His friends who are going to attend the dance have been trying to convince him to come, but Stephenson has not wavered in his decision.

"They tell me that I should go, but they haven't given me any reasons why I should," said Stephenson.

And even though he is skipping out on prom, he is not foregoing on fun. He is still deciding on what he will do instead of spending the money needed to go to prom. He has toyed with the idea of just going out to dinner with his friends' group, having his own party, or doing something completely out of the ordinary.

"If I end up renting a tux, then I might pretend to be a secret service agent," said Stephenson. "I can go into DC with sunglasses and one of those car walkie-talkie things and that would be fun."



Sean Hogan

Senior Craig Stephenson poses in front of the MADD prom demonstration car. The car is in the senior parking lot to remind seniors of consequences of decisions made on prom night.

Underclassmen dates overtaking prom

Seniors are dissappointed when classmates ask younger dates to the dance

By Alyssa Horton
Features Editor

Prom. A four-letter word teenage girls dream about, plan for and spend a lot of money on. Until he was asked by Sara LaPorta to this year's dance, sophomore Richard DeMocker didn't think he would have to worry about this word for another two years.

"She said she was going to ask me but I didn't think she was serious," said DeMocker.

In each of Richard's classes LaPorta left a basketball rubber duck with a note and a balloon. When he reached his final class that day, chemistry teacher Maria Clayton read LaPorta's note aloud to the class. The note told Richard to go to Senior Rail after school. DeMocker blushed as Clayton proclaimed that the whole class would go with him.

"As soon as I walked into class everyone was like 'awwww'. It was kind of embarrassing, especially when Mrs. Clayton told everyone to follow me to Senior Rail," said DeMocker.

When DeMocker reached Senior Rail, it was decorated in green and yellow with balloons and two big posters. One of the posters displayed a duck while another had "Richie and Petey" written on it. While LaPorta was asking DeMocker, Peter Lalich was also invited by Tricia Irvine.

Now that DeMocker has accepted LaPorta he has to start planning for everything else.

"I'm paying for dinner and the limo, but Sara's buying the ticket," said DeMocker. "I think this weekend I'm going to go pick out a tux with Sara to make sure it matches her dress."

DeMocker's mom is getting very involved in the

preparation process. She's excited about shopping for a tux and seeing her son all dressed up.

"My mom thought it was a little weird at first that I'd be going to prom but then the whole shopping thing came up and she got all excited. She started asking about Sara's dress, like what color it was and all this other stuff," said DeMocker.

Since DeMocker is only a sophomore, he has gotten a lot of different responses about the fact that he's going to prom. He knows that some of the senior girls don't like the fact that underclassmen are going.

"You hardly ever see an underclass guy going to prom, you're more likely to see girls. I think the girls think girls have it easier because all they have to do is get a dress," said DeMocker. "The guy usually has to pay for everything on top of getting a tux."

DeMocker is looking forward to prom though, mainly because of one thing.

"I get to go to the after-parties!" he laughed and added, "Just kidding."

Super-sizing prom night

Friends don't know how to say no to friends

By Krista Pedersen

Scoop Editor

Either there wasn't enough money, or there were too many people.

The prom group that senior Elise Barth organized started out with 20 people, but grew rapidly as everyone invited other friends/dates. She was forced to change their limo reservation to two party buses, but then it wasn't affordable. Again, more people were added to the list, until the group contained 39.

"We just kept inviting more and more people because we needed their money," said senior Clay Price, a member of Barth's group.

It's common knowledge that prom is a very expensive event. With tickets costing \$50 apiece, plus formal wear, transportation and dinner, students have trouble scraping up enough money if their parents won't pay for the night.

"We ended up having way too many people. People complain about it costing too much," said Barth.

A frequent difficulty with large groups like Barth's is the inability to meet everyone's wishes for arrangements. In Barth's group, there were so many people going to the dinner that the restaurant required them to order fixed plates—the same meal for everyone.

Needless to say, this caused many disagreements. Keeping track of everyone in the group also became hard to do.

"Since the group got so big it's been hard to organize," said senior Andy Ehrhard. "We're more suited for a big group [though]."

In larger groups especially, more juniors are likely to be found. Some of these students look forward to prom for multiple reasons.

"I'm excited to see what it looks like because I'm an officer and shoes will be so hard to fill next year," said junior Amy Zinicola, who was invited by senior John Walsh.

Some of the senior girls were not happy with this.

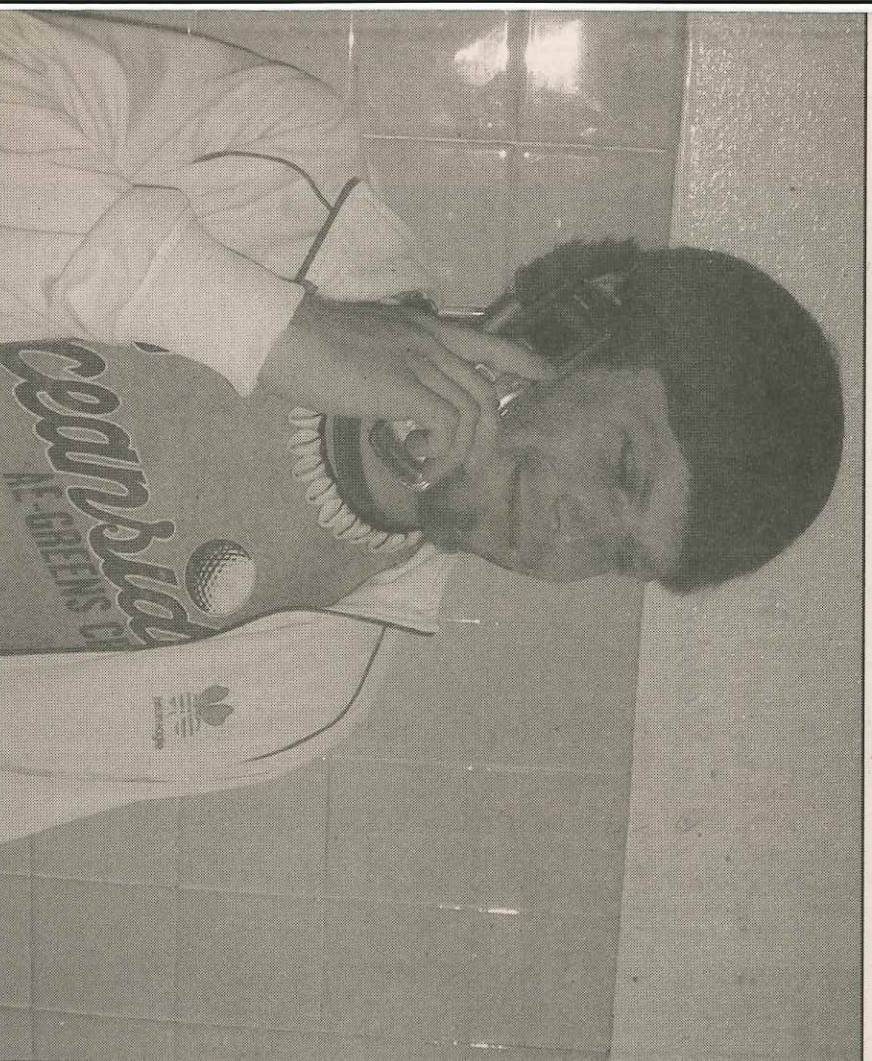
"I think some of the girls were upset by it, because it's supposed to be a senior prom," said senior Leann Spinosa, a member of a second large group that contains 40 people. "[But] I don't mind because I have a date and I was a junior last year that went to prom. It's not like it's their fault."

In the end, virtually all seniors think that the excitement of prom will overshadow any earlier disagreements over plans.

"Prom's going to be fun no matter what," said Price.

arrangements, limo, dinner, after party, prom night

or about. But now thoughts of the big night
classmen as well. With groups as big as 40,
the night to remember,
reasons.



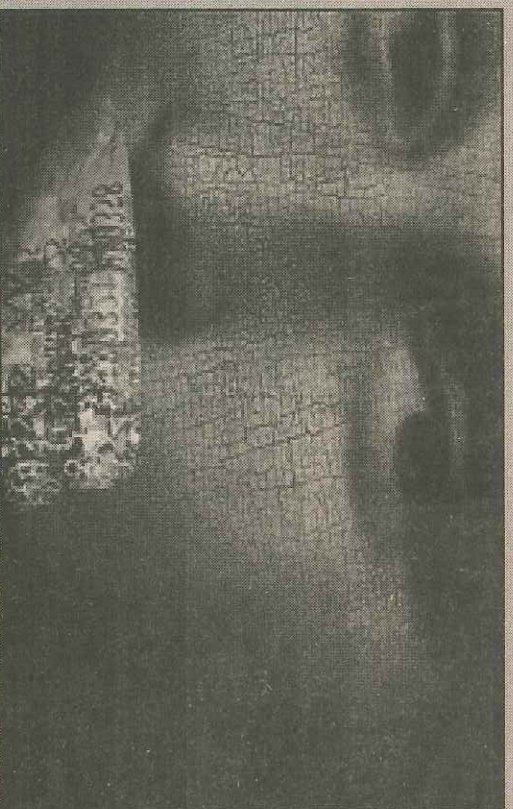
Senior Darron Lattomus talks on his cellphone about plans for prom. Lattomus is going with Senior Danielle Weiss.

Krista Pedersen



Senior Clay Price (6th from the right, back row) poses with his Homecoming group of 2005. Some of the same people are in his new group of 40 for prom.

Amy McGregor



Movie-Addict

'Da Vinci Code' cracks

High budget film breaks under book's pressure

By Lindsay Burke

Senior Staff Writer

The controversial book swept the nation as Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* boldly stepped onto divisive grounds. Now, producer Ron Howard joined up with actors Tom Hanks, Jean Reno and Audrey Tautou to make a feature film of the infamous book.

After an inconsistent blend of extreme reviews, both malicious and marvelous, critics stepped aside to let the public see for themselves. "The Da Vinci Code" opened to the public on May 19, and people flocked to see the two and a half hour film. Robert Langdon, played by Tom Hanks, is a Harvard symbologist who is called to a murder scene to decipher a code found near the body. The code, in turn, leads to more clues ingeniously disguised in the works of Da Vinci. Langdon teams up with Sophie Neveu (Audrey Tautou), a French cop and cryptologist and is trailed by detective Bezu Fache (Jean Reno) on their search for the answer to these clues. The secret they discover along the way about Da Vinci leads them to their hardest mission yet; to complete the puzzle before the secret will be lost forever.

Unfortunately for those who had not yet read the book, the movie followed a complicated series of turns that are impossible to follow without some foresight into the movie. The movie is a carbon copy of the book; boring for those who have already read the book, and confusing for those who haven't. How can a movie with so many clues be so utterly clueless? The book is completely disgraced by the movie and is a waste of time to those who have or haven't read it. To those who have only read the book, keep your money for the next big blockbuster; to those who haven't done either, buy the book for the same price instead. "The Da Vinci Code" is another classic case of the book-to-movie phenomenon; the book captures the original beauty, and the movie wastes it and \$125,000,000 in the making of a disaster.

'Yo Mamma' is ugly, poor, fat, and on MTV

By Nicole Simpson

Entertainment Editor

It seemed like "your mom" jokes would never get old. As soon as I thought they were finally gone for good, MTV brought a 30 minute block of exaggerated premeditated "your mom" jokes back into my life.

"Yo Momma" claims that their show is to "resolve territorial rivalry," my understanding of territorial rivalry is more along the lines of Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas; shooting the guys in the purple



MTV

shirts, not mocking how fat or poor their rivals' mothers may or may not be. Props to MTV for going the safe way on that one at least.

Two groups from each "territory", as I guess producer Wilmer Valderrama would like me to say, are sent out to "battle" against their own. This set-up little quarrel goes on until one of the co-hosts comes to a decision on which one from the group will continue to the next round battle one-on-one with an unknown rival. Since a show like this is inevitably hosted by MTV, the next ten minutes of the show are much like MTV's "Room Raiders." Host Wilmer Valderrama goes with the contestants to their competitor's house for a "home invasion." This is where the jokes actually get funny, but I credit that one to Wilmer's accent (even though it doesn't even begin to compare with his on "That 70's Show"). After Wilmer and the

contestants go through each others rooms, it's time for the greatly anticipated, final battle.

The two opponents meet up in "neutral" territory, which I can only think of as a place where nobody will get angry at their surroundings. There is where they make fun of everything from mothers to hygiene. The contestants are supposed to aim for originality, but it isn't uncommon to hear some jokes that even I have sadly heard in the classrooms of our school, but I'll admit it is *hilarious* when they get called out on how overused their jokes are, i.e. when their jokes are finished *for* them. The contestants are also supposed to use the "dirt" they "dug up" from the others house, but, a joke that original is pretty hard to find on this show. After Wilmer



MTV

"Yo Momma" is full of trash-talking battles and 30 minutes of senseless entertainment.

and his two co-hosts, Sam and Jason decide who wins, the ultimate "trash-talker" gets awarded for his cruelty and blows to the others mother but going home with \$1000.

All in all this show's basis is pretty terrible, but it is a source of some giggles. But save it for a rainy, humid summer day.

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Softball wins Districts

Varsity captures first title in three years

By Sunnie Ko
Senior Staff Writer

The air was tense, the stands were silent, the pitch was about to be thrown.

"I couldn't even stand still," said freshman outfielder Krista Pedersen. "Everyone inside and outside the dugout was restless."

No one could calm the nerves of the players or spectators on Monday, May 22 at the bottom of seventh inning of the Patriot District Championship game.

The Spartans battled the entire game against the top seeded West Potomac Wolverines.

After a quick run scored in the first inning, the Wolverines had a one to zero advantage.

"There wasn't any doubt that we were going to win," said sophomore second baseman Jordan Jeter. "We knew this was our time."

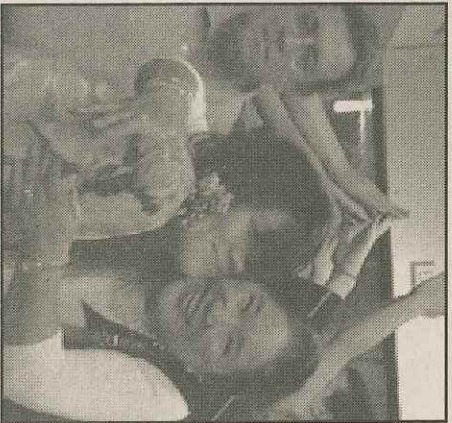
The Spartans showed their resiliency during the fourth inning. With sophomore Kat Rogers and junior Devon Buckley on base, Pitcher and top hitter Jess Thomas got up to bat.

Thomas had two strikes on her as the fourth pitch went soaring towards her.

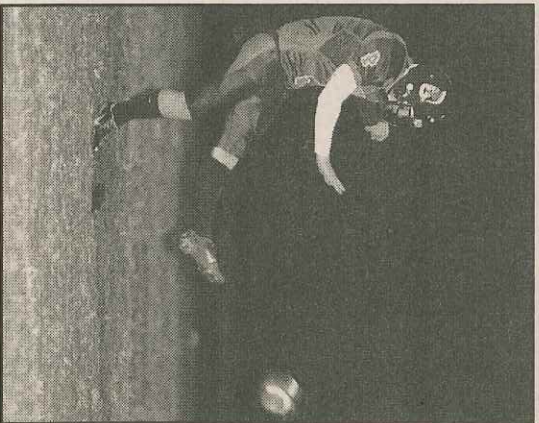
She hit the ball, sending it soaring through the sky above the third baseline and nearly clearing the fence.

The Spartans now had a two to one lead.

By the seventh inning, the score had increased to three to two, with the Spartans holding the advantage.



Katherine Burton



Litouch

High school sports stars like swimmer Kim Case and kicker Josh Clakowski plan to play into college. Case (top) is swimming at Rutgers University, while Clakowski will be kicking at North Carolina State.

After a quick batting effort, the Spartans were sent onto the field where the Wolverines had a chance to tie or even win the game.

"Everyone was nervous" said Buckley. "But everyone was pumped at the same time. It was a good nervous."

"There wasn't any doubt that we were going to win," said sophomore second

baseman Jordan Jeter.

"We knew this was our time."

With two outs, and the batter holding two strikes on her shoulders, the Spartans knew

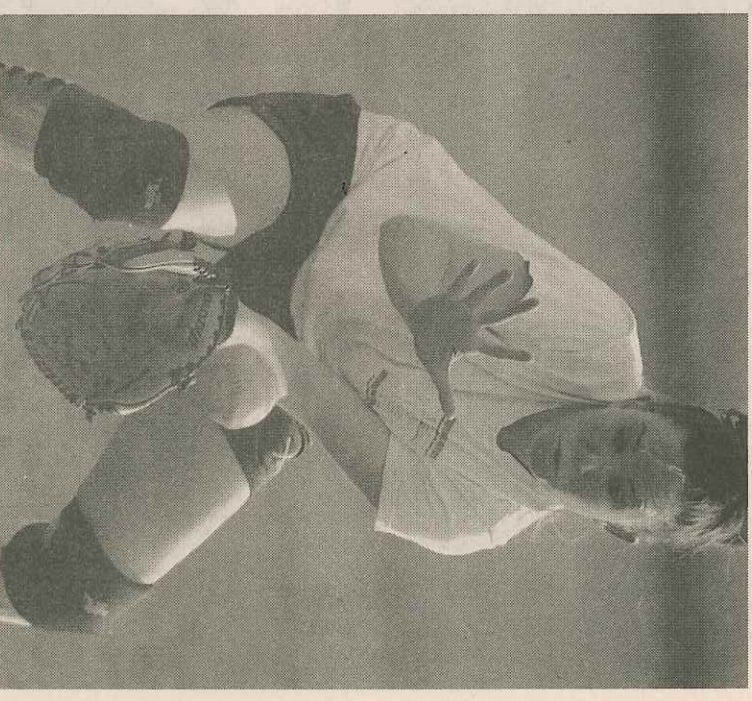
all they had to do was get one more out and the title was theirs. Thomas threw the pitch. The bat made contact with the ball and headed toward first baseman

Jessie Eiriksson.

Eiriksson watched the ball hit her leather glove and after a few seconds of reassurance that the ball was in to stay, threw it down and screamed.

"The first thing I thought when I caught the ball was 'where do I throw it now?' Then it hit me. 'Oh my gosh, we won!'"

The team that was described at the beginning of



Litouch

Junior Devon Buckley, one of the Varsity captains, fields a grounder on the way to the Patriot District Championship.

the season as "young, inexperienced," and "had a lot to learn" pulled together and won the Patriot District Championship, the first one since 2003.

Thomas, Rogers, Buckley all won recognition of All Tournament Team. Thomas was the MVP.

"There was no doubt before the game that we were going to win," said Buckley. "I knew as soon as that last pitch was thrown, they were done."

Movin' on up

Senior athletes graduate to offseason training for Division I college sports

By Kelly Sipple
News Section Editor

Senior athletes have not reached the finish line. Their high school sports career is coming to an end but they are about to start new ones in college.

"I was offered a scholarship at Rutgers," said senior Kim Case, captain of the Girls' WS Swim Team. The scholarship, along with the swimming facilities available at the university, helped Case accept their offer.

"The owner of the Jets built the swimming pool," said Case.

A good education as well as getting a college sports allowed seniors to get the most out of their college experience.

"It's a good opportunity regardless of football," said senior Vince Coppola, current captain of WS's varsity football team, and future member of West Point's team. "Going into the army and military is what I've always wanted to do. With football I get the best of both worlds."

Seniors expect the training to be more intense in college. For WS athletes playing a sport in college means stepping up summer training in order to be prepared.

"I'm attending the Olympic training center in Colorado for two weeks," said Case.

Seniors find that working with friends over the summer is a fun way to stay in shape for the rigorous training that lies ahead.

"Incoming college freshmen that I've been playing with for years are going to a preseason camp [with me]," said senior Molly McCluskey, member of the WS girls' varsity soccer team.

Depending on the school, summer training is not only encouraged, but provided by the school. West Point is one college that sets up a program for its football players. Coppola will be leaving July 14th for basic training.

Seniors' decisions about playing a sport in college ultimately came down to the environment of the college teams.

"My decision had a lot to do with the team," said Case. "It felt like more of a family than separate people."

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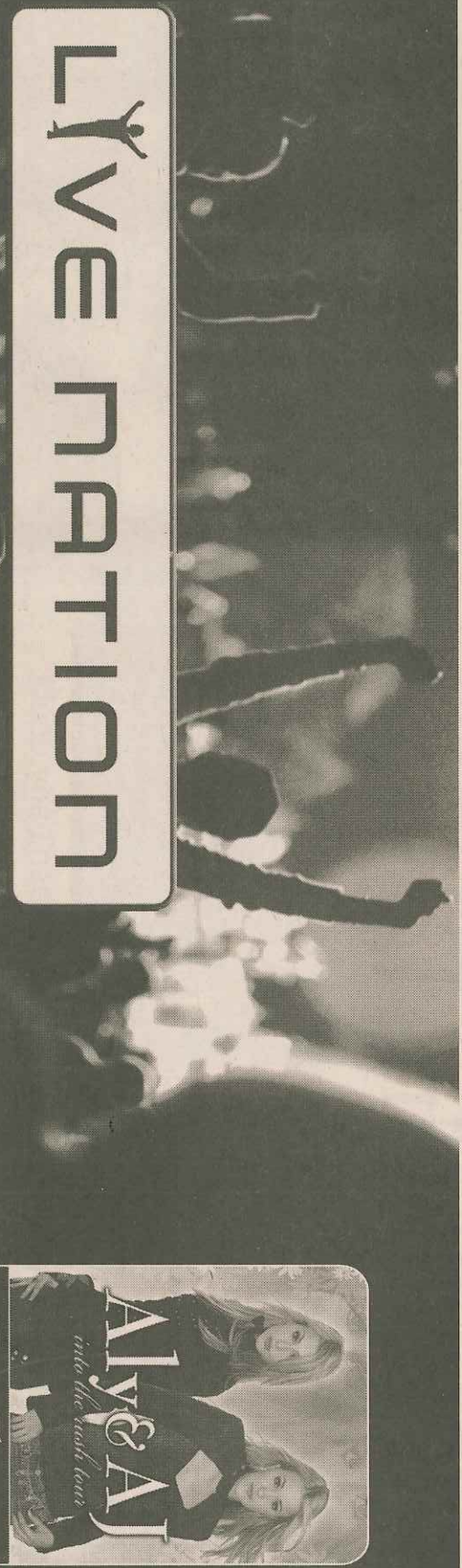
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WILLIE NELSON
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Sic & The Sunshine Band
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2006

with special guest
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JOE TORRES

NISSAN PAVILION
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SPECIAL GUEST
Pearcy

NISSAN PAVILION
JULY 6

with special guests
Wai Jips
PAPER

NISSAN PAVILION
AUGUST 25

VANS WARPED TOUR '06

NISSAN PAVILION
ALSO AT MERRIWEATHER
POST PAVILION JUNE 15

AUGUST 10

DASHBOARD CONFSSIONAL
with special guest
BEN LERER

DAR CONSTITUTION HALL
DUST AND SUMMER
AUGUST 9

Disturbed
SYSTEM OF A DOWN
DISTURBED
LACUNA OIL

NISSAN PAVILION
AUGUST 6

2006 Juntos en Condo
marc anthony
laura pausini
marco antonio solis

presented by ING
NISSAN PAVILION
AUGUST 4

Shakira
oral fixation tour

with special guest WYOLFE
VERIZON CENTER
AUGUST 29

MARIAH CAREY
THE ADVENTURES OF MARIAM
THE VOICE: THE HITS
THE TOUR
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Sean Paul

Veri-on Center
SEPT 7

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STEVIE'S SUMMER SUGGESTIONS



By Stevie Fiorino
ETC Editor

Not sure what to do this summer? Well, here are some suggestions for you...

- Go up to Terra Alta, West Virginia to the Sunshine Daydream festivals. Go to <http://www.sunshinedreams.com> for more information.
- Buy a \$500 car with a couple of your friends and "pimp" it.
- Go to the Corcoran Gallery of Art and check out some of the sweet exhibits.
- Buy an extremely large US map, close your eyes and pick a place, then take a road trip there.
- Buy something completely useless off of eBay and sell it to a 7th grader, making them think that it will one day be worth millions.
- Wear your bikini top over everything you wear, and tell people that it's the new fad.
- Go somewhere in Virginia where you've never been before. For example, Pochontas, VA.

Population: 433.

-Go see The Beatles tribute band on August 2 at Jammun Java. Go to <http://www.jammunjava.com> for more information.

-Go see the Foo Fighters acoustic show at the DAR Constitution Hall on August 15. Go to <http://www.foofighters.com> for more information.

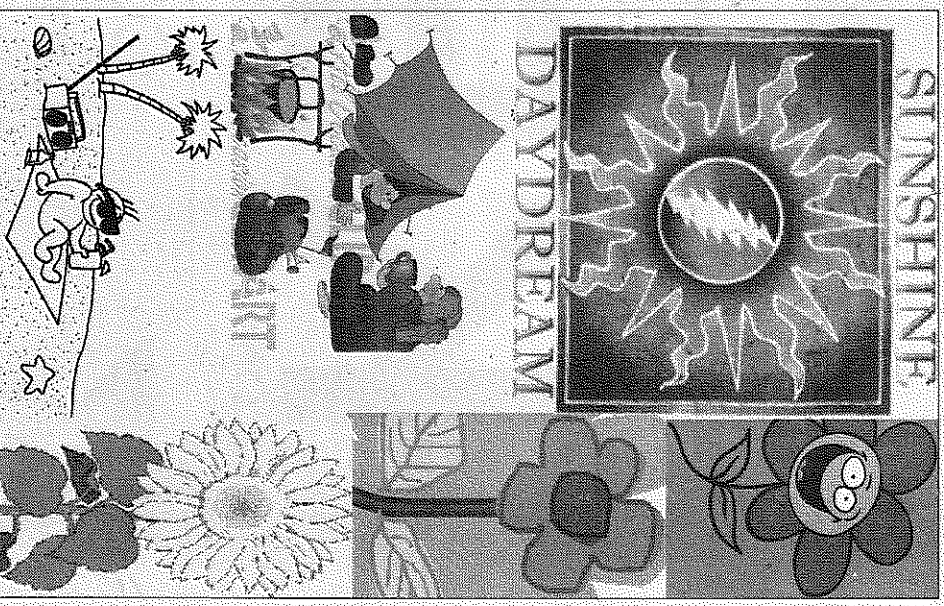
-Take a trip up to Stephens City, VA and see a Drive-In movie at Family Drive In. Go to <http://www.drive-ins.com/theater/vatfami> for more information, or, <http://www.user.shentel.net/cerker/drivein.html>

-Get a summer job... (yeah, right...)

-Go camping at the Shenandoah National Park. Go to <http://www.shenandoah-national-park.com/camping.htm> for more information.

-See how long you can go without sleeping.

-Get a new hobby, like collecting rocks or leaves, or something that you know no one else would think of collecting.



-Sleep in your pajamas all day and do nothing productive!

These rules weren't meant to be broken

By Sean Hogan
Oracle Editor

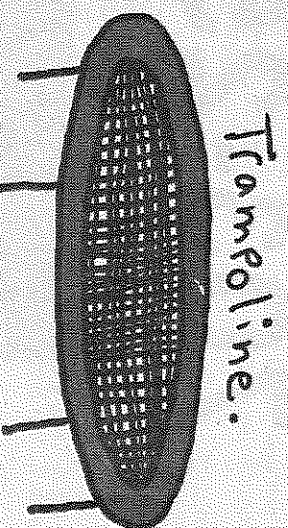
"R-E-S-P-E-C-T" is not only an Aretha Franklin song. For the "Hogan's Rules" of the late 1990's, "respect" was the first section on a list including "chores," "reading," "staying clean," "exercise," "pool" and "trampoline."

Respect laid out the rules for conduct with my sisters. In other words, it was our Treaty of Springfield. We were told that it's okay to disagree, as long as we didn't raise our voices or intimidate each other. I guess the definition of "intimidate" doesn't include my sisters using their pointy nails to leave scars on my arms, so they followed the rules like I did. Don't worry, I got back at

them by putting green soap into their "Ear Care" products from when they got their cars pierced. Punny how I got grounded and they didn't.

The "Chores" section outlined my household responsibilities such as putting my clothes away, keeping my room neat (with nothing on the floor) and simple kitchen chores. I guess these rules don't apply anymore because my room has enough clothes on the floor to clothe...a large group of naked people. Just kidding. Mom and Dad...my room is clean. I promise!

We were also encouraged to read daily "to keep your brain working." Since I know I will get it at home eventually, I'll just quote my sisters and say "well that worked well, didn't it?"



During the 1990s, the word "trampoline" was synonymously used with the word "no" in the Hogan household.

Staying clean was the biggest challenge for me. I showered daily. I promise. My problem, however, was staying clean between showers. Anyone who knew me during my baseball years would know that I would actually wait until the last second to make a catch just so I could dive and get grass stains on my pants and dirt on my hat. I also learned where I got my sense of humor.

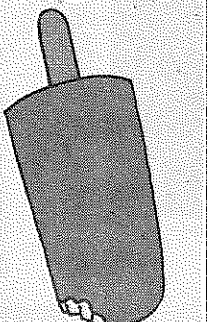
Natalie Dee

If I remember correctly, we went four times.

The "pool" section (I don't know why the last part wasn't in the pool section, but whatever) noted we'll go and leave when Mom and Dad say so (or wake up from their naps).

Finally, the "trampoline" section simply said "Forget it!" The two words so simple and to-the-point, were as disappointing in my family as, "we'll see," which can be found in the Hogan Thesaurus under "no."

June 2006



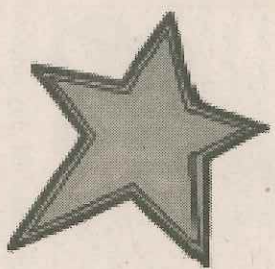
Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
16 Senior Prom 9:00 PM	17 Nationals Home Game Vs. New York Yankees 1:20 PM	18 Gretchen Wilson Concert at Merriweather 7:30 PM	19 Underclass Exam: 2 nd Period	20 Last Day of School!	21 DC United Home Game Vs. the Chicago Fire 7:30 PM	22 National Philatelic Writers Day
23 National Bullwacker Day	24 Dave Matthews Band Concert at Nissan 7:00 PM	25 Strawberry Parfait Day	26 National Decide to be Married Day	27 Mystics Home Game Vs. Indiana 7:00 PM	28 National Ice Tea Day	29 Christina Milian at Club Love 7:00 PM
30 Nationals Home Game Vs. Tampa Bay Devil Rays 7:05 PM						

Summer 2006!

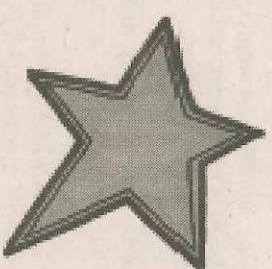
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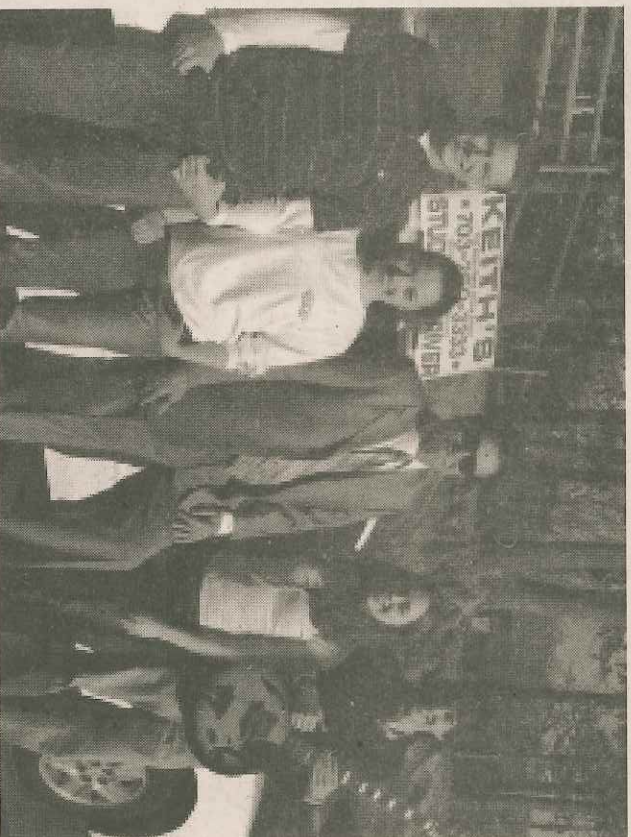


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