



Class of 2007 works hard for their money

By Kristen McGregor
Junior Staff Writer

If the Class of 2007's Prom was tomorrow, it would be in the cafeteria with 10 balloons, a choir member as the DJ and maybe some glitter for glamor. Realizing their destiny, the junior class has decided to step it up and raise some cash.

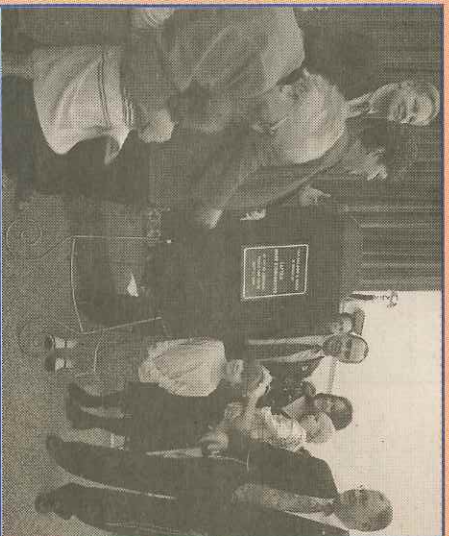
"Our freshman and sophomore years we didn't really raise enough money we needed to raise," said class officer Ben Trump. "We have about four grand. I'd really like to have about 10 grand by the end of this year."

With 10 grand the junior class could add some punch and chips. Trump would ideally like to raise 25 thousand more by the end of senior year to make Prom affordable and at least upgrade to a hotel.

Class officer Ryan Yohe ran to make a positive contribution to her class. It has also had a positive influence on her.

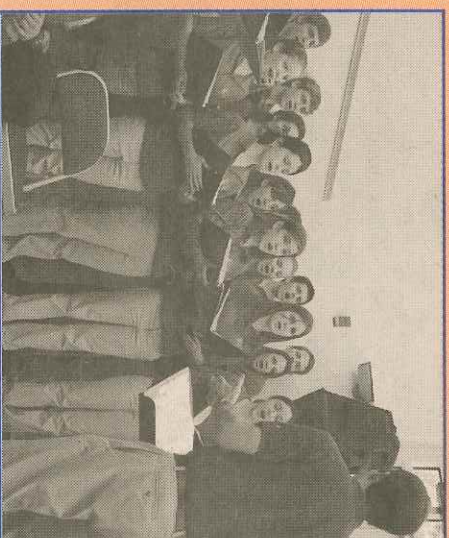
"The biggest lesson I have learned it listening to others," said Yohe. "Where there are six people with different ideas there are a lot of great ideas and learning

See 2007 on Page 6.



Fran Mollinigo

The wife and children of Mark Stubenhofer were at the dedication ceremony, along with Madrigals.



Fran Mollinigo

Post office dedicated to alum lost in Iraq

By Lauren Adams
Senior Staff Writer

While most students were either lounging at home recovering from PSAT brain drain, or still sleeping and enjoying their senior privileges, the Madrigals, along with alumni from the class of 1992, gathered outside the Rolling Road Post Office to honor a courageous soldier:

Captain Mark Stubenhofer died in Iraq in December 2004, but his memory and legacy at WS has not been forgotten. Stubenhofer was part of the state winning baseball team in 1992, and also sang

in the chorus. After he lost his life as the 1,000th US casualty in Iraq, Congressman Tom Davis felt Stubenhofer was more than deserving to be honored for his actions. Davis wrote and passed a bill in the US Congress designed to rename the Rolling Road post office after the 1992 WS grade. The bill passed unanimously, and was signed by President Bush. Choir director Michael Dombrow attended WS with Stubenhofer.

"He had strong character, but also with immeasurable service," said Dombrow. "[He is] worthy of renaming a building in his name."

No Ordinary Girl

Christina Rogers' dream becomes reality

By Christina Sohn
Weekend Editor

During her teen years, two of senior Christina Rogers' greatest wishes have become a reality.

The first wish she received was money to buy a four-legged helper named Chloe to help her with several basic tasks she was unable to perform in a wheelchair. This service dog with velvety black hair was provided by an organization in California. Rogers applied for the grant for her dog after she had back surgery when she was in eighth grade.

"I wasn't able to do the things that I wanted to do at that time and since I had to go back to school, I didn't want to depend on an assistant. I don't like having to depend on people," Rogers said. That year, Rogers was finally able to buy Chloe and take her to middle school for help.

"When I dropped something and it rolled underneath the table, I couldn't reach underneath and pick it up. Chloe

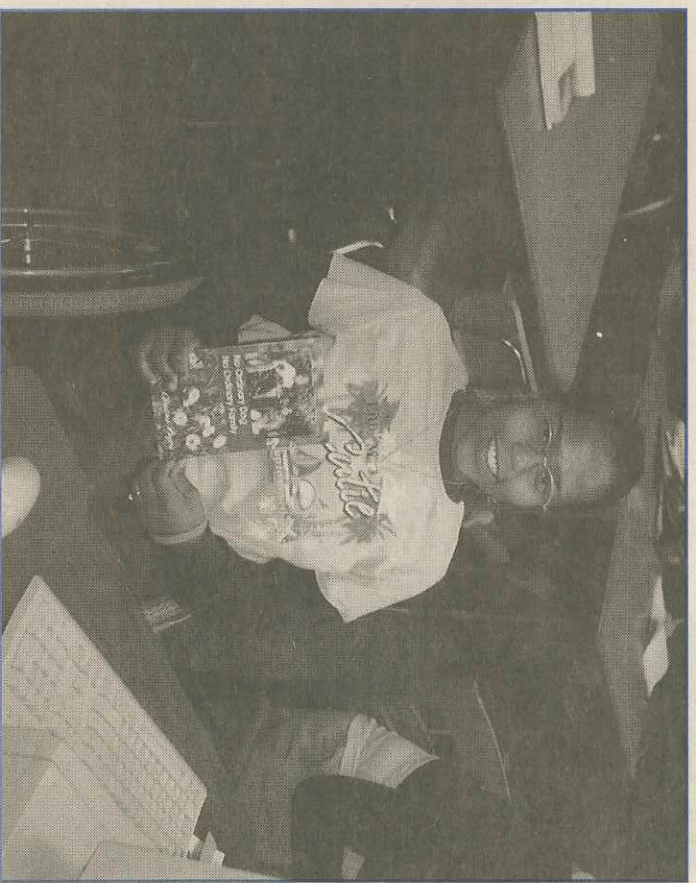
would pick it up for me," said Rogers.

When Rogers was fifteen years old, she started writing an autobiography about her relationship with Chloe and the uniqueness of her family, which consists of seven internationally

"I felt that many deaf children could understand the book. I wanted something that my five deaf sisters and their friends could read, understand, and relate to."

—Christina Rogers,
senior

adopted sisters and a caring mother. A year later, the Make-a-Wish Foundation granted Rogers her second wish, which was a chance to print and publish her



Tina Weida

Christina Rogers proudly displays her book, *No Ordinary Family*, which was published with help from the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

story into the book *No Ordinary Dog* *No Ordinary Family*.

The book is written in a simple prose meant to appeal to children.

"I felt that many deaf children could

understand the book. I wanted something that my five deaf sisters and their friends could read, understand, and relate to," said Rogers.

See Rogers on Page 6.



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Shmandy
Shmilashmakis



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spook students



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takes the
cake.

Libby's Fashion Do's and Don'ts

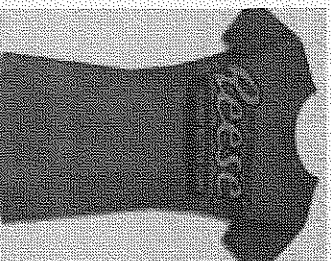
From sweater boots to screen tees, fall fashion trends have their 'ups'—and also a great many awful 'downs'

By Libby Bursley
News Editor

I may not be the famous stylist of celebrities such as Mischka Barton or Jennifer Aniston, but I like to think that I can spot a good or bad trend when I see one.

At WS, the majority of students dress comfortably for the day, in basic jeans and shirts. In my mind though, there are still mistakes that are commonly made even when dressing simply.

Highest on my list of dislikes are screen printed T-shirts. The shirts commonly found at most stores, ranging from American Eagle to Hot Topic, with the cute little sayings on them.

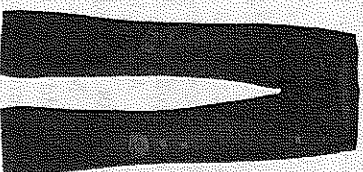


YAY! 61%
Nay! 39%

These shirts are pointless to me. Are any of these boys really keepers (like Oliver Wood)? And is the "war" between blondes and brunettes important enough to mention on a shirt? Shirts with no words can be so much classier.

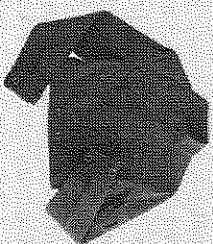
Speaking of classy, nothing to me personifies this word better than polo shirts. Ranging in price from an Aeropostale or Lacoste shirt, this preppy look is amazing on anyone.

Understandably not everyone is preppy, and that's fine. But when guys wear one or even two polos, they rate higher in my mind.



YAY! 64%
Nay! 36%

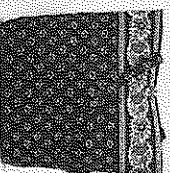
Not so classy are the trendy ripped jeans. The artfully-done, machine-made rips and distresses decorate the whole pair of pants, baring patches of skin to the world. I like this style, and proudly own one pair of these. Of course, the pants were on sale at Express. If they had been full price, I probably would not have invested in them. They aren't that cute.



NAV! 52%
Yay! 48%

After finally giving into the trend of shrugs and cropped jackets, I have discovered that they are indeed one of my favorite things to wear. They keep you warm, and are not as bulky as a standard coat.

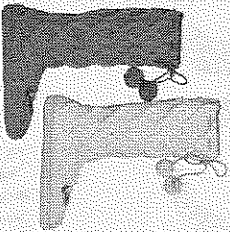
The only problem with these is that they will not be in style next year. So buy a few for the rest of this year, and wear your old ones well, while you still can.



YAY! 60%
Nay! 40%

NAV! 76%
Yay! 24%

Boots are a hot item this season, from the traditional style to the western cowboy variety. Merging into the colder weather, I have begun to see a new kind, dubbed the sweater boot. This has the potential to become the new Ugg boot. It makes me fearful to even think another ugly boot has been released to an



We need to stop buying the Vera Bradley bags. The select few, myself included, were fortunate enough to realize this trend last school year and pounced on it. Now that more people here have discovered how adorable they are, seeing them around the school on a regular basis lessens the bag's appeal. Especially when 10 other people in this school are carrying the same size bag in the same shade of Bermuda Pink. As time goes on, I am sure that more new trends will pop up for me to praise or criticize. For now I leave you with my words of (semi-) wisdom, and encourage you to find your own niche in the great big fashion world that works for you.

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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Fairfax County's grading scale is harder than that of Baltimore County.

FCPS grading scale toughens up students

By Christie Smith
Junior Staff Writer

The grading scale at WS is very steep.

At my old school I made the honor role with "A's", "B's", and one "C". To make the honor role here you must have all "A's" and "B's". That was a frustrating change for me.

Getting a high grade in a public school in Baltimore County is much easier than achieving a high grade here in Fairfax County.

For example, a 70 percent is a "D+" in Fairfax, but is a "C" in Baltimore. A failing grade in Fairfax is a passing grade just an hour up the road.

Another policy that distinguishes Fairfax from Baltimore is standardized testing. Throughout the school year, teachers are preparing students for the stressful SOL tests.

These tests are given in Fairfax to certify that teachers are doing their jobs. In Baltimore they do not give SOL tests. In Fairfax, not only are they required, but if you fail them you are forced to retake them. In Baltimore, the only standard tests are final exams. SOL's are just one more thing that may keep you from graduating.

Sometimes I still miss the days where a 70 percent was good enough for a "C", but overall I am pleased that the tougher standards in Fairfax will give me a better education than I received in Baltimore.

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Get out of my way! Some helpers try to take charge

By Katie Bourget

Oracle Editor

Parent volunteers can be a wonderful asset to a school, but they can also be rude.

This is not to say that every parent volunteer is a terrible, inconsiderate person, but lately I have been incredibly disappointed with the way that particular parent volunteers treat students and teachers.

The Oracle staff had an upsetting encounter with two parent volunteers during the distribution of an issue last month.

As members of the staff were filling teachers' mailboxes with papers to be distributed during fifth period, two volunteers barged into the office with a cart full of PSAT practice-test packets.

They informed us that we would need to remove all the papers we had already distributed (we were nearly halfway done) because we needed to think "what the school would think is more important."

Now, while I can be passionate borderline obsessive about the newspaper, I am not so jaded as to think that *The Oracle* should be at the tip-top of WS's priority list.

Still, what I fail to comprehend is how a parent volunteer would think she is qualified to speak as a voice of authority for the school.

What made the situation so frustrating was that I knew that the Guidance Department, which the volunteers were helping, would be willing to find a compromise so that the newspapers and the PSAT information could both have been delivered.

I was correct and the staff has since received a nice apology note from counselor Ken Christopher.

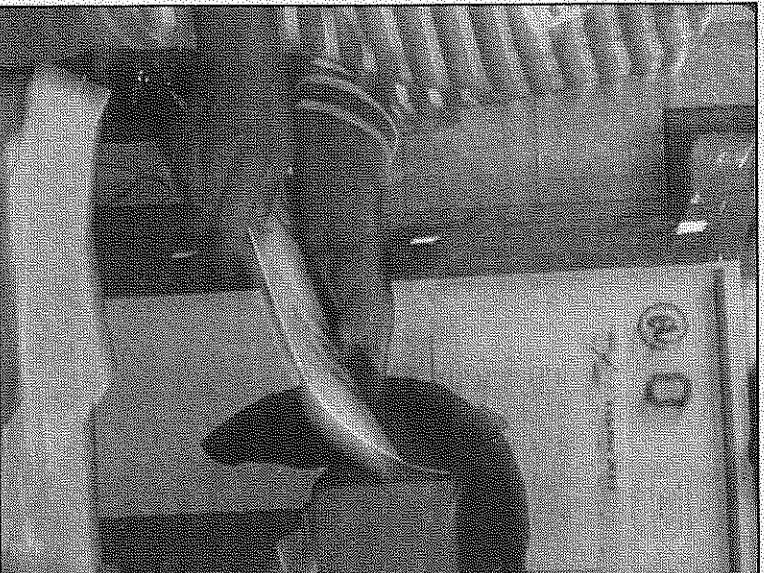
I have also had disappointing encounters with Career Center volunteers. I visited to schedule an appointment with career specialist Susan Rexford. She was engaged in another conversation when I got there, so I sat down to wait until she was free. A volunteer suggested that I should not "prance in and expect to see Mrs. Rexford" because she is an "extremely busy lady."

I completely agree that Rexford is a very busy lady, but she is also an extremely nice person who would never ask parent volunteers to act like her security guards.

Although it may not seem like it, I really am grateful for the majority of parent volunteers and their efforts.

My oldest sister started at WS when I was a year old and I accompanied my mom on countless trips here so she could volunteer.

All I ask is that parent volunteers keep in mind that they should be coming to make the school a better place, not one where students feel mistreated.



Leah Vanetta

Most parent volunteers help the school in a variety of ways, from working in the Career Center to helping out with Xeroxing.

TURNING OUT

Teaching through TV creates a disadvantage for students really interested in learning

By Linnette Lam

Senior Staff Writer

This year, instead of WS faculty members, televisions teach me AP Spanish Literature and Multivariable Calculus/Matrix Algebra.

These two courses are part of FCPS's television network program, classes that issue live broadcasts to schools across the county who do not have the needed teachers on site.

I had been assured that the worst of high school went away with junior year, but with a heavy course load, the absence of actual teachers in two of my classes, and all other senior-year commitments, school has been more overwhelming than I had anticipated.

Last year, the nine remaining non-seniors in my AP Spanish Language class signed up for AP Spanish Literature, with the understanding that there would be no one available to talk to in person or to help us with homework when we needed it. We appealed to principal Dr. Smith, asking him if we could have a teacher on campus, but our request was denied because we had too few people signed up to take the class.

Therefore, the nine of us sit in front of a television every orange day, watching the curly haired, bespectacled, Magda Cabrero broadcast to us from Falls Church High School. She sits in front of the camera, with a control board that can switch the focus of her camera to her writing table, a movie, a PowerPoint, or her live class sitting before her.

I would assume that Cabrero is a very nice person, a teacher who would be willing to stay after school to help me analyze a piece of poetry or an excerpt from a novel, but there is no way that I could find out. I do not know her, she knows even less about me, and her classroom is miles away from here.

My classmates and I feel that we are left on our own, unable to access anyone who can give us the personal attention that we need in understanding material of such difficulty. As high-school students in a the third-year college class, we barely have any guidance in interpreting the Spanish literature. Another challenge



Carrie DeChant

Second period Multivariable Calculus/Matrix Algebra looks to the TV to listen to the instructions of teacher Carol Rychlik, while Sandra Sanders sits in to supervises the students to keep them in check

presents itself when we are absent, because there is no teacher available to catch us up on what we miss.

Meanwhile, as we struggle alone every class to understand sonnets written by Garcilaso de la Vega and Sor Juana de la Cruz, Lake Braddock students enjoy the benefits of their own AP Spanish Literature teacher on site.

With a real teacher located just down Rolling Road, the frustration that my classmates and I feel festers as we are denied the ability to travel to Lake Braddock because it is does not offer any "academy-like" class options to students of other schools.

In contrast to my orange days, on blue days I sit in front of a *different* television to watch the short-haired, well-manicured Carol Rychlik teach me Multivariable Calculus/Matrix Algebra from Woodson High School. The class consists mainly of watching her work out problems on her desk, as we follow along in note packets that she posts on Blackboard.

Although Rychlik does not know me, I have met her. She held a back-to-school night for her television students and our parents in September. Rychlik has taken many measures to make herself more accessible

to her students. She offers office hours during which students can come to visit her, hosts online chats on Blackboard to allow students to discuss the material with her, and actively responds to her e-mail.

The fact that Multivariable Calculus is offered in English is another positive aspect of this course. Mathematics requires less discussion in terms of profundity and Spanish figurative language, and the logical nature of the subject does not call for a teacher to be physically-present as much as AP Spanish Literature does.

Both Cabrero and Rychlik try to stay in touch with us through Blackboard and try to make their broadcasts simulate a real class, but none of that fully compensates for the personal touch of a teacher.

Certain classes may be easily taught by placing students in desks and having them watch the FCPS channel, but others—such as AP Spanish Literature—require more personal instruction. I need someone in the classroom that can address my questions, stay after with me, and who can cater his or her answers in a way that I can understand. I am tired of feeling like I am watching an extremely-sophisticated Telemundo.

Extra credit adds effort

By Lindsay Burke
Viewpoint Editor

The dreaded "F" has the ability to make us cry, laugh, and pray to whomever that we will not be grounded.

Unfortunately for some of us, one bad grade can ruin an entire quarter. Extra credit opportunities are occasionally offered to us so that we may redeem ourselves from a terrible grade we don't deserve. All WS teachers should be required to give out these chances.

Extra credit is an essential part of learning. When we complete extra credit assignments, we are given a few points out of a base score of zero.

Normally, the rare extra credit assignments that are given are not always helpful. In addition to the need for more extra credit opportunities, the assignment needs to reflect, if not increase, the amount of effort a student is expected to put into their regular assignments.

We, as students, need to realize that it is much easier to do our work thoroughly and well than to slack off and believe we can always make up for it through easy extra credit.

Other teachers do not offer extra credit at all. This is just as useless. We need to know it is okay to make mistakes once in a while. Extra credit gives us the opportunity to show our teachers we care about what we learn and what we do.

Besides becoming more driven to work in class and out, we need to always keep stretching our minds. Extra credit that actually requires brainwork allows us to understand new concepts to their fullest extent.

Late work can be an issue, too. Not all teachers will accept late work for a grade reduction, even if you've accidentally left your paper in the printer at home, or your dog somehow managed to eat it for breakfast the morning it was due. Extra credit can help replace a few of those occasionally forgotten assignments.

We also constantly complain that we are "so close" to receiving the next higher grade in a class. A few points could make a lot of difference on a high school transcript. Colleges look at grades, not percentages, so they have no idea how close you came to that "A" in AP Government.

All extra credit opportunities should be constructive and challenging for students. The hard work we put into extra credit will make us appreciate the easier assignments we are given and required to complete.

Vending machines get fit

By Andrea Maxwell
Inside Story Editor

During the Renaissance in Europe morbidly obese people were the essence of wealth and prosperity. Today, however, obesity is not something that people strive for.

Proper nutrition and exercise is stressed to anyone and everyone. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is constantly reiterating what the healthiest eating habits really are. Despite the fact that teenagers can be carefree, nutrition should not be overlooked at WS.

The vending machines throughout the building have started to offer students with a variety of food choices at all times, not just during lunch. In previous years the machines were filled with potato chips, Little Debbie's and chocolate covered doughnuts. It was ridiculous, students ate two packages of chocolate covered

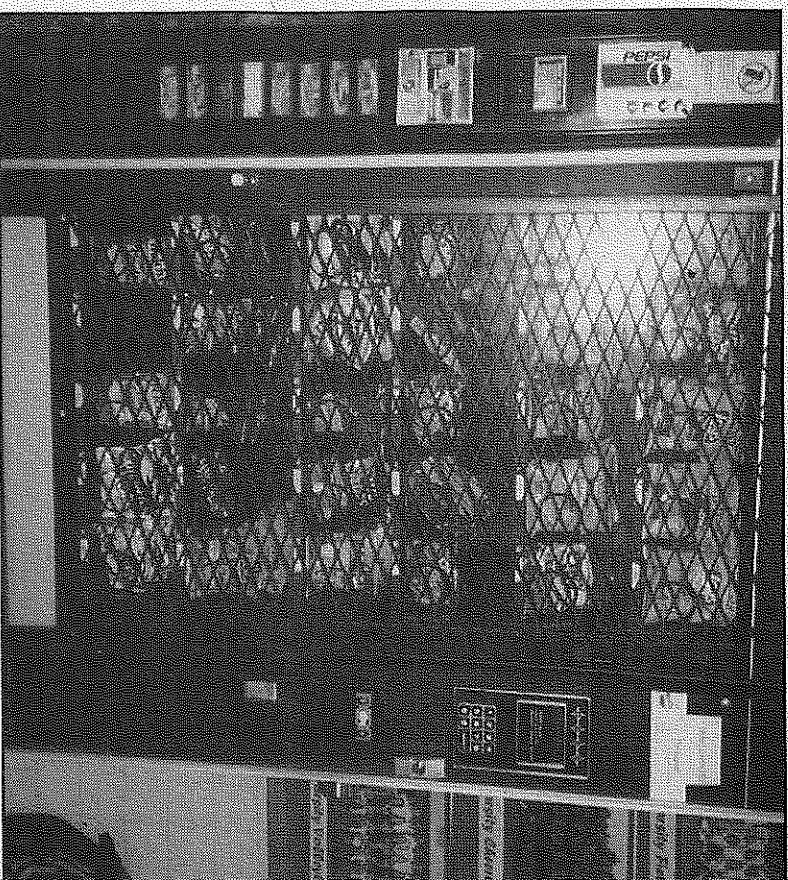
doughnuts and some cookies and called that a lunch. The last time I checked, doughnuts were not part of an essential food group.

This year the vending machines have taken a new twist. The machines that remain on all day are no longer filled with just greasy chips and doughnuts; instead they are filled with healthier options, too.

All of the chips are now baked chips and doughnuts have been replaced with oatmeal bites and cereal bars. The changes in available food are better for the population at WS. Colossal Little Debbie snacks do not create an outstanding performance on the football field or in the classroom.

The healthier snacks in the vending machines exemplify the necessity of healthy eating habits.

As the availability of healthy food increases, students must take the initiative to eat the healthy food. The changes have been a huge improvement to our school environment.



The vending machines around the school are now filled with healthier choices for snacks at lunch.

Administrators enforce smiles

Our school administrators have a very hard job.

They lend us mandatory fashion advice to better our appearance, they remove hats from heads in order to make sure our eyes receive proper lighting, they make sure we stay on task by not letting us roam the halls without a pass and, best of all, they keep all the freshman who feel the need to make out every 10 seconds under control.

Lately, the administration has acted more cheerful. They have smiles on their faces (with an exception to when they are pulling those freshman apart) which can make everyone's day a little brighter.

They have displayed a bit more leniency toward students who commit small infractions that could have potentially turned into complicated situations. The smallest things that used to bother them now seem to hardly effect them at all.

For example: a Frisbee thrown in school during school hours whizzes past Dr. Smith's head, coming close enough to give him a good shave.

Instead of picking up the Frisbee and snapping it in half, leaving the boy who threw it in tears, Dr. Smith simply lets him know it was not a good idea and to proceed with his day, free of Frisbee throwing.

The administration seems to have come to be on a more personal level with students.

They ask questions relating specifically to the student like how their volleyball game went, or how they are handling AP US.

These administrators are able to do this with over 2,300 students in the school. Where as the 98% of those students are probably unable of stating

one unique fact about any of the administration.

The administration has become much more fair in how they monitor halls.

They know as well as the students that not everyone has a specific and productive purpose for being in the halls during class, even if they don't always have a pass.

Instead of completely ignoring the student's plea for sympathy, the

administration now listens to their story.

This is not to say that they have become lenient or let up on discipline.

They are able to enforce rules as well as make exceptions for certain situations, but the ways they have been enforcing them lately are a peasant improvement.

We wanted to take the time to express our gratitude towards them for everything they do, especially for keeping those freshman displays of PDA as limited as possible.

Editorial



Administrators such as Assistant Principal Becky Brandt, have displayed more tolerance recently.

Lesah Vandetta

Models strike a pose

Students prepare for Homecoming fashion show
 By Zohra Alnoor
 Junior Staff Writer

When you see models strutting their stuff down the runway, you never realize that it took hours to get everything perfect, from props shown on the stage to makeup artists hiding behind curtains. Fashion Marketing 2 classes work for weeks setting up the WS homecoming fashion show until everything is perfect. From the music to the dresses to the models.

The modeling tryouts for the fashion show were held on September 28. Female models had to wear properly fitted clothing and 2-inch heels while the male models wore whatever they wished. Forty male and female models were chosen, plus two alternates.

"I was nervous when I first went to the tryouts but I started walking and got over it," said senior Tiffany Graham.

The curriculum of the Fashion 2 class is for students to demonstrate the role

of management in fashion related promotional activities.

"Part of the Fashion Marketing 2 curriculum is that students have to do promotional planning and management. The expectations of the county are so students learn the fashion business," said Woodson.

This is why the Fashion Marketing 2 students are in charge of the fashion show this year instead of being in it. Now that other students have the chance to be in this year's show, several students tried out.

"It's my senior year. I want to do everything I can this year," said senior Victor Rivas.

The homecoming fashion show will be held during the homecoming assembly on Friday October 28 in the auditorium.

"This will be the biggest, best fashion show. The theme is masquerade, and we're taking the theme and developing it with a twist," said Woodson. "All will be revealed in the fashion extravaganza."



File Photo
 Renee Newsom models in an event sponsored by Fashion Marketing 2.



File Photo
 Student Paige Vontak poses during the Homecoming fashion show last year.

Online users should be cautious

By Linnette Lam
 Senior Staff Writer

Investigators involved in the case of Taylor Behl's disappearance and death consider her use of online journals as an important source of clues as to what happened.

Behl, a 17-year-old freshman at VCU and recent graduate of James Madison High School in Vienna, disappeared from the VCU campus on September 5. Her body was found 70 miles from campus two weeks ago.

"Although technology has made our lives easier in many ways, it can be invasive and inappropriately used. Blogging could be seen as a wonderful mode of self-expression, but unfortunately not everyone is as good and kind like we would like to them to be," said Career Center Specialist Susan Rexford, who helps maintain WS's website.

Behl regularly posted on her LiveJournal and MySpace websites, writing detailed accounts of her personal life, ranging from getting her first car to her romantic relationships.

On her MySpace, she had 92 "friends," one of whom was 38-year old Ben Fawley, who was one of the last people to see Behl and was recently arrested on charges of possession of child pornography. There is evidence of the romantic relationship between Behl and Fawley in their online correspondence on MySpace.com.

"Never share your name or personal information with a stranger, no matter how innocent it may seem."

—Susan Rexford,
 Career Center Specialist

Behl was only one of 31 million MySpace users; she was not the only one to share too much personal information online. Experts say Internet users should remain conscientious about what they say publicly.

"Never share your name or personal information with a stranger, no matter how innocent it may seem," said Rexford.



Scared Monkeys
 VCU freshman Taylor Behl disappeared on September 5 and her body was found one month later. She often posted blogs about her life on MySpace.

STOP! DROP!



and roll into SpartanFest

to order your yearbook!



All's fair in college search at Fair Oaks

By Bethel Habte
News Section Assistant

With the exception of Today's Japanese Seafood buffet, The American Café and a Starbucks, every store in Fair Oaks Mall was closed last Sunday for the Fairfax County Regional College Fair.

Over 400 colleges were represented from international universities to popular regional college choices for WS students. Susan Rexford, career center specialist promoted the College Fair here at WS and described it as one of the largest on the east coast.

"The biggest advantage (attending a college fair) is getting exposure to colleges you are interested in and all the colleges that would potentially be really good fits for you," Rexford said.

The mall was more crowded that night than it would be during regular mall hours.

Rows of tables were lined up along store entrances and streams of people passed busily between them. One would

overhear conversations between students and parents about GPAs, financial aid and other concerns people would have in their search for the 'perfect college'.

Jennifer Roud, a college representative for Marymount Manhattan, heard some of the main concerns students had about college in general.

"Housing, because our school is in New York City, financial aid and scholarships are a big factor," Roud said.

Although parking was difficult and personal space was sacrificed for everyone at Fair Oaks that night, many students, parents and college representatives saw the benefits for students to attend a college fair as opposed to looking up a college online.

Tyrone Young, a representative for University of Maryland Eastern Shore, described a college search via Internet like "Trying to diagnose yourself on the Internet (rather) than talking to a doctor in person."



Carrie DeClark

Students, parents and college reps "bonded" at the Fair Oaks College Fair.

Rexford was present Sunday to set up a career connections display at Fair Oaks.

"This is a promotion for career planning resources that are free for FCPS students," she said.

'07 finally starts collecting cash for Prom



Sara El Saied

The Class of 2007 has finally started raising money for Prom, through a series of car washes, ice cream sales and dinners at Fuddrucker's. One summer car wash earned the class more than \$700.

Young author writes for a good cause

Rogers gets inspiration from others who have overcome life's problems

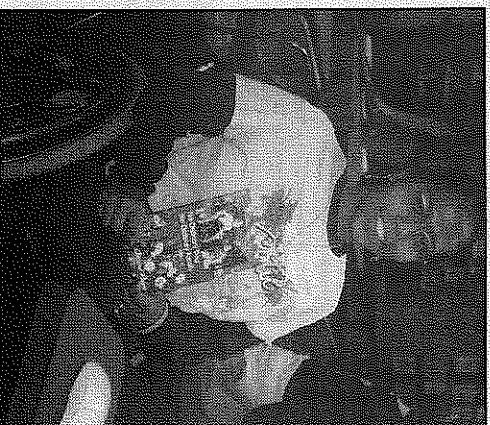
Continued from page 1

She gained inspiration through writers who struggled in their own lives but overcame their obstacles, and were courageous enough to write about their experiences.

"My favorite book is *Determined to Win* by Jean Disrociot, who was an amazing wheelchair racer faced with difficulties due to her physical disabilities and other health issues," said Rogers.

In her book, Rogers wants to convey the message that people with disabilities are not that different from people without disabilities.

"I may look different from the outside," Rogers said. "But on the inside and what goes on in my life is just like everyone else's."



Tim Wayda

Christina Rogers poses with the book she wrote titled *No Ordinary Dog, No Ordinary Family*.

Continued from Page 1

To listen to everyone has been really important. In addition to that learning how to be organized and on top of things has been really helpful."

Through fundraisers like car washes, ice cream sales and Fuddrucker's dinners, the Junior Class is fighting to see their Prom be a success.

"At the summer car wash we made over \$700," said Trump. "A guy on the side of the road gave Hilary Clinkenbeard and Lauren DiGiorgi a 50 dollar bill."

Another way the Class makes a lot of money is by selling beer.

"A big way the class makes money is by getting all of their parents to work at the Nissan Pavilion to sell beer during concerts and instead of getting paid their hourly wages it goes to the class treasury," said Trump.

It's not just the Class Officers who are getting off their butts. Sara El Saied, who ran for office and did not win, still comes out to the fundraisers to help raise money.

"You get to meet people outside of the classroom," said El Saied. "You are not only helping your class, but you are having fun with your friends."

News Bites

Senior Linnette Lam will receive the National Council of Teachers of English's Achievement in Writing Award. The English Department will honor Lam soon with a reception.

At the Running With the Wolves cross country meet last week in Lynchburg, junior Mike Spooner won his 4th straight major invitational race as he led the Spartan boys to 2nd place in a field of 22 teams.

Senior Kris Benton and juniors Leo Walker and Lex Martis all had top 15th finishes. The girls' team finished 3rd in the meet. Sophomore Rose Barber, junior Trish Freederick, and sophomore Caitlin Kenney all had top 16th finishes. Congratulations, runners!

Also last week, the Forensics Team competed against 19 area schools in its first season tournament at Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda. Students competed in eight categories. The following students received awards:

Freshman Kenton Ngo—3rd place in the novice division of Student Congress; junior Jocelyn Ott—4th place in Original Oratory; juniors Ben Trump and Richie Hartz—4th place in Dramatic Duo; freshman Christina McCarver—4th place in Dramatic Interpretation; Senior Aisha Toor—

4th place in Oral Interpretation of Literature; junior Stiane Lipkin—3rd place in Oral Interpretation of Literature; junior Cori Buck—2nd place in Oral Interpretation of Literature; freshman Destiny Sweeney-Durant—2nd place in Declamation; sophomore David Bae—1st place in Declamation. Hartz also won 2nd place in Dramatic Interpretation. Congratulations to these performers and their sponsor, English teacher MaryLove Wynne.

The Oracle is accepting original artwork, poetry, prose and photographs for publication in its December issue.

Please bring your work to Room 215, or put it in Brooke Nelson's box in the main office.

Kirsch clowns around

By Kristin McGregor
Junior Staff Writer

Ben Kirsch knew it would not be an ordinary Metro ride when he watched the man with a spongy red nose create a balloon masterpiece out of thin air. Kirsch, sitting on the orange plastic seat, began his growing fascination with ballooning.

Kirsch has worked with his mom as a professional clown for over 5 years. Kirsch gained clowning experience in a circus group he joined in his childhood. Now in his teens, Kirsch uses his ballooning talent to captivate his audience at events. He learned some balloons designs faster than others because of their simplicity. Kirsch loves to make human shaped figures such as Spiderman and aliens.

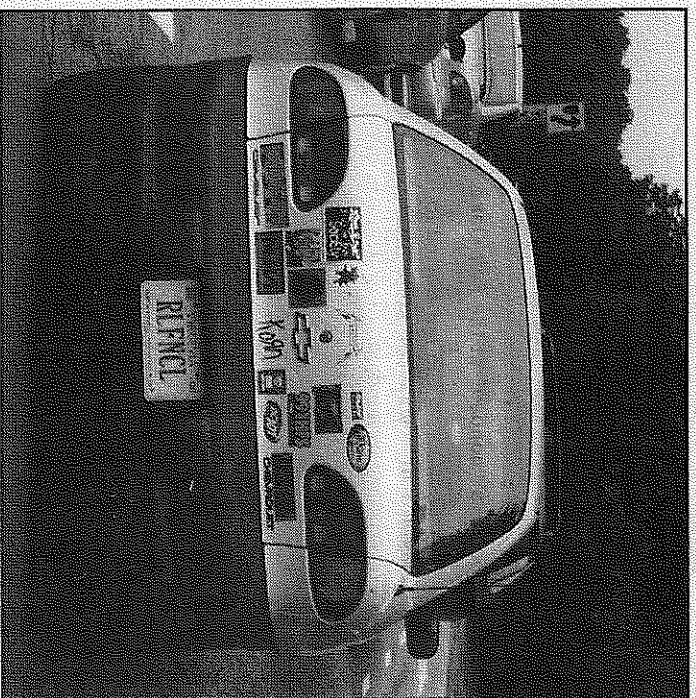
"You can't just throw on a costume, makeup, and show up and say, 'Pay me,'" said Kirsch. "You actually

have to do something."
Kirsch's most common requests for a certain balloons depend on what he creates first. Kirsch says that usually one kid will like the first balloon and all of them will want one.

"I love ballooning because not a lot of people know exactly how to do it well. It's fascinating to see the different kinds of things that can be made out of balloons," said Kirsch. "It is like an art form."

Going in front of little sinister kids or a group of adults to become a source of laughter is not the most appealing job description, but for Kirsch, the \$150-\$200 an hour is a big incentive for wearing the spongy red nose.

"It's wicked fun. I like the fact that I can go in front of large groups of people and act dumb and not be embarrassed about it," said Kirsch. "I get paid for having fun."



Liz Zuchmeister

Covered with bumper stickers, this Chevrolet Cavalier displays its owner's love of music, such as Nine Inch Nails.

Customized cars turn heads Students pimp their rides for extra performance

By Jordy Serwin

Business/Systems Editor

"You've officially been pimped!"

MTV's successful "Pimp My Ride" introduced the masses to customizing cars. It's now big business to turn mundane, beat up cars – some nothing more than trash cans on wheels – into customized works of art by adding a few strokes of paint and a few grand worth of extras.

Customizing isn't limited to those fortunate enough to be picked by "Pimp My Ride"'s host "Xzibit". With a little spare time and a lot of extra cash, anyone can customize a car.

Customizing can mean getting a personalized license plate, or reconstructing a car from the bottom of the tires to the top of the newly installed sunroof.

"You should first plan what you want to do...if it's for performance or appearance," said sophomore Sean Laporta. "Then you should call the dealership and do some research online."

The most popular modifications, also known as mods, are strictly cosmetic.

"I wanted to make my car look original, make it kind of stand out," said junior Chip Horan, the proud owner of a Jeep Wrangler. Ambitious customizers may

take on more structural mods. "I got a lift, I got bigger tires...a different exhaust, different bumper and a different shifter. I've done body and paint work and I redid the engine," said junior Andy Adell.

There is some cost benefit of doing the job yourself, but when major surgery is required, the job is best left to a pro.

"For the more difficult stuff you probably need a mechanic," said Laporta.

Modifiers enjoy the attention that a customized car receives. The satisfaction makes customizing worth it.

"I like the looks you get from people as you go down the road," said Horan.

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Accommodating environment created for Muslim holiday

By Jenny Taylor
Sports Editor

The average time between sunrise and sunset is estimated to be twelve hours. For millions of Muslims around the world, the month of Ramadan brings new meaning to this lengthy period of daylight.

The holiest holiday of Islam requires believers to fast throughout the day, without eating a single snack or taking even the slightest sip of water. Gum chewing, swearing and overall unethical behavior are also forbidden from dawn to dusk during Ramadan.

"We fast so we can see how the poor suffer and because the profits fasted too," said freshman Malalai Mohsin Ferdawsey.

Other purposes of fasting include improved self-control and a stronger consciousness of God. Surviving a 12-hour fast takes incredible strength and endurance. In order to make it through the day, Muslims often consume large breakfasts full of protein. "I usually wake up at like 4:30 or 5:30 to eat a really big breakfast when it's still dark," said junior Jasmine Mahboob. "Then I sleep for another hour until I have to wake up again for school."

Lunchtime can be especially difficult for those partaking in Ramadan's challenging fast. Watching fellow classmates drinking soda or eating pizza may not be the best environment for WS's Muslim students. Fortunately, French teacher Joelle Torreele has offered her classroom as a quiet place, where students can come to escape the distractions of the lunchroom.

"If we go to the cafeteria, there's food everywhere. It's frowned upon to be around food when we're

fasting," said Ferdawsey. "We went to the library, but it was too loud. So we came here [Torreele's room] instead."

The end of Ramadan is marked by the celebration of Eid Al-Fitr, the Festival of Breaking the Fast. This year, Ramadan is predicted to conclude on November 4. The exact date often changes since the Islamic calendar is based on the phases of the moon. Eid Al-

**"We fast so we can see how the poor suffer and because the profits suffered too."
— Malalai Mohsin Ferdawsey,
freshman**

Fitr is traditionally a time spent with friends and family, similar to the Christian holidays of Christmas and Easter.

"Eid is like Christmas, because you get a lot of money and presents from your family. It lasts for three days, which is good in case you can't celebrate it one day," said Ferdawsey. Ramadan is often completed with generous contributions to the poor that are intended to demonstrate the great respect Muslims have for their extreme suffering.

"You can have a goat or lamb religiously sacrificed and then sent to another country as a donation," said Mahboob.

Ramadan tends to be recognized for its exhausting fasts and, like Christmas, its true meaning is often forgotten.

"We celebrate Ramadan because it's when the Koran was revealed to Muhammad," said Ferdawsey.



Lifetouch



Lifetouch

Homecoming '04 floats make their way around the track at the Homecoming game. This year's floats should make us proud once again.

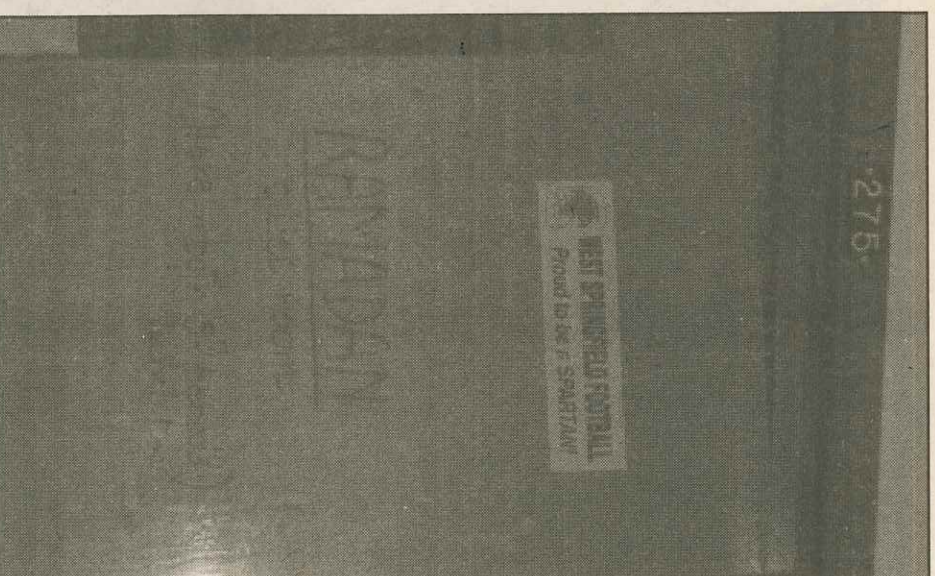
Homecoming traditions are staying afloat

By Sarah Alvarez
Sports Assistant Editor

Homecoming floats have evolved over the years but their necessity in the homecoming experience dates back to 1911, when the first college homecoming was reported by Cindy Nick of the Dance/Drill team directors of America. The University of Missouri had the first college homecoming in the early 1900's in order to draw back alumni to the school and arouse spirit for the biggest football game of the season. Homecoming floats were created as another way to lure alumni, students and the community to the school to support the team.

Math teacher, Beth Roop, remembers homecoming floats being a tradition at WS, recalling that they have been a part of homecoming ever since she has been at WS.

Homecoming floats have changed since the originals in the early 20th century. They now have more elaborate themes and decorations. Floats express class creativity and incite competition among grades. Manuals and guides on float building are even available illustrating new methods using chicken wire and corrugated cardboard. The history of homecoming floats at WS is indefinite, however students say unity is the root of creativity.



Sara Kolburt

Madame Torreele's room is open for students celebrating Ramadan during A and B lunch where they can work quietly and not have to see other students eating.

This unique holiday separates itself from traditional celebrations by placing its believers in a somewhat uncomfortable situation. Afterward, however, there emerges a great sense of optimism and thankfulness, which will certainly outlast a grumbling stomach.

"It brings people together so it's more of a social impact, [that float building has]," said junior Kathryn Fournery. Class officers and sponsors organize dates and times to build the floats, but the challenge goes past the building itself.

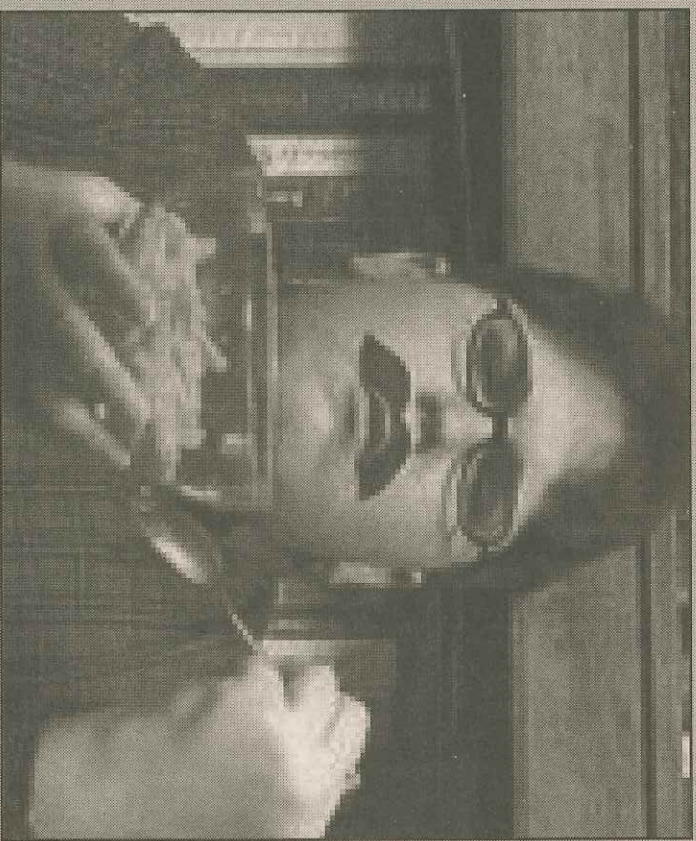
One problem is finding someone to donate their car to pull the float. "Right now it's pretty much a fiasco," said junior class officer Ben Trump.

Another problem for the float builders is getting started. Freshmen have been delayed in their construction because they recently elected their class officers. Other classes elected their officers at the end of the previous year.

Competition and school spirit create a desire to be the best in the school. Last year the seniors won the competition, but this year other classes are hoping to be on top.

"I want our float to be beast this year," said sophomore Lizzy Augilar. Building floats is not the only way to show school spirit and class pride. "The football game and dance are all that matter," said sophomore Kathryn Rogers.

By either building a float or attending a game, school spirit is thick in the air during Homecoming. In agreement with past Homecomings, float building is used to attract students to the game and fuel school spirit.



Associated Press

Andy Milonakis' odd humor has made his new show on MTV an instant hit. Some students, though, find his jokes more offensive than amusing.

Eccentric Milonakis

invades MTV's airspace

By Sean Hogan
Features Editor

He's a more offensive, taller, white version of Gary Coleman. Andy Milonakis, star of the appropriately named "The Andy Milonakis Show," gets his laughs at others' expenses. Students are tuning to MTV to share the fun with him.

"I like him because he's out there," said junior Scott Holmes. Milonakis is the author of the genius lines "Got peas on my head, but don't call me a pea head," and "When life gives me lemons, I make beef stew." A description other than "out there" would be inappropriate, just like Milonakis' first hit, "The Super Bowl is gay" video.

"I hope he didn't get his show just because of [the "The Super Bowl is Gay" video]," said freshman Cooper Mitholohand. Sorry, Cooper, but he did. After skipping out on a friend's Super Bowl party, Milonakis sang a song to his video camera, saying just about everything he could think of that he considers "gay." He named water, cologne, cottage cheese and vacuum cleaners among other things with no sexual orientation.

People noticed the video on his website, AngryNakedPat.com, and he was invited to be on "The Jimmy Kimmel Show," where his career transformed from a 14-year-old look-alike to a 14-year-old look-alike with his own television show. Despite his young appearance, the newest MTV star will turn 30 in January.

Junior Melea McCreary isn't impressed with the newfound star. "He's stupid and pointless," said McCreary. "He's not even stupid funny like Bam, and he's so racist."

Milonakis makes fun of the elderly, his mentally unstable friend Ralphia and his dog Wubbie and pretty much anyone else he can belittle.

"[He is racist] about Spanish pizza delivery guys," said Rodriguez. "He's a hater."

Not everyone thinks Milonakis' show is trash, considering it had 1.7 million viewers in the premiere episode on June 26. The show has been building a strong cult viewership ever since then. Still, only 1.7 million out of the total US population of about 296.5 million people (according to census estimates) actually watch the show every Sunday night at 10:30.

"It's horrible," says senior John-Mark Walker. "It's the weirdest, stupidest show. The 'John-Mark Walker Show' would be much better."

Hollywood leads star-studded support for Katrina victims

By Kelly Sipple
News Assistant

In the weeks following both Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita, celebrities assisted with relief efforts by giving cash contributions, volunteering, and participating in benefit events.

Celebrities who lived in the affected region have a special connection to those areas. "Mississippi Rising," a benefit concert that aired on MSNBC October 1, featured over 40 celebrities native of the devastated areas, including singer Faith Hill, comedian Ray Romano, and its host, actor Morgan Freeman. Singer Brinley Spears, "Good Morning America" host Robin Roberts, and former N'SYNC member Lance Bass have all called the Gulf Coast their home and have helped with relief efforts. Spears auctioned off dozens of items on eBay, with all proceeds going to The Brinley Spears Foundation to benefit the Mississippi Hurricane Recovery Fund.

"Most of the celebrities I know of contributed something publicly, probably personal. I think that most of them were probably genuine volunteering," said senior Aisha Toor.

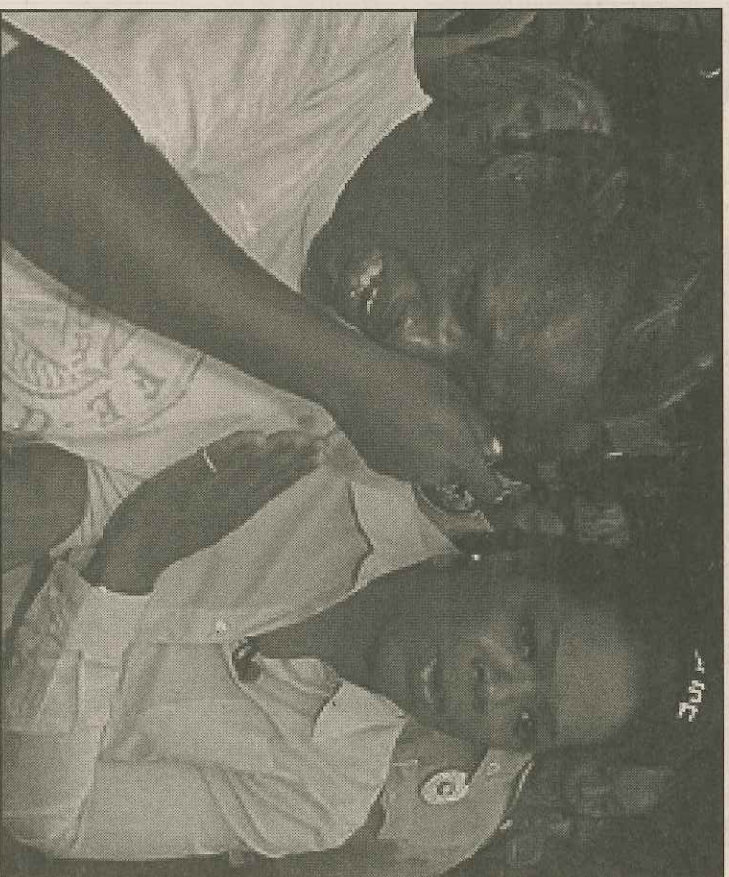
After Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, Oprah Winfrey televised a special edition of the "Oprah Winfrey Show," where many celebrities were filmed volunteering. On the show, Julia Roberts, Faith Hill, Jamie Foxx, John Travolta, Lisa Marie Presley, and Matthew McConaughey delivered medical supplies, food, love, and support just days after the hurricane made landfall. Winfrey also pledged \$10 million to distribute amongst charities.

McConaughey spent a week in the deep south and rescued 70 pets. Later, using his cell phone, he reunited a mother with her daughter who was in a different shelter. Foxx was brought to tears as he listened to a family tell their heart-wrenching story.

"I think [celebrities volunteered for] publicity because they want people to buy something or be in unity with them. They want to get involved to be more famous and make more money," said junior Mariela Vargas.

Whatever their motivation, celebrities helped many Americans.

"I don't think they [celebrities] should have made [volunteering] such a big deal. We just want their money, not their opinions or time," said junior Jared Dumale.



Associated Press

Oprah Winfrey dedicated two of her shows to comforting and supporting the disaster-struck victims of Hurricane Katrina. Other stars, like Julia Roberts and Jamie Foxx, helped Oprah deliver supplies to the affected areas.

The big 'Daddy' of reggaeton

By Stephanie Aguilar
Forum Editor

Reggaeton: rhythmic beats intricately meshed with rap that has inspired an entirely new breed of music, known to pump up a crowd of proud Latinos.

Two weeks ago, the Patriot Center held one of the most anticipated concerts of the year. It starred Daddy Yankee (Raymond Ayala), one of the best known reggaeton artists with his hit "Gasolina". Deckerd out in a pearl-white suit and sitting on his king throne, Daddy Yankee beamed at the audience from the stage as part of his grand entrance.

"The show was just so exciting. It was all too crazy," said senior Jenny Pabon.

Before the famous Puerto-Rican took over the stage, artists Akwid and Zion y Lennox performed as opening acts. Akwid's performances were accompanied by only silence and was not well received by the audience.

"It was so boring. There was no way to dance with the beat," said junior Ivan Rios.

Zion y Lennox performed with Daddy Yankee making it a two-for-one special for the night. The singing voices of the fans blended in with the blaring music and people could be seen dancing in very close proximity.

Daddy Yankee sang for about two hours, featuring his most popular hits, including "Lo Que Paso Paso" and "Machete."

"I actually thought Daddy Yankee wasn't going to sing a lot since he

started at 10," said sophomore Katherine Delacruz.

As the end of the concert approached, the anticipation of the famous song, "Gasolina" was rising. Colorful lights crossed and blinked furiously across the stage and the legendary motor-running noise from the song came on the loud speakers.

"Gasolina" was the most crazed out song of the night. The Latino-populated stadium could be seen moving all throughout the seats and the lyrics were heard crystal-clear through the speakers. It was a phenomenal ending to an amazing concert. The reggaeton concert had let loose the Latino heat.

"Reggaeton to me means Latinos," said Pabon. "It represents us and it's something I'm proud of because we're now opening up more the public."



Stephanie Aguilar

Reggaeton artist Daddy Yankee wowed the crowd at his Patriot Center performance two weeks ago.

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

"I love the feel[ing] of
being painted with
Spartan Pride."

— *Josh Freer, junior*

The marching
role during the
They add sp
tween plays
training half t

Students in all
grades come out
to cheer for the
football team. Re-
cently the class of
2007 has made it-
self known at the
50-yard line with
signs, costumes
and noisemakers.

“It’s fun when we are winning because we get to play the fight song.”

— *Cat Cantrell, senior*

“My favorite part is playing football games on the baseball diamond.”

— *Colin Stephenson, sibling*

ing band plays a vital role in the football games. It brings a sense of spirit and pep in the locker room as well as an entertainment performance.

“We enjoy seeing other neighborhood families there. It is fun to [cheer]”

— *Donna Campbell, parent*

Students who attend the football games do not always attend this school. Younger siblings come out not necessarily to watch the football games but to hang out with friends.

Parents make up a substantial part of the crowd at football games. They come to enjoy the game and become involved in the sense of community.



Seventeen transforms the movie going scene

By Katie Costello

Features Editor

17, the age when one is able to replace gym with an elective that requires much less perspiration. It is an age when one is one year closer to becoming a legal adult. Best of all, it is an age when one can legally see an "R" rated movie without their parents.

I should know, I went to an "R" rated movie 48 hours after

turning 17 and it was a fabulous experience. There is something liberating about being carded for a provocative, explicit film that is only suitable for the appropriately aged. When handed my ticket after being asked to see my ID, it hit me. I am 17.

I can see the goriest, most disturbing, sexually explicit film ever shown in theaters, and no one can stop me. No more dodging under the red ropes or bribing a friend who happens to be an usher. Those days are gone at the age of 17 and I have made a solemn vow never to undervalue this privilege.

Younger children saw me and my equally old and mature friend enter the theater to see "A History of Violence." As they watched longingly I thought to myself, "Yeah, that's right. I am old and mature enough to see an 'R' rated film and you are not. So nanny nanny boo boo, have fun watching that silly little animated movie with talking skeletons."

Maybe it was not the most mature thought, but who cares. At least the Motion Picture Association thinks I am mature.

I sat in the theater with my legs crossed (that is how mature people sit) and watched the trailers for future 'R' rated movies that I would also be allowed to see. Then "A History of Violence" began with a criminal

shooting a little girl, and I began thinking m a y b e being able to see

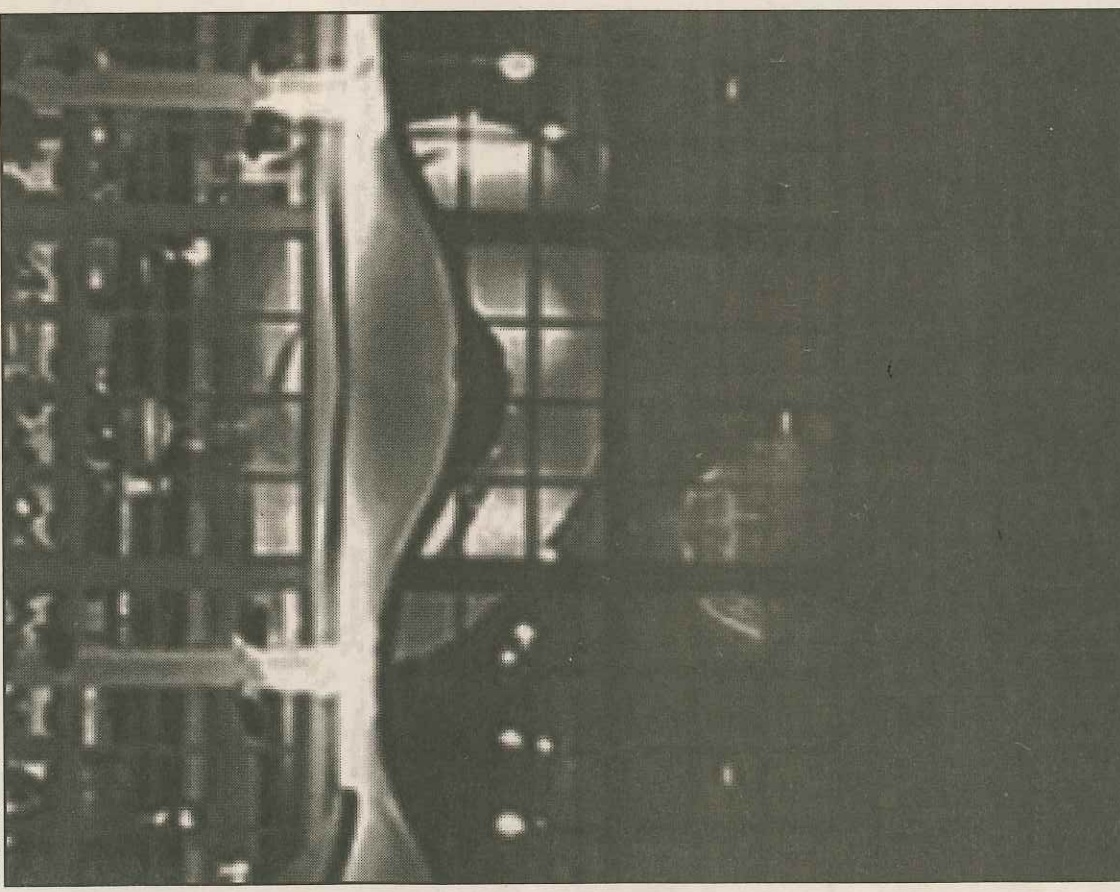
movies like this was not such a great privilege. When Viggo Mortensen came on the screen however, all was well. I continued to watch the movie, seeing mobsters shot, with blood oozing everywhere and graphic love making on the stairs between the main character, Tom Stall (Mortensen) and his wife, Edie (Maria Bello).

Besides the occasional "Ewww" upon seeing blood spurting onto peoples' shirts and the occasional whispering the comment of, "He is so screwed" whenever a mobster came on the screen, I watched silently, intently and without interruption, along with the rest of the over-17 audience. There was no cat-calling, no giggling and no popcorn throwing. There was no one to "shh" at and there was not even any slurping of sodas, probably because the audience knew how completely juvenile slurping is.

The movie ended, the credits rolled and there was no clapping because,

Commentary

ORACLE 30



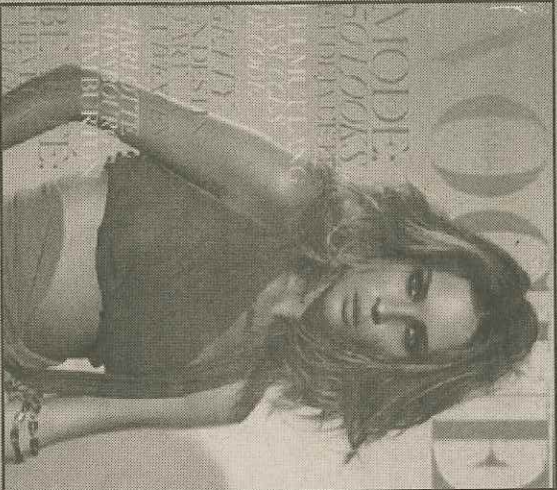
On their seventeenth birthday, students will often rush to the theater to see 'R' rated flicks without supervision for the first time.

really, no mature person would clap at the end of a movie. We filed out of the theater, discarding our trash responsibly in the bins. I am in the no-clapping, shh-free world of movie watching now that I am a 17-year-old, and I must say it is a world I do not mind being a part of.

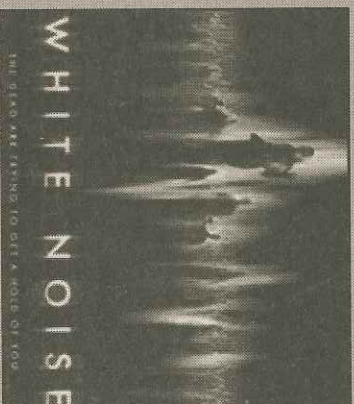
Oracle Anti-Picks

Vogue

Vogue: I like the Vogue magazine when it comes to the interesting articles and the new celebrity fashion do's and don'ts. But the problem is that I can never find them. The whole magazine is full of ads, Ads, ADS! I open the magazine up to a random page and there goes Gisele Bundenchen modeling for Gloria Vanderbilt and her pink swan. I flip to another page and there's young Michelle Trachtenberg posing with the new Dooney & Burke purse. Flip again and there's a too-skinny model in a really weird pose that makes her look like an anorexic gorilla in a gold dress. I'd rather read a teenybopper magazine where some annoying girls most embarrassing moment occurs in front of her huge crush, who just happens to be the varsity football captain. That is definitely saying something.



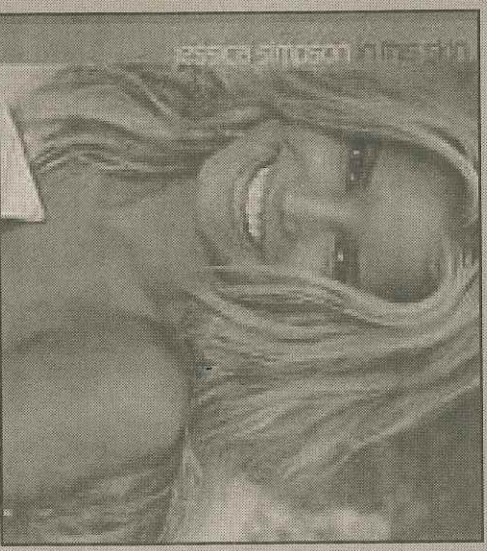
'White Noise'



White Noise: Everyone always needs a good scary movie to watch with a group of friends so that they can watch one of them scream and then laugh at them even though their scared themselves. Then that night they're sitting in bed too scared to go on their midnight run to the bathroom. Well, "White Noise" is definitely not one of those movies. This drama/sci-fi/horror/mystery/dumb movie is the worst film since "Torque." Instead of scaring me it just kept me thinking, "THAT'S SO FAKE! THAT COULD NEVER HAPPEN!!!" The movie is about a successful architect named Jonathan Rivers, played by Michael Keaton, whose wife dies mysteriously. He's eventually contacted by a man who says that his wife, Anna, had contacted him recently through (Electronic Voice Phenomenon). Believing this, Rivers becomes obsessed with contacting her on his own, not knowing that he's getting himself too far into the world of the dead. What ever happened to the movies where the transparent ghost chases around a group of friends, killing them one-by-one until only one is left? I miss those classics.

'In This Skin'

In This Skin (Jessica Simpson): Jessica Simpson has a great sense of style... sometimes. I loved her show, "Newlyweds." Who wouldn't want to watch a show about two celebrities and their dysfunctional life? But the thing is I can't stand her music. She can sing, but the way she sings is what kills me. When she performs, she opens her mouth to let out her "irresistible" lyrics and it looks like she is going to choke on her tongue. IT KILLS ME! Even Ashlee, the "carefree teen sis" doesn't sing that poorly, and she can't even really sing, she just kind of talks...with more of a melody. If you are in the mood to hear really spazzy music, the Simpsonater is the way to go.



—Compiled by Zohra Alnoor



King's Dominion sets up Fearfest the time around Halloween. It has haunted houses, scary rides, and thrilling shows. *Internet Photo*

Fearfests are a thrill ride

By Laura Byland
Senior Staff Writer

By the time teens enter high school, their options for Halloween are limited. Too mature for trick or treating and too bored with Halloween parties, a selection of teens are celebrating Halloween beforehand by attending Fearfest at Kings Dominion.

Most of the regular rides at Fearfest, such as Drop Zone, are open in addition to their special Halloween attractions. The gory "Friday the 13th" big screen movie showing or the laugh inducing "Skraaake," there is an activity for everyone.

"I went last October," said junior Allison Campo. "The roller coasters were awesome in the dark because they were scarier."

Fearfest is attractive to teens because of its scare potential. One truly terrifying attraction is the Maze of Madness.

Those brave enough to risk it are taken on an inside tour of an insane asylum. Psychoelectric patients escape and tour attendees are locked into the building with them.

"I like being scared. It's a rush. It's not something you get everyday," said sophomore Melissa Finkelstein.

Perhaps because of these fear seekers, Fearfest caters to a more mature crowd than those who attend during the sweaty summer months.

"It was crowded, there were mostly teenagers and young people in their twenties," said Campo. "I didn't see any little kids."

Fearfest is a wonderful alternative to trick or treating and a great reason to spend a day at an amusement park, especially for those who didn't have a chance to attend during the summer.

"It's better than trick or treating," said sophomore Joseph Lacroix. "You can bring a friend with you for a different experience."

Kings Dominion's Fearfest is open on the weekends until Halloween. Saturday hours are from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., and Sundays from 10:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The admission price is \$39.99.

"It's like going trick or treating with a whole bunch of people," said Finkelstein. "I like how everyone gets really into it."

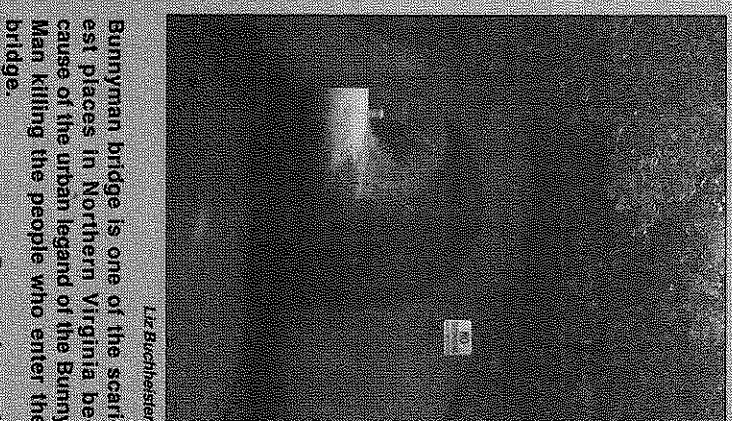
'Hopping' for a good scare

By Caitlin Laverdiere
Managing Editor

Urban legends and ghost stories find a place in every community, but making the top ten list for scariest places in the US invites extra attention.

The myth of Bunny Man Bridge has been around for over a century, passed down through generations of Clifton, Virginia residents and gradually diffused throughout the Northern Virginia area.

The legend begins in 1903 when people began inhabiting the region and insisting the asylum located there be moved. The prison convicts were to be transported to Lorion but en route their driver lost control of the bus and crashed into a tree. The convicts attempted to escape but were eventually rounded up by the police - all except two.



Lee Buchheit

Marcus A. Walker and Douglas J. Grifon. People began finding dead bodies scattered around the bridge's vicinity and soon after Wallster was discovered dead under the bridge.

On Halloween night in 1905, a group of teenagers gathered at the bridge to drink, but when midnight came only three remained; the next morning they were found dangling from the overpass of the bridge - throats slashed and bodies mangled. The following Halloween the same incident occurred, except this time as midnight approached one of the kids decided to say hidden several feet away from the bridge while still within viewing distance just in case the Bunny Man really did arrive. At midnight she spotted a dim light walking over the bridge and stopping in the center. It

then disappeared and a bright flash of light appeared underneath the bridge along with deafening screams as the bunny man murdered all six of the teenagers who had been present at the bridge. She witnessed him hang the bodies in the same fashion as he had the previous year. This was reported to happen on several other Halloween nights. The latest report of the Bunny Man was in 1987 when Janet Charleier witnessed the murders of three of her friends at Bunny Man Bridge at

midnight on Halloween. Supposedly she can be found to this day sitting on a swinging bench on her porch every morning looking in the direction of Bunny Man Bridge.

Several groups of students have taken trips there with their friends.

"Last year the varsity [cross country] guys went down there," said junior Mike Spooner. "We heard the girls were going and we wanted to scare them. We brought a fire cracker and when they came by we tossed it into the tunnel."

Certain students who have visited the bridge report encountering strange situations, making them question whether or not the story may be true.

"If you stop under the bridge where the ropes from the hanging bodies wore away the rock you'll hear an eerie noise," said senior Meredith Sclaretta. "Just good 'ole bunny man starting his engine."

The validity of the myth provokes a great deal of skepticism, but the story continues to live on and spook those who enjoy entangling themselves in a good ghost story.

"I just think it's a scary thing," said senior Beth Janz. "It's like a scary movie that freaks you out."

Genuine haunted houses

Colonial spirits haunting historic landmarks

By Chrissy Regelski
Entertainment Editor

Lady Anne's shoe still taps 300 years after her death. The Wagon of Death, packed with prisoners condemned to the gallows in the 1700s, still rambles down Nicholson Street in 2005.

The history of Colonial Williamsburg cannot be found in any history book. It can be found, however, on the Original Ghosts of Williamsburg Candlelight Tour that runs every night, since ghosts do not take nights off.

"I thought [the tour] was interesting because it was historical facts with ghost stories," said junior Kathy Thaxter.

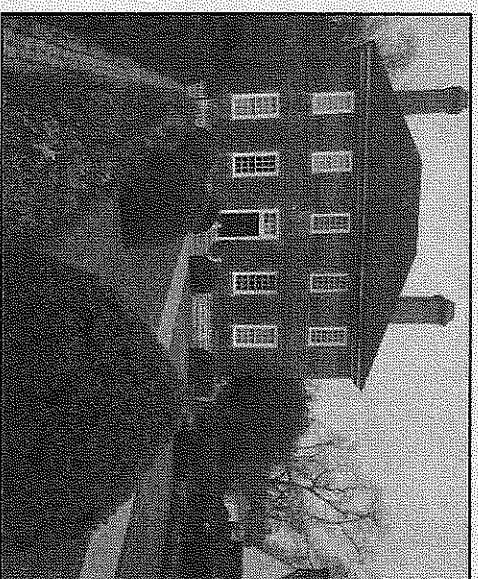
The George Wythe House on the Palace Green in Williamsburg, Virginia is known in American History classes as the home of George Wythe, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The Ghost Tour knows this colonial dwelling as the midnight romp of the late Lady Anne Skipwith.

In the mid 1700s, Lady Anne and her husband, Sir Percy, who were staying at the Wythe House, engaged in a violent spat at a ball after Anne found out Percy cheated on her with her sister. Anne fled the party in a storm of fury, losing a shoe on the Palace Green, and then ran up the stairs of the Wythe House to her bedroom. After Anne died during childbirth, Percy went

on to marry her sister, an act ghost believers agree would make anyone's spirit upset. Today at the Wythe House, people have claimed to hear the tapping of a single shoe on the stairs or to smell a strong scent of perfume when no one is around. These claims, along with the occasional apparition of a red haired woman, are attributed to the tormented ghost of Lady Anne Skipwith.

The Wythe House is not the only haunted house in Williamsburg; there are some are haunted by multiple ghosts. The Peyton Randolph House, originally the home of the President of the first Continental Congress, has a history of unfortunate events. In the 1800s, Mrs. Mary Monroe Peachy, the owner of the house, had multiple children die in the house from diseases and a male relative committed suicide in the drawing room. Since then, there are reports of a translucent old lady wandering the rooms of the Randolph House as well as a mysterious figure of a man.

Campuses are also part of the Ghost Tour's thrilling agenda. The College of William and Mary, the historical school that educated Thomas Jefferson, has its own score of ghosts in various buildings on its grounds. The Wren Building, which was used as a hospital during the American Revolution, is rumored to be haunted by a French soldier who died there. The Phi Beta Kappa Hall at William and Mary is also supposedly haunted by a ghost named Lucinda, a student who



Internet Photo

The George Wythe House is one of the stops along the ghost tour in historical Williamsburg, Virginia. This particular house is supposedly haunted by a ghost that used to live there.

died in a car crash two weeks before starting in the school play. She likes to play music out of the broken organ pipes in the building and was even heard to say, "Don't stop!" to a student after he stopped practicing his instrument.

Whether you are a ghost skeptic or a firm believer in the paranormal, Williamsburg's Ghost Tour, at 8:00 p.m. every night for only \$9, can be an amusing, or even a terrifying, experience. Call 757-253-1058 for reservations because tickets tend to go fast, especially during the season for spooks.

"It was a fun thing to do around Halloween," said Thaxter. "It's scary."

Crowds gather for Tysons' expansion

By Nicole Simpson

Entertainment Section Assistant

Tysons Corner, which attracts over 20 million visitors a year, has recently finished its much anticipated renovation. This addition, to the already impressive shopping center, adds more than 30 stores to its previous 250, and has drawn a great deal of attention to the mall.

"The [sales] lady didn't have any change, there were lines out the door."

—Kara Lewis, freshman

Tysons, with an addition of more than 350,000 square feet, now includes year round valet parking, a new large food court, a 16-screen complex AMC theatre with stadium seating and 30 more pricy stops. In its new wing, Tysons now includes some popular stores, including the controversial Victoria's Secret, the provocative displays were too risqué for children.

"I did go into that Victoria's Secret, it's not that bad, people were saying it was really provocative and that kids shouldn't see it," said junior Stephanie Yalco.

News broadcasts are even unwilling to show the displays publicly.

"I thought it [Tysons' Wing] was really nice, but the Victoria's Secret is really gross. It's not appealing at all," said freshman Erin Mackie.

Popular clothing stores such as Abercrombie, American Eagle, Delta's, Express, Hollister, Old Navy and Urban Outfitters can all be found in the new wing.

At the grand opening, which took place Saturday October 1, stores were chaotic.

"It was really crowded," said freshman Kara Lewis. "The [sales] lady didn't have any change, there were lines out the door."

All of this attention makes one wonder what the upcoming holiday season might hold for Tysons Corner. Holiday shoppers can expect a setback in their shopping due to enormous crowds this year.

"I think Tysons will be really crowded when it's near Christmas time because it is already packed, and it will just quadruple," said sophomore Katie Gatski.

Students are planning to make a visit to Tysons to see how the renovations, including juniors Celia Hatton and Ishita Ahmed.

"We are going Saturday, we've made a date. We're extremely excited," said Hatton and Ahmed.



Super H Mart is one of many ethnic grocery stores in Virginia, where shoppers can buy foods not found in stores like Giant or Safeway.

International groceries

Ethnic stores gain popularity among students

By Aaron Snow

Junior Staff Writer

Ethnic diversity is one of the features that makes the DC metropolitan area unique. Here people gather from all walks of life and corners of the globe.

With so many ethnic groups in the area, stores have sprung up that feature foods and products from native lands.

These stores are particularly popular among students at WS.

"We go to Lotte because they have food that's not at Giant," said junior Chris Benedict.

Lotte is just one of many ethnic food stores that are becoming nearly as common as Giant and Safeway. Among the many nearby Fairfax County stores are: Shivan Grocery, Asian Supermarket, Krishna Grocery, LA Latina, and Afghan Mini Mart. Many of these stores almost give the impression that you are in a foreign country. With almost everything written in a different language and many foods that most Americans have never even heard of, ethnic food stores are a taste of the world outside.

"They [ethnic stores] have stuff that other stores don't have like stuff from overseas," said junior George Trifonas.

A recent study by the FMI (Food Marketing Institute) shows that half of all grocery shoppers shop for ethnic or specialty foods at least once a month.

With such a high demand for ethnic foods it is no wonder the stores are so common today.

Many people who are natives of another country feel like ethnic stores are a window to their homeland.

With almost everything written in a different language and many foods that most Americans have never even heard of, ethnic food stores are a taste of the world outside.

"Afghan Mini Mart and Brookfield Plaza have a lot of people from my native country," said junior Zoe Naweed.

Ethnic stores allow shoppers to meet other people from their country and speak their native language with others who share a common background. This is one of the unique things about living in a country which at its very core is a land of immigrants.

With so many wonderful products ethnic stores have become a staple for people from different cultures.

Welcome to the ghost town

By Beth Stinson

Business Systems Assistant

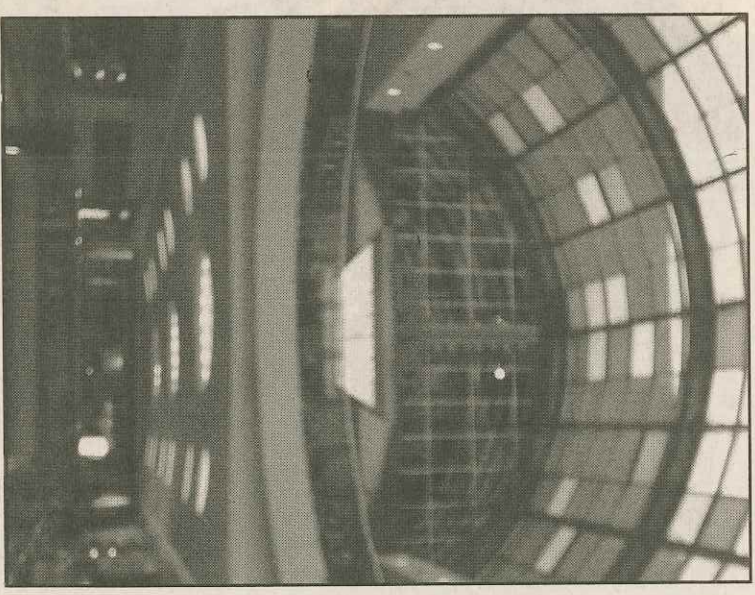
The streets of Old Town Alexandria are teeming with history and saturated with compelling tales of our Founding Fathers. But the centuries-old buildings and antique churches are also fabled to be haunted.

The Alexandria Colonial Tours organization offers "Ghost & Graveyard Tours" of Old Town that are led by one of 16 guides dressed in 18th century regalia. It begins at the Ramsay House Visitor Center on the corner of historical King and Fairfax Streets. Built by William Ramsay 24 years before the founding of Alexandria, the Ramsay house serves as a visitor center and makeshift museum.

Some guides and faculty of the house say they are witnesses to its alleged haunting. At the beginning of the tour, they attest to personal experiences with the spirits of the house's former inhabitants. About five doors down from the Ramsay House is the opulent and unique Carlyle house, which was built in 1752. Its owner and builder, John Carlyle, was married to Sarah Fairfax, the daughter of Lord William Fairfax, who named a county after himself, the county we live in! Go figure!

Farther along the tour there is Christ Church, which boasts George Washington was its most famous parishioner. The church itself is said to be haunted as well. One night, almost seven years ago, a contractor was photographing the church for renovation purposes. When the film was developed, the smoky figure of a woman's torso, head, and bonnet was visible. The photograph, which is displayed next to the Ramsay House, shows what looks like a colonial woman, sitting in the pews with a somber and prayerful posture.

"This lady took a picture with her digital camera and she saw something that looked like a ghost" said sophomore Beth Robialle, who went on the tour with her youth group.



Carrie DeClark

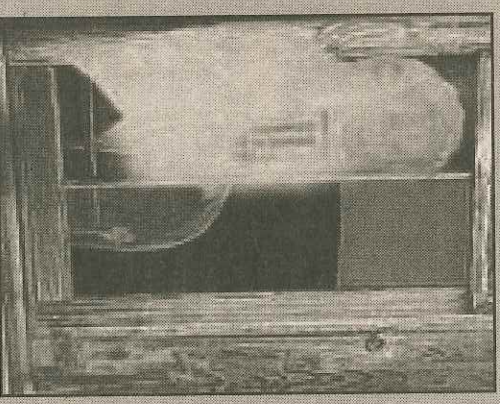
Tysons' new wing is an addition of more than 350,000 square feet and includes a new movie theater and 30 more stores.

"The tour was really scary and interesting."

Along with dozens of other ghost stories, (such as one story that involves a slave trampled by horses returning to her master's home who appears in mirrors) there is the occasional romantic tragedy that add still more chilling flavor to the region. The heartbreaking 1878 tale of Laura Schafer and Charles Tennessee, which was reenacted by guides on the Travel Channel earlier this year, is one of those accounts. Some say the ghost of the beautiful and devoted Laura still haunts Old Town after the loss of her beloved husband almost 150 years ago.

During the entire, frightening trek, there are several more spine-tingling stories of the residents of Old Town who have refused to leave. The tour combines both the proud history of our area and the enthralling legends that it entails. Sophomore Patrick Nutbrown thoroughly enjoyed his experience in Alexandria.

"[The tour] was really interesting. I didn't think I would like it but it scared me and I left feeling like I had to tell people about it."



Internet Photo

Legend has it that one night in the Christ Church in Alexandria a smoky figure of a woman appeared in a window.

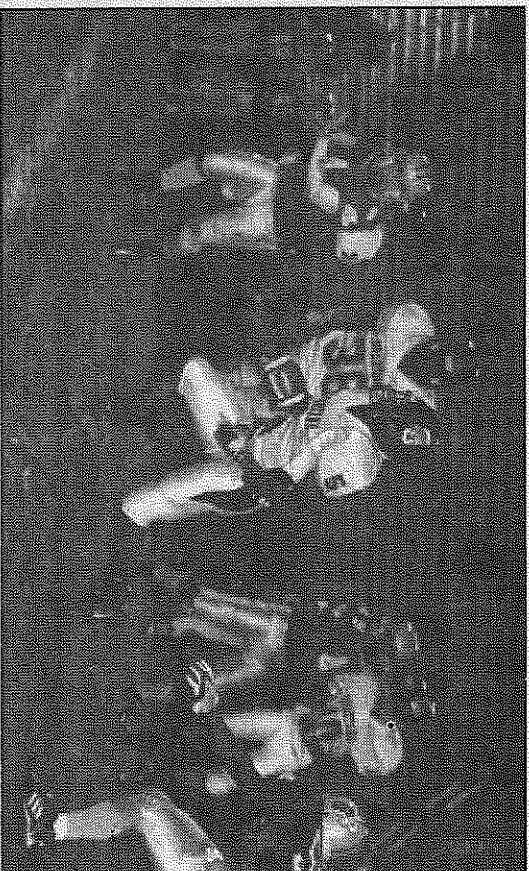
Predicted champs begin to lose it

By Cam Fushion

Sports Editor

Late in the month of August, the *Washington Post* released their annual preseason high school football scouting report. This report covered every district and every school in the Greater Metropolitan Area and gave predictions for the upcoming season.

The newly-revamped Patriot District received much praise, and the WS varsity football team was predicted to



Despite optimistic predictions from the *Washington Post*, the varsity football team kicked off its 2005 season with three straight losses.

win the district championship. The question now is: what happened?

"We really didn't get off on the right foot," said head coach Bill Renner, "but things are looking up."

The team suffered three disappointing losses at the beginning of the season versus Stone Bridge, Edison, and Amandale. Their first win came against Fairfax at home by a score

of 41-14, putting their record at 1-3.

They have managed to turn the season around with, ironically, three wins in a row and now stand in third place.

There really is no explanation for their poor start to the season, but the coaches seem to have changed their practices and routines between games.

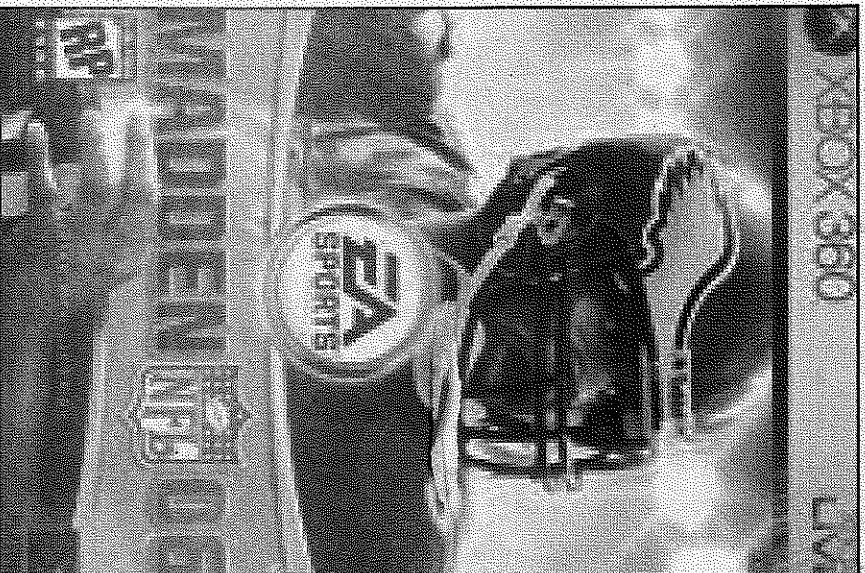
"There is definitely more running during practice, especially on Mondays

after losses," said junior offensive lineman Patrick Neilson. Players have been moved to different positions, practices have been altered, and game film has been analyzed over and over by the coaches, all to reverse the damage done in the start of the season. Now, the *Washington Post* has updated their standings, placing the varsity team in fourth place for the conclusion of the season. When all is said and done, the team could have a fighting chance at a .500 record.

"Hopefully, we will turn it around," said senior offensive lineman Steven Carter, "and come out strong towards the end of the season."

Although the team did not begin their season as well as they wanted, there is a possibility that they could reverse their season and improve their record to what reporters originally expected. The team still has an opportunity to win the division, since every school advances to the postseason. The seniors may not finish their high school football careers on top, but for the juniors and sophomores, there is always next year.

"If we train hard in the offseason and look forward to next year," said Neilson, "we are going to dominate."



The Madden Challenge offers experienced players a chance to compete against one another for cash prizes and exotic vacations during the Pro Bowl.

Spartans serve up their second winning season

By Carlin Sherril

Weekend Editor

As they tear up the court, both the men and women varsity volleyball teams are preparing to take home the district championships and put another year up on the district banner. The teams are having successful seasons, and are eager to finish strong.

The girls' varsity team has an overall record of 10-6. This season is only the second winning season for the girls in the school's history, as well as the second double digit winning total. They have faced some of the top teams in their league and won, making them high in the rankings for district championships.

"If we take care of business, we will do fine [in districts], said senior Jessi Molinengo.

By Tim O'Keefe
Sports Columnist

Catching the Madden craze

My pulse raised as I saw the all out blitz. I knew I had a one on one matchup with Randy Moss.

I lobbed the ball 50 yards perfectly down field for a touchdown to take a 14-0 lead late in the fourth quarter. My opponent threw his controller down and yelled, "Dang Randy Moss, Dang Randy Moss!" as I advanced the EA Sports Madden Challenge at Union Station. Even though my run ended with a 14-7 loss to a nationally ranked player, who ended up winning the Washington DC tournament, it was quite the experience.

The Madden series has been one of the most successful video games for more than 15 years. Legendary NFL commentator and former Oakland

O'Keefe's Beef

Raiders coach, John Madden, is the face of the series.

An almost cult following has been attracted to this game from normal guys like me, to NFL players like Eagles safety Michael Lewis.

The Madden Challenge is a national competition to see who the best Madden player in the country is.



The girls' varsity volleyball team has secured a winning record for just the second time in school history.

running for winning district championships this season. This is only the second season the team has played together; however, they are not getting discouraged.

"The majority of the team is seniors, with a few juniors and underclassman. Hopefully this won't effect our game and us winning [districts]," said Richardson.

Their current record is 4-4, but they hope to come out victorious by the end of the season. The 16 player team, like the girls team, is practicing day after day on improving their skills. Led by senior captains Dean Christensen, JT McCreary and Will Richardson, the volleyball team is working on their passing and serving, the two things that caused their loss to Robinson.

Both teams can see victory ahead of them and are eager to start playing for the district championships. The girls and the boys have high expectations for their teams. They plan on coming out successful, conquering the rest of our district's teams.

"As long as we stay focused, serve and receive serve at a high level and keep the injures at a minimum, we should be able to keep winning," said Duncetz.

Football is life

By Tim O'Keefe
Sports Columnist

A Nike poster hangs in my bedroom that says, "There is more to life than football, but not much." It is quite an exaggeration, but for me sometimes it is not far from the truth.

There are many reasons why football dominates the American pulse.

The first reason is the intense passion I feel for football. I felt it at our first WS football game. From the big hits where we went "Who!" to the enthusiastic fans with painted bodies that Friday night was quite unique. Junior quarterback Peter Lalich has been impressed with the fan support this season.

"I feel the energy in the stands," said Lalich. "Our fans are huge."

I felt it when I watched the USC vs. Notre Dame on TV. USC quarterback Matt Leinart's dramatic pass on 4th and 10, followed by a Leinart sneak into the endzone for the last second victory. Maybe it was the Mountain Dew I drank before the game, but I have not felt that type of excitement for months.

The buildup of football throughout the week brings a sense of importance to every game. I look forward to going to the game with my friends and classmates.

Each week of the NFL season has tremendous anticipation. Unlike MLB teams and their 162 game regular season, each NFL team only plays 16 games.

Over the last four months I had the pleasure of going to five MLB games. Although I enjoyed the slow paced atmosphere, it is nothing compared to the intensity, passion, and excitement of an NFL or college football game.

From pregame shows, to the commercials, to the tailgating at the stadiums, the NFL is truly an event more than a game. I look forward to every

O'Keefe's Beef

Sunday afternoon where I can lounge on my couch and watch 12 games at once on NFL Sunday Ticket. I may be obsessive, but I know I'm not alone.

Football is an escape for me. When players on the New Orleans Saints went to visit victims of Hurricane Katrina, many just wanted to see the Saints win as a diversion to their devastating problems. New Orleans Saints wide receiver Joe Horn feels the fans need football.

"I thought football would be irrelevant, but it's not," said Horn on NFL.com. "They want us to roll. They



Linebacker

Spartan Spotlight

Jessi Molinengo
Varsity Volleyball Captain

By Chrissy Regelski
Entertainment Editor

What is your favorite thing about volleyball?

"I like the fact that it's a complete team sport. You can't have slackers. Everyone has to work together."

What is your best volleyball memory?

"Beating Robinson at the District championship."

What is your worst volleyball memory?

"Volleyball suicides, [staying drills during practice]."

What are you doing differently this year?

"We have a really hot manager, [senior Dallon Cochran], and there is a lot more unity."

Do you have any pregame rituals?

"Not really, just warming up for the game."

What do you want to improve on the team this year?

"I want for us to have better defense and pass better. I think we're going to get the District [championship] and work on Regionals."

Are you going to continue volleyball next year in college?

"For fun, not competitively."

What are your favorite hobbies, besides volleyball?

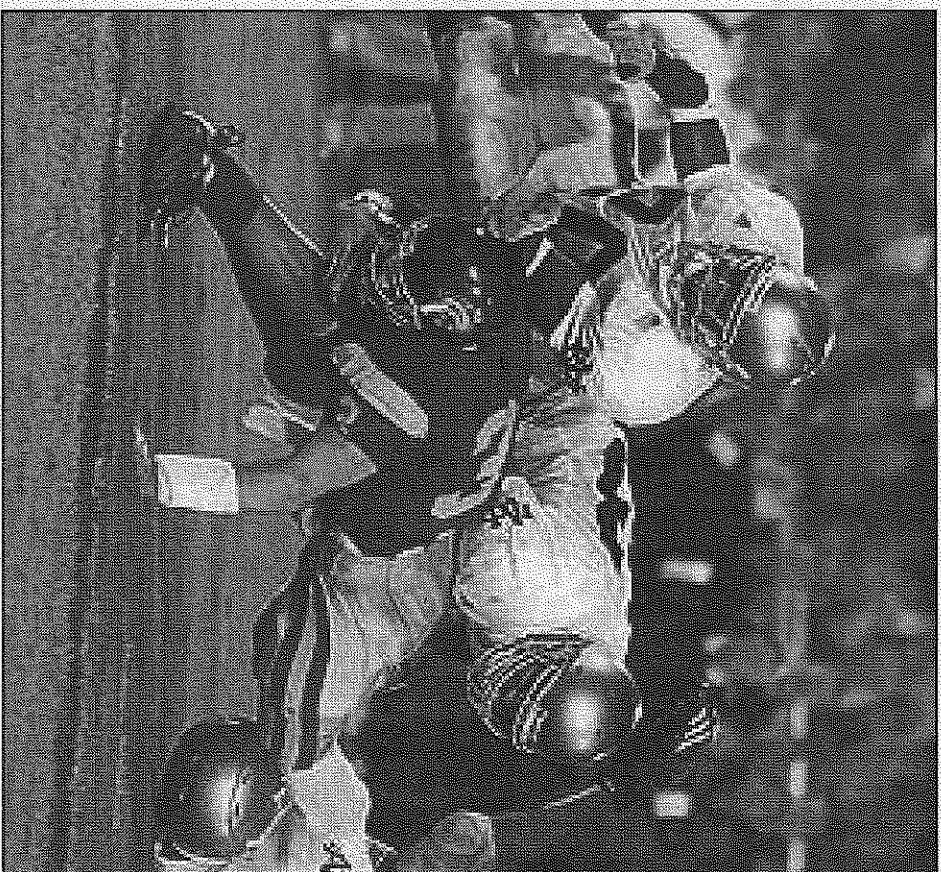
"I really like singing. I'm in Madrigals. Plus, hanging out with my friends."

Why did you take up volleyball?

"Because I had friends on the team. It was something I never tried and I wanted to try something new."

What are your personal goals for this volleyball season?

"I want to lead the team well and play well throughout the season."



Associated Press

Rivalries between teams of all levels have taken the country by storm. Notre Dame and USC are two of the biggest rivals in Division I college football.

want us to play, so now I'm more spirited brings me pain when my favorite quarterback throws for five

to do that." Football is an obsession and a distraction to me on the weekends. It brings me joy when my team wins; it brings me an obsession for me and others.

Student athletes are running for money

By Cam Rushton
Sports Editor

Students looking to go off to college, wherever that may be, know the importance of maintaining a good grade point average. The significance of extracurricular activities and sports have a major effect on their college transcript, too. Colleges look for not only studious high schoolers but also ones that play sports or are involved in some sort of after-school club.

Extracurriculars should be a prominent part in a student's daily activities, even if they are not going to pursue them after high school. Less than fifteen percent of all high school athletes across the country receive athletic scholarships.

"Studies should definitely come first since the percentage is so small," said junior Ben Trump, who runs track and cross country.

Popular sports, like football and basketball, offer more scholarships than others because there is such a widespread amount of involvement.

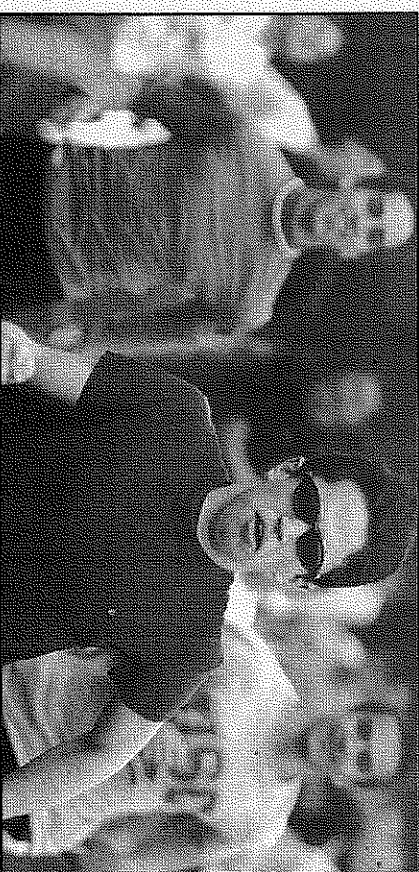
However many extracurriculars that a student participates in, grades are always the most important factor when applying for college. A 3.5 to 4.0 GPA are what colleges want to see.

"I have about a 3.6, so I'm in good shape," said senior Brian Decot, who is on the swim and the soccer teams.

Former WS student-athletes have gone on to be very successful with both their athletics and their studies. Kara Lawson did well at Tennessee academically and was a star basketball player, too. Laura Haskins graduated with a 4.0 and now plays basketball at Virginia Tech.

In the word "student-athlete," the most important thing to remember is that student comes before athlete. Being a good student is always more important than being a good athlete; studying for a major test is always more important than making it to practice. Even so, extracurriculars should be a large part in a high-schooler's life.

"I do a lot [of extracurriculars]," said Trump, "so I hope that does well for my application."



File Photo

Athletes like junior Ben Trump know the importance of achieving a good GPA.



Hilltop Golf Club
Hilltop golfclub located off telegraph road in Alexandria, VA was built in October 2003. It features a driving range, club rentals, and lessons.

Building friendships around sports

By Colin Embrey
Sports Columnist

There's nothing like the stinging sensation that accompanies a horrible golf swing.

Then again, there's nothing like a good ol' whiff in front of your friends who've played golf for nine years.

When I took a tip to the Driving Range at Hilltop Golf Club with my friends, I knew close to nothing about how to swing a golf club. Despite my best efforts on my own, I

couldn't figure it out. Every time, I got this huge rush just before swinging uncontrollably and missing completely. It made me feel like I might have been good. Then came reality.

So I opened my eyes and saw my friends' reaction, but I didn't panic. I wound up again, and this time, hit the ground before the tee. I watched in despair as the ball slowly rolled off the tee and just past the yellow line that keeps novice golfers like myself from picking up golf balls two centimeters away.

My buddy noticed I was struggling and came over to check my technique. He made sure I had the grip

down, but told me my hips and head weren't quite right. I'll be the first to tell you that if you can't stand still for more than 5 seconds, you shouldn't play golf. If you aren't used to it, the starting position can be a little uncomfortable.

Trying to help me, my friend told me to put my feet a little more than shoulder width apart with my left heel in line with the ball. So I made a few corrections, and to my surprise, I sent the ball screaming down the fairway.

My friend's reaction to my new found success is what made the experience worthwhile.

I didn't know how I would do when we were on our way, but the part that made trying it out so fun was finding whether I had a gift or a problem. I had never touched a golf ball, but I wanted to have fun with my friends, so I tried anyway. They liked to see the effort, and respected me for it. I concluded after that long night that despite whatever skills I do or don't have, it is always fun to build friendships around sports.

I realized that simple outings like going to the driving range, playing a pickup game of soccer or basketball, and throwing around a football let me relax and have fun with my friends.

Colin the Shots

A column derived from a love of sports

Pasta and practice = win for WS

at Friday night pasta dinners students load up on carbohydrates

Joshua Lipman
Managing Editor

After three first place finishes in five meets, the varsity boys cross-country team knows something about winning. They share a secret weapon with the varsity girls cross-country team: pasta.

"We have pasta dinners on Friday nights before invitational," said girls cross-country captain, junior Katie Barber. Pasta is loaded with carbohydrates which are good for endurance. "Everyone has their own little race day rituals."

The girls team needs the extra help with several runners on the team missing part of the season because of injury or illness including Barber, who has mononucleosis. She and her co-captain, senior Christina Arari, are keeping team morale up with secret buddy gifts.

The boys team captains are seniors Richard Walsh and Kris Benton. The captains' responsibilities include picking practice routes.

"They play the role of coach in the coach's absence and they coordinate a lot of social events," said varsity cross-country coach Vic Kelbaugh.

The teams have two different types of practices which they alternate every other day, each lasting between two and two and a half hours. On mileage days they continuously run for a certain distance or amount of time. On interval days they run various distances for different amounts of time. For example

they might run 600 meters at one speed, rest for fifteen seconds, run 200 meters at a faster pace and then repeat the process. The teams also run twice a week before school starts and hold goal planning sessions to make strategy for meets.

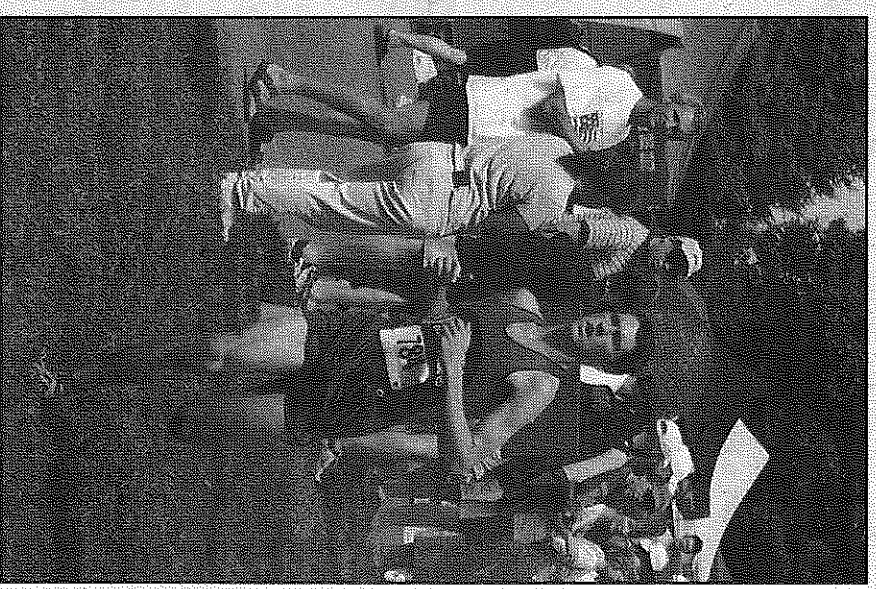
"In all of the invitationals we've been in the varsity team has been working on staying together in races because pack running is really important," said Walsh. He believes teammates also need to get to know each other's running styles.

Both teams are training for the district meet on October 26, which the boys team won last year. In meets, seven runners from each school's team compete in three mile races. The places of the top five finishers from each team are tallied up like a golf score with the lowest score winning. How the sixth and seventh place runners on a team finish is also important. If they finish ahead of any of the top five runners on another team it makes that team's score higher. The sixth and seventh place runners also count in ties.

"I've been eating a lot better. I've been working hard on workouts, basically just doing whatever the coaches tell me," said junior Mike Spooner, who is competing for the individual state championship.

Runners like Spooner can qualify to advance to later rounds of tournaments even if his team does not. "He's in an elite group of five or six guys that have a chance to win the state individual championship," said Kelbaugh.

Watch out Patriot District, these runners have plenty of pasta.



Lifetouch
Junior Mike spooner has been eating more nutritionally and working extra hard at work outs. His preparations are necessary to have a chance at a state title, as his coach Vic Kelbaugh predicts.

IHOP and dressing up

Underclassmen athletes initiated by veterans

By Lauren Adams
Senior Staff Writer

Hazing is a huge issue among high school sports team, where the line between team bonding and outright abuse has been blurred.

With so many cases being pushed on school boards, schools have tightened their laws to prevent of conflict, including sports initiations.

This hasn't stopped teams at WS, though, avoiding the term 'initiation', and instead, it with 'team bonding'.

The varsity girls volleyball team did that this previous summer when they decided the bonding was necessary.

With six seniors and four ACE boys in tow, nine unsuspecting underclassmen were nabbed from their beds and taken to IHOP during the wee hours of the morning.

With many different types of sleepers, there were plenty of surprises.



Lauren Adams
Captain, Senior Jessi Molinengo kidnaps Jennifer Castor and takes her to IHOP along with the rest of the team for an early breakfast.

"Some cried, some fought back, and some even threw punches," said captain and senior Jessi Molinengo. Sophomore Erica Williamson was the most unpredictable of all. Being a

"Some cried, some fought back, and some even threw punches."

—Jessi Molinengo, Senior

habitual sleepwalker, the ambush wasn't an immediate wake up call.

"I woke up and I was standing in my front lawn. My mom told me I was being kidnapped, so I put out my arms [waiting to be taken]."

The varsity field hockey team also initiated players, dressing up all the new teammates in costumes, generously donated by the old members. Although the teammates were

wanted the practice before, they still weren't sure exactly what to expect. Sophomore Brittany Klipstein got lucky, dressing up as Mushu, the red dragon, from Mulan.

Hazing never became an issue during these initiations, and it never crossed the minds of the initiated.

Both Williamson and Klipstein felt that their initiations were really fun, and great for bringing the team together.

With the elements of surprise and spontaneity, both sophomores felt that afterwards the teams were definitely more bonded, which was the main objective.

"It was nice to laugh with each other, because then you feel more comfortable together," said Klipstein. Looking back on the experience,

volleyball captain Katie Horner, who came up with the initiation from a previous experience she'd had with her Personality choir class, felt that all in all it was "a job well done."

Poor Liz's Almanac

Applying to college: It's not all about racial profiles

By Liz Weidenhold

Oracle Editor

While things like school, friends and breathing might be considered important, nothing rivals the importance of the college search.

In order to help you find that school that has everything you're looking for, whether it be an acapella group or an intermural beer pong team, I have arranged the correct process you should follow in order to get into the perfect college. **DISCLAIMER:** Susan Rexford, our very knowledgeable career counselor, has nothing to do with this article. If you want real advice I encourage you to seek her guidance.

Step 1: Pick a college. You should apply somewhere you can see yourself. A good way to tell is by going to each college's web site where you'll see a

group of people of all races and sexes smiling intellectually. This is a good indicator that your race and sex will be accepted at this school.

Next, look at their academic profile and see if your credentials match up with this specific school. Don't be shocked when you see that you don't have the right statistics for this school. It just means you aren't good enough.

Next, look at the name of the colleges. Names like Chowan University, Hood College and University of Incarnate Word can all be made fun of, so you don't want to go to these schools.

Step 2: Start your application. Usually the application asks you things about yourself that seem unimportant, like, "Have you ever been dismissed, placed on probation, or suspended from school, or convicted of a crime in a court of law?"



Many college websites advertise their student life section with pictures of all different races and genders gathering together to have fun and learn.

I mean, who cares that you hijacked a letter of recommendation..? If this car when you skipped school one day doesn't work, I would probably ask Mrs. to bomb an old lady's mailbox? It was in Rexford what to do because I'm at a loss. your second year of seventh grade and nobody important got hurt.

Step 3: Get teacher recommendations. either reject you flat out or accept you. The first thing you should say is "Mr. then reject you later on when they find Smith. I know we've had our differences out you failed all of your classes and that I whine a lot and I have a "D" in because, while you were waiting your class and I made fun of the way impatiently, you were also experimenting you dress behind your back, but I know with illegal drugs, watching the "O.C." deep down inside you really like me and and/or "Laguna Beach" and practicing I would appreciate it if you would write a little too much for that beer pong team.

Stevie's Story

Arabian Nights

By Stevie Florino

ETC Editor

Last Saturday my mom invited two of her co-workers to our house for dinner. She told us their names were Nowshad and Amman. Nowshad Rizwanullah is from Bangladesh and Amman Fenster is from India. Just by the names I could already tell that it was going to be an interesting night.

As soon as they came into the house, my mom took out the camera and had them sit on either side of our 170 pound St. Bernard. She was taking pictures like it was the first day of school. Once the photo session was over, we all made our way up to the living room for appetizers.

I learned a lot about Amman and Nowshad. They both went to Yale and they have been pretty close buds for awhile now. I also discovered that they like to play practical jokes on people. Let me tell you how I

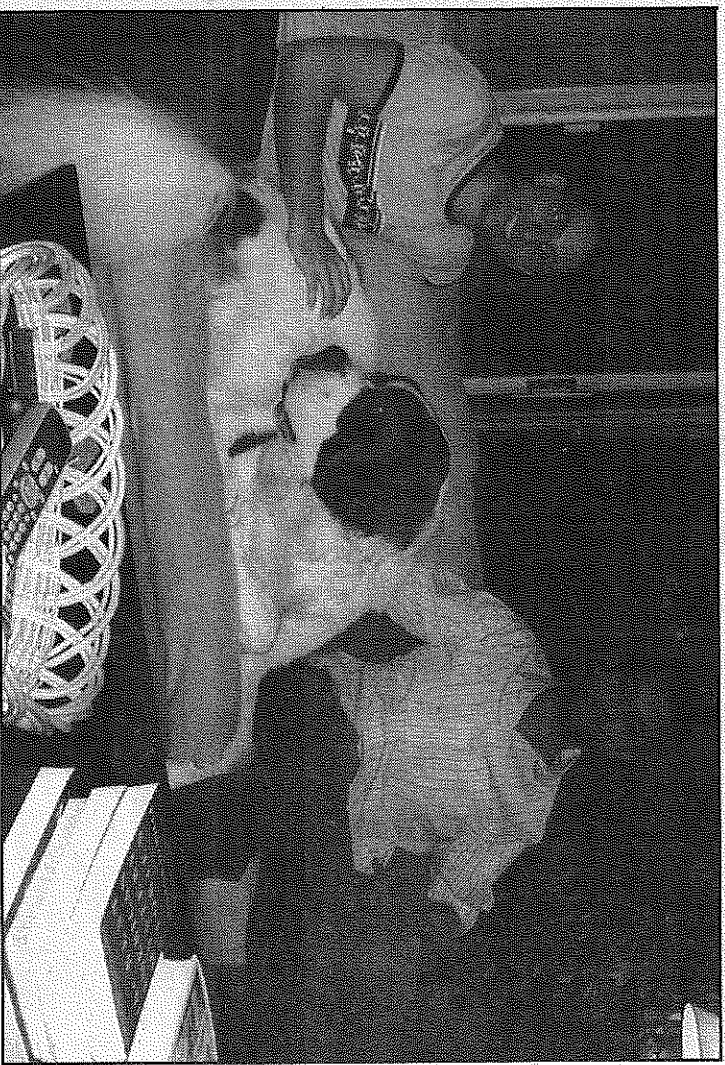
found that out.

My sister Angela and I were sitting on the couch talking about how redneck her new pickup truck is when all of a sudden, we hear Amman and Nowshad talking in some bizarre language. They were making clicking and popping noises and their words didn't even sound like words.

My first thought was that they must be speaking "their language." I didn't want to be rude and say,

"Oh, is that your language you're speaking?" So I asked them what language they were speaking. Their response was Umbehgdo. I definitely had never heard of that language before. I looked over at my sister to make sure she was just as clueless as I was, which she was.

They told me that there are many languages in India and Umbehgdo is one of them. I wanted to learn a little bit of it, so I asked them how to say "Hey, what's up?"



Amman (left), Wilson (center) and Nowshad (right), gather on the couch for a picture.

"Click-click, pop, am deh ya," is how you say "Hey what's up?" in Umbehgdo. I thought that it was pretty cool that there is a language out there that involves clicking and popping. Wanting to share this with everybody I ran to my mom and told her about this fascinating language.

My mom has known Amman and Nowshad for awhile now and she had no clue that they spoke this language.

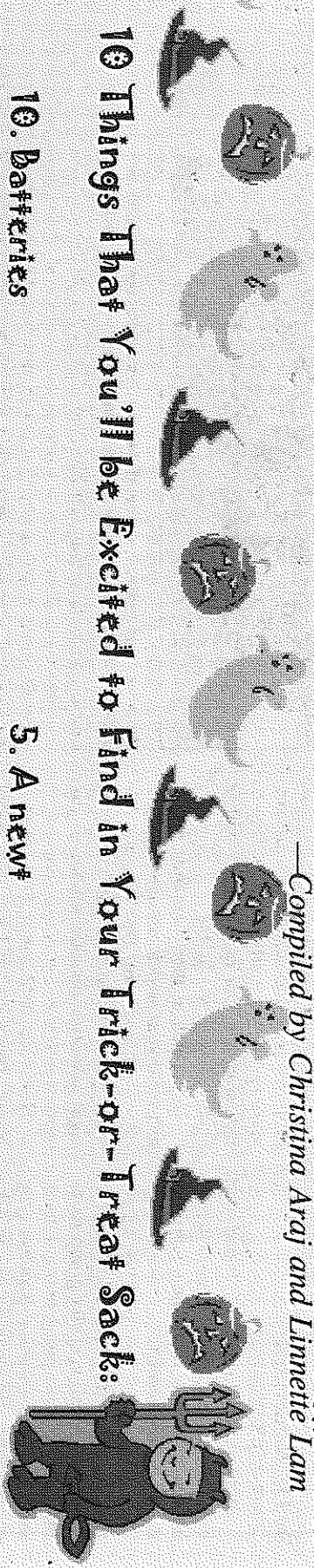
She asked Amman, "Wow, how long have you been speaking this language?" I was expecting him to say, "Oh, my whole life," but instead He said,

"I feel kind of bad now, we were just playing with you Stevie. I didn't think you were actually going to believe us. We just like to play jokes." I have to admit, I kind of felt like an idiot. Umbehgdo did sound pretty unrealistic. Especially with all the clicks and the pops.

October/November '05		Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
							21. Varsity Football Game @ Lee 7:30	22. Spartanfest
23. National TV Talk Show Host Day	24. Spirit week: Palama Day	25. Spirit week: Black and White Day	26. Spirit week: Classs Color Day	27. Spirit week: Masquerade Day	28. Homecoming Football Game vs. Lake Braddock 7:30/ Blue & Orange Day	29. Homecoming Dance 8:00		
30. National chicken soup for the laughing soul day	31. Halloween	1. National fig day	2. Plan your epitaph day	3. Cross County Northern Region Championship @ Burke Lake 3:15 (Girls) 4:00 (Boys)	4. Varsity Football Game @ Hayfield 7:30	5. Start of National "Dear Santa" Letter Week		
6. Chemistry day	7. Teacher Workday	8. Teacher Workday	9. Split pea soup day	10. Radiologic technology day				

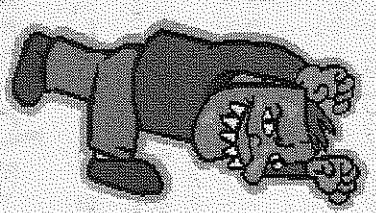
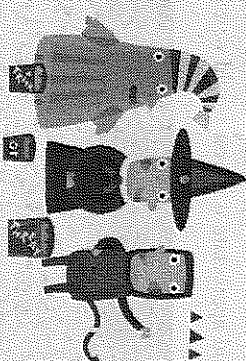
Halloween Fun Page

—Compiled by Christina Araj and Linnette Lam



10 Things That You'll Be Excited to Find in Your Trick-or-Treat Sack:

- 10. Batteries
- 9. Pennies and Sacajawea dollar coins
- 8. A chicken nugget
- 7. A hot girl/guy's number
- 6. Toilet paper
- 5. A newf
- 4. A jump of coal
- 3. An acceptance letter from your dream college
- 2. A pocket dictionary
- 1. Keys to a new BMW



Super Spooky Word Search

APPLE	CORPSE	SPOOKY
BLOOD	COSTUME	TRICKORTREAT
BOO	HAUNTEDHOUSE	VAMPIRE
CANDYCORN	MUMMY	WITCH
CARAMEL	ORACLE	ZOMBIE
COWEBS	PUMPKIN	
COFFIN	SKELTON	

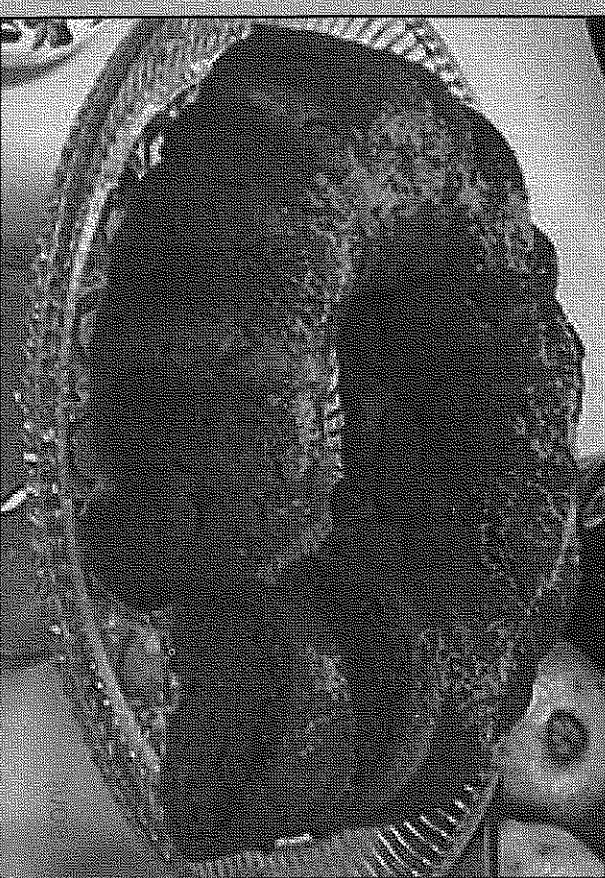
H Y S F V H I S O C E P P O M Q
 E A G B C T K E R A R P B Y W
 M D U T F E B I A N I F F O C
 L U I N L W G B C D P P A N M B
 I W M E T B B M L Y M P V O Q
 Z A T M N E I O E C A P P O Y L
 H O M E Y L D Z C O V L Y E J C
 N I K P M U P H G R X E M O J
 C O S T U M E H O N L A R C Y O
 S K V P E R F G N U R P C Y O
 N O Y V O Z R U W A S S N E Y K
 Q D F J W O W C C E S E G Z I
 B G E N A A K U B O V A W T V
 X M G U H B V Y B L O O D H Y
 T R I C K O R T R E A T Q U W

PuzzleMaker

TOP 10 SCARY MOVIES:

- "Halloween"
- "Seven"
- "Psycho"
- "Saw"
- "The Birds"
- "Rosemary's Baby"
- "The Shining"
- "Silence of the Lambs"
- "Texas Chainsaw Massacre"
- "Nightmare on Elm Street"

ULTIMATE PUMPKIN BREAD RECIPE



Ingredients:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 cups canned or fresh pumpkin

Directions:

—Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.

—Sift the flour, cinnamon, baking soda, baking powder, and salt together.

—In a separate bowl, mix the sugar, vegetable oil, eggs, and vanilla. Combine both mixtures and fold in the fresh or canned pumpkin. Pour into a non-stick 9 by 5 by 3-inch loaf pan or bunt cake pan.

—Bake for 1 hour. Then stick a knife into the middle of the loaf; it should come out clean. Cool for 15 minutes and turn out onto a cooling rack. Cool completely.

Diana's Kitchen

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

KEITH'S

ONE OF THE STATES LARGEST & BEST FULL SERVICE DRIVING SCHOOLS

250-3333

*** Sign-up EARLY ***

More information at 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 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 1/4 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.

However, I assure you that our instructors will instill safe driving habits, defensive driving habits, accident avoidance and evasive maneuvering habits in your sons and daughters. Please bear with us, summer time is coming and we all want to have a happy summer. Thank you so very much and may God bless and keep every one of you safe.

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 OBEY
 VA STATE
 DRIVER ED
 LAWS**

**WE
 DO
 IT
 RIGHT!**

Keith's also offers the 5 Point Driver Improvement Program