



# Sub collapses, students react in crowded hall

By Christina Sohn  
News Section Assistant

An ambulance rushed down Rolling Road on the Monday morning of September 19, 2005, squeezing past WS parents' cars until it arrived at the front entrance of the school. It had been summoned because substitute teacher Alan Kann collapsed.

Kann collapsed at around 7:15 a.m. in the hallway outside of the band room. Junior John Stryker was one of the first students in the hall to call for help.

"I walked out [of the band room] and he was there already collapsed. There were two kids kneeling next to him asking if he was OK," said Stryker. "Then I went to go get an administrator."

Band director Larry Einnis was the first adult at the scene. Once the administration arrived, the large crowd of students that had gathered were told to empty the hallway. Clinic aid also came to assist Kann.

"We got him help as fast as we could," said Security Specialist Mike Ukele.

The ambulance transported Kann to Fairfax Hospital, where he died of causes that are not officially known.

Kann was seventy-one years old and was going to substitute for Liz McDowell's Marketing classes. He lived in the WS community and has three adult

children who attended WS in the 1980's.

Principal David Smith made an announcement during fourth period informing students of Kann's death.

"I think it was good that they shooed people away [when he collapsed] and came back on the announcements later to explain what had happened and comfort people," said junior Keisie Snyder, a band student who had seen Kann lying down near the lockers.

Smith was present at the scene and thinks he and the rest of the administration handled the situation well.

"As I thought back over it, I feel that people who responded at various levels responded appropriately," said Smith.

Stryker also felt that the administration had been efficient.

"The administration had it under control as much as they could have," he said.

Smith believes that the school can learn valuable lessons from Kann's death.

"Cherish life. Take care of what's important. You never know when your time is up," said Smith. "We saw examples of that last year with deaths in the student body."



Liz Bucheleiser

The normally crowded freshman hallway by the band room was the sight of substitute teacher Alan Kann's collapse on September 19.

# To the rescue

## Students plan Katrina aid

By Caitlin Laverdiere  
Managing Editor

The horrific effects of Hurricane Katrina have displaced hundreds of residents from the New Orleans area.

Students here have come to the aid of those in need.

The SGA, NHS and Class of 2006 are raising money for the hurricane as well. The organizations are trying to mainstream their efforts in attempts to procure a larger profit in the end.

"The best way to help them is to not overburden the relief workers; they're being inundated," said French teacher Joelle Torrecele. "If we send money it goes directly to the kids."

The Gulf Coast was inundated with record high flood waters that washed away property, possessions and pent up savings of the Louisiana community.

Organizations across the country have stepped in to aid in reconstructing the area and sending support for the evacuees. Groups like the American Red Cross are providing shelter, food, counseling and other assistance for those affected by Katrina's devastation.

In the DC metro area, people are pitching in by volunteering at the DC

Armory where approximately 400 evacuees have sought shelter and solace.

Individuals can volunteer by donating critical necessities to the Armory and by spending time with the evacuees to help them feel comfortable integrating into the community.

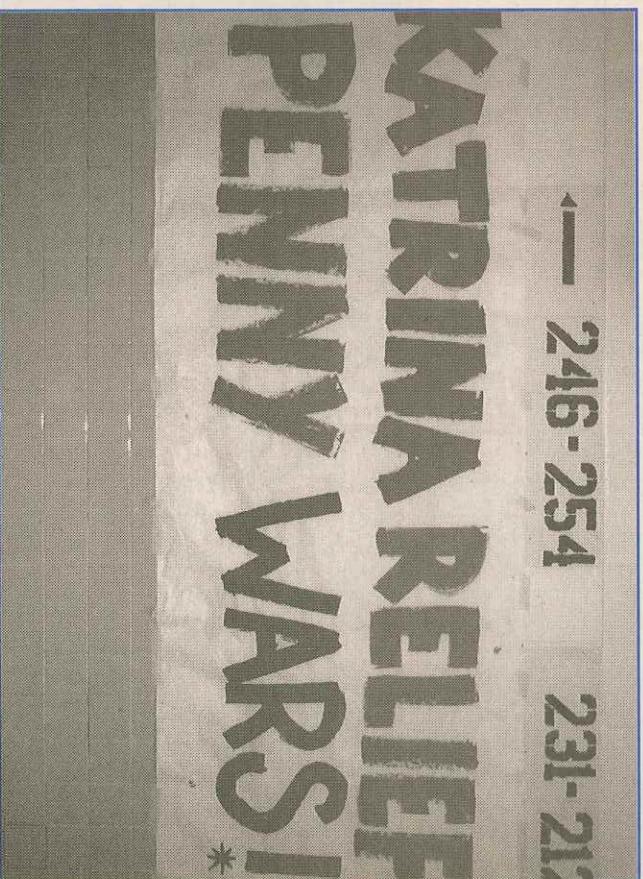
There are several fund-raisers underway within the FCPS and WS community to assist in the Katrina relief effort.

Bill Strauss, the national director of the Cappies, organized a benefit dinner at Hayfield on September 24 to raise money in support of the victims of Hurricane Katrina. The donations from attendants are going to the American Red Cross. WS sent a group to perform at the dinner.

"Every school [had] the option to perform a song or skit for three minutes," said senior Maggie Seegers.

"We [did] 'Seasons of Love' from *Rent*." The schoolwide effort to help Katrina survivors involves collecting money in a class penny wars-type fund-raiser.

The student government groups hope to send money, not packages, to the hurricane victims. Packages that



Liz Bucheleiser

Different groups at WS have devised ways to help out with the citizens of New Orleans who were affected by Hurricane Katrina, including the fundraiser Penny Wars that started this past Monday.

have been sent to the Louisiana region have been disregarded because of the overwhelming number being sent into the area from organizations across the county.

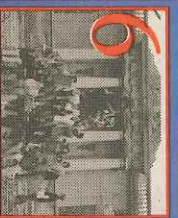
"There will be a school wide penny wars to benefit the Hurricane Katrina victims," said government teacher Kevin Gallagher.

The penny wars will be a spin off of the effort undertaken last year to help the tsunami victims in Sumatra.

Each class will compete to earn the most money for the relief effort and the winning class will earn a reward.

Students are encouraged to participate in helping with the school and community wide fundraisers. Whatever people are able to contribute, from time to money, will help.

"Money is less personal," said Torrecele. "But we need to be practical and the main way to help these people is in the best way possible."



6 Field trips break class monotony



7-8

Arrival of the Forum section



13

Redistricting creates new rivals



# Crowds consume Hollywood and Vine

By Carlin Sherrill  
Weekend Editor

Our Hollywood and Vine is significantly different from the one across the country in California.

While the street in the sunny state of California is home to historic places as well as new trendy shops in Hollywood, WS's Hollywood and Vine is home to the class of 2006. This year it seems like the intersection is overcrowded, with too many seniors taking up the hallway.

The intersection, also known as senior rail, is where the seniors make their territory known and exercise their new power. I understand that it is the beginning of the school year and the

seniors are basking in the glory of being the oldest in the school, but is it really necessary to claim all four hallways and a stairway?

Since the school year is just beginning, the new underclassmen are still trying to map out the way to their classes around one intersection: Hollywood and Vine.

Since it is in the center of the school, most freshman include it in their paths as they navigate the building.

They have not figured out that there are ways of getting around WS that do not include going through Hollywood and Vine, like the back stairways and halls. Instead, they go through Hollywood and Vine multiple times a day,

making even more congestion at the already crowded intersection.

When I go through the intersection, all I notice is how many seniors there are and how they think they are all big and bad.

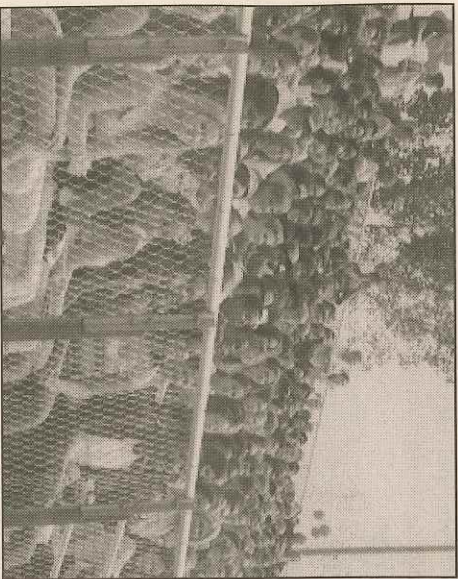
They take up way more space than actually needed. My definition of being the big and bad does not include taking up as much space as possible and making it harder for everyone to move about the school.

I understand that as a senior, this is a tradition that you receive for being the oldest in the school. These crowded conditions, however, are ridiculous. I suggest having the administration monitor the stairway, making sure that

there is a clear path for students to pass through. This path should not include pushing and shoving through the hallway. The lane needs to be cleared at all times.

Granted, I am not a senior and some might argue that I do not understand about being the powerhouse of the school. I do realize that this is the seniors' way of trying to be "cool" and pushing around the kids underneath them, but the seniors need to recognize that senior rail is a privilege.

It should not be abused. No one has the right to block other students' pathways. This goes against our school motto: "Take care of yourself, take care of this place, and take care of eachother."



Liz Buchheister  
Crowded and hot conditions hindered a good idea during the first outdoor pep rally.

## Letter to the Editors:

Dear Editors:

From my perspective, the entire student body deserves commendation and recognition for an outstanding pep rally on Sept 9.

On a beautiful Friday afternoon when less mature teenagers may have been tempted to misbehave, the Spartans demonstrated politeness, respect and class.

Thank you for a great beginning to what I am sure will be an outstanding school year.

Mike Dobson, Director of Student Activities

# Pep Rally heats up

We'd really rather celebrate inside

Maybe sitting 2,300 warm teenage bodies in the stadium in the afternoon summer sun isn't the best idea.

While the students, eager to miss instruction time (we mean show their school spirit), should be thrilled that there are pep rallies at all, the first pep rally had its flaws.

Right from the start, the commute to the stadium was less than enjoyable. Seniors, who are normally released first from class for the pep rally were forced to join the thick lines attempting to squeeze through the two slim entrance gates in what should have been their grand entrance.

Administrators were herding students toward the stadium so fervently that even an alumni stopping by to say "hi" to a teacher was "strongly encouraged" to go to the rally and was threatened with detention if he would not comply.

After three years of seniors looking forward to the opportunity to sit with their class and be the powerhouses, they were sadly denied that opportunity. The class sections were not clearly defined and

seniors found themselves helping the freshman win the beach ball game. This should not have happened.

Though the speeches that the sports captains make are always lame and embedded with the usual inside joke or two, they are a pep rally staple and were missed.

Because the field was farther away, we missed out on any possibility to see the dance team's midrifts, sweat pouring down class officers' foreheads as they ran in the relay and couldn't see a single water

balloon smash one of our burly football players.

There was, however, an advantage to this new venue. The fresh air must have calmed us to the point

of politeness. Mike Dobson, Director of Student Activities, was so impressed by the student body's behavior that he wrote a letter of commendation.

So, although we praise the organizers of the pep rally for all their effort and are pleased the event was even possible, in the future we hope the pep rallies move back inside, allowing long-standing traditions to continue.

## Editorial



The  
ORACLE

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The Oracle is a student-run publication to inform and entertain the students and staff of West Springfield High School and the Springfield community. We publish articles written with as little reporter bias as possible. Opinion is expressed in Viewpoint, Inside Story, ETC., and in reviews and columns. Editorials represent the opinion of at least two-thirds of the staff and do not reflect the views of the adviser, the administration, or the Fairfax County Public School System. The Oracle reserves the right to reject advertising deemed inappropriate. Signed letters to the editor and personal commentary will be considered for publication, but could be edited for grammar, spelling and space.

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# Assignments snag student summers

By Lindsay Burke  
Viewpoint Editor

Week-long assignments, the most boring books you will ever read and note taking are things that never used to be associated with summer vacation.

As the years go by, however, we students find our summers attacked by the FCPS school board and selective teachers.

We get pressed with absurd amounts of summer work. Teachers hand out packets, required summer reading lists and sometimes even school books before the end of the year for us to work on over the summer.

Sure, we are given plenty of time to complete these assignments, but let's be realistic: no student is going to come home on the last day of school and celebrate by beginning the crucial AP US History packet, and no one would ever ruin their entire summer by doing the commonly suggested "little each day."

Summer is supposed to be a time to relax and have fun with friends, visit family in other states, or go on vacation just to get away. It is not a time for school, which is exactly why it is called "summer vacation." It is supposed to be a vacation—from school.

We love summer, and we need it to be given back in full. We are in school 10 months every year, I am sure we learn enough in those 10 months that we can keep the two we are given to ourselves.

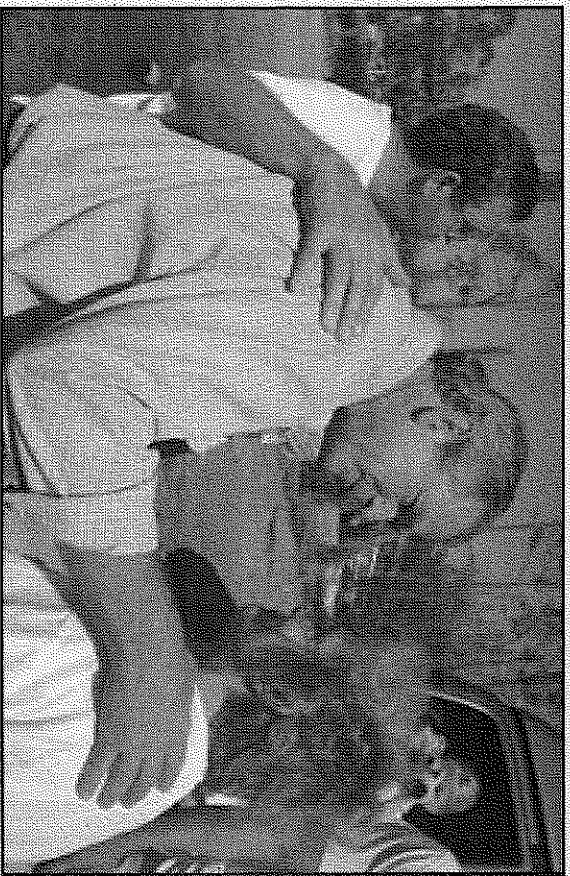
It is heartbreaking to wake up on a beautiful summer morning and realize you're going to spend the majority of it highlighting important sentences in a summer reading book.

A handful of teachers do not even allow students the entirety of the summer to complete assignments. AP Comparative Government students were forced to read articles and e-mail them responses. The assignment was due on August 12 this summer.

The work that is assigned over summer could easily be done as class work during the year or as a homework assignment during the first week of school.

Even people who opt not to do their summer assignment should not be punished. It's unfair for students to suffer from a bad grade before the year even starts.

The FCPS school board and summer-assignment-obsessed teachers need to take two tips from elementary school: keep their hands to themselves and stay out of our summer.



White House  
Although President Bush did eventually go down to see Hurricane Katrina's wreckage, he was on vacation when the disaster struck.

## Spartan Spotlight

What is your opinion on the government handling of Katrina?

"It was actually pretty good. I don't think it was Bush's fault, it was the state and city governments who weren't letting help in."  
—Chris Colton, senior

"I feel like it could've been done better, but with communication down, they did alright."  
—Kelsey Calderwood, junior

"It was slow, they should have tested things before this happened."  
—Amunda Hirsch, freshman

"[FEMA] had a director who wasn't qualified."  
—Myrcie Butt, freshman

"The Red Cross is everywhere, on the radio, newspaper, and TV."  
—Leo Walker, junior

"Part of the problem is that people aren't donating money specifically to the hurricane relief fund when they donate to the Red Cross."  
—Zach Siders, freshman

"I think they did pretty well, because they sent troops, supplies, and all sorts of help to New Orleans. They could've had more communication on where to send help. It was a little unorganized."  
—Mark McDonald, junior

—Compiled by Jenny Taylor

## Katrina blows Bush off course Americans criticize Bush's actions

By Josh Lipman  
Managing Editor

Mass chaos, death, and violence are all pretty good indicators that your government has failed you.

If it cannot keep you alive and healthy, then whatever services it is providing for you are irrelevant. Our federal government, headed by George Bush, has missed this point.

The Bush Administration knew Hurricane Katrina was coming three days before it hit.

They knew federal troops, like the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and the First Cavalry Division, were on standby to head into disaster areas before it hit.

They knew the New Orleans levees were extremely vulnerable before it hit.

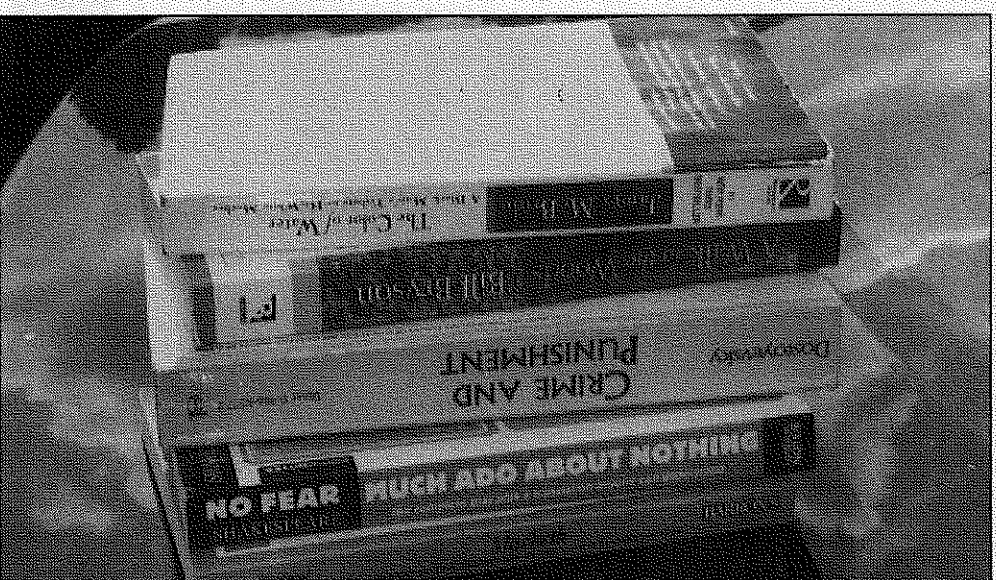
They knew the New Orleans Superdome only had three days before it hit.

They knew the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne was not dispatched until September 4, a full week after Katrina hit.

Bush claimed nobody predicted the levees would break even though his government had cut federal funds to improve them from the budget for each of the last three years.

Buses did not start arriving to evacuate the Superdome for four days. The government knew what was coming and failed to act accordingly.

Either they did not know what to do, meaning they are incompetent, or they knew what to do and did not do it anyway, meaning they are negligent.



Erica Whitting  
Summer reading assignments and thick textbooks haunt WS students' summer break.

In either case they should be fired just like anyone would if they completely failed their job.

The Department of Health and Human Services did not declare the Gulf Coast a public health emergency for two days after the storm.

Were they waiting for an outbreak of the Bubonic Plague?

Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco requested federal troops on the Monday the storm hit and not only did Bush not send troops, but he tried to blame the shortage of troops on her by claiming she did not ask for any help until Wednesday.

The man Bush hired to head the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Michael Brown, had no prior experience in emergency management.

His last full-time job before joining FEMA was the commissioner of judges and stewards for the International Arabian Horse Association. In case you were wondering—he was fired from that job.

The reason he was able to become the head of FEMA without going through a Senate confirmation hearing is because Bush downgraded FEMA from a cabinet position and made it part of the Department of Homeland Security.

Despite all of this, Bush told Brown, "Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job," about a week before forcing him out of his job.

Maybe it is time for the American people to say, "Bushie, you're doing a heck of a job."



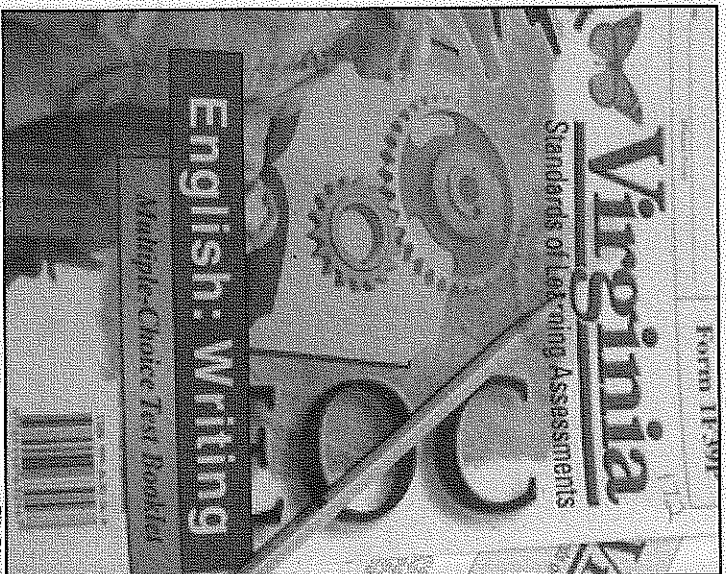
## Virginia

Standards of Learning Assessments

Form 11-391

### English: Writing

Multiple-Choice Test Booklet



File Photo

SOL's are often at the forefront of teachers' minds because their student's performance apparently reflects their ability as educators.

## Test scores take precedent over learning in order to teach to the test

By Scott Babcock

Senior Staff Writer

It is a common argument, whether it is a good idea for a teacher to base his or her curriculum around the Virginia Standards of Learning test or not.

I believe that it is in every student's best interest that teachers do teach to the test. There are two main advantages to this method and almost no disadvantages.

The most valuable aspect of teaching to the test is that it ensures students that they are getting the same education as every other student in the state.

Without this reassurance students would be unaware that they might be getting screwed over on their education.

Also it ensures less affluent school systems that they are not being hindered by their lack of funds.

Teaching to the test also guarantees that teachers are doing what they are supposed to be doing, that is educating the youth of Virginia. I know it is hard to

fathom, but if allowed, some teachers would not teach a thing. They would just come to school to pick up a pay check. I don't know about other students, but I would rather come to school to learn, than to come to school for no reason at all.

Some critics would also argue that teaching to the test takes ALL of the fun out of school. Who said school should be fun? Again, school is for learning, not for fun. This argument is also not valid because school was never fun, even before teaching to the test.

On the other hand some critics say that teaching to the test limits a teachers ability to be creative in their teaching styles. I do not see any reason a teacher would need to be creative in school. There job is to educate, not entertain. And, frankly creativity is for artist, not teachers.

Teaching to the test is an excellent way to provide students with an exceptional education. It would be a tragedy if the school system ever got rid of it. Richmond is on the right track.

## Teachers deal with low pay and high standards

By Lindsay Bruhn

Viewpoint Editor

Teachers in Fairfax County are some of the highest paid teachers in the country. The country's average pay for teachers is around \$46,000 a year.

That said, my mother who is a teacher at Cardinal Forest Elementary, makes less for spending countless hours on lesson plans and grading than my father does for *not* working. His retirement pay is significantly higher than her salary. I am disgusted.

A teacher's paid day, at this school, is supposed to start at 7:00am and end at 3:00pm. If you know your teachers at all

then you are aware that most of them stay well beyond the "end of school." Yet, they never receive overtime pay.

When you consider the amount of work that they take home, their pay becomes even more ridiculous.

Teachers are being ripped off in countless ways. A) they have to deal with screaming, disrespectful kids, and B) their lunch break can be taken up by students needing help or makeup work.

While they are given planning periods, it barely compensates for the amount of planning and grading that goes into running an orderly and interesting class.

Finding a solution to this problem is not an easy thing. Teachers are paid

through the government, and in order to raise their pay, we must raise taxes, and nobody wants that.

As students we do not pay taxes and therefore can do nothing in regards to the pathetic pay.

We can give them an easier time in dealing with students by being on our best behavior. Simple "please and thank you's" would, I am sure, be greatly appreciated. Teachers do everything for us, so try and make their lives a little easier.

For all of you that enjoy giving the staff here a hard time, think twice. They have one of the most important jobs in this country, educating the next generation of leaders.

## Permanent schedules make permanent problems

By Beth Stinson

Business Systems Assistant

It is WS administration policy that teachers and staff are paid to educate the students of WS and to try to place them in the best environment for the individual student. By doing this, our teachers are able to help each student build the foundation for his or her education.

But what if a student finds it hard to participate in a class because of a teacher's style? For some students it is hard to find a comfortable position on the couch of learning.

Students with different learning styles, Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder, and those who are academically gifted often find it hard to find the right class, or teacher, that corresponds to their needs.

Students who wish to change classes because they find it difficult (like honors Chemistry to regular Chemistry) are often more likely to be given an easier escape. Some students are placed in a class with a teacher who just flat out doesn't teach the way they learn.

Counselors confuse a student not liking a teacher for a sheer inability to perform comfortably in the classroom. It has been scientifically proven

that every single young adult has a different way of learning. A student who is a visual learner, may be stuck with a verbal teacher who is not willing to adapt to accommodate all students.

As of now, it is a three week process to switch teachers. It is a long, drawn-out, and embarrassing procedure in which parents must take time out of their busy day to meet with the teacher, and then again

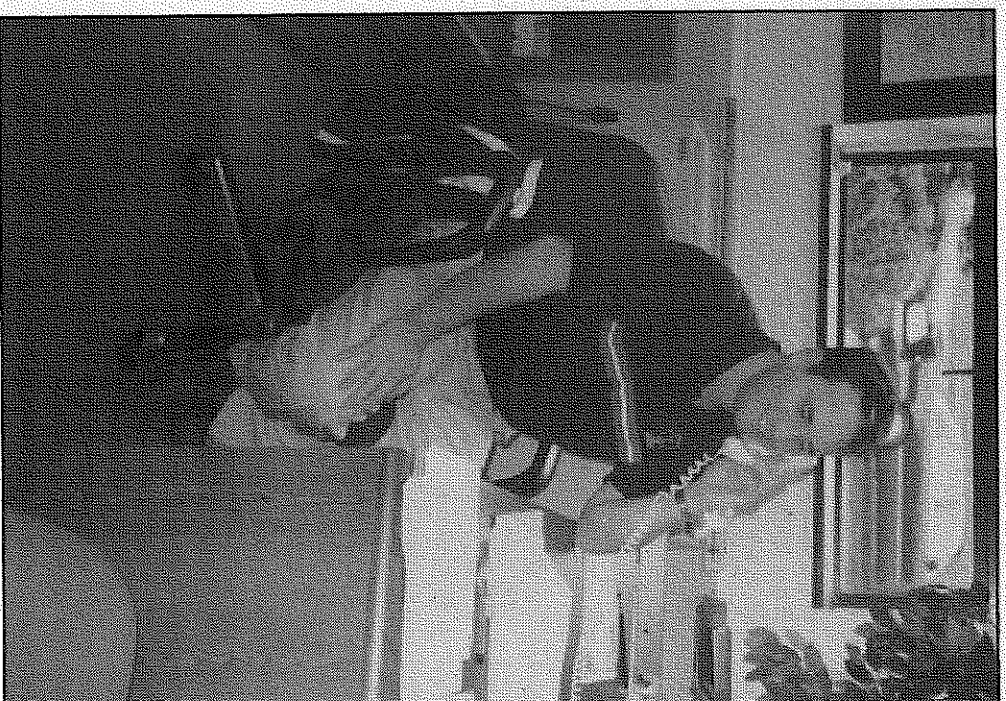
with both the teacher and an administrator.

In addition, if the final exchange is never carried out, the student is trapped in an unimaginably uncomfortable setting with a teacher who they tried to replace.

The process is complicated and laborious because some students don't have feasible evidence that they are not learning in a given class.

Some try to switch teachers just to be with their friends. To avoid this, it takes three weeks, and lots of time taken out of the day to reach the ultimate goal of switching teachers.

I suggest that the process of switching teachers be made easier and less emotionally straining on the student. I believe that as long as they give a plausible reason for wanting to be switched, the counselors should assist them as they need it.



File Photo  
Ken Christopher works the phone while helping students sort through schedule problems.



AVWeb Editor

Tax payers are holding their money with a death grip, making teacher pay-raises impossible to obtain.



# WS scheduled for minor renovations

By Linnette Lam  
Senior Staff Writer

It is common to hear gripes around WS about how the school needs cosmetic changes, but a complete renovation is an intangible possibility for the foreseen future.

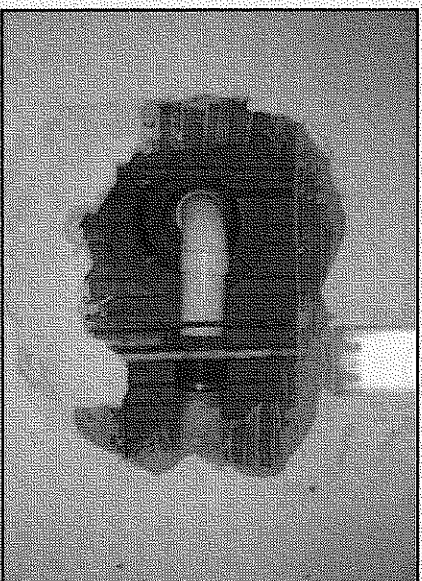
"You'll be grandparents [when the school is remodeled]," said principal Dr. Smith.

Aside from a little chipped paint and a few aged windows, our school is still in a functional state for daily school needs.

There are plans for a few minor reconstruction projects in our school, however, such as the conversions of a few storage rooms into small classrooms to accommodate for the greater student population and the growth of certain educational departments. The last major WS renovation occurred in 1990, when Spartan Hall and the auditorium underwent improvements.

Fairfax County has recently focused more on updating WS's technological learning aids, such as wireless labs, Smart Boards and an improved network system, rather than expending money on the aesthetic side of the school.

As FCPS allots WS money for better technology, other schools within the county with extreme needs



The exposed piping in the girls locker room is one of many sites around WS that show the need for renovation, minor or otherwise.

Tina Wagle

for renovation are getting (or will soon receive) the necessary funds.

The WS community has the option to take it upon itself to make the best of the current state of the school. The Class of 2006 seniors have recently repainted the football stadium bleachers and Spartan head in the parking lot, revamping the school while continuing the tradition of class spirit that has been an integral part of the Spartan experience.

Another simple way students and faculty members could prevent deterioration of the campus would be to pick up after themselves. A view of the hallways, cafeteria, sports lobby, and parking lot tells of the thousands of students that have been there, evident by the trash items strewn across the floors.

An empty parking lot leaves the testaments of various Starbucks Coffee runs, unwanted homework and unfinished food items.

Altogether, the superfluous trash becomes unnecessary work for the WS custodial staff. The staff not only maintains all rooms, hallways and outdoor grounds, but then also has to take up the extra tasks of unclogging bathroom sinks blocked by single-ply paper towels, cleaning up messy leftovers, picking up discarded items on the lawns and other menial tasks.

"I think it's ridiculous that our custodians end up picking up after us. It's just not fair," said senior Andrea Goelchius.

Campus cleanliness can be achieved, beginning on the individual scale. With no renovation on the radar, it is the only option to maintain a presentable school. Freshman Ahad Wahed has already learned about how important it is for the students and staff to take some responsibility in improving the condition of our school, as was evidenced when he bluntly said, "Students should simply put trash away."

## Hurricane Katrina victims attend WS

By Lauren Adams  
Senior Staff Writer

Everyone has heard about the recent natural disaster that has caused thousands of people to evacuate their homes and leave behind essentially their whole life.

Hurricane Katrina swept across the southern part of Louisiana, destroying everything that crossed her path. Hundreds of people were left homeless, and in need for a place to take refuge.

Junior Jeremy Buisson is one of these refugees. Although he was fortunate enough to be West of where the hurricane hit the hardest, his house still felt the effects, with damage to the roof and garage.

"Across the main highway they said there was a levy about to break," said Buisson.

This damage was enough that after staying in Dallas for a short period, he has come to Virginia to stay with his

second cousins. He has just started attending WS, and despite the fact that his school will reopen in January, says that he will most likely finish the year here. After our school year ends in June, he'll head back home to attend his school in the fall, which in the meantime will reopen in January and continue all through the summer from 2:30 to 7 pm.

He is both relieved and a little anxious about this sudden transition.

The transition to WS has been challenging at times. But, he is thankful that he has a place to stay and considers himself to be one of the lucky ones.

Buisson is not the only one who has come to Virginia to stay with relatives in order to escape the devastation of Louisiana. Junior Caitlin Grace's cousin, Christie Tribble has come to stay with her because Tribbles's house lost power and acquired small damage. Grace says that her cousin's stay is for an indefinite period, because they're not sure when the schools will open back up.

"I'm excited that Christie has come

to stay with us, but I feel bad because she can't go to school with her friends," said Grace.

According to Grace, that other students that went to Tribble's school will probably not go back, but instead move on in hopes of rebuilding their life.

A third student that has come to WS after being "temporarily displaced" from his town outside of New Orleans, is sophomore Matt Reed. After his house was flooded with over four feet of water, his parents sent him and his sister to NOVA to live with their aunt and uncle. Luckily for them, they were staying at a hotel at the time that the hurricane hit. He recalls the shuddering of one of the hotel windows, but said that he slept through it. Like many of the other refugees, Reed isn't sure when he'll be returning home.

"I'm glad that I have a place to stay but I'd rather be there [New Orleans]. I know some of my friends won't be coming back but that's just the way it is," said Reed.

## Six Japanese exchange students arrive at WS

By Libby Bursley  
News Editor

New arrivals from the culturally rich country of Japan made their way to the states for a visit last week.

On September 23, six exchange students came from the Higashi School in Kagoshima, Kyushu to spend a week in Springfield. All were sophomore, junior and senior girls at their high school, and stayed with families of students who were in Japanese levels two, three and four.

Usually, the students come around November but this year decided to come early. It caused a bit of a rush to try to find host families, but six families offered to house a student each starting right after school on the 23.

A variety of activities were planned for the students and families to take part in. There was a mandatory sightseeing tour for the WS and Higashi students on the 24, while the next day was a free day for the families to take their students wherever they wanted to go.

"We just went shopping for clothes at Tysons. We ended up buying earrings though," said senior Jenny Stapor.

On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the exchange students came to WS to attend school with their hosts, and went to all their classes.

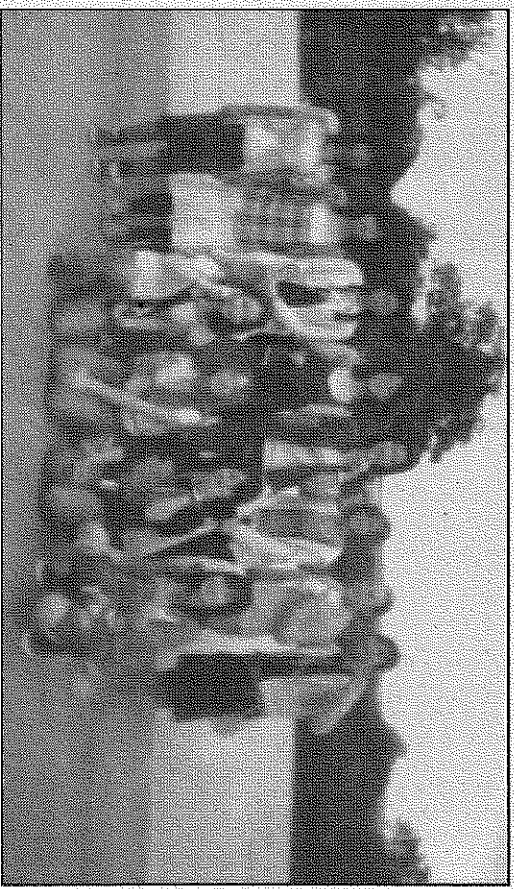
"American schools are more free than Japanese ones. Also, there aren't any uniforms," said Higashi student Chihiro Iwamoto.

Then on Wednesday night, there was a goodbye party for all the host families to celebrate their last night with the foreign students before they traveled back to Japan.

The students from Japan were here on a scholarship trip from the International Department at their high school which they belong to. Many of them had applied to come here to work on their English language skills (English is required in high schools in Japan) and to learn more about our culture.

The students at both high schools came away from this experience with a new perspective on each other's countries.

"It was really fun, but also a challenge," said Stapor. "I had to use Japanese all the time, but it was cool having a sister."



Kristen Garner

WS and Higashi High School students pose for a picture during a sightseeing trip to Arlington Cemetery. Later on that day, the students also went to Old Town Alexandria for food and shopping.

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# Classes are trippin'

*Teachers find that field trips make learning more fun*

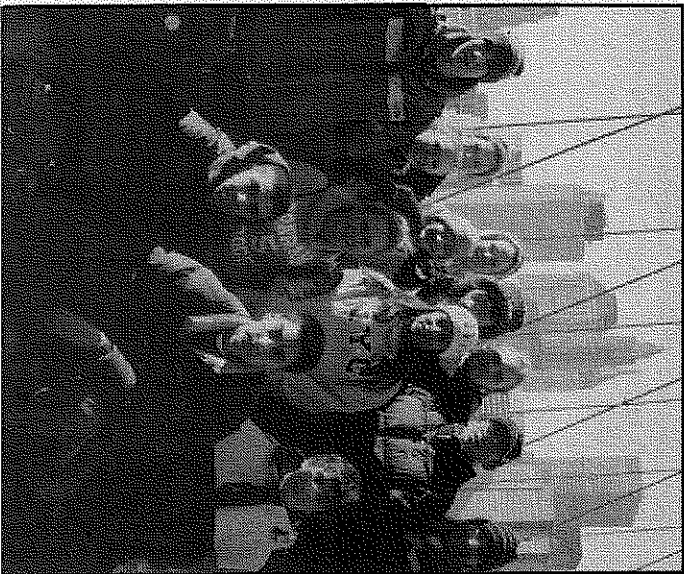
**By Laura Byland**  
Senior Staff Editor

Students often imagine school to be a place where teachers unendingly drone about banal subjects or even worse, a place where learning is done only by bookwork. The teachers at WS, however, are proponents of field trips.

Students are enthusiastic about these hands on learning experiences.

"If learning is more exciting, people will want to learn more," said senior Kate Maginn.

Teachers are cashing in on this theory. James Percoco's Applied History class is known for its alternative learning methods. Students enrolled in



Courtesy of Lauri Fischer  
Lauri Fischer and her students pose on the Brooklyn bridge on a New York field trip this past spring.

the class will visit, among other places, the Lincoln Cottage, Monticello, the National Archives, and Gettysburg this fall. In spring his class will travel to Cincinnati, Ohio to visit the National Underground Railroad Museum and then to the Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana and to other Lincoln related sites in Springfield, Illinois. The trip is replacing his annual visit to civil rights related sights in the Deep South for now.

Field trips are popular across the board amongst history teachers. Laurie Fischer takes her U.S. History students on several trips every year. Her students will sight-see in Philadelphia this fall. Last year, they toured the Betsy Ross House and saw the Liberty Bell. This fall her students will also tour Arlington National Cemetery. She will lead her annual trip to New York City in January. She has a trip scheduled from Cleveland in late April.

"My favorite thing was the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum. It was fun learning all about the music

"It's more up close and more hands on. You can see what you are learning about."

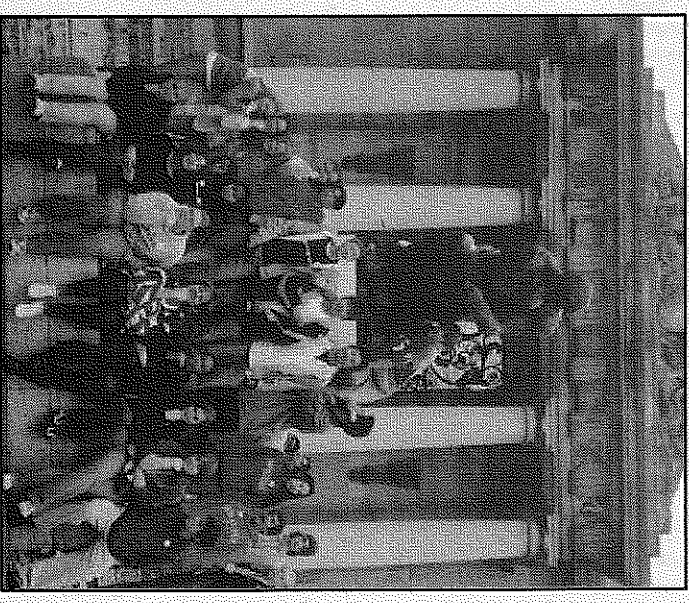
— *Kate Maginn, senior*

of the past," said senior Kellie Shoukat, who went on the trip last year.

US History classes will go to the National Museum of the American Indian this September, and AP European History students will visit the National Gallery of Art this October to view European paintings.

Last summer the AP European History students were required to visit the Holocaust Museum.

Maggiano also encourages his students to do individual field trips.



Courtesy of Lauri Fischer  
Students from Lauri Fischer's history classes went on a trip to Philadelphia in the fall of 2004.

Sports marketing teacher Bill Gibson hopes to bring his students to Orlando on a behind the scenes tour of the marketing department of a theme park this November.

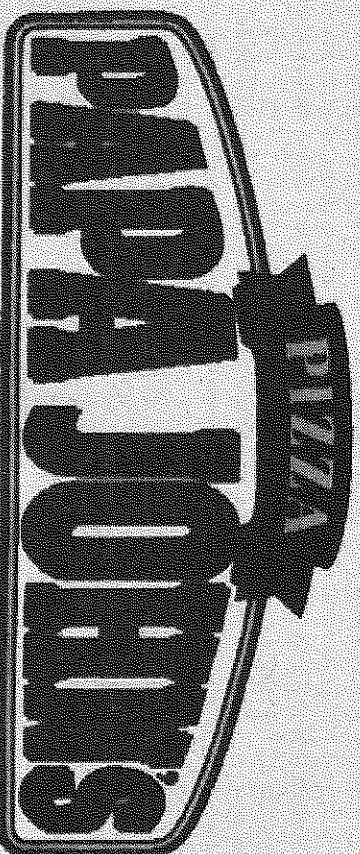
"Theme parks are a very viable business and give students a first hand look at the entertainment industry," said Gibson.

Ed Linz will bring the Science Honor Society to the Florida Keys in November to visit the John Pennkamp Coral Reef State Park and Key Largo National Marine Sanctuary. Here the aspiring scientists will hike on ecologicval trails, see the array of plant life in Florida, and visit the aquarium. Students will also go snorkeling at a coral reef and visit Ernest Hemingway's house.

"The sea inspired him to write. In the real world, it is all together. Other aspects show students we are really studying life. Learning doesn't involve just one certain discipline or area," said Linz.

Students understand and appreciate the merits of field trips, regardless of the subject.

"It's more up close and more hands on," said sophomore Sarah Wink. "You can see what you are learning about."



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## Spartan Man needs a new head on his shoulders

By Beth Sinson

Business/Systems Assistant

From the inside, it is a mass of smelly foam padding and sweat. But on the outside, it is an elderly and disgruntled chicken nugget with facial hair, fresh from a drunken bar fight. He is our Spartan mascot, and neither pride, nor a person to wear him, comes easily.

As of now, no one has taken any interest in suiting up every Friday night to transform into the mighty Spartan nugget after WS's last mascot graduated. This is understandable because besides the fact that it really is a lot of work being the mascot, our current costume is old and ready for retirement.

"The costume is ugly, and doesn't even look like a Spartan," said junior Taylor Milford. Despite the hardships of 'mascoting,' Nylen managed to take jibes and obvious giggles from students in stride.

"It was really fun, and a great experience," said Nylen, the former

Spartan Man. "But it kind of stinks because the costume is terrible. It's hard because you can't do a lot of the fun things like 'The Worm,' because the strap inside the head is broken, so I had to hold it on. I looked like a complete idiot."

Yes, yes he did. Scores of students agree that having such an embarrassing mascot costume effects school spirit and pride.

"The mascot makes me afraid for my life. It's the scariest thing I've ever seen. He came up behind me once and I started to cry," said sophomore, and JV cheerleader Suzy Placke.

Instead of instilling a sense of carefree, hormone-driven school spirit, the mascot infuses the student body with a kind of shame, a shame that drives them to point and laugh at the Spartan Man.

The obvious solution to this crisis is to buy a new costume so that maybe the job of the quintessential mascot will seem more appealing.

Though we have the money to



File Photo

'Spartan Man,' seen here in a 2004 photo, is missing in action due to a lack of interest in potential future mascots, partly because of an old, smelly costume. purchase a better one, the problem remains that still no one wants to be the mascot.

"We could get a new one, there's no reason we can't," said Assistant Director of Student Activities, Mike Mukai. "This

one kid actually called us and asked what he had to do, we told him to talk to Rita Robinson, and we never heard from him again." The fact is, because the costume is probably about 30 years old,

ugly, sweaty, and hard to wear, no one really wants to be the mascot. So chances are, if we had a new one someone would want to be the Spartan Man.

So for now, WS will continue its athletic dominance of Northern Virginia without a noble mascot. If you are a responsible young adult who wants to be the mascot, contact the varsity cheer coach, Rita Robinson.

## Thank the Academy

By Zohra Alnoor

Junior Staff Writer

Leaving school is the dream that all students have. They want to go through those big heavy doors with chipped blue paint and go home.

Having an academy class partly fulfills that dream. Instead of going home, juniors and seniors have the privilege of stepping onto a "state of the art" yellow bus riding to another public high school in the county to take a career-based class. When students become juniors and have two elective classes open, they can take an academy class varying from animal science to cosmetology.

"I work construction with my dad after school and want to have that as my future career," said senior Andy Shartle who takes a Construction Tech class at Edison.

Schools including Chantilly, Marshall, Fairfax, Edison and West Potomac participate in the Academy program.

Academy students leave during first block at 8:55 am and return in time for A lunch.

"Sometimes we get here late and I always miss break and don't get to see my friends," said junior Kristen Webbers who takes physical therapy at West Potomac.

Even though academy students are denied their precious ten minutes of break, where students loiter the halls, screaming and laughing like little hyenas, they do get benefits. They get the chance to go to other schools and take classes where they can build "little" houses, learn to talk in front of a camera, and put makeup on a scary looking dummy-head.

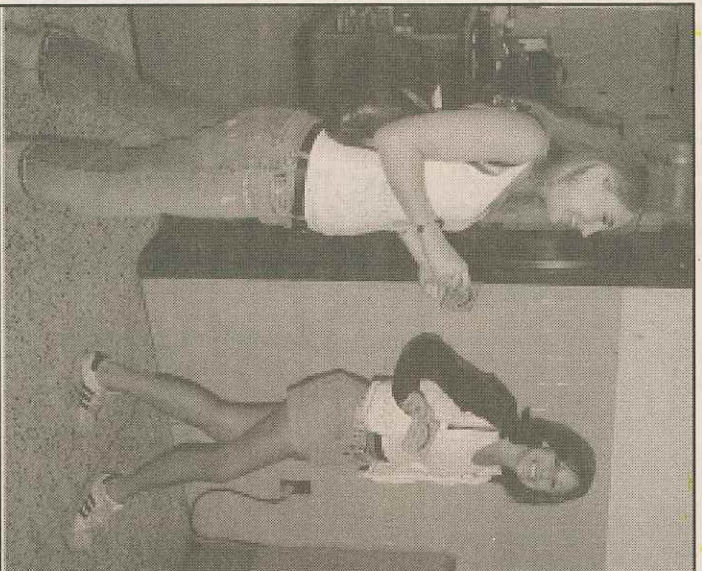
Senior Sara LaPorta takes Animal Science at Edison where she learns how to groom and care for animals.

"I needed to take an academy so I took Animal Science," said LaPorta.

Last year, when LaPorta was a junior, she took Criminal Justice at West Potomac.

Some students look at the academy classes as an alternative option to college, while others use it as a way to do more hands on research about whether or not they would like to do a certain career.

"I thought I wanted to have a career in criminal justice, said Laporta. "I'm glad I took it because I don't want to have a career in it."



Sara Kotail

Juniors Nicole Wiesenhahn and Chrissy Rogers leave their physics class early to go to their academy classes.



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# Calling all

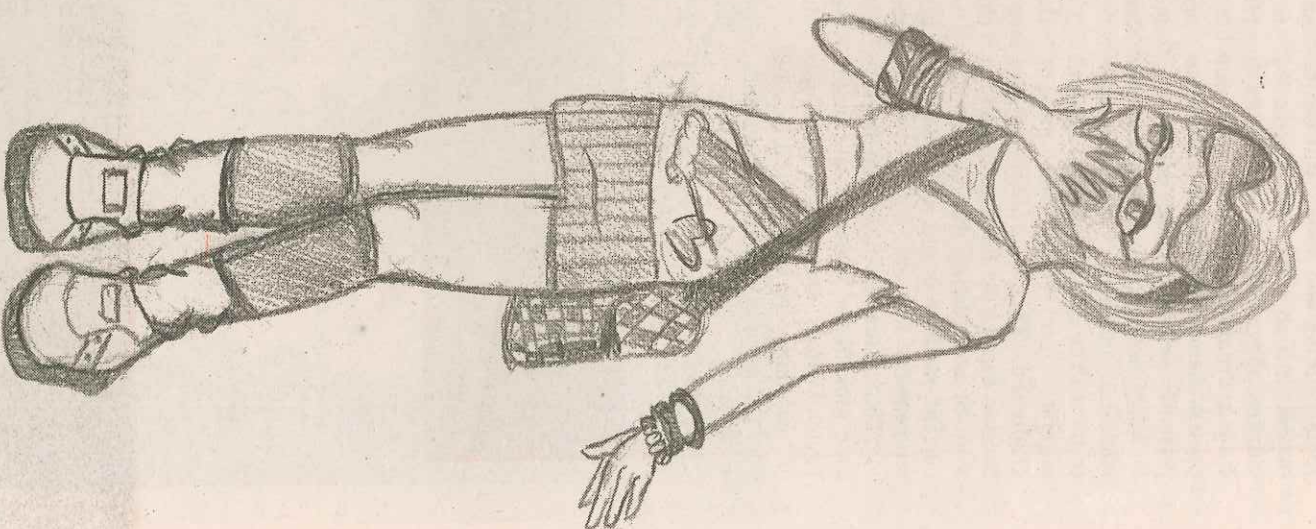
## creative students!

The Oracle proudly presents *Forum*, a new section designed especially to showcase WS's creative side. Please bring your poetry, prose, artwork, photography, sketches, raps, and song lyrics to Room 215, and we'll publish them in our pages. Or, talk to our new *Forum* editors, Stephanie Aguilar and Alyssa Horton, and they'll make sure the right people see your work. Our next submission deadline is November 4. See you in *Forum*!

### What Lay Dormant in The Sea

A man shouts out in desperate cries-  
Run! Run! Run! We're all going to die!  
But no one believes him; he's  
dismissed as a loon,  
Alas, all will find out, sooner than  
soon,  
What Mother Nature's been hiding,  
all will soon know,  
What all time's been biding, soon  
nowhere to go,  
The fisherman screams, and then it is  
clear,  
No one could tell, but the end was  
here,  
Too scared to move, too frightened to  
see,  
No more to prove, now wished they  
were free,  
For what will happen after the wave,  
Will be more devastating than  
impressions it gave.  
Women and children, they run for  
their lives,  
Debris follows after them, sticking  
like knives.  
Some surrender to death, others try to  
hold on,  
People cling to palm trees until break  
of dawn.  
They soon tire out, and retreat to  
their passing,  
Reprive from the hope, succumb to  
the thrashing.  
Finally after the hours despaired,  
The waves become calm, like they  
never were there.  
The war of the water, battle of sea  
I cannot forget that the waves spared  
me.

—Marryam Castle, sophomore



“Japanese Style” —Cooper Millholland, freshman



“California Sunset” —Amy McGregor, junior



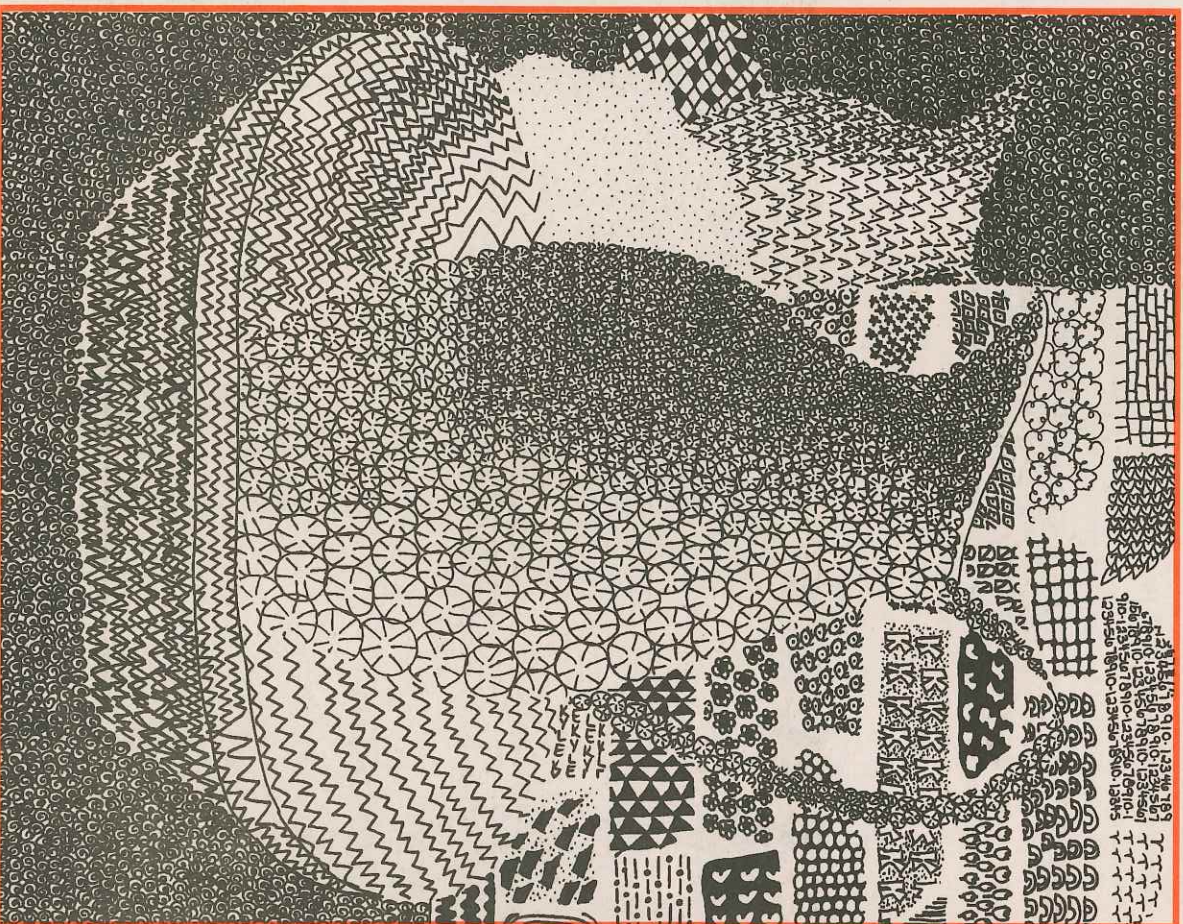


"Giant Eye" —Fanny Liang, senior

### The Power of Love

That feeling that you just don't know  
 That feeling where no matter what  
 happens, you can't let go  
 That feeling that takes over happiness,  
 sadness and all of the rest  
 When the directions are "it's right not to  
 love"  
 So you wanna go left  
 That feeling that you feel and you just  
 can't handle  
 You feel you can give up anything, and  
 your life is part of the gamble  
 And when you get hurt you want to  
 throw it all away  
 That feeling you put over all, but say  
 Love is just a waste  
 But when the emotions are in your face  
 Your heart just dies  
 You can't help but cry  
 And at the end of the day when you feel  
 like you're getting shoved  
 But To pick one or the other, you pick  
 Love

—Eddie Rivas, sophomore



"Fat Woman" —Kyle Schmitz, senior



# Xbox xpands Xperience

## A built-in DVD player, music storage, digital pictures enhance Xbox to please gamers

By **Stephanie Aguilar**  
Forum Editor

Gamers everywhere will receive a new toy this fall with the release of the new Xbox 360. The Xbox 360 is the sequel to Microsoft's first videogame system, the Xbox.

The Xbox 360, coming out this holiday season, is the first console to have a built-in DVD player included. It is considerably smaller than the first Xbox and it will also feature interchangeable faceplates to make it more aesthetically pleasing. The new console has the ability to store music and share digital pictures. This new gaming system introduces players to the exciting world of multiplayer online gaming.

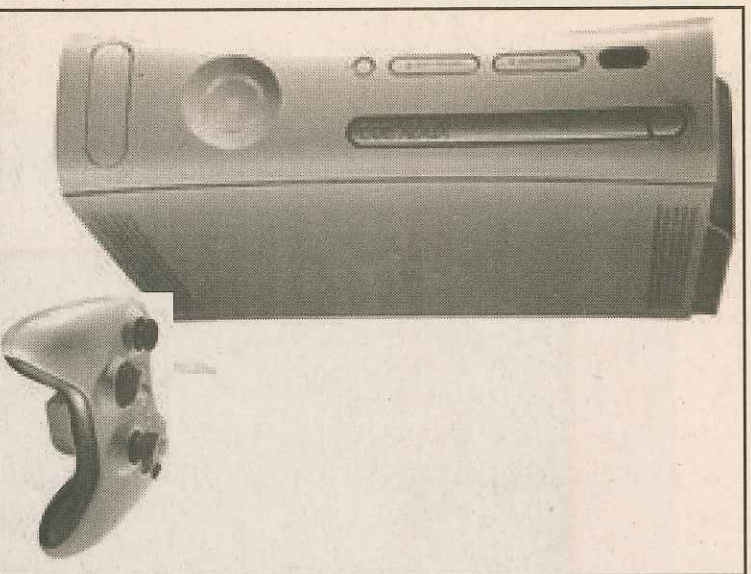
"The thought of playing with other Xbox fanatics in a more 'live' way will just enhance the whole experience of Xbox playing," said senior David Hunt.

The Xbox 360, however, is not compatible with games designed for the older Xbox. The makers of this new console have put gamers on their tiptoes by making the sounds and images even more realistic.

"I plan on getting [Xbox 360] as soon as it comes out," said junior Michael Peterson. "I want to experience the crazy graphics and the new effects."

The new features, however, may not be enough to convince the Nintendo players to switch loyalties. Money-wary gamers fear an even newer version will pop up shortly after the release of this version.

"The new technology appearing in game systems will only get better," said sophomore Loring Ross. "That's why I don't want to get the Xbox 360. A year or so later, an even greater Xbox will appear and that's when I'll ask my parents to buy it. Till then, it's not worth it."



Associated Press  
The new Xbox 360 boasts a sleeker look as well as enhanced graphics and sound effects.

## FOREIGN INVASION!

*American cinema appreciates foreign films' break from traditional blockbusters*

By **Jordy Serwin**  
Business Systems Editor

American cinema offers movie-goers an array of genres to select from. Among comedy, drama, horror, action, romance, classic and science fiction, the seemingly straightforward task of picking a movie to watch can be an experience straight out of Hitchcock's most frightening movies.

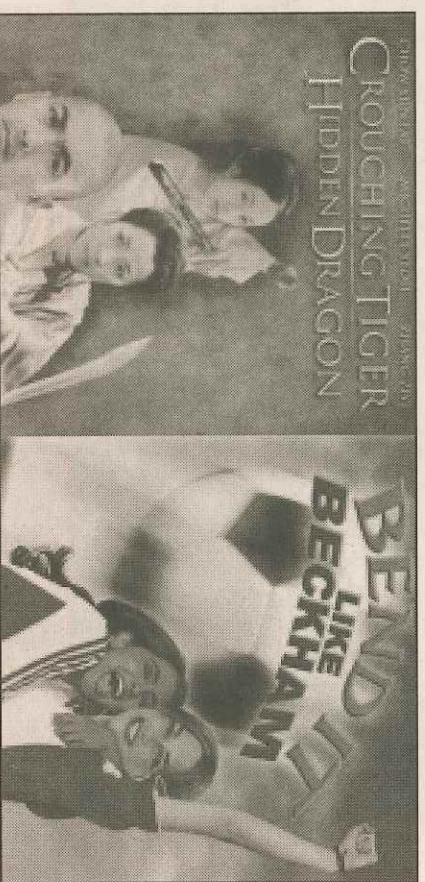
One unique, and often overlooked, genre may hold the answer to the daunting task of picking a movie: foreign films.

The popularity of foreign films in America is by no means a phenomenon of recent years. As far back as the mid 1950s, the Academy Awards has given trophies for the Best Foreign Language Film. Popular foreign films of the 1960s included Clint Eastwood's spaghetti westerns (western movies that were

produced by Italian film companies) and films by the Italian screenwriter Federico Fellini, such as the Oscar winning "8 and a Half." 1970s foreign movies were marked by actor Bruce Lee's anthology of Kung-fu style films from China. The foreign genre in the 1980s punched out "Cinema Paradiso" and "Das Boot."

The late 1990s and early 2000s produced a few, more artsy, foreign films like "Life is Beautiful" and Amelie in addition to more traditional comedies such as the United Kingdom's "Bend It Like Beckham" and Bollywood's "Bride and Prejudice."

The late 1990s also gave rise to the so called "wire-fu" style featured by Taiwan's "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon." The film's unique cinematic elements proved so successful with American audiences that American filmmakers began to emulate the style in films like "The Matrix" and "Kill Bill."



Associated Press  
America has been latching onto foreign films like England's "Bend It Like Beckham" and Taiwan's "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon."

"Hero," "House of Flying Daggers," and "Kung Fu Hustle."

What makes foreign films popular is just that: they don't come from the United States. Audiences want to experience art and culture from other countries.

"I like the fact that foreign films give a different perspective," said junior Sara Elsaied.

A current trend in American filmmaking is the multi-million-dollar blockbuster that, more often than not, sacrifices writing for special effects.

"I like the film 'El Mariachi,'" said senior Craig Stephenson, "I like the fact that they could make such a good movie on such a low budget."

Another cause for the popularity of the foreign genre is that foreign films are often an exception to the rule that movies, in whole or in part, repeat themselves over and over again.

"There are some elements of foreign films that you don't see in American films," said junior Carlo Canlas, "foreign films are just a good break from American films."

## 'Shark Tale'

Two words. Screen SUSHI. This movie is like a bad version of Finding Nemo. But you never find out what the point is. EVER. NEVERRRRRR EVERRRRRRR. There's a lot of dancing at the carwash, fish in skin tight bikinis and LIES—One of the biggest being that this is a family movie; unless your family enjoys watching a film laced with sexual innuendo and gang violence. If I could do it all again, I'd die first. So basically, next time you feel like settling down with the 'rents and little Janney Sue, think twice whether or not you want that precious girl to learn how to walk the streets.



## Oracle Picks



### Pure Punishment

Ahh, a book that is truly punishment. Written by Fyodor Dostoevsky before the English language was invented, most of it consists of mindless numbing about absolutely nothing. Part of the language confusion could be because it was originally written in Russian, and in Russian it should have stayed. The main character, who no one knows what his name really is (Rassnfsrjgnhkdto-kov), decides out of the blue to kill some poor old hag, only to steal her possessions and bury them again due to his immense guilt that he begins to feel. Where is the action? The love affairs? This book is about as pleasurable as getting a wart removed, while being stabbed by a thousand knives. (Being stabbed being more fun). A punishment with every page...

## 'This Side'

This CD puts a new twist on bluegrass. The group's voices, composed of three southern Californians, are the perfect combination to create smooth harmonies. "Sabrae Girl" has a haunting melody, revealing the pain of wanting more than friendship. "This Side" is more upbeat and will keep you tapping your toe while trying to keep up with the clever lyrics. "The Lighthouse" is more about lost loves. Each song touches on a different trial or tribulation of life, each with a unique tone.



—Compiled by Lauren Adams



# Waiting till the last minute

By Caitlin Kenney  
Viewpoint Assistant

Organization and homework is a top priority....on the procrastination list. Students can cram a whole project the night before it's due while other kids prefer to spread the work load out.

"As much as I try not to save projects until the last week or so, I do work well under pressure," said junior Diego Rodriguez. "Probably because I'm forced to give 100 percent on the project to get it done. Although I pull over-nighters, I get my projects done and in good quality."

Classmates try to get organized for school, but the just-ended summer can delay the process. Students are still in summer mode and are not willing to go back to school for all the work they know is ahead of them for the coming months. Once procrastination starts it's a never ending list of work.

"I probably procrastinate more than the usual person," said junior Kaite Viyy. "On the weekends I begin to do homework definitely on Sunday and very late too. And then of course I get very cranky and tired, but what can I say: I hate homework!"

After three years of high school, seniors find it easier than most to juggle many activities as well as school work.

"Writing down everything that I need to do, and checking tasks off as I finish them helps organize."

said senior Jackie Dolan "Taking periodic breaks also helps, so I don't have to do a lot of work in large chunks."

Getting active helps relieve the stress and the permanent shadow of homework. Each year the work load increases.

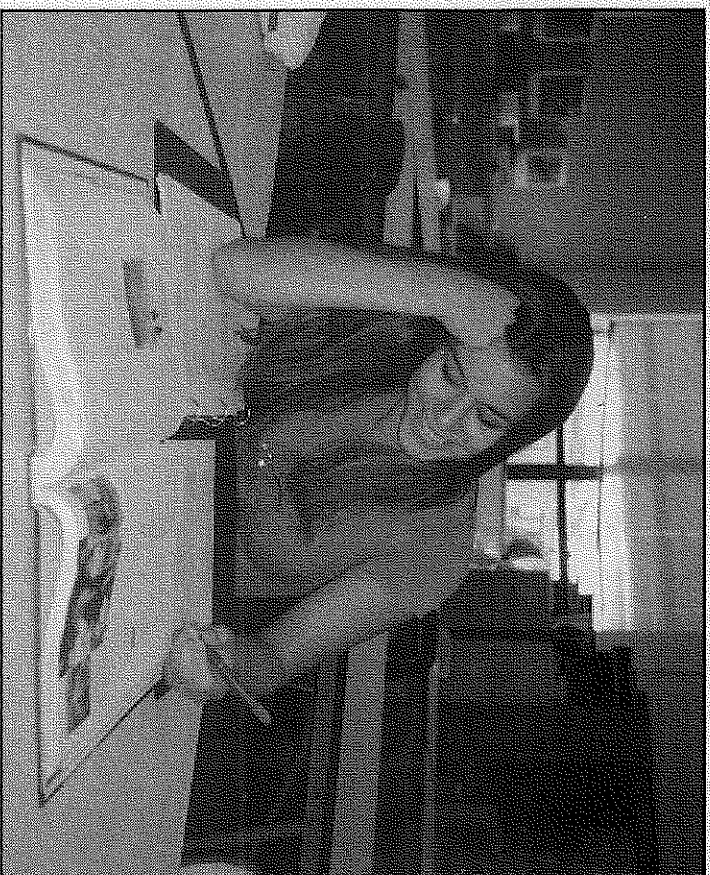
"To help me prepare for the following weeks, on the weekends, I rollerblade because I love it and it's a huge stress reliever," said freshman Taylor Silver.

**"As much as I try not to save projects until the last week or so, I do work well under pressure... probably because I'm forced to give 100 percent on the project to get it done"**

—Diego Rodriguez, Junior

A diverse part of the student body experiences apathy when it comes to homework. The weekend for some is a time to just chill and not worry about school. Since the teachers, however, give homework on the weekends, we are forced to do the work over our weekend breaks.

"Procrastination isn't something I like to do. It kind of just happens," said junior Leo Walker, "I don't ever really start my homework on the weekend, I start it Monday morning."



*Tina Weida*  
Senior Amanda Abbott sits studying hard on her SAT practice work. She wants to do well in order to have a good chance of getting into the college of her choice.

## Stressing the SATs

By Stephanie Aguilar  
Forum Editor

The stressful, premature ulcer, inducing SATs, leaves many students at WS looking for some extra help. Sometimes escape routes are closed and the only thing left is to take the painful SAT courses over the weekend.

For those who enroll, the classes effectiveness is not always clear.

"I felt like it was working at first, but I hadn't improved that much. The SAT scores didn't show it," said senior Maxwell Brooks, who had taken the Princeton Review courses for one month.

Fortunately, for Brooks, the program came with a guarantee that if the scores had not risen after taking the course, you could take it again, and the second time, it would be free.

"This year, I'm going to take the same program since its free and see what happens from there," said Brooks.

Seniors, getting ready to apply to college, take SAT prep courses to get prepared for what will come.

"My mom researched it. They give homework and I think its been helping

me out," said senior, Will Cope, who will be taking the Kaplan prep courses later this year.

Top notch SAT courses like that of the Princeton Review charge \$548 for 20-30 hours of SAT prep. Kaplan, another popular preparation program charges \$800 for three months. At WS a less expensive option is available.

A program put together two years ago by Career Specialist Susan Rexford offers a free SAT prep course.

"It's free and open to every single person in school grades nine through twelve that wants to do it," said Rexford.

The course includes SAT test questions online at College Board. Only about ten minutes a day is required on the college board website as practice for the program.

The SAT scores of WS students have raised a noticeable amount because of this prep course. The prep course is truly improving WS SAT scores.

"It's great that the school is making accommodations and that it's open to all. It should be offered to all kids and most importantly that they participate," said assistant principal Richard Griffin.

## Applying yourself

*Upperclassman are using their free time on the weekends to take college visits and get their applications in order for the upcoming years.*

By Alyssa Horton  
Forum Editor

Taking the SATs, meeting with counselors, getting transcript, filling out applications and visiting campuses are all components of searching for a college.

Everyone must eventually face their counselors, teachers and family members bounding them to start thinking about college. The students are faced with applications, college visits that come with the college hunt.

The seniors and juniors of WS started this process by visiting the colleges they are considering in their spare time over the weekend.

"My mom made me fill out all of my applications over the summer so that I'd have them out of the way," said senior Nicole Sinwell. Sinwell filled out applications for UVA, the College of William and Mary, Duquesne University, St. Vincent's College, Penn State and the University of Pittsburgh.

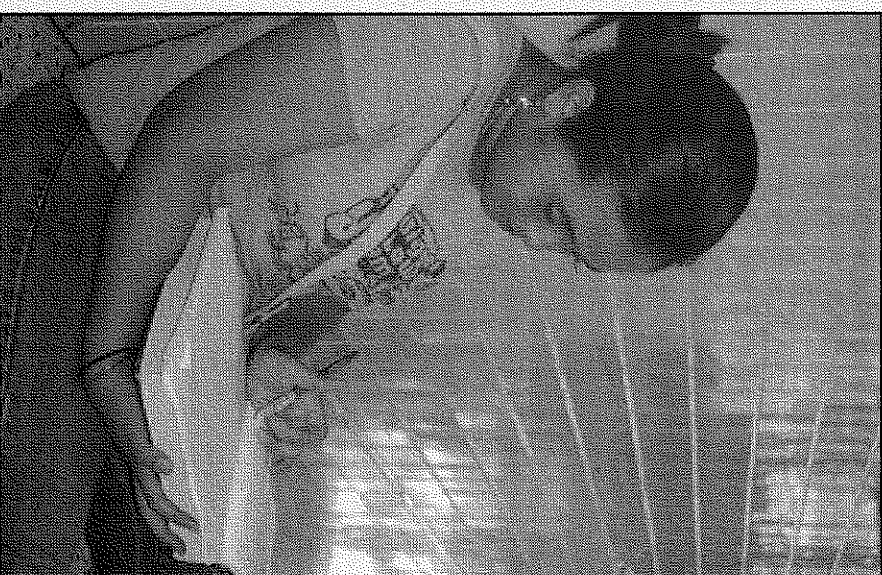
"I visited Pittsburgh a couple of weeks ago and the campus was really nice," said Sinwell.

Juniors, however, are more relaxed about college at the moment.

"I'm not really looking at colleges that much because I've still got a year," said junior Sarah Mazzeo, "but right now I think I want to go to CNU [Christopher Newport University] because you only have to have a 3.2 to get in there and that's something I can do."

A huge factor of college searching is in-state or out-of-state. Although, if the college is out-of-state, it's harder to find time to visit.

"I went to Liberty for a weekend over the summer with my family. I like the campus and I think I'll go there for the first two years to get all the basic [stuff] out of the way," said senior Robbie Phillips. "then I'll transfer to Belmont, but I haven't had the chance to visit it yet since it's in Nashville."



*Tina Weida*  
Junior Diem Lee works on one of her classes work before the beginning of the school day. Students try to finish their homework right before their classes.

Other seniors have not even bothered to visit the college of their choice yet because they already know what it is like.

"I'm looking into Charleston Southern Baptist University because that's where my parents went and they liked it," said Chris Cheney.

Even though the seniors and juniors have to look at colleges, that doesn't mean they want to.

"I hate the whole process of filling out applications and visit the campuses said Sinwell "but, you know, I've got to do it."



*Marcel Pygo*  
The University of Virginia is one of the colleges that lots of WS students are looking into for their college experience.



## New branch of Abercrombie aims for sophistication and coziness

By Kelly Sipple  
News Assistant

Over the past year popular retailer Abercrombie & Fitch Co. opened nine stores across the nation that are a part of their new division, Ruehl.

The most recent location is at Tysons Corner Center and attracts many customers with its unique store front and mysterious appearance.

Ruehl's storefront is meant to mimic a New York Brownstone-style home with details including a wrought iron gate and flower boxes. Upon entering the store, there is a small room with built in bookshelves complete with books, which are available for purchase, and store merchandise including clothing and handbags. The rest of the store is made of small rooms, all with the same decor and are very cozy and dimly lit.

To continue with the brick house theme, "No. 925" can be found throughout Ruehl stores, a number which is the "address" of the house.

Abercrombie & Fitch Co. is trying to appeal to a different demographic with their new division.

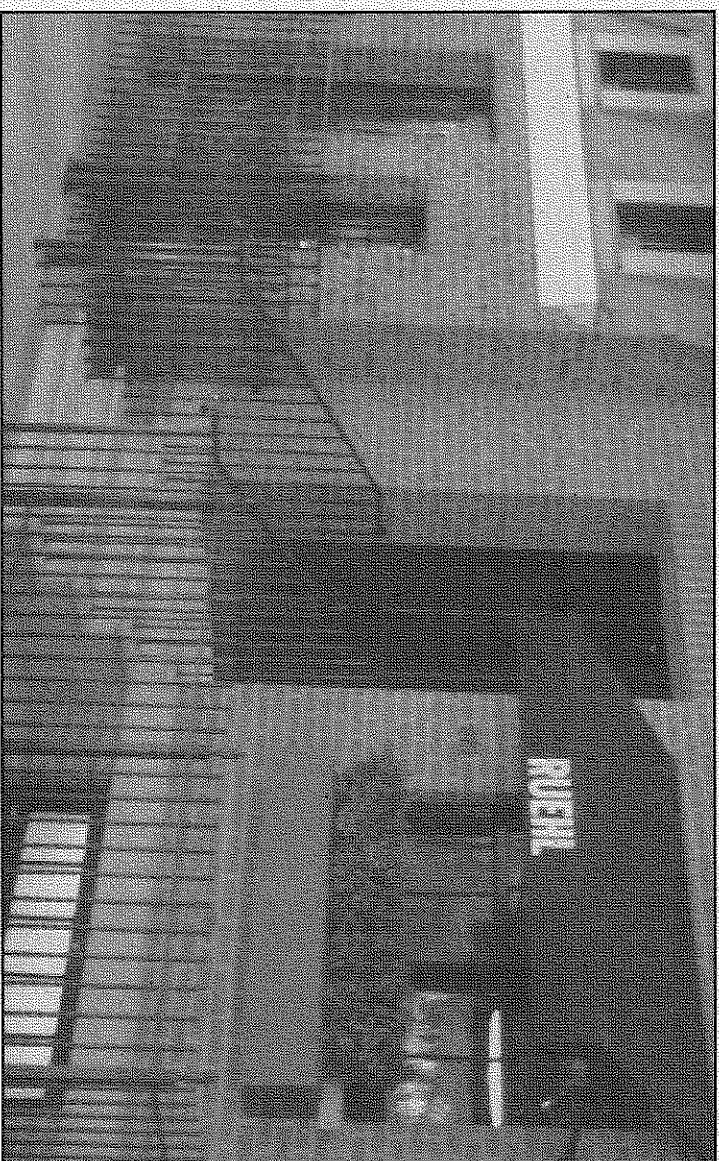
"Ruehl is a branch off of Abercrombie. We like to think of it like Hollister aimed more towards teenagers. Abercrombie is aimed at the collegiant age level, and Ruehl is targeted at post-collegiant people, ages 25-35, with more sophisticated clothing that would be appropriate for a first job interview," said Ruehl employee Lydia Miner.

Students were impressed by the exterior of the store but were disappointed once they went inside.

"[Ruehl] is ok. I don't know that much is different about it other than its decorations. It's just another trendy store and is like new stores in Georgetown. It's like an expensive Forever 21," said sophomore Jesse Thomas.

The high price of clothing at Ruehl also disappointed students.

"The clothes were ridiculously priced for people just out of college. Unless someone's parents are really rich, they won't be able to buy anything," said sophomore Devon Grimes. "There were tons of cute clothes and bags I wanted but I don't wanna spend \$600 on a purse. I think it's worth going through just to see the store and its design."



Ruehl's is located at Tyson's CornerCenter and it's unique exterior is decorated in the style of a New York Brownstone home.  
Kelly Sipple

## Partying, poker-style

By Sarah Alvarez  
Sports Assistant

The anthem is "huslin' for loot" since the poker trend has expanded past the casinos to online gaming and even poker parties. Poker is now a source of entertainment whose audience has broadened to include WS students.

Although poker is not a sport, it airs on ESPN, which televises the poker world championship.

ESPN allows aspiring poker players to play on its website. Legally eligible students play poker in online casinos. Junior Scott Juhl recommends pokerparty.com, where players can create their own virtual poker game and

play for online prizes. Basement poker parties provide the convenience and closeness of their home and the entertainment of a blaring casino.

When WS students see the cash in person it is all about big buy-ins.

"I'm a high roller so we have \$100 buy-ins," said junior Nathan Thomas.

Not all poker enthusiasts at WS can put that much at stake and \$5 is a more reasonable wager. Between five and six people buy in at a time and the amount of money to win goes up, making it all that much sweeter for the lucky player who goes home \$25 richer.

Betting the money is just the beginning of the poker frenzy. Having the right chips and table make for a more realistic gambling setting which

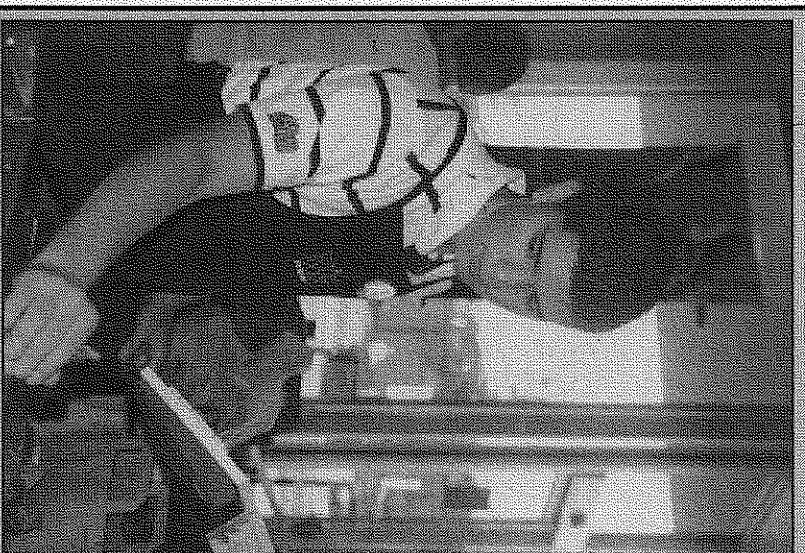
in turn makes WS students feel more like Poker World Champion Chris Ferguson.

"We have a poker table and we're getting a 500 chip set," said sophomore Paul Rowley.

Chris Ferguson, commonly known by the poker playing population as the dude with the long black hair is the world champion, but with the growing popularity of poker, it looks like he is going to have some competition.

"I'm a high roller so we have \$100 buy-ins."  
—Nathan Thomas, junior

The increasing number of poker parties is evidence that WS students are getting plenty of practice dealing the cards and keeping a poker face.



Sara Korbil  
Junior Andrew Delgado works as a cashier at Whole Foods Market. Students find jobs to earn spending money and add to their college savings.

## Students find balance between jobs and school

By Bethel Habbe  
News Assistant

Having fun as a teenager does have a price tag. High school students all over the country and at WS earn their own money with part time jobs.

For anyone without a job, part-time prospects may seem like a time consuming, sleep depriving, social interference—especially on the weekends. But most students at WS juggle their job, sports, academics, and still have time for a social life.

Senior Heather Murphy uses the Cooperative Education employment program offered through marketing class. She leaves school early to be under the glaring fluorescent lights of her work at Total Crafts for two periods at the end of the day.

"It's basically like getting an 'A' for both classes," said junior Jaime Mercado who is also involved in the program and spends 35 hours a week at his job at the House and Grill restaurant.

"I have to pay for my own gas now."  
—Bryn Veditz, senior

Student jobs range from bagging groceries at Giant to free lance work with neighborhood lawn care services and babysitting.

Junior Helen McCarthy even got a job here at WS through her technology class as an official Fairfax County tech.

"I'd be doing it anyway. I might as well be making money," said McCarthy.

Students can find plenty of reasons to be making money as a teen—money for shopping, movies, dates, college, (cougn) savings, and just the satisfaction of being financially independent.

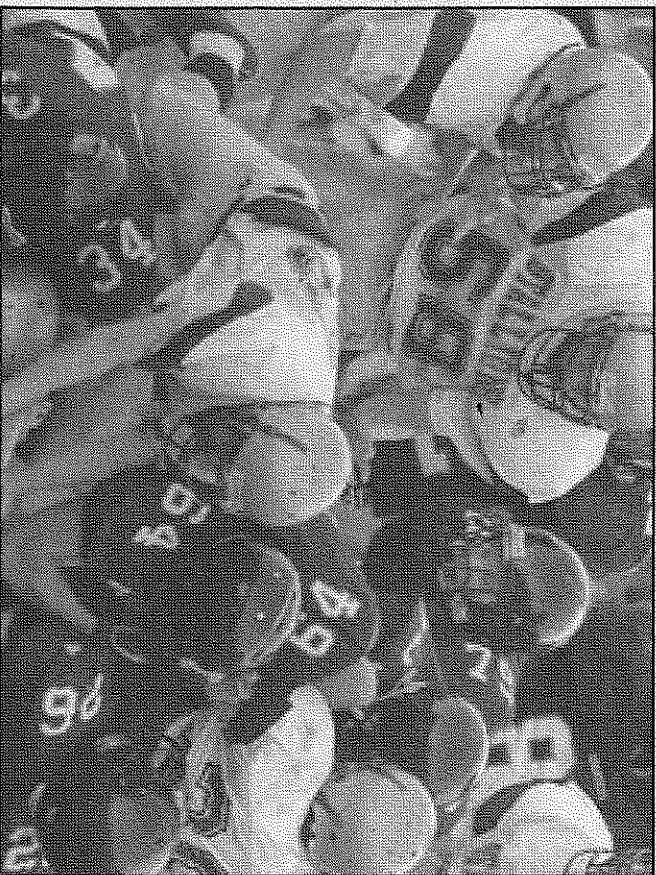
Senior Bryn Veditz has another reason. "I have to pay for my own gas now," said Veditz. According to a study carried out by the U.S. Department of Labor, 41% of freshmen work during the school year versus 87% of high school seniors. Administrators and teachers alike believe having jobs in high school can be beneficial to students in the end.

Sophomore administrator Richard Griffin says that students who work are usually good at managing their time and do very well academically.

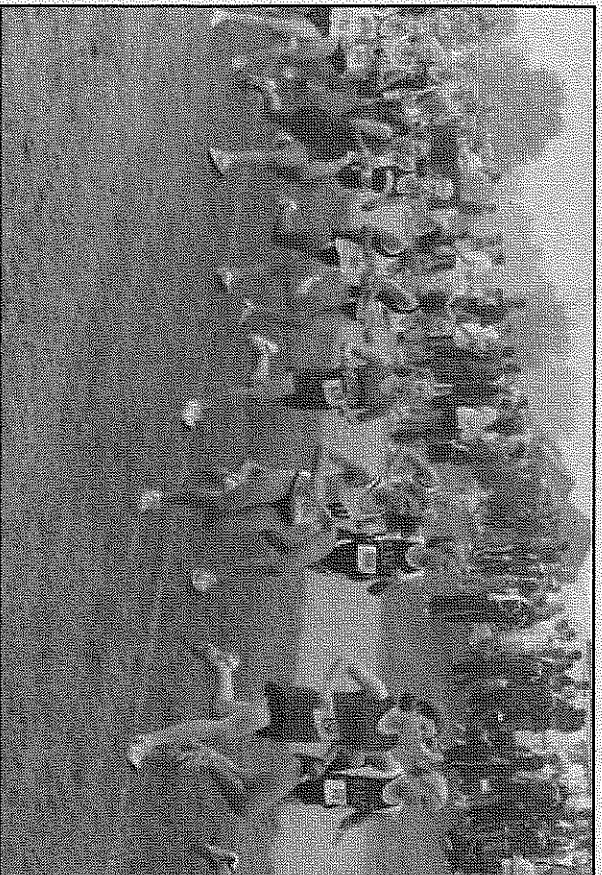
"If they balance their job and academics they should have no problems," he said. "Most of our kids can make that balance."

HAVE A GREAT YEAR  
JUNIORS!  
CLASS OF 2007





Alan Goldstein



Spartan Sports

With Robinson gone, Hayfield's talent split with South County, and the addition of Lee, WS could become the dominant school of the Patriot District.

## Golf team topples Lake Braddock in District finals

By Tim O'Keefe  
Sports Columnist

The suspense mounted as the WS golf team trailed rival Lake Braddock in the Virginia AAA Patriot District golf championship. Junior Scott Juhl was their last chance for victory. Juhl came through with three dramatic birdies in the last three holes, as Lake Braddock hit three straight bogies. The performance lifted WS to their first district win since 1987.

"This win is huge for our program," said junior John Todd. "We can still compete with the best in the patriot district."

WS followed up their district win with a fourth place finish in the regional tournament at Brambelton Golf Club. Juhl advanced to states by shooting a 75 and 73 for a total of 148. Chantilly and Westfield earned the top two spots in the tournament and advanced to states.

"Chantilly is by far the best team in our region," said Junior Andy Adell. "Our hope was to finish second."

This year's team's sudden success has been partly attributed to younger players stepping up, like juniors Chip Horan and Scott Juhl. Juhl and Horan finished in the top five of the two-day district tournament at Fairfax National Golf Club.

Juhl just recently moved to WS from North Carolina and has been playing golf competitively his whole

## New districts bring new competition

*Lee and South County move in, as  
Robinson exits the Patriot District*

By Christina Araj  
Oracle Editor

Not only will the addition of South County affect where students attend school, it will also change the level of competition for WS's sports district.

With Robinson out, and South County and Lee in, WS athletics could take a turn for the best.

There is no denying that Robinson has consistently been a major threat for nearly all WS sports. As a result, WS sports teams could win more district championships.

For instance, last year, the WS Varsity Football team finished second in the District to Robinson. So it is only logical that this new change brings about the possibility of a District Championship.

"Anytime you lose Robinson, it's a good thing," said head Football Coach Bill Renner.

Robinson, however, was never our only competition, and there are still ominous teams, such as the ever-present Lake Braddock and West Potomac.

And although, at first glance, South County seems to only increase WS chances to win, due to the young talent and the lack of senior athletes,

underestimating them could be a mistake.

"Adding a new school makes it tough; South County may not be really good now, but they might get really good later," said Assistant Activities Director Mike Mukai.

Westfield is a prime example of this. Westfield, who had its first graduating class two years ago, turned into an ever talented pool of great athletes.

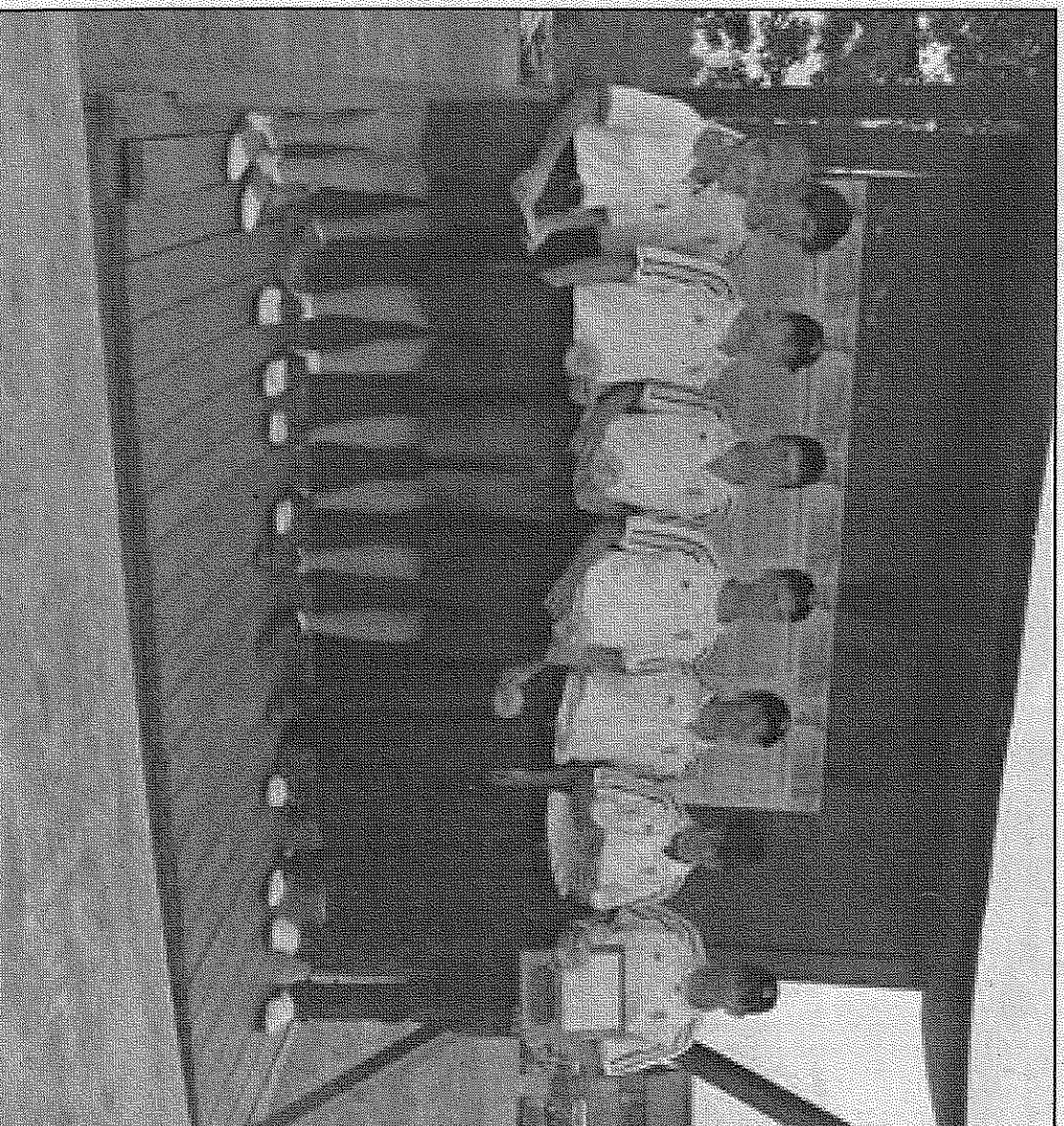
**"Anytime you lose Robinson, it's a good thing."**

**—Bill Renner, head WS football coach**

Robinson may be gone, but instead of replacing the school with another one, WS received two. It's simple: more teams equals more competition to defeat.

"It becomes automatically tougher because we have more schools," said Mukai. "Tougher competition is a good thing; it always makes it more satisfying when you have to put in more effort."

It is difficult to foresee, however, whether the changed lines will be a blessing or curse early in the season. WS will just have to play and see.



Spartan Sports

The Spartan Golf team, led by junior Scott Juhl, topped its superior 10-1 record with a Patriot District title.

life. Juhl brought not only his talent to the golf team, but also brought his leadership.

"Scott [Juhl] has been huge for us," said junior Chip Horan. "He helps each of us with our swings, he helps our chemistry, and he makes each of us want to get better because we want to play at his level."

Only one senior is included on the Spartan golf roster (Adam Brunderman), so coach Sue Spatcher has had to develop a younger team.

"I thought coach Spatcher's demeanor would be

the same as she was as a Health and PE teacher," said Todd. "But I have been blown away on how helpful she has been with my swing and my overall golf game."

Although WS aspirations to advancing to states ended, they are aware of the type of impact they and season they have accomplished.

"This whole year has been a Cinderella story because no one expected us to do anything," said Horan. "We did not have anything to prove, we were just thinking about playing good golf."



# In pain?

## New athletic trainer packs AND wraps

**Andreana Maxwell**  
*Inside Editor*

Each high school in Fairfax County has the luxury of having at least one athletic trainer on their staff. This person is responsible for helping student athletes with injuries they suffer because of their involvement in sports at school.

For the last three years, WS has had the same athletic trainer, Matthew Redmond. This fall he made the decision to return to graduate school at Middle Tennessee State University.

The necessary staff change has brought the student athletes at WS a new athletic trainer, John Shepard. Shepard is new to WS but, he is not new to athletic training. He has three years of experience between Mount Vernon High School and a school in New York.

The training room, located near the boys' locker room, is always bursting with people. The office opens everyday after-

school and remains open until all athletic events have ended for the evening.

"They are helpful. [There are] always a lot of people in there," said freshman, Bobby Johnson.

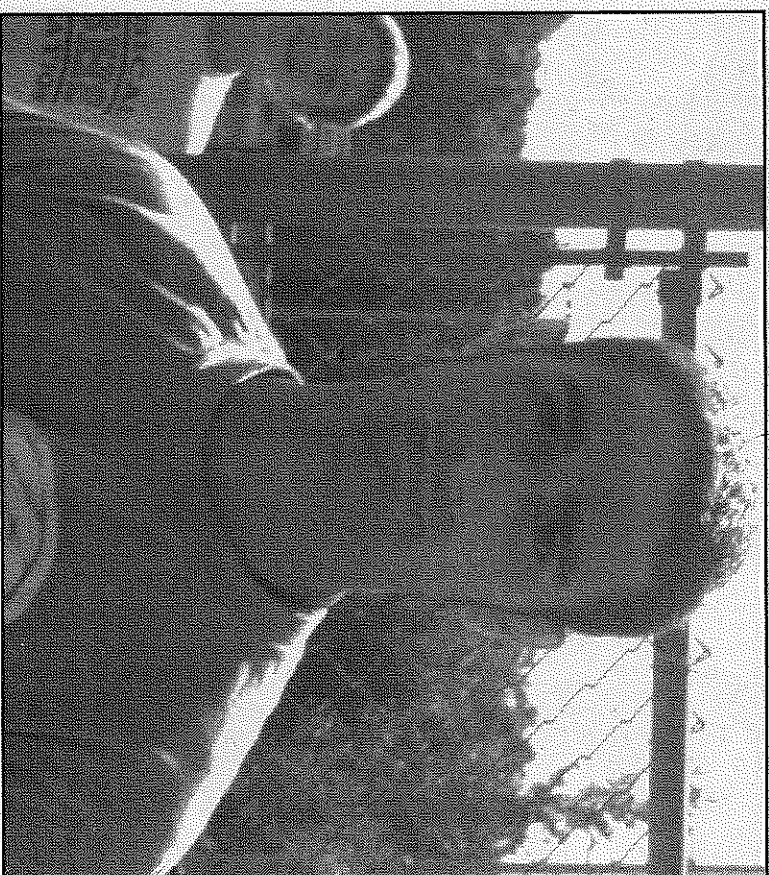
According to Shepard, between 35 and 50 athletes are treated everyday in the training room alone. An additional 10 each day must be helped on the fields during games and practices.

Students visit Shepard for an array of reasons: ranging from pulled muscles to shin splints.

"He gave me some strengthening exercises for my back," said junior Esther Erbe.

The job description of athletic trainer at WS does not begin at the end of the school day. Shepard also teaches four periods of sophomore physical education as well as one period of sports medicine.

"He is really nice," said sophomore Rosemary Barber, "[he] definitely knows what he is talking about."



*Erica Williams*  
 John Shepard has three years of athletic training under his belt, but this is Shepard's first year working with WS students.

# Money: the root of professional football

**Colin Embley**  
*Sports Columnist*

"Money, it's a gas." Such a simple statement is a creed every professional athlete should learn. Who better to explain it's meaning than the classic rock geniuses, Pink Floyd with their song "Money".

When I was in first grade, my teacher asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. I knew I was meant to be a professional football player. I envisioned crowds roaring my name in celebration after breaking a long run into the endzone. I saw myself as a star quarterback, with 5 touchdowns a game or being the number one receiver, and catching anything thrown my way.

All being a pro-football player meant was that I had my chance to entertain people. I would be famous. I knew players in the National Football League (NFL) made a lot of money, so I was set for life.

In the words of Pink Floyd, "Get a good job with more pay and you're O.K." My childish mind had no sense of the things money does to people.

As I started to grow, I started doubting my chances of playing pro-football—my toothpick body would snap in half against two and three hundred pound defensive tackles. That was okay with me because I started

learning important morals and values and how money affects them in people with a lot of cash.

Rich folks, like pro-football athletes, tend to be too protective of their money, which is why they hire agents and sign contracts. Basically, "I'm alright Jack keep your hands off of my stack".

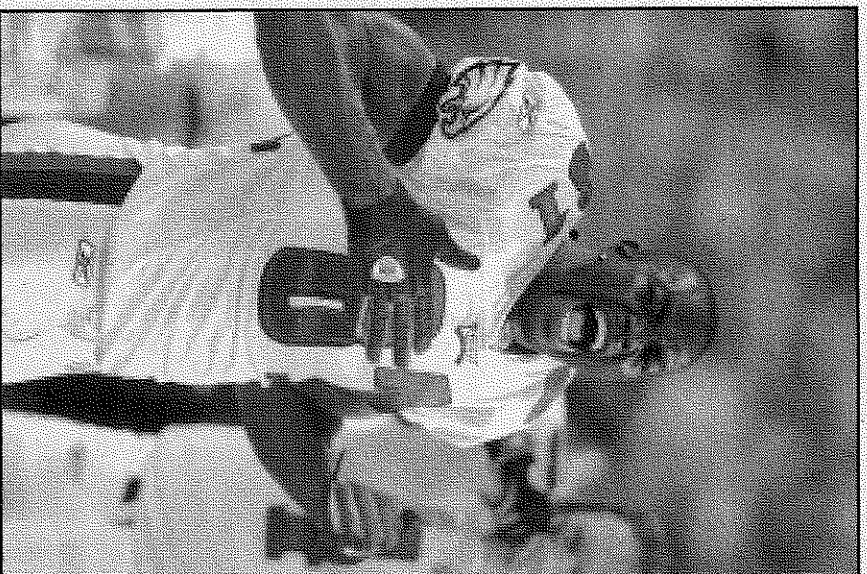
Fans come out every weekend in the fall and winter and pay to watch these so-called "entertainers". Diehard fans have deep relationships with their home teams, and it's not fair to cheat them out of their money by holding out because of contract issues. "Money,

## Colin the Shots

*A new column derived from a love of sports*

it's a hit," Pink Floyd bluntly responds, "Don't give me that do goody good b\*\*\*s\*\*\*". They don't care about the sport any more than they care about getting paid.

When a player has a good season, he wants more money. Imagine that. The Washington Redskins' total payroll added up to \$117,962,286 in 2004. The average salary for a member of the team was \$1,638,365. I give props to team owners for cutting players who ask for too much money. Why? You can live with just one and a half million dollars. Deal with it, T.O. "Money, so they say is the root of all evil today," Pink Floyd so delicately puts it, "But if you ask for a raise it's no surprise that they're giving none away".



*Internal Photo*  
 Terrel Owens of the Philadelphia Eagles beat his chest with pride.

# Sports drinks take a back seat to good old water

**By Nicole Simpson**  
*Entertainment assistant editor*

Along the sidelines of any sporting event or practice, refreshments are lined up for the same replenishing purpose. Sports drinks are a growing option to athletes in search of a better "science-based" hydration.

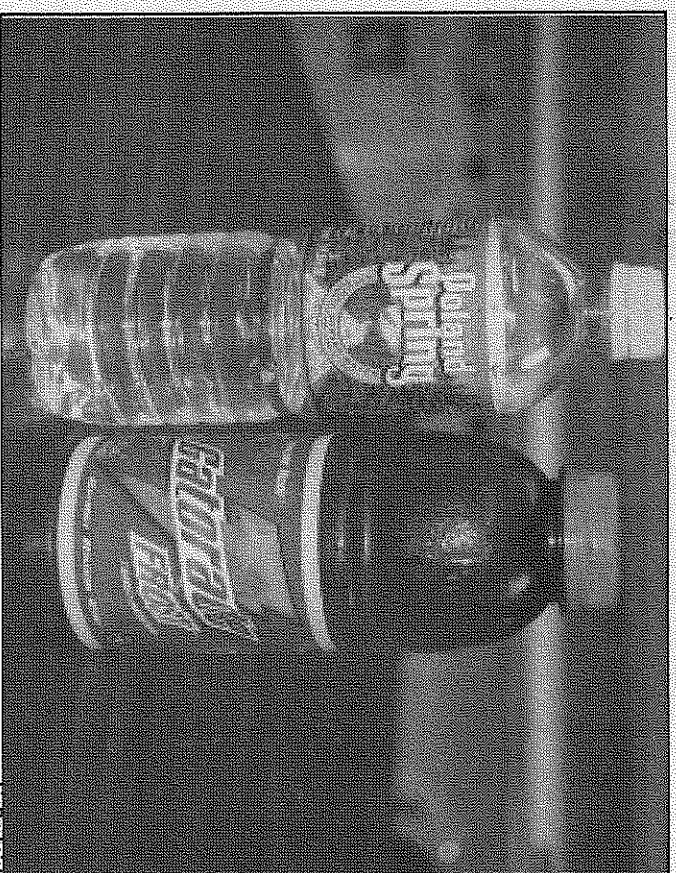
Sports drinks, like Gatorade, are intended to restore electrolytes which are lost in sweat.

As several sports drinks are becoming more common and options are rapidly increasing, finding the right choice of hydration is complicated. Sports drinks are specially designed to help prevent cramps and remain cool and well hydrated during athletic activity.

"I don't think there's anything wrong with sports drinks, but water's natural," said PE teacher and baseball coach, John James.

"Sports drinks have a lot of sugar in them which is great for short term but doesn't do you any good in the long-run."

Thirty-nine percent of WS students



*LZ Berger*

Although 39 percent of students preferred water over sports drinks while exercising. One of the more popular sports drinks is hydrating Gatorade.

polled, preferred regular water as a sideline refreshment, and claimed sports drinks were an over-rated source of energy. They also believe the advertisements of athletes dripping with sweat of an intensified color are a huge exaggeration in the sports world. Some people even dilute Gatorade

Thirty-nine percent of WS students polled preferred regular water as a sideline refreshment, and claimed sports drinks were an overrated source of energy.

Her sister, sophomore Linnea McGavin agrees but would rather drink Propel because it is like water, but also tastes better than water itself.

"The sodium [in sports drinks] allows your body to hold onto more water than normal," said PE teacher John Shepard, "You can't go wrong with water, but at the wrong time if you drink Sports Drinks you can hurt yourself even more."



Poor Liz's Almanac

# My life as a frisbee golfer

*Not every game is made for the whole family*

By Liz Weiderhold  
Oracle Editor

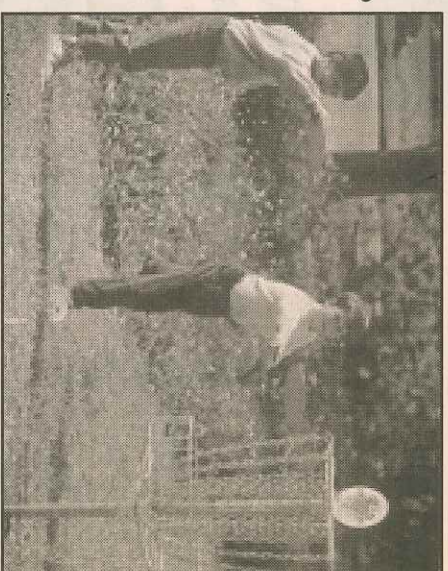
When I was asked to go Frisbee golfing one crisp, fall day, I envisioned my friends and I traipsing through the grass, whisking Frisbees at a common hole and laughing mirthfully. But then another side of me imagined that this game would become selfishly fierce; friends turned to bitter enemies, Frisbees hurled in all directions; mayhem. Instead, Frisbee golf became a valuable learning experience.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the game of Frisbee golf, it is played with an unlimited amount of players based upon how many friends you have (in my case three and one stranger) who try to throw a disc somewhere (I don't exactly know where because I lost my patience too easily from hitting so many trees that I gave up before getting a good look at exactly what we were throwing the Frisbees toward, although the glimpse that I did get of it sort of looked

like a used tampon, but that could just be my eyes playing tricks on me. They like to do that, those eyes of mine.)

You then have to throw the Frisbee at a different area toward a different tampon and repeat the process of romping through the woods alone and afraid searching for your Frisbee in vain under rocks, in beaver's dens, or, more commonly, in deer poop. After about three rounds of this you go off with your friend telling the others you "need your digital camera" to make memories of this "really fun game" and instead head down 123 South, radio blasting "Get it Poppin'" until you reach Lorton Shopping Center where you order an iced tall tazo chai tea latte at a place called "Starbucks."

If at this point you receive a call from an angry friend asking why the BLEEP did you BLEEPING leave right in the middle of the BLEEPING game, just calmly remind your friend of that last hole in which you nearly severed off the head of a 5 year old who was



Throwing discs into a giant tampon is a great, but dangerous way to spend your Saturdays.

picnicking with his mom. Say that although you firmly believed this child was going nowhere in life, the police on the scene say the mother is pressing charges. So to deal with all that *drama* you just needed some freaking caffeine.

So that's what Frisbee golf is actually like. Don't listen to those "professionals" who have their Frisbee bags, Frisbee gloves, and Frisbee jock-straps. Don't listen to ones who have actually seen the alleged "basket." You can trust me. Well, as long as I'm not holding a Frisbee.



*Have no fear, Hoagie Man is here to save the day*



## Hoagie's World

# It's a bird, it's a plane, it's Hoagie Man!

By Sean Hogan  
Features Editor

"If you could be a superhero, would you be Awesome Man?" These words, said by the singing comedian Stephen Lynch, inspired me to create my own superhero.

Everyone wants to be a superhero. Whether you are four, 16, 64 or whatever four to the fourth power is, everyone

has wanted to be one at some point in their life.

Odds are you have worn your underpants on your head at some point in your life, and for a select few, this was last week. So, come along with me and create your own superhero with me.

If I could be a superhero, I would be Hoagie Man. (Insert groans from the audience commenting on my egotistical columns).

Hoagie Man is the greatest superhero ever. Hoagie Man is invincible, can stretch really far

(like from Norway to Liberia to Kalamazoo, Michigan) and he comes in 254 different colors. Just kidding, he only comes in one color, chartreuse. One bonus point for anyone who can actually identify which color is most similar to chartreuse.

There is a superhero for everyone. Some heros have x-

ray vision, superhuman strength, can shoot lasers out of their eyes, can read minds,

can turn shoes into beer (like the guy in the commercials), general stuff like that. Hoagie Man's most important power is extreme sub-making skills.

You have to be careful, though. Bad guys are out to get you, and every superhero has his kryptonite (or its chemical equivalent—mine is

Hydrochloric Acid). There are no invincibility cheats in real life (Insert GASPI's and OMG's).

I can fly, I can read your mind (right now, you are thinking, "what a dummy"), I can paint my face chartreuse, I can do anything. Well, anything besides ending world hunger and Precalc homework, but only because Hoagie Man's brain comes sold separately. I should probably go to the local AI's Toy Barn and get that, pronto.

# OCTOBER

*"Expose yourself to your deepest fear; after that, fear has no power, and the fear of freedom shrinks and vanishes. You are free."*

—James Douglas Morrison

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Start of Apple Jack month
	2	3	4	5	6	7
	National custodial workers day	PSAT Registration 1 <sup>st</sup> block	National toot your own flute day	National denim day	PSAT Prep Program	Football game at West Potomac 7:30
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
National children's day	Bring you teddy bear to work day	National coming out day	PSAT, School closes early	Yom Kippur	Football game at home, senior night 7:30	National grouch day
16	17	18	19	20	105	
College Fair at Oaks mall 7pm	National black poetry day	Alaska day	National evaluate your life day	Sunday school teacher appreciation day		

# WAYS TO CELEBRATE OCTOBER

1. Spend a whole weekend watching the new series premieres on TV
2. Suggest a field trip to the pumpkin patch with your science teacher.
3. Sign up for every college visit at the Career Center.
4. Change all the calendars in the school to the first day of summer break.
5. Spend a few hours blissfully making leaf angels.
6. Take the SAT on a school-day.
7. Get a pass for a college visit to NOVA.
8. Create the first snow day of the year with baby powder.
9. Make a senior (junior/sophomore/freshman) skip day for every week
10. Claim that you skipped school to save space on your school bus.

—Compiled by Laura Byland



Highway Safety Is Everybody's Business, But OUR Specialty!  
*"Keith Has Been Serving Northern Virginia for Over 40 Years"*

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ONE OF THE STATE'S LARGEST & BEST FULL SERVICE DRIVING SCHOOLS

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More information at [keithsdrivingschool.net](http://keithsdrivingschool.net)

### A Message from Keith

Dear Spartans,  
 I would like to thank each one of you for allowing us to serve you. I can only hope that your experience with us has been as rewarding and gratifying as our experience with you. I also want to thank so many of you for your concern for my recent illness.

As you may know, with the help of Senator Jay O'Brien and many other good friends in Richmond, we have been able to pass several bills that have been brought to legislative order thereby becoming law, enhancing the driver education program and the quality of instruction administered to the first year driver. Virginia has some of the best first year teenage drivers in the country - mainly because of the program and the care which this program is administered, especially through Keith's Driving School.

Despite what you hear from some media, portraying teenage drivers as being the worst drivers, this is not true. They don't bother to separate states and tell you which bill or law is what. They want to send the spin the way they want it to sound. It doesn't work that way. Go to the stats. The media might portray things without telling you or breaking down state by state as to which one does and does not have these types of laws or legislation restricting first year drivers.

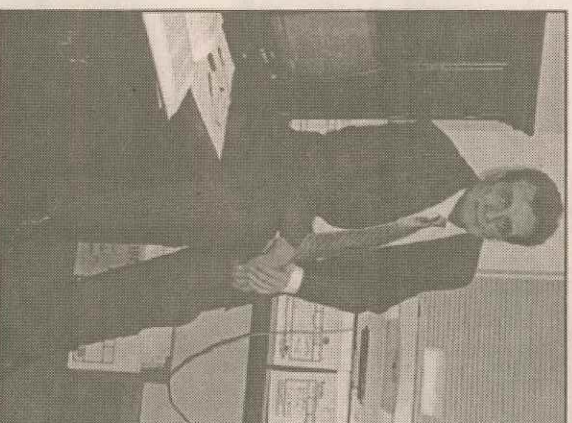
These laws allow us to eliminate some driver education establishments that are not concerned about administering the proper driver education nor the safety of your child. This also makes the driver education industry better. I have always done everything I can to educate the public, the students and parents, on the Virginia driver education laws.

Speaking of parents, I have taught some of you to drive. This past year, five of you searched me out to teach your children. You don't know how good that makes me feel and I wish I would be here to teach their sons or daughters, but that is a bit of a pipe dream.

In every ad you will see my Virginia's license number and the Virginia State requirements. Look at other ads and you don't see those things. It is my way of saying that we at Keith's Driving School do care and are concerned about driver education and your sons and daughters. Parents must know they are going to get the correct type of training that their son or daughter needs at Keith's.

Our instructors are professionals. That is what we do for a living. We teach people to drive and try to help them survive. Though we cannot win them all, we do try very hard. It's true, we charge quite a bit more than some driver education institutions, but this is because we give you so much more. We pick up; we drop off. We are on the road, not on a parking lot. The last time I checked, the death toll in Virginia on parking lots amounted to 1/2 of one percent. That is not a stat that warrants parking lot instruction. Virginia eliminated parallel parking in 1971 to concentrate on more important areas because parallel parking is not a life threatening maneuver. Though we teach parallel parking, we don't concentrate on it.

Our students average 125 miles on the road, with all kinds of traffic situations. Some will drive more than that based on the sparsely populated areas. But in the densely populated areas such as Springfield, Annan-



dale, Falls Church, Fairfax, Tyson's, and McLean, they average is about 125 miles. This along with 40 hours equates close to 1,000 miles of experience before students go out by themselves. This is so important. Senator O'Brien and myself fought for six years for the bill along with the documentation of the mileage.

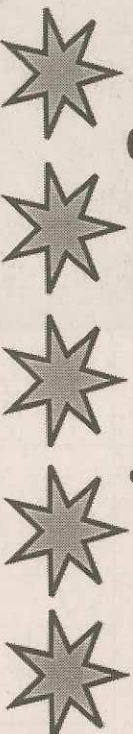
Nobody really wanted that, but Senator O'Brien had the wisdom to get it passed in a really good bill.

There is really no one in the industry I take second to. We are the best. I ask your indulgence and patience. Enroll your child early to get their program going, even before they start their 40 hours or halfway through their 40 hours. You DO NOT have to have the 40 hours completed before enrolling.

We at Keith's are all about teaching driving. Give us a call early. We have some of the best teenage drivers in the country in Virginia and the death toll for first year drivers has been steadily dropping since Keith's Driving School opened. There is proof of that.

I wish we could teach everybody, but we can't. I wish I could be the guardian who rides around with them after they get their license but I can't.

## Safe Driving is Everyone's Business



### Driver Improvement

5 Good Points

VA STATE LIC #15030000304 - BONDED - INSURED  
 VIRGINIA TEEN LAW REQUIRES

\* 7 - 50 minute periods of Behind-the-Wheel

\* 7 - 50 minute periods of observation

\* MUST BE GIVEN ON 7 SEPARATE DAYS

\* Classroom requirements are 36 - 50 minute periods

**WE  
DO  
IT  
RIGHT!**

**WE OBEY  
VA STATE  
DRIVER ED  
LAWS**

Keith's also offers the 5 Point Driver Improvement Program