

THE



RACCLE

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West Springfield High School 6100 Rolling Road Springfield, Virginia 22152

WS team wins

Second place on

'It's Academic'

By **Christina Sohn**
Weekend Editor

Right before it was time to be on television, senior Rachel Barry was nervous. All of her team's Thursday afternoon practice sessions were going to come down to a twenty-minute competition.

But Barry says, when it comes to crunch time, this nervousness "heightens your senses."

This alerted state is necessary in a competition that tests one's intelligence, memory and—often most crucially—quickness.

Ultimately, it was the rapid buzzing and alertness of Georgetown Day High School that pulled the private school to the front of the pack to win first place in the "It's Academic" competition, which was televised two weeks ago.

The competition involves the host, Mac McGarry, shooting off questions as three teams tap the buzzer if they have the correct answer. There are also rounds in which McGarry directs questions to just one team and the other teams cannot answer.

In the beginning, WS held on tightly to Georgetown Day and by the first commercial break, both schools

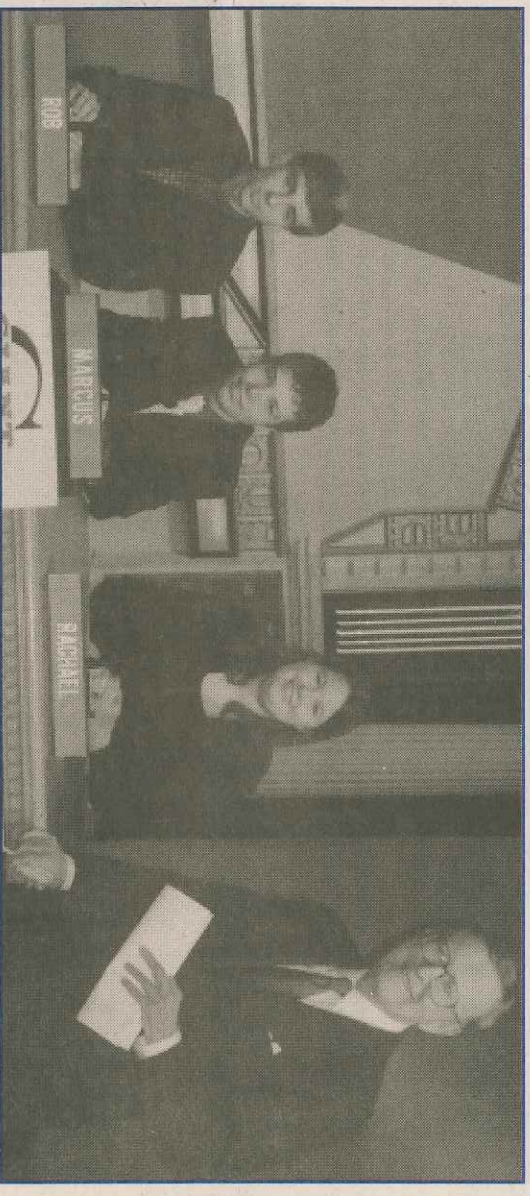


Photo credit here

The WS "It's Academic" team competed on January 14, and came home the second place winners. They were tied with 210 points each. Bishop McNamara was trailing behind with 180 points. But toward the end, Georgetown Day's quickness put them on top.

"Georgetown would always buzz in early. Sometimes they hesitated and were penalized for that but this technique [of buzzing in early] worked out in the long run," said sponsor Sandy Novak.

The competing WS team, which consisted of Barry, senior Rob Patrick and senior Marcus Balog, finished in second place. The club, which has 10 members, not only focuses on competing but also emphasizes the fun of meeting and interacting with smart and interesting people.

Student didn't paws to save dog

By **Andreaana Maxwell**
Inside Story Editor

Senior Jason Nguyen began the early January day as an ordinary high schooler and ended as a community hero.

After a typical day at school and 8th period Jazz Band, a Sturpee was the perfect fix.

Now, he may have assumed the trip to 7-11 would be just like any other. He would walk in, carefully select the perfect flavor, make the ideal Sturpee, pay and leave. He was, however, in for a great surprise in the parking lot.

On this lovely day Nguyen parked his car at the store located in Saratoga. As he left his vehicle he noticed a dog walking behind a car across the parking lot. Immediately, Nguyen ran over and picked up the dog. The driver, however,



Erica Wilkening

Senior Jason Nguyen reenacts his impact with the car after rescuing a dog. His friends call him a hero.

did not see him and continued to back up.

As the driver backed up he hit Nguyen and caused him to fall behind the car. Luckily, neither Nguyen nor the

See DOG on Page

Boycotting Bagel Bakery

Choir members find encounter with longtime supporter leaves bitter taste

By **Katie Bourget**
Oracle Editor

Choir director Mike Dombrow was sitting at his piano when one of his students came and whispered in his ear. She informed him one of her fellow choir members purchased a bagel. Dombrow gasped.

While the purchase and consumption of a bagel might seem like a routine and harmless activity, the Choral Department now considers it a crime—at least if the bagel is from Bagel Bakery (formerly a franchise of Chesapeake Bagel Bakery).

"I don't support sabotage nor the verbal or symbolic trashing of local businesses, but I've been telling [choir

SPARTAN CHOIRS
<http://members.wvnet.net/wshs-choir/>

"Give your patronage to those who support you."
—Mike Dombrow, Choir Director

West Springfield High School
Choir Dept. 703-412-5002

students] to choose your restaurants wisely," said Dombrow. "Give your patronage to those who support you."

The bagel boycott began as a result of a discrepancy over the company's involvement with Spartan Cards, a profitable fundraiser for the department. Chesapeake Bagel Bakery is advertised to give a 10 percent discount to customers who

See BAGELS on Page 4.



Popular radio station leaves the airwaves.



Forum goes out of the box.



'Les Mis' captures viewers' hearts.

Z1104 is no more

From modern to classic overnight

First 99.1, now Z-104. Everyone was in shock last year when they went to tune into some mid-morning jams, only to discover Spanish voices serenading back at them.

Flash forward a year: the same story. While some may have thought that Jack Johnson had switched over to learning the piccolo, many realized that the beloved Z-104 had suddenly switched over to the classical station WGMS.

When the alternative rock WFS 99.1 went off the air after making an allegiance with the Spanish Broadcasting System, it was in an attempt to try and attract a larger audience. But it did not really work.

Yet, new station WTOP seems to think that by kicking out Z-104 in order to get better radio frequencies, they

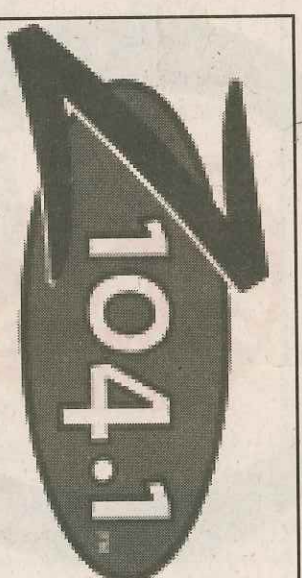
will have ten times the success that the Spanish Broadcasting System had.

But, to take away a major teenage station of modern music, minus hip hop and hard core rap (Hot 99.5) just isn't the right way to go about doing it. It just doesn't leave much to listen to on the radio.

Listeners who are not big fans of Eminem, and aren't fond of Beethoven, are stuck in static land. With constant repetition of Mariah Carey, 99.5 can easily lose one's interest.

There are few other stations worth listening to, either because they are littered with commercials, static or both.

Country is always a safe choice because there is an overwhelming amount of non-static country twang stations available. Although many teenagers enjoy this



Modern Music Z104

genre, it is in their human nature to want to have choices.

Now, it's not like 104.1 is completely gone, because classical 103.5 proudly took its place. WTOP has taken 103.5's spot, making two identical WTOP news stations for a supposedly excited listening audience.

Maybe not, at least not to high school students. Students get their news mostly from word of mouth and of course, *The Oracle*. Littering the radio with news, which remember, is basically what the AM stations are for, takes away from the variety of music and freedoms of choice that people love to have. It's like Baskin Robbins switching from their delicious, eclectic 32 flavors, to boring vanilla, strawberry and chocolate. It's no fun to be forced to choose just one.

Redskins make it to playoffs and fumble

Six game winning streak comes to an end

By Cam Rushton
Sports Editor

I have been a Washington Redskins fan my entire life. I have stood by the 'Skins' through thick, thin (granted, it's been mostly thick) and everywhere in between. Nevertheless, I never saw one thing coming: the playoffs.

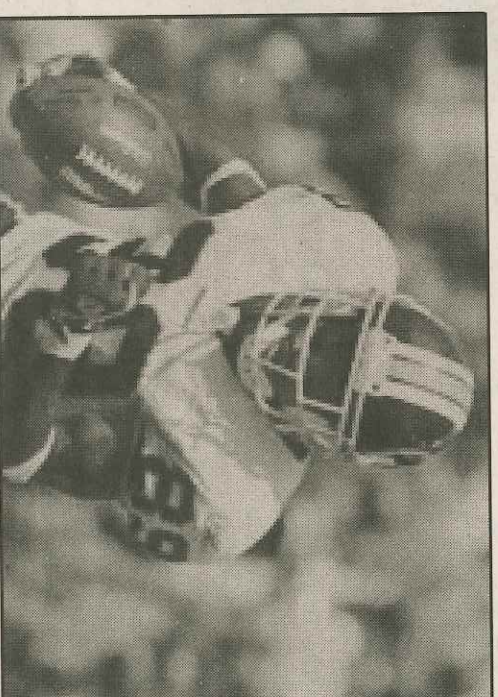
Prior to a few weeks ago, I considered the words "playoffs" and "Redskins" politically incorrect when used in the same sentence. So, when the post-season crept up and hit me like running back Clinton Portis hits the open field (and the way quarterback Patrick

Ramsey is supposed to hit his open receivers), I was stunned. Ecstatic, in fact, considering this year marked the 'Skins' first playoff berth since 1998. After countless years with the likes of head coach Norv Turner, running back Stephen Davis and head-butting quarterback Gus Ferrotte, the playoffs were a nice change.

Until Week 11 of the NFL season, the 'Skins' playoff chances were just out of reach. It became obvious that Washington would have to win their last five games, a rare occurrence even for strong NFL teams. But, when surging teams like the Giants and the Cowboys

were overcome by the 'Skins', their chances improved. The season's climax came with a 31-20 win over the Philadelphia Eagles (the last game of the season), making Washington's playoff hopes a reality.

After finishing the preseason with a record of one win and three losses, the upcoming season for the Redskins seemed like another below-average phase in what owner, Dan Snyder, claims was their "rebuilding stage." That rebuilding stage seems to be fairly complete. The 'Skins' surpassed everyone's expectations, beating the Tampa Bay Buccaneers in the



NFL Halima Store

first round of the playoffs, but then losing a close, hard-fought game to the Seattle Seahawks.

Although roughly the entire Washington area population would have liked to have seen a Super Bowl trophy at FedEx Field, the playoffs were not a bad change. It was unbelievable to see the support of not only students around school but other people around the Springfield area. Whether I was filling up my car's tank at

the gas station, or getting the morning paper, I seemed to be surrounded by Redskins' jerseys and apparel.

Last year, the 'Skins' almost made the post-season, but missed it by a few games. In only his second season back with the 'Skins' (after a successful stint in NASCAR), Joe Gibbs has produced a playoff-caliber team.

Not a bad improvement, boys, and not a bad season.



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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Students bring back burnt out styles

By Nicole Simpson
Entertainment Assistant

Fads are a part of every generation; what's ironic is that there are occasionally ones that just won't go away. Even the most distasteful fads somehow keep fascinating confused teenage girls.

Girls in general already have the tragic confusion of what to wear in winter.

Let's think: is January usually sweltering or freezing? Sweatpants or flashy mini-skirt? The choice must be devastating to make.

They compromise their wardrobe so that maybe, just maybe, they will be able to walk out the door dressed in two things from two seasons and two generations: the "original" mini skirt and leggings or legwarmers.

Back in their prime, these leggings were basically just considered biking shorts and scrunched socks, two things most often

seen in an 80's work out video, accompanied by a torn sweatshirt and scrunchie.

We might as well switch back to jelly shoes and try to pull off Madonna's underwear as outerwear.

I do believe however, that there are some exceptions to these trends, perhaps attending an 80's themed disco, or a neon-hit roller skating rink, whatever kids do these days that may call for some extreme dress-up.

I fully support the 'trying-something-new' and 'being-your-own-person' theme to the fullest.

I would, however, much rather witness something new, and not everyone prance about in one of Madonna's out of date fashion don'ts.

Among these worn-out-and won't-go-away-trends are things like popped collars, both high and low top converses, polka dots and another that is bombarding our

school at an amazing rate, temporary hair dye and hair dye in general.

Everyone has to change things up once in a while, I emphasize the word 'change' for one reason: the ever popular dark red hair color.

I love this color. I have to say it does wonders for any who decide they want to try out this hair color.

It's an unmistakably good choice, but it seems to me, way too many people are choosing it. Good pick, but let's take on the 'change it up' motto, shall we?

Through my sloppy statistics done throughout our own hallways, I have concluded somewhere near 22 people have made the same exact decision to choose this dark red hair dye.

While we're only six years into our current decade, let's make these years creative and new. Maybe we can set trends for kids, like myself, to come to despise 20 years down the road.



Sara Kofalt
Fads tend to come and go, but this one has struck WS hard. Sophomore Laura Bellantoni sports a jean skirt with long blue leggings. Students all over the school have been spotted in similar outfits.



Erica Wilkenling
The brand new Kingstowne Shopping Center movie theater is a great place to enjoy a movie comfortably, but the reasonable price is questionable to students.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Fine & "Reasonable" Oracle Editor,
I am writing to you concerning the article "Kingstowne provides a royal time."

This article mentions the Kingstowne movie theater that recently opened and the shopping center in general.

The picture associated with the article shows the new theater, but the caption, however, says "Kingstowne Shopping Center's brand new movie theater is a great place to enjoy a movie comfortably and at a reasonable price."

This so-called "reasonable" price is not mentioned in the article.

It can only be assumed that the "reasonable" price includes two movie tickets, popcorn, two drinks and perhaps candy. This would describe the typical movie date.

The cost of such a date, however, is as follows: two movie tickets, \$18.50; one popcorn, \$4.00; two drinks, \$8.00; one candy, \$2.50; movie experience, anything but priceless!

The total cost of this typical movie experience is \$33.00. It can only be assumed that \$33.00 is a "reasonable" price.

This does not include the supposed dinner in the "dinner & a movie" package.

I don't know about my fellow students, but I do not have the privilege of being able to spend \$33.00 + weekly or monthly on a movie date, however much I may want to.

I realize that I may be wrong so I suggest a poll should be taken to provide the student population's perspective of a "reasonable" price.

Thank you for your time and realize that I feel wronged not by The Oracle staff, but by the movie theater monopoly.

Thank you for your consideration of my opinion and please do not assume anything without further research of such an assumption.

Your Fellow Student,
Matt D. Norwood, junior

Smoking stinks

Students continue to use nasty habits

By Lindsay Bruhn
Viewpoint Editor

I have made a discovery. We, the said "brilliant" teenagers, are actually really dumb.

We say that we should be treated like adults and yet act like complete morons, which in case you did not know, does not endear us to our parents, and when our parents are not pleased with us, adult treatment does not come.

One would think that with this common knowledge a teenager would simply try and behave in a more suitable manner, and yet it seems that we are unable to.

Yes, at times we can pull ourselves together and behave as little adults, but we always

revert to our selfish, stupid, rebellious ways.

Teen smoking still presents itself as a popular habit.

I am absolutely amazed at the number of students who smoke at WS. I see them on the corner before pulling up to the school, and I see them in their cars over on Hillside.

I do not understand what is going through their heads. It must be chalked up to human, sorry "teen," nature.

According to the teen-driven anti-smoking website ydoy.outlink.com, smoking has some absolutely disgusting side affects.

Death being the number one most common side effect, it is followed by increased facial

hair for females and the addiction of twice as much mucus than in non-smokers.

That is not mentioning the disgusting ash tray smell those lovely cigarettes leave behind on your car, clothes and breath.

Ok, so even if teens do not visit websites to find the gross side effects of smoking, they are all provided, even pounded into our brains, by high school health.

Even before high school we were constantly being told how bad smoking is for us. Yet still there are so many who do.

Blame it on being rebellious, or blame it on not knowing because you slept through health for five years.

Personally, I blame it on stupidity.



Tina Wojcik
Students stand outside of WS to light up a cigarette after school. Center Road and Hillside are popular spots to gather after school to smoke.

Possible changes ahead for SAT's

By Caitlin Kenney
Viewpoint Section Assistant

The College Board is looking into changing how students take SATs. They spend up to five hours for a test which lays out their futures. The expectations and pressures send even levelheaded students over the edge.

Career Center Specialist, Susan Rexford helps students reach their potential on SATs and teaches the best test taking skills. The College Board has reviewed a series of complaints about the new SAT and it's undesirable length.

"There is a group of high school college counselors who made the proposal to College Board that they should consider spreading the SAT over multiple days. They are in the test center for more than six hours. The College Board has decided to study the suggestions," said Rexford. The College Board took three years before they decided to introduce the new version of the SAT. It may take even longer for them to decide the time management of it.

"Since I don't think there will be any changes within the next few years, Mrs. O'Brien and I will continue with our test prep program exactly as it is. Of course, if College Board does make changes, we will adapt to those changes," said Rexford.

The SAT length is a controversy for counselors and students across the country. Five straight hours of scratching pencils can make any student crazy.

"The breaks are too short and students get hungry and tired—neither of those are conducive to good test taking. Breaking up the test into two segments sounds good to me. Students would be able to concentrate better on test because of the manageable length," said Rexford.

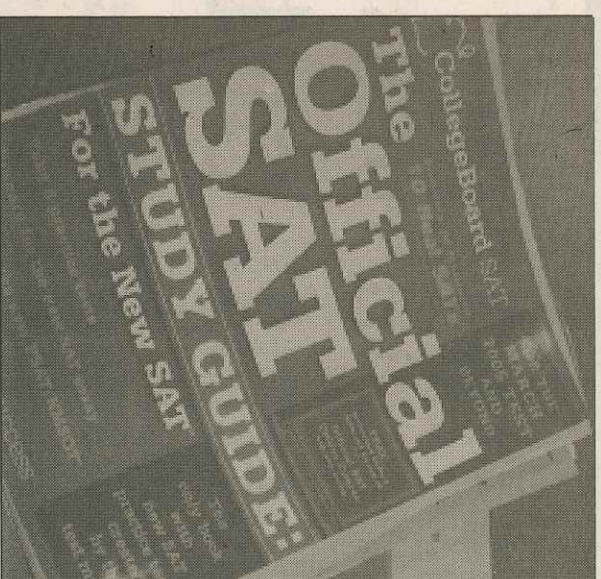
The alternative of taking the SAT in segments scare some juniors out of their minds.

"I would hate to study for one section at a time. I don't want a test over a period of several days," said junior David Nelson.

There are some disadvantages of having the SAT stretch for more than one day. It could cause some conflicts with schedules and make it more complicated to take.

"More planning and test dates will be needed if students want to take the test several times [to improve scores]. I am assuming there will be additional costs involved in segmenting the test and this will be to the disadvantage of students with limited financial resources," said Rexford. Students tend to feel that it's easier to take the test in one day.

"I'd rather just get the SAT over with in one day. It's less stressful," said junior Caitlin Baker.



Liz Buchsteiner

With possible changes ahead for the SAT's, study methods for the test are likely to change.

Even with the College Board decision up in the air students can still get high scores through classroom preparation.

"Working hard in the classroom has always been the best way to achieve success on standardized tests," said Rexford.

Used chairs spark debate

By Zohra Alnoor
Junior Staff Writer

The WS staff has been receiving new connected desks for several classes and many students don't like them.

"Hayfield has all new furniture since they renovated, so the furniture we've gotten in the past year has been Hayfield hand-me-downs. We don't have a choice," said senior administrator Joan Galdi.

It's impossible to stay awake at 7:30 a.m. when you're listening to a lecture about 'tangents to circles' in Geometry or 'how to pass a law' in US Government.

"I hate them because they're uncomfortable. If you want more leg room, you can't get it because you can't push the desks over," said junior Kaska Adoyete.



Erica Wilkening

Oftentimes, students find connected desks uncomfortable with the minimal leg room.

off of the desks," said senior Fahsia McQueen.

With older desks falling apart, the WS staff has found a way to get our new and improved desks easily.

WS students should get used to the "better" desks because we're going to have them for a while. The most they can do after those grueling hour and a half classes is get in a nice stretch before the bell rings for their next class.

"I hate them because they're uncomfortable." —Kaska Adoyete, junior

It doesn't help at all that the chairs you're sitting in make you feel like you're stuck in a two foot box.

"It's very hard to sleep in them," said senior Aurelia Geddis.

Difficultly sleeping is not the only reason WS students dislike the new desks.

"You can't put all your stuff on them, and it's tilted so all you things keep sliding



Garnie DeClark

Mike Ukelele patrols the edge of the WS property bordering Center Rd. The area is a common place for students to smoke, a problem that recently hired Mark Travis has noticed.

Additional security personnel hired

Jesse Langley and Mark Travis work to make halls safer

By Katie Costello
Features Editor

If two heads are better than one, then four must be exemplary. This is the case in the recent increase in the number of officers that maintain school security. Since the beginning of the school year, WS has been operating with only 50 percent of the required amount of security needed for a high school.

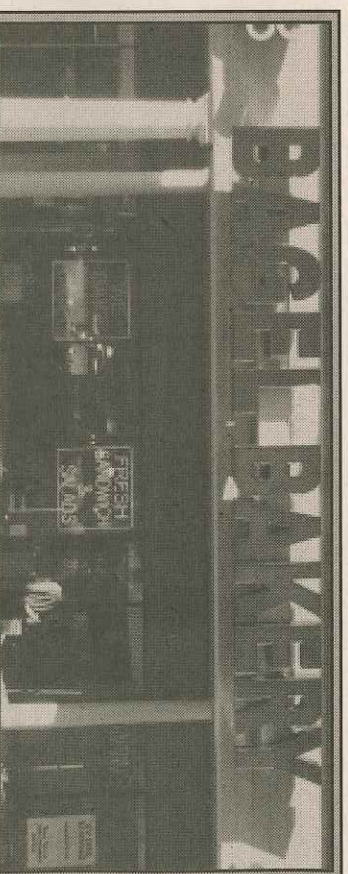
"We only had two people at the start after Mr. [George] Perry and Mr. [Pete] Sherwood retired," said Safety and Security Specialist Mike Ukele.

The problem of being short-staffed has been solved thanks to two new arrivals Safety and Security Assistants Jesse Langley and Mark Travis.

"My second day here I caught more kids smoking than my whole time at Jefferson."

—Mark Travis,
Safety and security assistant

"I was originally hired in October and the original day was supposed to be November first, but we had a situation



Erica Wilkening

The Bagel Bakery has a new sign, and new ownership. Now that the former chain restaurant has gone private, they refuse to accept Spartan Cards.

Choir cards cause controversy

Continued from page 1

present a Spartan Card, but now that the restaurant has gone private, it is refusing to accept the cards.

Companies that appear on the Spartan Card sign a contract with the Choral Patrons Association, the chorus department's nonprofit organization that handles fundraising and financial operations.

In the past, the choral department and Chesapeake Bagel Bakery enjoyed an amicable relationship. The Madrigals and other groups were known to perform in the restaurant and in return, Chesapeake would donate food for choral events.

Bagel Bakery contends that the discontinuation has not bothered the majority of customers.

To satisfy Spartan Card holders' bagel needs, the Choral Patrons are pursuing the possibility of Einstein Bros. Bagels honoring Chesapeake Bagel Bakery's discount offer.

In the mean time, chorus students who think they have been duped by Bagel Bakery still plan on attempting to use their Spartan Cards. They will choose not to make a purchase if the card is rejected. Senior Adaire Jennings inquired if her card would be honored, and was disappointed and frustrated when a employee told her no. As a result she has decided to buy her bagels elsewhere.

"I've stopped going to Bagel Bakery," said Jennings, "and I have developed a new obsession with Einstein."

at Jefferson because they needed workers as well," said Travis.

Jefferson was able to solve the dilemma and Travis was able to join the faculty as a basketball coach and security officer.

One of the main problems for school security officers to tackle is the issue of smoking on school grounds.

"Problems concerning kids smoking cigarettes is increasing," said Ukele.

Smoking is an increasing problem, especially near Center Road. The rise in student smoking is new for Travis, because smoking at Jefferson was not as problematic.

"My second day here I caught more kids smoking than my whole time at Jefferson," said Travis.

WS has also much more stringent than the security at Jefferson.

"We didn't even have referrals at Jefferson," said Travis. Langley and Travis have been a welcome addition to the faculty and a much-needed one at that.

"Now we're staffed with the amount of people we're suppose to have," said Ukele.

The new officers are just as happy to be here as WS is to have them.

Travis enjoys interacting with the kids and getting to know them.

"So far I really like WS," said Travis. "I'm really glad to be here."

Mass student e-mail messaging spam is canned

By Bethel Habte
News Assistant

Erika Babel had enough. She addressed the entire school with an e-mail politely telling off everyone who was clogging up her student e-mail inbox with messages like "Hey class of 2008!" and "What's up everybody?" E-mails she found annoying and "so pointless."

The mass student e-mail spared no class. Multiple complaints from students eventually got Susan Latour and Susan Rexford to talk to the students doing most of the damage.

"Our complaints were coming from students who are using school based e-mail the way it was intended and were frustrated with all the spamming much the same as when we all get frustrated when our mail boxes are filled with unnecessary e-mail," Rexford said.

With student e-mails, teachers, counselors and administrators can conveniently contact an entire class rather than reach them one at a time. Rexford uses the e-mail to keep seniors updated on legitimate scholarships available to them.

Sophomore Courtney Bruce found the e-mails annoying but amusing.

"People shouldn't waste their time but some of them were pretty funny," she said.

Unless a student was told to use their account regularly for a class, many never logged in to the system and chose to opt for their personal e-mail.

Junior Lauren Rijos used her student e-mail in the beginning of the year for an accounting class but hasn't used it since. Switching documents from her personal e-mail to her student e-mail "did



Freshman Cory Chamberlin checks his spam-free student e-mail account.

put a strain on things" since opening personal e-mail at school is considered computer misuse.

According to Rexford, there are two main reasons the school likes to keep students off personal e-mail sites like Yahoo, G-mail and AOL.

"We want students to learn to model the ethics of the workplace by using a "professional" e-mail address for school correspondence," said Rexford.

The school can check up on users, too.

"With school based e-mail, we have an easy way to identify the sender which is necessary for security issues."

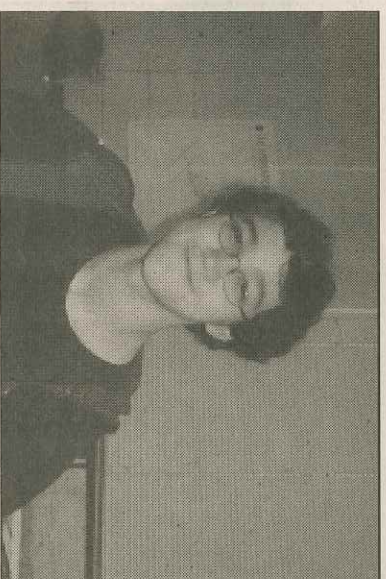
With less spamming, students will be able to now use their accounts with less hassle. Freshman Katie Scamon scoffed at the all-in-good-fun spammers.

"Those people have no lives," she said.

Nguyen at the right place, right time

Senior jeopardizes his own safety to rescue dog in 7-11 lot

Continued from Page 1



Erica Wilkening

Jason Nguyen became a hero to a dog at 7-11.

animal was injured by the car. The animal was returned to its owner.

Nguyen, an avid band member, is known for his friendly and outgoing attitude. He is the owner of a three-cornered hat with signatures covering the entire thing. The hat serves as a symbol of his personable attitude.

His friends say Nguyen's act of courage was quite

in character. In other words, he was the right person at the right time to save the dog's life.

"It doesn't surprise me. He's a good person who is really caring," said junior Bonnie Pedder.

Nguyen's courageous act of kindness exemplifies the strong character of a member of our own community.

"I just did what anyone else would have done," said Nguyen. "It makes me feel like I made a difference."

News Bites

Junior Celia Hatton, who plays the viola in the Symphonic Orchestra, has been recognized as one of nine students nationwide who has reached the Semi Finalist Round of the Sphinx Competition, a national music competition. She continues the competition in February in Am Arbor, Michigan. Congratulations!

Congratulations to the **Girls' Varsity basketball team**, which competed in the Junior Orange Bowl Classic in Miami, Florida. They placed third among a field of eight teams.

Kudos to the **Boys' Varsity basketball team**, which won the 2005 Pohanka Chantilly Championship over winter break.

Forty-nine students were recognized as **Students of the Quarter** and 776 students achieved recognition on the **First Quarter Honor Roll**.

The English Department is proud to announce this year's NCTE Achievements in Writing Award nominees: juniors **Chris Carter**, **Elizabeth Giardina**, **Christy Regelski**, and **Christina Sohn**. They will submit samples of their writing to the National Council of Teachers of English, who will judge them along with thousands of others. The NCTE award is a distinction that recognizes some of the most versatile and talented young writers in the country. Great job and best of luck!

The **Forensics Team** is the first-place winner of the Northern Virginia Forensics League for 2005-2006.

Sophomore **Katie Carroll** won the annual Shakespeare Competition, and will move on to the Shakespeare Theater. Good luck!

English Teacher and Tri-Hi-Y sponsor **Nonia Gay Jones** felt well enough to speak at this year's National Honor Society induction ceremony on January 19. Jones, who told students she has two months of therapy before she resumes teaching, talked about growing up in a coal mining town in West Virginia, and about family and close friends, including **Principal David Smith**, who gave her her first teaching job. Jones, who suffered a mild stroke in October, received a standing ovation from NHS members. Welcome back, Mrs. Jones!

The **Capitol Steps** are coming to WS February 12. The group, famous for its singing political satire, will perform a Choral Department benefit at 7 p.m. in the auditorium. Tickets are \$25 per person, or \$20 per person in groups of 10 or more. Contact the Choral Department for more information.

All students interested in taking Advanced Placement courses next year are invited to **AP Information Sessions** during both lunches Wednesday February 1 through Friday, February 3. During the **AP Sack Lunches**, which will be held in the Career Center, Career Center Specialist Susan Rexford and AP Coordinator Ann Wong will talk with students about our program and its requirements. Bring your lunch!



Erica Wilkening

Nonia Gay Jones speaks to NHS.

Seniors **Ireane Cao** and **Katy Zavack** received the top scores in the WS Brain Bee last week. They will represent our school in the National Capital Area Competition in early February. Congratulations, girls!

Lifetouch Photography will be in Spartan Hall from 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. on Friday, February 10 to take **senior cap and gown portraits**. The photos are optional, and portrait appointment cards were mailed to each senior's home. A schedule of appointments is posted on the senior bulletin board outside the Library Xerox room. If you're interested, please check the list to make sure you're scheduled!

In another departure from tradition,

the **Winter Sports Pep Rally** will be held Tuesday, January 31, in the main gym. As our sports teams head into District play, the student government wants to recognize the athletes' efforts this past season. Our schedule that day will require a shortened Break to make room for the morning pep rally. Come out to support our Spartan athletes!

Have you ordered your yearbook yet? Come by Room 215 after school on Wednesday, February 1 and Wednesday, February 8 to order a copy of the 2006 *Olympian*. We would prefer for you to pay with checks made out to WS in the amount of \$60. If you're unable to make it, keep your cars open for morning announcements and your eyes open for flyers announcing future sales. Don't forget to order your yearbook!

"Willie" Nelson has struck again! The desperado made his/her mark in at least two of the school bathrooms in recent days. Authorities have yet to identify the culprit.

Science teacher **Maria Clayton** and some of her students are surveying teachers to find out how much **WS recycles**. Teachers are encouraged to fill out a form indicating their willingness to have their rooms' recycling habits studied, in hopes of establishing a recycling program here.

—Compiled
by Linnette Lam

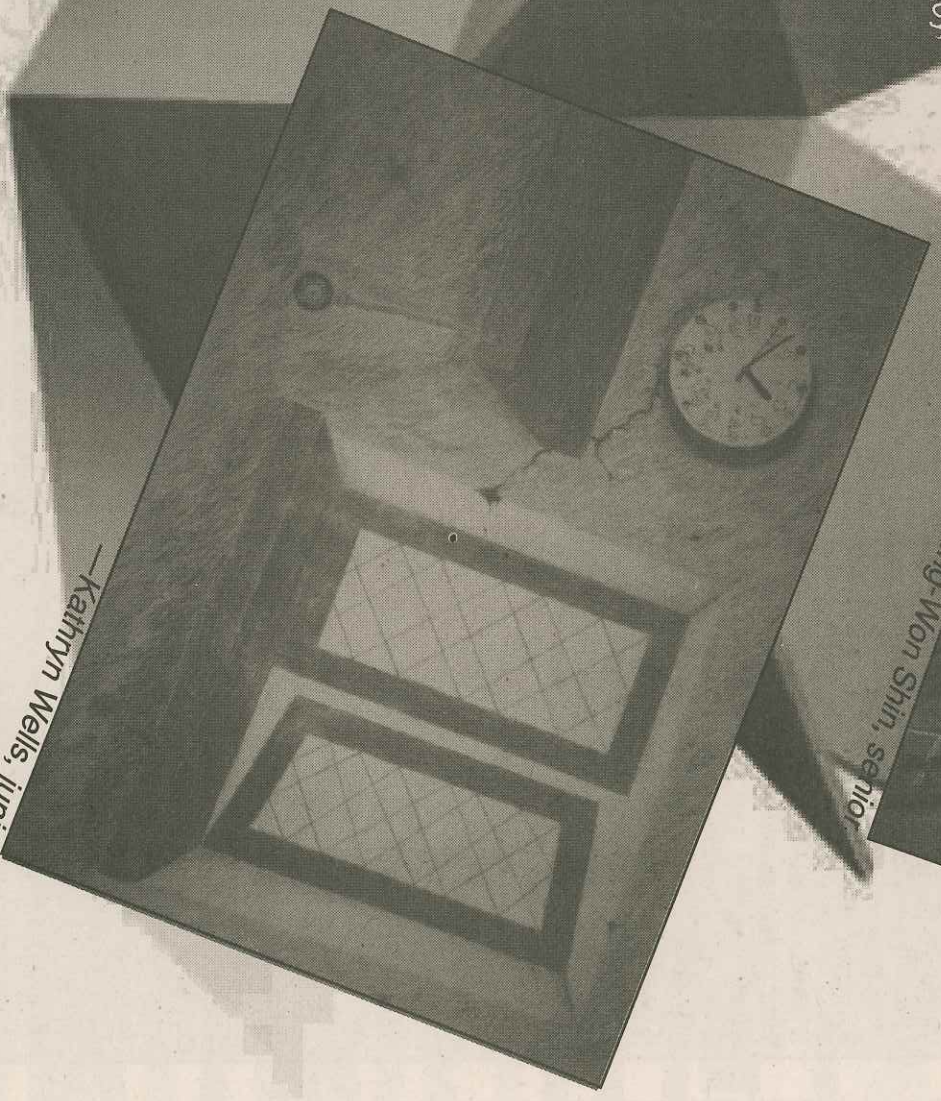
OUT OF THE BOX: Student artists picked random items and then had to think outside their normal comfort zones for this endeavor.



—Jamie Milloy, senior



—Jung-Won Shin, senior



—Kathryn Wells, junior



—*Jenni Stapor, senior*



—*Andrea Castanon, senior*

The Oracle wants to showcase your creativity! Please bring photographs, artwork, poetry and prose to Room 215, or drop them in Brooke Nelson's box in the main office.

In love with Shakespeare

By Kelly Sipple
News Assistant

Last month, students met together for the first meeting of the newly formed Shakespeare Club. The students, or troop as they like to be called, participate in a club unlike any other at WS.

"The club is a way for all of us who love Shakespeare to perform his masterpieces and enlighten others about his work," said sophomore Becky Koenig. "We just had our first meeting at a member's house where we established what it is that we want to do as a club."

For the club founder, senior Jack Powers, the reason for starting the club was quite simple.

"I have a thing for Shakespeare," said Powers. "Some of my friends also have a love for Shakespeare which inspired me to round up the troops and make it an official club."

Right now, the club is still dealing with some logistical problems.

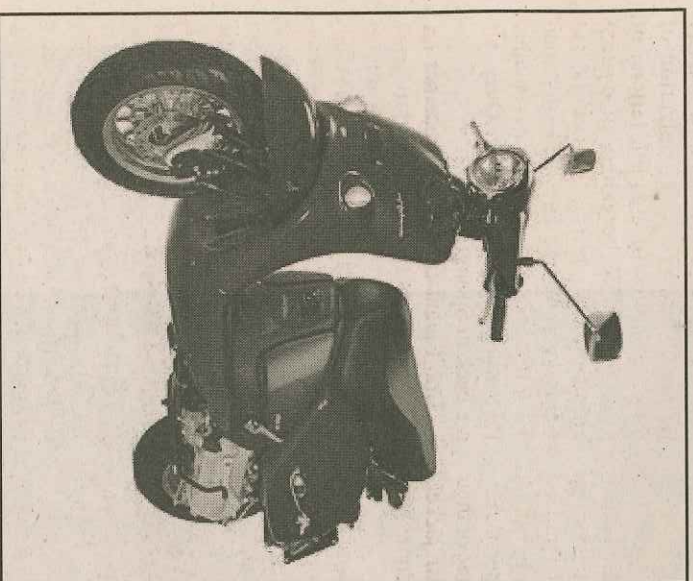
"A lot of people in the club are in theatre arts. Hopefully, between the casting for the musical and the musical itself we can get in a performance," said Powers. "We also aren't sure where we will be performing. It would be great if we could get on the stage, but if not we are looking at other possibilities like the Japanese garden, the library courtyard, or Spartan Hall would be really cool."

Underclassmen, who are often required to read Shakespeare in different English classes, typically are left with a sour taste for Shakespeare.

"Shakespeare is really boring," said freshman Sarah Davis. "If it was entirely up to me, I would never read Shakespeare because the words are so weird."

The club hopes to change the views of students like Davis who dislike Shakespeare's work.

"Shakespeare's work is not meant to be read; it is meant to be spoken," said Powers. "That is why it is so important that we get on stage."



Aprilia.com

Sophomore Joel Kellogg's use of a motorscooter is not only cost efficient but healthy for the environment as well. This is a model of the motor scooter Kellogg owns.

Do not print

By Katie Bourget
Oracle Editor

Latin is a dead language, and cursive is its handwriting counterpart—at least in the hearts and pens of the majority of high school students.

In the nine years of schooling between third grade and senior year, I can recall only one assignment that was required to be in cursive. Mostly, teachers seem happy if their students' handwriting is at all legible. The swoops and swishes of perfect cursive penmanship are not on their list of priorities.

However, there is one particular instance where cursive is not just an option for a handwriting overachiever, but instead a requirement.

Slacking off in third grade can have serious repercussions (well, maybe not that serious). Still, the crucial cursive handwriting lesson, which takes place in elementary classrooms, is actually important for the dreaded SAT.

The SAT requires that test takers "write, do not print" the Honor Statement—basically a promise that you are the person whose name is on the test, and that you will resist sneaking a peak at your neighbor's answer sheet.

Yet for some test takers, maybe even one destined for a perfect 2400 score, writing the brief statement in "do not print" is an insurmountable task. So much so that test facilitators are asked to write cursive letters on the chalkboard as an example.

So cursive lovers out there, wherever you may be right now writing in your handwriting practice books, be proud of yourselves. Be proud that your teachers can always recognize your papers, even if you forget to write your name on them. Be proud that you are keeping the swooshes and weird looking "z" alive.

Most of all, you should be proud that you are capable of breezing through a portion of the SAT that sends even future Ivy-leaguers into a dither.

Kellogg scoots to school

Sophomore opts for alternative transportation

By Sarah Alvarez
Sports Assistant

As of June last year, sophomore Joel Kellogg became the proud owner of an Aprilia Sr50 Ditech Factory R, a sleek black and gray motor scooter.

Motorscooters, not to be confused with motorcycles, can be driven without a license by a driver 16 years and older. Although Kellogg is not a licensed automobile driver he is still expected to abide by all traffic laws.

To operate a scooter you must drive on the main roads, which can be a challenge for Joel at times, "they [cars] don't really pay attention to you, they cut you off," said Kellogg. Motorscooters have a smaller engine than a motorcycle; therefore they can not go as fast. Scooters can reach speeds up to 70mph. Seventy is fast enough for Kellogg; he leaves his house at 7:05 and makes it to school between 7:10 and 7:15 depending on traffic.

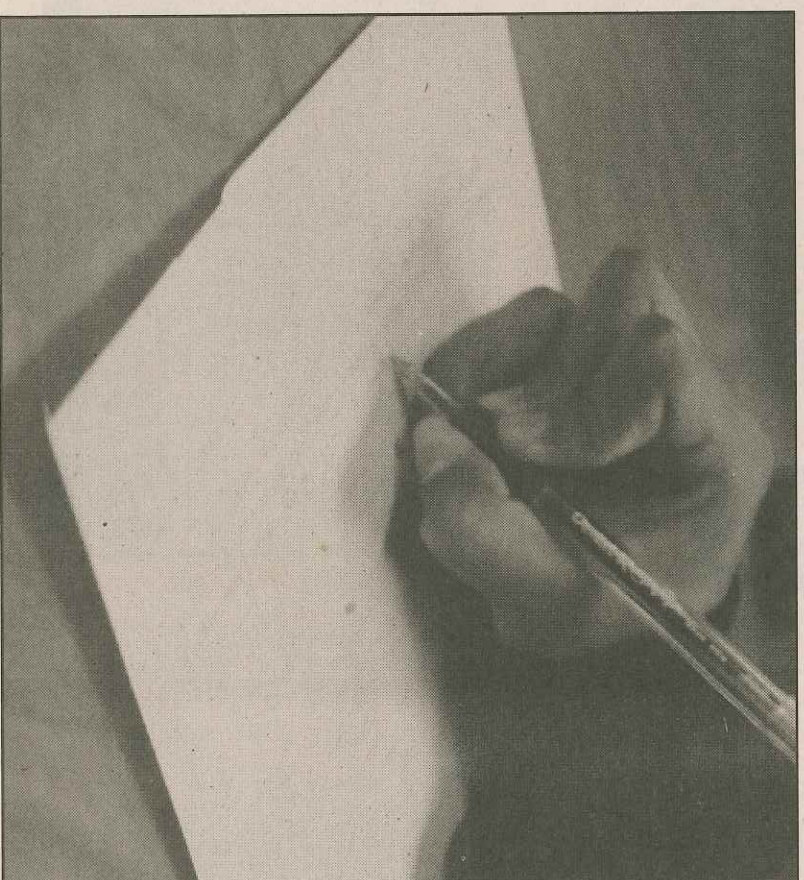
With gas prices the way they are Kellogg's motorscooter is a practical and economical choice of

transportation. He gets about 150 miles per gallon, which today is five times better than the average SUV. Kellogg fills up the tank about every two months depending on how often he drives it. The motorscooter only needs to be serviced about every 7,000 miles, making it a reliable source of transportation for Kellogg. According to Maxmoto webpage, a motorscooter sales site, it has one of the lowest emissions on the road making it eco-friendly as well.

Kellogg drives in most weather conditions, although the cold is bitter when he has to drive in the snow and rain. The driving conditions are slippery and he has had some near incidents because of it. "I almost died," said Kellogg.

In snowy weather whenever he put on the gas, "the back end would swoop out," said Kellogg.

He enjoys driving around, and doesn't mind sharing the good time. "If anyone needs a ride, I can give them a ride," said Kellogg.



Tina Weide

Senior Liz Bucheister writes a letter using cursive. Kids are strongly encouraged to use cursive throughout elementary school but by high school it is rarely used nor required.

Tune in with Clinton

Freshman sings her way through the year

By Libby Bursley
News Editor

Maureen Clinton is reaching for the high notes during her first year at WS.

Clinton has learned to adapt very quickly to the shocks of high school, unlike some of her peers.

"This year so far has been great," said Clinton. "I love it all even though you have much more responsibility than you do in middle school."

This new-found responsibility didn't stop Clinton from jumping right into a time-consuming activity she enjoys. She participates in Ladies Select Chorus, a class populated with few freshmen girls.

"I guess singing is my talent. I just do it in school, and we're preparing for a festival that's coming up soon," said Clinton.

Although chorus is Clinton's only current activity, she stresses this will change in time. She has plenty of time before graduation to build up her resume, and improve her already impressive singing skills.

School is not all that dominates Clinton's life. Her home life is hectic, with four siblings, one who is a WS sophomore and three who are younger than Clinton. Even with her busy schedule and added amounts of homework, Clinton still makes time to relax and have fun with her friends.

Fresh Meet

A new column about interesting freshmen

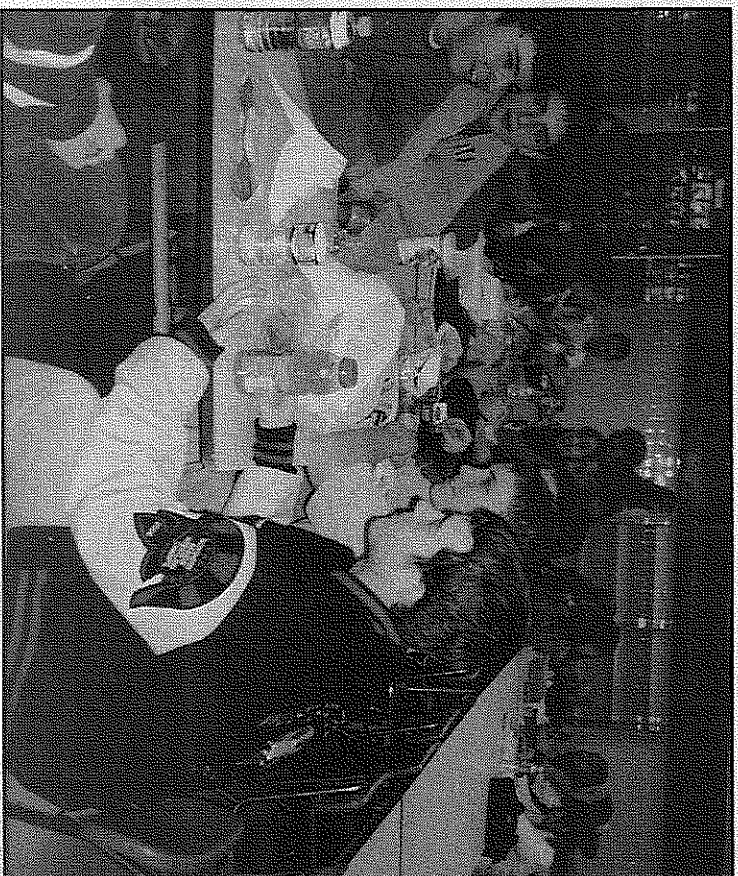
"When I'm with my friends, we just kind of hang around, and talk about life," said Clinton.

Clinton also enjoys going to movies, her most recent favorite being "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire."

"I really liked it because of all the magic, the fantasy stuff is fun," said Clinton.

Clinton, who previously lived near Philadelphia, concluded she likes living here better.

"It isn't as cramped here as it was there," said Clinton. "And I like it here because of all the diversity."



Liz Buchheit

Junior Ryan Timmons wears his letter jacket proudly as he chats with fellow juniors Nathan Thomas, John Todd and Don Coppola at lunch. Timmons' patch on his left arm came from the 2005 Northern Region wrestling championship that the Spartans won for the first time in more than 20 years.

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Grand journey for a groovy jacket

By Beth Stinson
Business/Systems Assistant

Only the strongest of WS athletes and band members receive the coveted varsity letter. Students who survive the athletic gauntlet receive a "WS" patch, which some choose to place on a letter jacket, which they wear to alert everyone of their letter. The champions get their jackets from a multitude of sources. Come with me and I'll show you how!

One option is to make your own jacket. You will need: a sewing machine, fabric (preferably orange and blue), and the letter. Step one: sew fabric together in the form of a jacket using the

mentioned sewing machine. Step two: attach letter using sewing machine. Viola! A letter jacket!

If sewing a homemade jacket is out of the question, the Internet offers a variety of jacket options. To the Internet! Look! It's www.TMAthletics.com! Let's go!

Okay, we made it safely. Here students can design and purchase their own jacket. Go ahead, click on "Design A Jacket!" Now choose a jacket and design it using the fun and easy "Interactive Design-a-Jacket." Once done, just order and buy. Jackets here range from \$125 to \$199. Located across the street from TM Athletics is www.webjacket.com. Here students can choose from a list of different jackets, pick the size, and specify what they'd like put on it. Web jacket offers



Leah Venant

Freshman Maureen Clinton manages her time so she can do homework, hang with friends, read Harry Potter books and sing.

both embroidery and chenille varsity letters. There is a large selection of different styles of chenille letters, or browse through the gallery of custom embroidered letters. Jackets at webjackets.com are less expensive than TM Athletics, but the selection is smaller. Prepare to leave the Internet! Okay, we are back in Springfield.

Don't want to surf the webnet for your priceless symbol of athleticism? That's fine, because there are also options available to you practically down the road. A reliable and popular company is Wick's

Commentary

Sports Lettering in Alexandria. Here students choose the style jacket they'd like, the colors and the size. Bring the sacred letter to them, and they will so it and anything else on to the jacket. The skilled artisans at Wick's will soon have your jacket done and ready for you to pay for. There is also Cheseldine's Sports and Lettering Services in Waldorf. Like Wick's, students can either supply their own jacket or purchase it from them, and have the expert father-and-son team make the jacket sparkle with pride.

Other students choose to buy a plain jacket and get their letter sewn on at a local tailor or alteration store, or have their moms do it.

So there you have it. You no longer have to attach your letter to your backpack and T-shirts via safety pins. You have fought long and hard for your letter, now go get a jacket to sew it to.

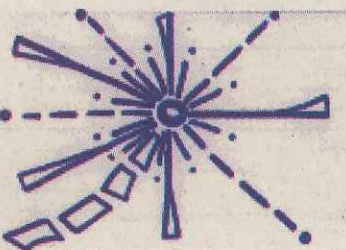
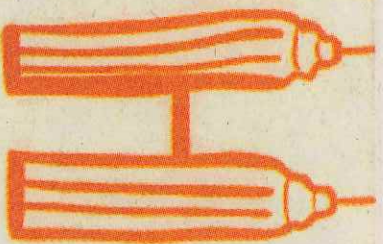
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Saving \$\$\$
might keep
her out of the
dog house

By Cam Rushton
Sports Editor

In most cases, people make New Year's resolutions to better themselves or try to do something that was not accomplished in past years.

Then, there are other people that make resolutions to get a laugh out of their friends, or to get something that seems far out of reach.

Like sophomore Ashley Arias, for example. "Three years ago, my resolution was to convince my parents to buy me a dog," said Arias.

Not only did she get a dog, but her parents gave her two. Although that is Arias' favorite resolution, she still likes to keep her feet on the ground by making other resolutions. This year, Arias has vowed to save money and not to spend as much.

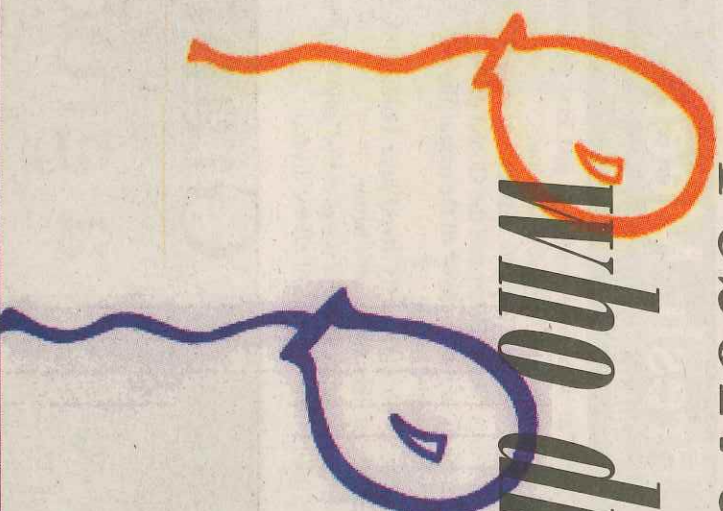
Saving money is one of the more popular resolutions that is made on the first of the year—and one of the resolutions that is the hardest to keep.

According to About.com, saving money is number five overall on the list of the most popular resolutions. The irony of that list: number seven overall is to get out of debt. On the list of broken resolutions, according

Those who

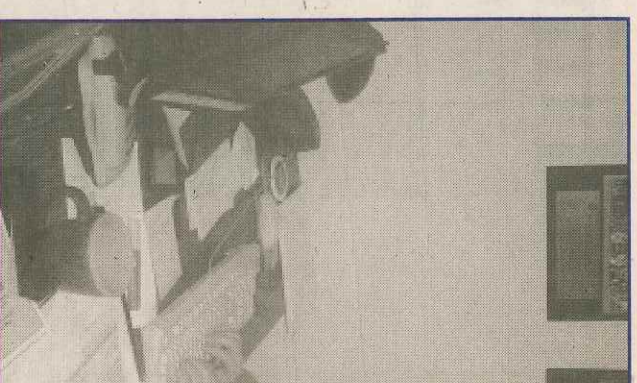
resolve, those

Who dissolve...

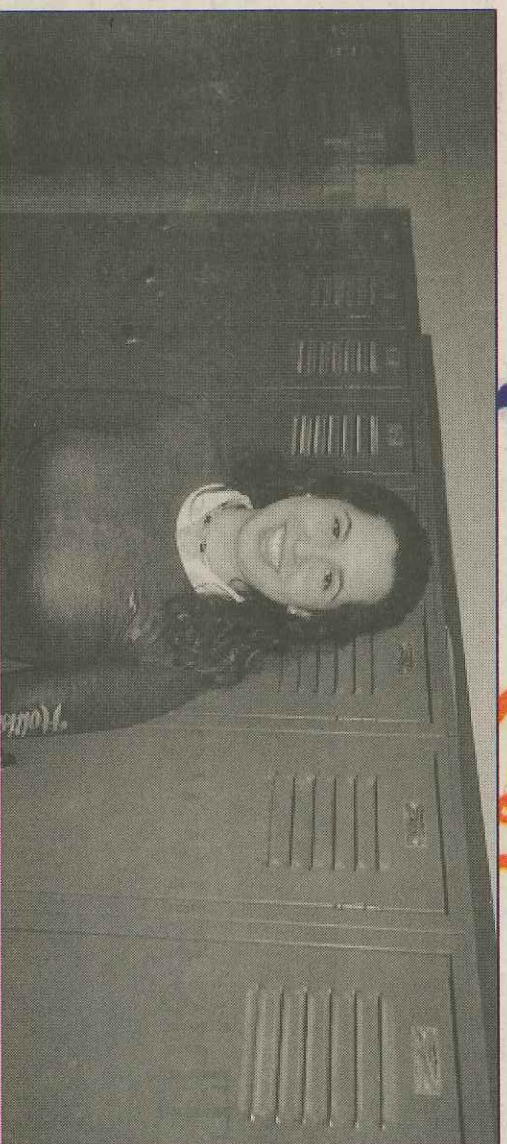


"My other one [resolution] is to try to slow down and enjoy life more to stop feeling rushed and deal with the small things that seem big at the time."

—Ken Christopher, Guidance



Guidance counselor Kenneth Christensen hopes that his resolutions to slow down and enjoy life will be a reality.



Tina Wojcik

Junior Ashley Arias makes different resolutions every year. She has been successful at keeping her resolutions, including convincing her parents to buy her a dog. This year she wants to do well in school.

to hicrads.com, the number one resolution that is not kept throughout the year is to diet.

"Another of my resolutions is to do well in school," said Arias.

For some, a resolution is what defines a

person throughout the year, but then there are people like Arias, who make resolutions not as a rule, but as a guideline.

"I make resolutions to have a goal for myself," said Arias, "but they don't really affect me that much."

F-lab is fab

Student attempts to gain 200 pounds
to fulfill sumo wrestling dreams

By Chrissy Regelski
Entertainment Editor

245...244...243...Not only will there be countdowns to midnight this New Year's Eve, but thousands will count down those unfortunately large numbers on the scale as they resolve to lose weight in 2006.

Junior Matt D. Norwood, however, has resolved to revamp his diet this new year for a different purpose.

"I want to gain 200 pounds, maybe 250 [for New Year's]," said Norwood.

This daunting task is merely a stepping stone for Norwood, whose small '06 resolution is a plan for bigger things to come.

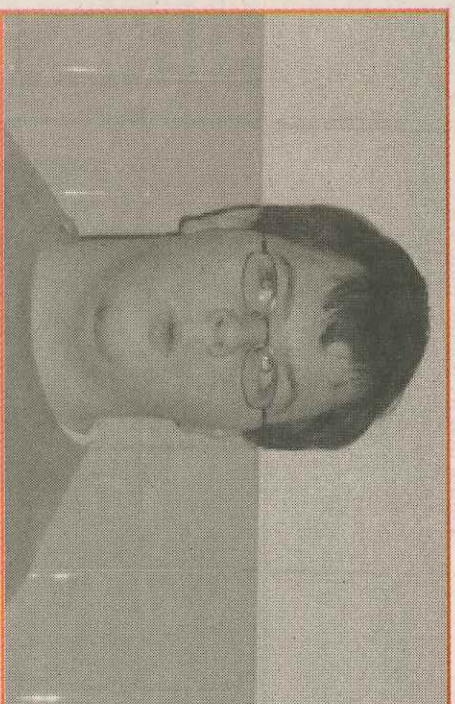
"It's so I can be a five-star sumo wrestler, class 2B," said Norwood. This is not the first time Norwood has looked hopefully to January 1 as the perfect time to resolve to do what others deem as impossible.

Norwood's previous escapades, however, have regrettably failed and will have to remain impossible for another year.

"I tried to fly but it didn't work out," said Norwood. "I got a few broken bones."

Gravity has not been the only element holding him back from accomplishing his new year goals.

"I tried to improve my grades once," said Norwood, "but then I came to Fairfax County."



Sara Korlat

Junior Matt Norwood has high hopes of gaining a massive 200 pounds this year with aspirations to be a sumo

Undisturbed by past disappointments, Norwood has conceived a plan to make '06 a successful year. His plan is to have a diet that allows him five sweet and greasy meals every day. The first meal on the menu is one of Twinkles followed by the second morning chow down of all the breakfast foods that exist.

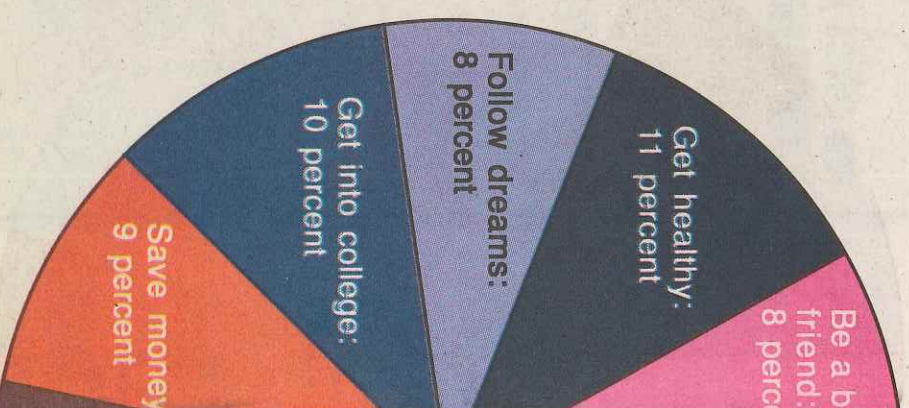
The third meal of the day consists of chugging soda (non-diet, of course) to be followed by the consumption of multiple steaks as the fourth feast. His dedication to his resolution never ceasing, the fifth meal consists of fridge-raided snacks to be eaten at midnight.

Not understanding others who resolve to lose weight at 12:01 a.m., Norwood immediately knows what his strangest New Year's pledge was.

"My weirdest resolution was to improve my health," said Norwood.

"I make resolutions to have a goal for myself."

—Ashley Arias,



As a kid, Christopher cooked up some promises to his parents

By Laura Byland
Senior Staff Writer



Sara Kofall

Christopher works at a solution to slow mobility in 2006.

Guidance counselor Kenneth Christopher's New Year's resolutions usually only last two weeks, but this year he hopes he will fare better.

"My normal one is to watch what I eat," said Christopher. "My other one is to try to slow down and enjoy life more, to stop feeling rushed and deal with the small things that seem big at the time. With this one people can't tell. Even if I screw up, only I will know."

Christopher admitted, however, that often he does not make resolutions.

"Usually I don't set them, not that I don't need to," said Christopher. "I do more of a daily check."

Even though he does not always make them for the upcoming year, he can remember some of his more unusual resolutions.

"When I was a kid I promised my mother I would cook dinner every Sunday," Christopher said. "It

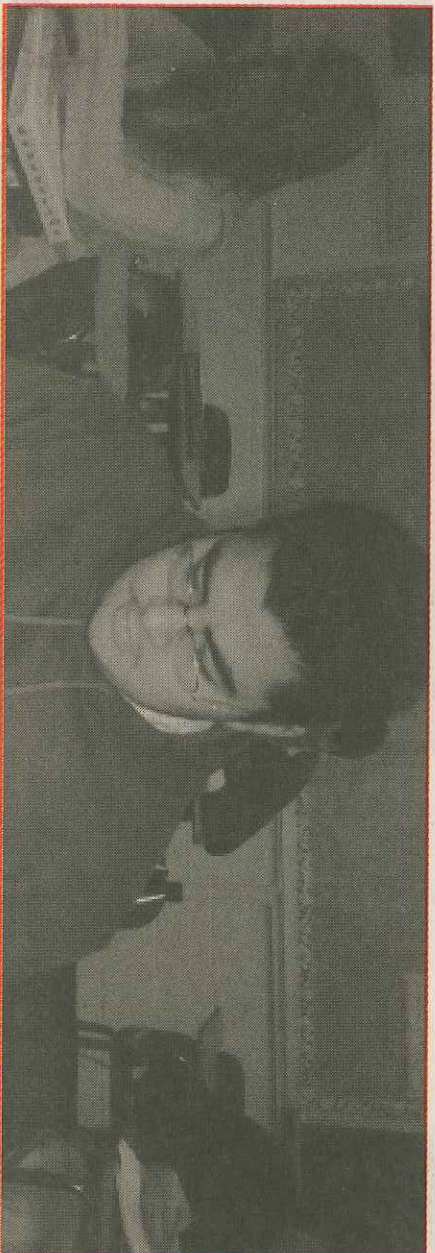
lasted two weeks. My mother expected it. She got a kick out of it while it lasted."

Although Christopher might not have normally cooked Sunday dinner, he went beyond most of his peers in helping his parents out.

"I cooked every other night because both of my parents worked," he said. "I had a set menu. It was either ham, mac and cheese, and broccoli, or grilled chicken, mashed potatoes, and green beans. I was famous for my spaghetti in college."

He will be busy over the upcoming weeks with college recommendations, a stressful process for him. If Christopher could make any odd resolution this year, it would be, "to stop losing my hair. With every recommendation I lose five hairs," said Christopher. "Maybe I will shave it like Dr. Smith so that I do not have any hair to lose."

In the spring after the seniors in his flock have made their college decisions, he and his hair can relax, at least until the application process begins again the next school year.



Sara Kofall

Senior Jesse Garcia ponders over his schoolwork as well as his desire to eliminate women's suffrage. Garcia's quest to end universal suffrage will begin this mothers day when he has students of both sexes sign his petitions.

This guy votes against suffrage

By Aaron Snow
Junior Staff Writer

As senior Jesse Garcia leans back against his locker and enjoys a hard-earned lunch, it is easy to overlook him as he talks with his two friends. He has the appearance of a typical teenager, and one would hardly guess amidst the flurry of conversation and laughter, that Garcia is far from typical. Far from typical, that is, in today's terms.

While most students have New Year's resolutions to improve their personal attributes, Garcia hopes to improve attributes on a national level. He wants to take away a woman's right to vote.

"I would like to end women's suffrage," Garcia says.

Garcia dreams of a time when only men can vote and has few qualms about sharing his vision with anyone who cares to listen.

"I think that we should follow the old days because my grandma didn't vote, and she still makes great cookies."

Garcia feels universal suffrage is somewhat of an antiquated notion, and even has a plan to accomplish his highly controversial, and most would say, overly ambitious scheme.

"I am going to get a petition and have everyone sign it, even girls," said Garcia.

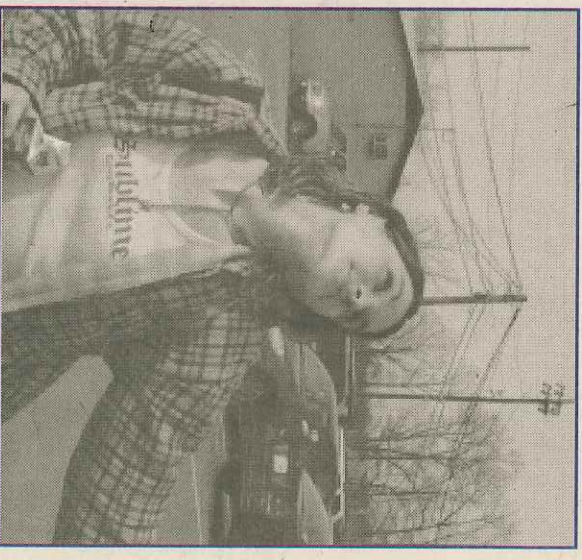
Of course, this does beg the question of how many females plan to participate in Garcia's reversal of the celebrated 19th Amendment. A quick glance at Garcia's two male lunch mates shows that signs are not hopeful.

"His resolution is not a reality and it's not going to happen, and no one cares about his bigoted viewpoints," said junior Coles Ide.

Despite his overwhelming lack of support, Garcia holds fast to his beliefs and is not going to let something as trivial as an amendment to the Constitution stand in his way.

"I am going to petition the students, and I'm going to start on Mother's Day," Garcia says.

He remains undeterred and marches on in pursuit of the reversal of decades of civil rights movements, and even democracy itself. "I'm not going to give up, I have high hopes," Garcia says.



Sara Kofall

Sam Williams has made an unusual resolution this year. Williams is a junior who is set on having a boyfriend this year, a resolution that is "in the process". In addition to her own resolutions she stresses that the students at WS need to "grow up and get jobs" this year.

Wanted: 'significant other' in '06

By Linnette Lam
Senior Staff Writer

An influx of sports-club memberships, newly-established savings accounts, and renewed personal promises to be kind to others are due around this time of year.

The year 2006 begins, as all sets of 365 days do, with series of commitments that people try to fulfill—and more—often end up breaking.

Others may be feverishly pumping their legs on Tigh Masters and staying away from enriched white flour products, but junior Sam Williams isn't. She is not looking to lose weight; she's looking for a boyfriend.

In terms of her progress with her primary resolution to land herself a significant other, Williams said, "I'm in the process."

Williams is not the only one with a particularly interesting resolution.

"I've met others set on finishing an entire Monte Cristo fried sandwich at Bennigan's," she said. "But the craziest thing I've heard was to lose one's virginity."

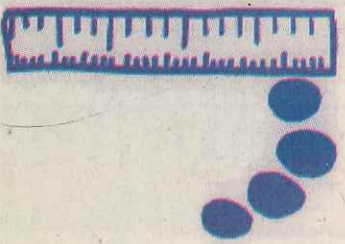
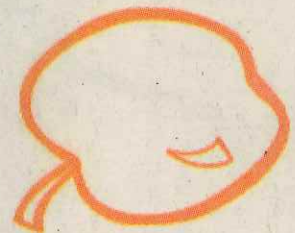
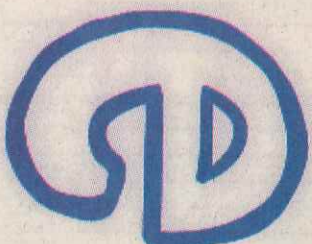
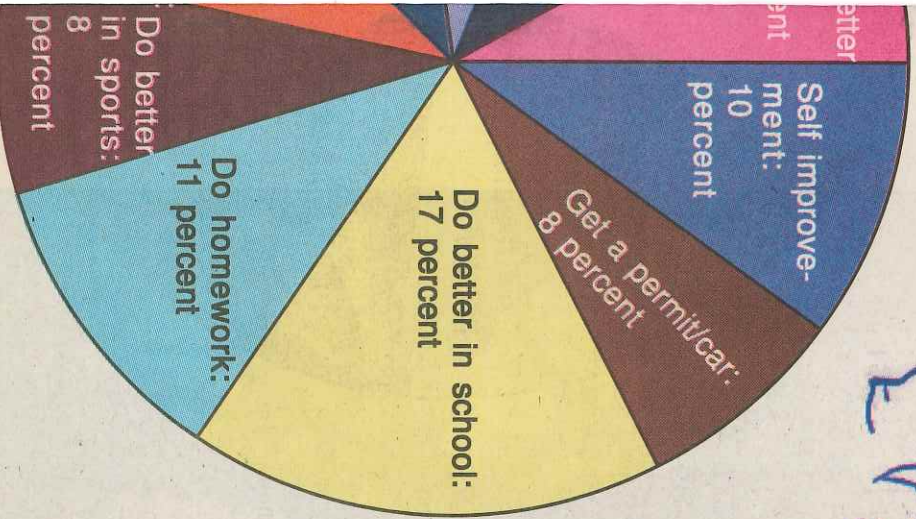
Williams not only has goals for herself, but she has a few suggestions for the rest of the student body.

"I think you guys should grow up and get jobs," she said.

Among the other things on her list of resolutions for this year and for the extended future are Williams' hopes to be "financially stable and not to die alone."

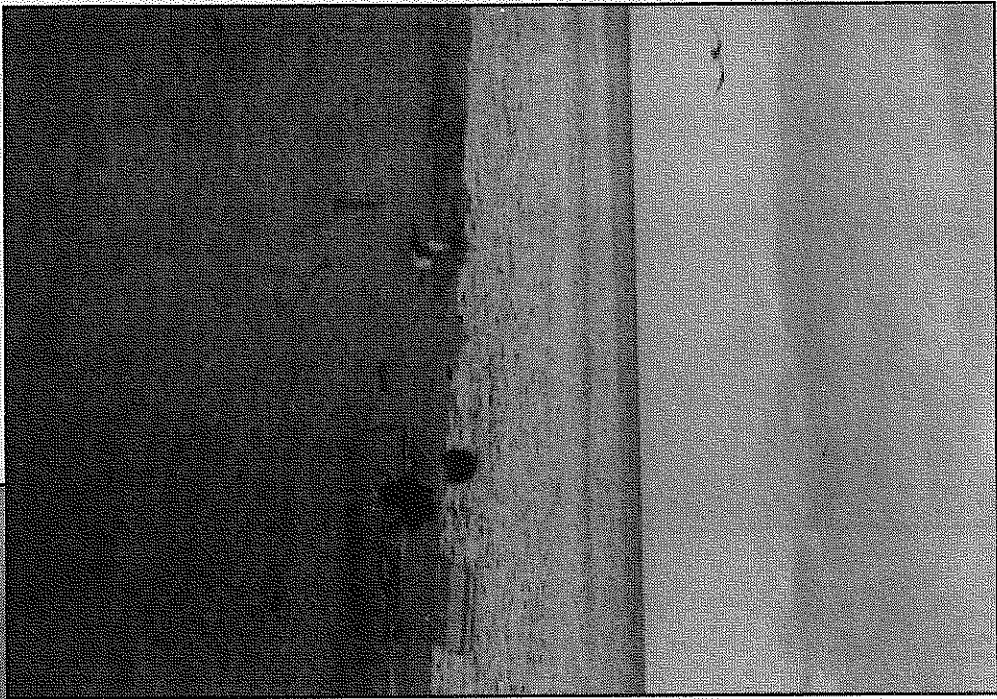
The pessimist would say that resolutions are usually fruitless, but Williams approaches the subject from a brighter angle.

"I think that resolutions are fine, but they should be goals that you strive to meet all of the time. They should become part of your life-style," she said. "I like being goal-oriented; the only problem is that I'm not very good at it."



—Poll of 250 students compiled by Scott Babcock

—Graphics by Caitlin Kenney



Above: A little boy at the beach with his mother found the seagulls incredibly fascinating

F L O R I D A

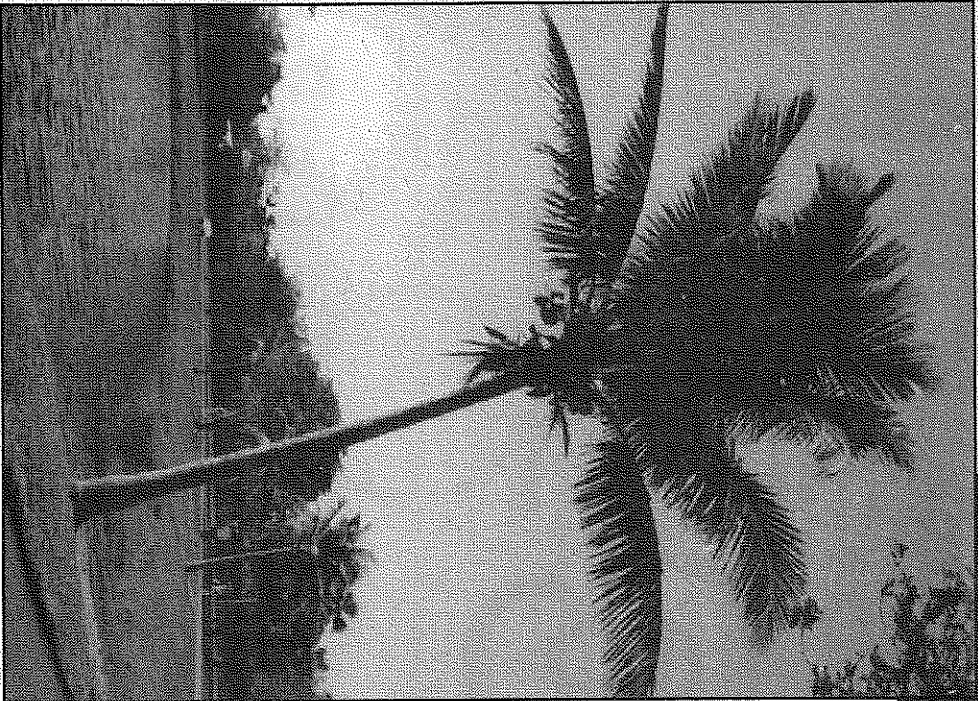


Above: Beach view from SLOPPY JOES restaurant

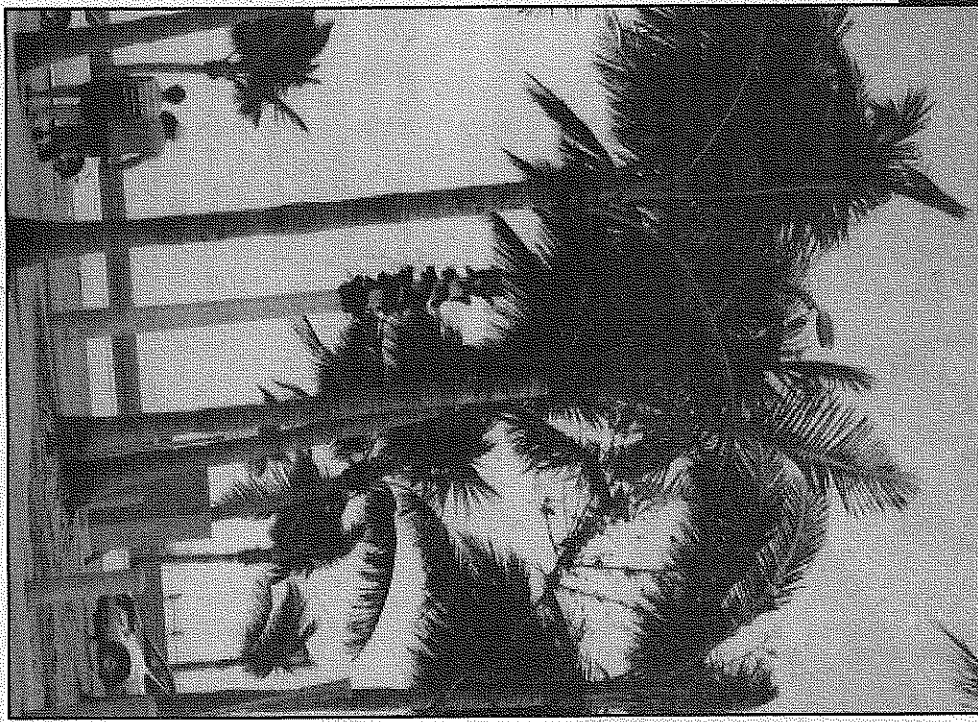
Florida Style by Liz Buchheister



Left: One last picture taken before the sun disappeared and the rain came in.
Below: Too cold to go in the water, couples walked along the beach.



S T Y L E



'Casanova' woos audiences

New romance brings fresh comedy to theaters

By Laura Byland
Senior Staff Writer

The breath taking scene of Venice at sunset, the shimmering waters of the canals and Heath Ledger in breeches... The scenery of "Casanova" could not get any better.

"Casanova" is the amusing tale of Giacomo Casanova, played by none other than Heath Ledger, a notorious womanizer, who is jailed and put on trial after seducing a nun. With his typical luck, he is allowed to stay in Venice as long as he marries a wife of respectable reputation. Giacomo casts his sights on Victoria, an innocent young girl. He is challenged to a duel by Victoria's jealous admirer, Giovanni. After the duel, he discovers that he was not fighting Giovanni, but instead Giovanni's sister, Francesca, played by Sienna Miller.

Naturally, he falls in love with Francesca. But all is not well in Paradise, er, I mean Venice: Francesca, a feminist, despises Casanova for everything he represents, mainly how he is able to render the most independent woman to mush. Oh, yeah, Sex is essential to the movie's plot. I found it surprising that Venetian society in the eighteenth century would be so open about sex.

and Francesca is already engaged, too. Parading under a series of fake identities, Casanova continues seeing her despite Francesca's disinterest. "Casanova" has an intricate plot with many unpredictable

twists and turns as Casanova fights to overcome the many obstacles in his way to finding love.

Although the movie is admittedly sugary, I found the plot to be unexpectedly well thought out for a chick flick. It has a great mixture of humor and excitement. Even so, the best attribute of the movie is its eye pleasing props and setting. British accents, breath taking costumes and Venetian architecture give this chick flick a cultured edge.

Sex is essential to the movie's plot. I found it surprising that Venetian society in the eighteenth century would be so open about sex. In "Casanova," members of the upperclass regularly made sexual jokes. Consequently, the movie delivers what it promises - sex appeal.

If you are looking to de-stress with a romantic comedy, "Casanova" is sure to provide you with laughs about relationships.



Yahoo! Movies

"Casanova," starring Heath Ledger, follows a womanizer who falls in love with the only woman he cannot have.

'Hostel' hacks at viewers' stomachs

By Katie Costello
Features Editor

Traveling through Europe has never been more gruesome and staying in a hostel has never been more well, hostile.

In "Hostel" three young men travel to Amsterdam, a city well known for its leniency on drugs, sex and just about everything considered illegal anywhere else. They meet up with a man who tells them the best place to visit for a good time is Slovakia, so they take a detour there, where two out of the three mysteriously disappear.

The remaining traveler (Jay Hernandez) sets off to find them and is led to an isolated building nearby the hostel they were residing in. In this building people pay huge amounts of money to live out their twisted fantasies of torture, one of which involves his best friend Josh (Derek Richardson).

Watching Hernandez run through rooms and halls filled with the sounds of chainsaws and screaming as well as plenty of sighnings of brutal killings was not fun for me.

As with most horror movies, "Hostel" makes up for the absence of its plot with lots of bloody limbs. I find it repulsing that the box office can rely on multiple forms of torture to lure in money. It's almost as repulsing as watching a girl's eye get drilled out of her socket and then cut off with a pair of scissors, which is the outcome you will receive for paying nine dollars to see this movie. Even if you were to leave the movie before the gory part started, you would essentially be paying nine dollars to see naked girls for half an hour. That's what M'V'C is for, not a well respected theater.

This movie is most definitely not for those with sensitive stomachs, or for those that want to get their money's worth. I would also not recommend eating popcorn or any other snacks while seeing "Hostel" unless you want to see it in a more colorful form in the toilet bowl later.

I guarantee that upon seeing this movie you will rethink any plans of backpacking through Europe. For the sake of your limbs, please just rent a nice hotel room, and for the sake of your finances, save your ticket money for a less nauseating experience.



Yahoo! Movies

Jay Hernandez stars as college student, Paxton, who gets trapped by a hoard of torturers in "Hostel." Paxton and his friends eventually regret taking a detour to Slovakia.

'Les Mis,' c'est magnifique!

By Christina Araj
Oracle Editor

Sitting in the absolute worst seats in the house, Row Z of the balcony, in the far left corner, next to the emergency exit, I experienced the most exhilarating, captivating and utterly mesmerizing masterpiece: "Les Misérables."

Despite the abysmal seats, so far away that I could not make out the facial expressions of the actors, "Les Misérables" still managed to capture my heart. Luckily, the DC National Theater, where the musical was on tour until January 21, was small enough so that the play was enjoyable, even in the back.

This thrilling musical, based on the novel by Victor Hugo, recounts the personal strife of characters during the French commune when students revolted against the corrupt government

of the 1830s. Motifs of loyalty, loss and love are woven throughout the musical and portrayed through the dynamic character relationships.

The play was more like an opera in the sense that every word was sung. Instead of talking, the characters acted with their voices. Each song flowed beautifully, bringing the audience along for a true emotional journey. Every note struck my bones, every octave paralyzed me in my seat and every act absorbed me into the powerful world of the characters.

The actor who played Jean Valjean, an ex-convict who has moral conflicts throughout the play, particularly had an awe-inspiring voice. All his hardship, his 20 years in jail and his turmoil was flawlessly portrayed through his booming voice. He was able to move along the musical scale

with ease; not a single note sounded strained or forced.

The downside to the show was that unless a person went into the theater knowing the general story line of "Les Misérables," the plot was difficult to follow. The choppy scenes were more like short recaps of the characters' lives. This can only be expected, however, when a 1463-page book is condensed into a two and a half hour show.

This did stop me from losing myself in the scenes. Each scene was brought to life by the realistic sound effects and lighting. Fog, flashing lights and gun shot noises during the major battle scene between the students and the French army was gripping and gave me the feeling that I was in the middle of a real-life battle. An especially unique aspect was the revolving stage. The center of the stage had a movable disk that would turn in

a circle to give the effect that the characters were walking or going from place to place.

The exceptionally talented singing made "Les Misérables" a truly enchanting experience

that should not be missed. Every song added to the pivotal climax and provided for a powerful finish that guaranteed no dry eyes in the theater.



Cameron Mackintosh Overseas Limited

French revolutionaries gain a burst of spirit in one of "Les Misérables" songs "Red." "Les Misérables" recently toured at the National Theatre in DC.

Z1104's drastic change for the worse

By Sunnie Ko
Inside Editor

Washington area radio listeners were once again baffled.

On January 4th, 2006, fans of radio station Z1104 did not hear the "modern music" usually played but instead heard a version of a Rachmaninoff piano concerto.

Stronger broadcast signals and station popularity forced the Bonneville International Corp to replace Z1104. With popularity and ratings growing for WTOF, an all news station, the station wanted to reach more listeners. Their problem was solved when they replaced the classical station WGMS, 103.5.

"We'll reach people all over the place," Jim Farley, WTOF's vice president of news and programming, told *The Washington Post*. "If you're working at home,

if you're in the car downtown, we'll be your nonstop news source."

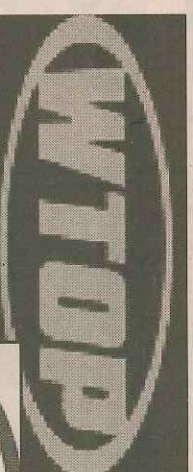
With WGMS now out of the 103.5 slot and without a home, Bonneville decided to move it to one of the weaker broadcasting signals, 104.1.

Another reason for Z1104's replacement was about locality.

"Let's face it, Matchbox Twenty doesn't sound very different in Minneapolis or Los Angeles or Washington," Bonneville Senior Vice President Joel Oxley told *The Post*. "Washington Post Radio [WTOF] can be very local, with exclusive content."

This is not the first time the Washington area has felt the blow of a station's death. Last year, 99.1 a modern music/rock station was drastically changed when it was replaced with EL ZOL, the spanish pop station.

Besides the controversy of losing the music, many are bewildered as to who will broadcast the Nationals'



Wtop



Monofestival

201, host of 'Today's Hit Music' was recently replaced with 103.5 Classical WTOF game.

WTOF's other frequencies, 1500 AM and 107.7 FM, will make the transformation into the Washington Post Radio which will most likely broadcast not only the Nationals games, but the Redskins as well.

Replacing Z1104 has caused a stir-up among students as well as around the community, and although some may be open to change, many are not.

"I was disappointed," said sophomore Jeff Heuply. "I never listened to it that much, but I know Z1104 was better than classical; I can tell you that."

American Idol kicks off season five

By Jordy Serwin
Business Systems Editor

In 2002, a poor destitute reality show made a life-altering decision. On June 11, 2002, the show boarded a tiny wooden ship, suitcase and steereage ticket in hand. As it swatted the flies buzzing around its head, the reality show decided that its chances of assimilating into American society would be greatly increased if it Americanized its name.

Nothing came immediately to mind. Pop was frustrated. Finally, as the ship neared New York Harbor, Pop went to the upper deck, where something caught his eye. It was a giant green woman holding up a torch in one hand and clutching a book in the other. Pop did not understand why this was significant, however he suddenly knew what he must call himself. Pop Idol would now be called "American Idol."

"American Idol", which will begin its fifth season with Fox on January 17 at 8 P.M., has quickly become one of the country's most popular television shows. That said, the show has received its fair share of criticism.

"There can't be more than one American Idol. It's a title!" said junior

Devon Buckley.

Expectations are plentiful for this new chapter of the show's history.

"I hope we meet three more William Hungs this season," said junior Jess Lawrie.

Much as the show itself rose from a flash in the British pan to US TV aristocracy. Contestants with enough drive and talent can rise from rags to riches in just a few short months. Sometimes, however, this provides more entertainment than opportunity.

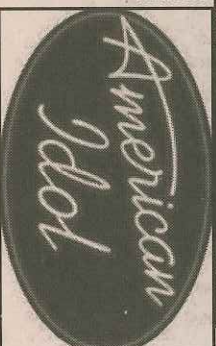
"I want to see people make fools of themselves on national TV," said junior Matt Greene.

The first season's winner, Kelly Clarkson, now has her own record contract and is developing credibility within the recording industry. Her repertoire has quickly grown to include singles, albums, and music tours. Kelly's success was no small contributor to the overall success of the show.

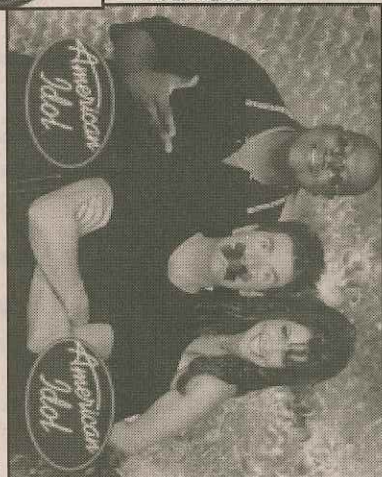
"I love Kelly Clarkson. Kelly is successful and seems like a normal



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Fox

Above: A hopeful auditioner on American Idol tries to impress judges: (left) Randy Simon and Paula

person. She looked more American than the others," said junior Lauren Stephenson.

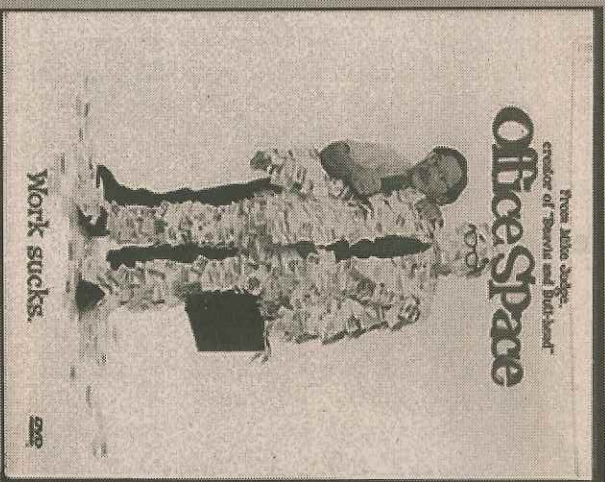
Ruben Studdard, who won during the second season of the show, has three albums and is also touring. "American Idol" season three ended with Fantasia Barrino receiving a contract. Like the other winners, she is currently touring. The most recent winner, country singer Carrie Underwood, has released two albums and is on tour.

The same loveable bunch of regulars, including host Ryan Seacrest, artist

Oracle Picks

'Office Space'

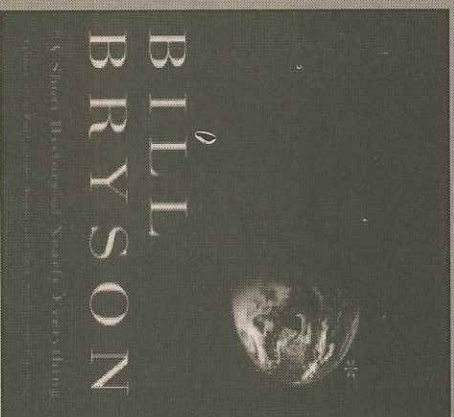
The movie "Office Space" is a tribute to every person who has ever been forced to sit in a cubicle for hours a day doing mindless work at the mercy of more than a few bosses, each, bent on finding fault with their employees' every move. In this comic portrayal of life at Initech, a fictional software company, Mike Judge, the writer and producer, captures the outrageous tedium of life inside a cubicle. The film follows Initech employee Peter Gibbons (Ron Livingston) as he and two fellow workers attempt to program a virus that steals money from, what they believe, to be an evil corporation.



Maps

'A Short History of Nearly Everything'

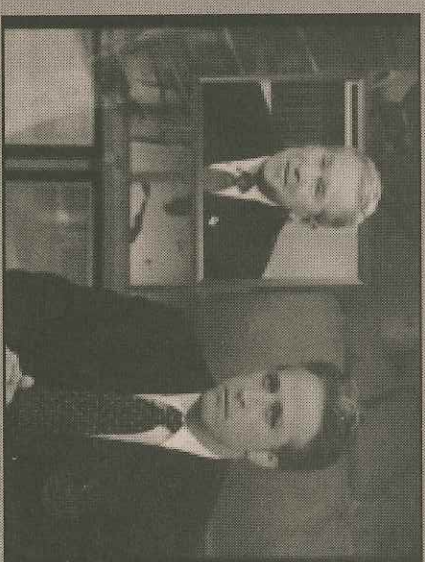
In *A Short History of Nearly Everything*, writer Bill Bryson provides an account of the history of the universe from the big bang to modern day humans. Bryson seeks to answer many of the questions we have about the universe and gives an idea of the sheer magnitude of the space around us. Even those uninterested in science are sure to be pulled in by Bryson's clever wit, as he takes you on the journey of a lifetime. *A Short History of Nearly Everything*, is immensely entertaining and can make a science buff out of us all.



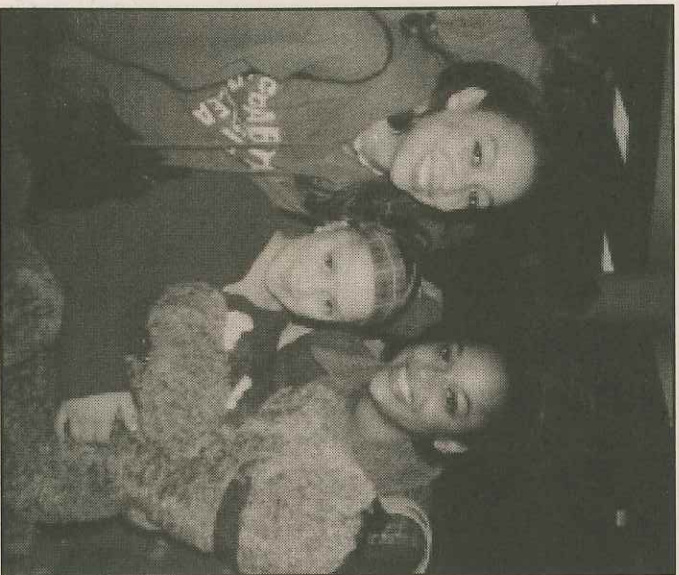
Magprofessor

'The Daily Show'

Comedy Central's "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart" is news with a hysterical twist. Host Jon Stewart will have you rolling as he exposes the comical side of news and politics. Stewart isn't afraid to say anything and addresses nearly every major issue in the world today. Despite the comedic tone of the show, Stewart says what needs to be said and sheds our politicians in their true light. The news segment of Stewart's show is all true and is made even more entertaining by his witty remarks, underlain with sometimes astounding insightfulness into the true nature of politics.



Lisearin



Sydney Morris

Junior Sydney Morris and senior Kim Cosby took time out of their weekend last year to go to Kristi's Christmas. They shopped with kids whose families are often broken or financially unstable.

Step back in time DC's museums offer students a fascinating taste of history

By Caitlin Laverdiere
Managing Editor

Our nation's capital is home to an eclectic array of museums and art galleries, appealing to the assorted interests of an even more diverse populace.

The most acclaimed museums in DC include the National Air and Space Museum, the National Art Gallery, the National History Museum, the Holocaust Museum, the Spy Museum and the National Museum of the American Indian.

The National Art Gallery is laid out into the East Wing and West Wing which hold contemporary and traditional artwork respectively. Both wings have a very different feel; the East Wing has a more spacious atmosphere, housing more modern pieces, while the West Wing has a more conventional feel.

housing more classic, traditional pieces of artwork.

"One of my favorites is definitely the National Art Gallery," said Doti Swaggard, AP Art History teacher. "It is very person friendly [and] laid out really well. It has a computer system in which you can download what you want to see, and it will give you a print out."

Other popular DC art galleries include the Phillips Gallery, the corcoran gallery, the Sackler and the Hirschorn, which is well known for its sculptures.

"The smaller ones, even though they don't get the volume, are still great," said Swaggard. "[But] your eye can only take in so much visual artwork at one time, so I recommend two galleries a day."

The Smithsonian offers a variety of options for those interested in history and science, namely the National Air and Space Museum, the National Museum of American History and the

Warming up the community

Students find fulfillment and satisfaction in volunteering

By Stephanie Aguilar

Forum Editor

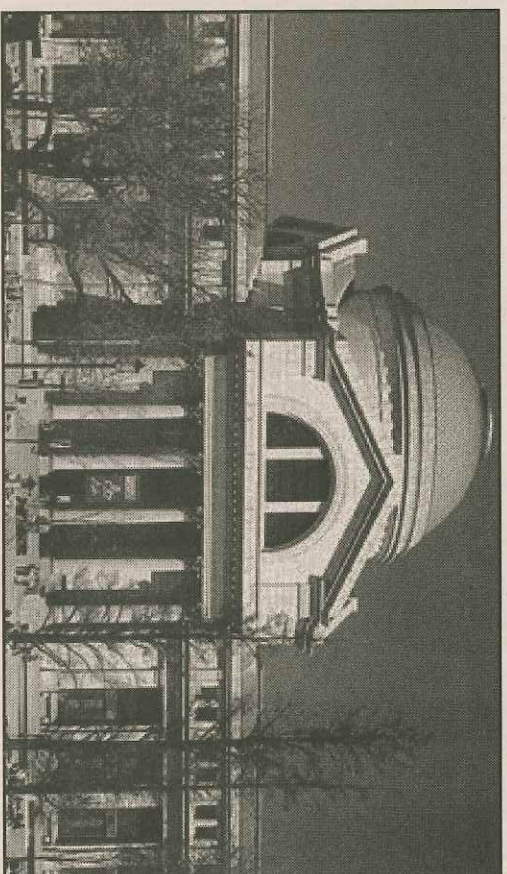
Looking down at the audience, junior Kaska Adoteye patiently holds the sacred Bible on an early Sunday morning mass, while the priest in white reads aloud to the devoted Catholics what Jesus did for them. Community service, or volunteer work, can range from moral activities to must-do activities. It can make one feel fulfilled or just teach one a lesson.

"Being an altar boy might seem stupid, but I did it to go to church more and just to get closer to God," said Adoteye.

The motivation behind all this can be found in the heart of the one making the difference.

"I help at Eddie's Club. It's about interacting with kids with disabilities," said freshman Maggie McGavin. "I started in eighth grade but decided to keep doing it this year."

Sometimes people use volunteering to help people in need, regardless of payment.



washingtondc.com

The Museum of Natural History is one of the most popular museums in Washington DC. Its collection includes dinosaurs, fossils, and other aspects of nature.

National Museum of the American Indian. Other exhibits aside from the Smithsonian are also informative.

"The best exhibit right now is probably the Public Value at the National Archives," said US/VA history teacher James Percoco. "[It's] based on the Preamble to the Constitution. It's very interactive."

New exhibits and museums are constantly being designed and prepared

for an eager public.

"I'm really excited about the National Museum of African American History," said Percoco.

These varied museums boast the opportunity to explore a smorgasbord of exhibits, presented in both observable and interactive formats.

"Museums are changing how they exhibit information and how they tell their stories," said Percoco.

Strolling down the nation's capital Beautiful Washington Mall is landmark to explore

By Scott Babcock

Senior Staff Writer

It was in the year 1800 that Washington DC became more than just a dot on the map, gaining Capital status. Since then its claim to fame has been the fact that it is Capital of the free world.

Now, even more importantly, it can claim that it is an entertaining spot for WS students to visit. The most exciting factor in this new found hot spot is the Washington Mall.

No, it's not a shopping mall, which it is often confused with. The Capital, particularly the Washington Mall, is a beautiful piece of land scattered with monuments of monstrous size, the most notable being the Washington Monument.

Despite its general lack of shopping institutions, students still manage to have a great time.

"We are so lucky to live so close to the capital," said senior Holly Tripp. "So many people have to pay a lot of money to travel here and visit."

The last time Tripp visited the Capital she did what many students go there to do,

"The last time I went to the Capital was to work on a project for history," said Tripp.

Other than working on projects the Capital offers various entertainment opportunities throughout the year.

"My family used to go watch the fireworks on the Fourth of July," said junior Thomas Gunshnan. "It was cool until I was old enough to realize that it was incredibly boring."

Half a year away from the Fourth of July, the Capital offers a spectacular winter spectacle in the unveiling of the National Christmas Tree. Junior Laura Ulish attended with her family.

"We are so lucky to live so close to the capital. So many people have to pay a lot of money to travel here and visit."

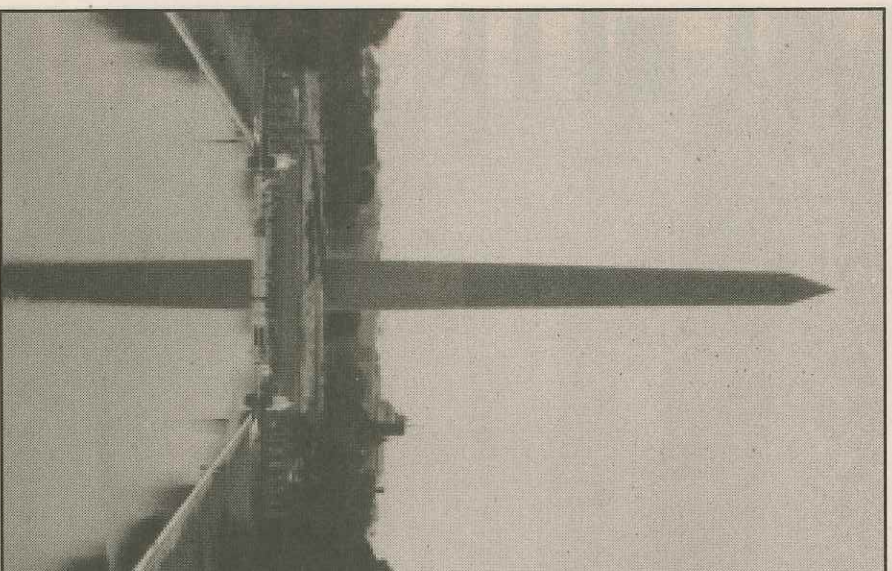
— Holly Tripp, senior

"I enjoyed dancing to the music with my nieces and nephews," said Ulish.

For information on these events and more visit www.washington.org.

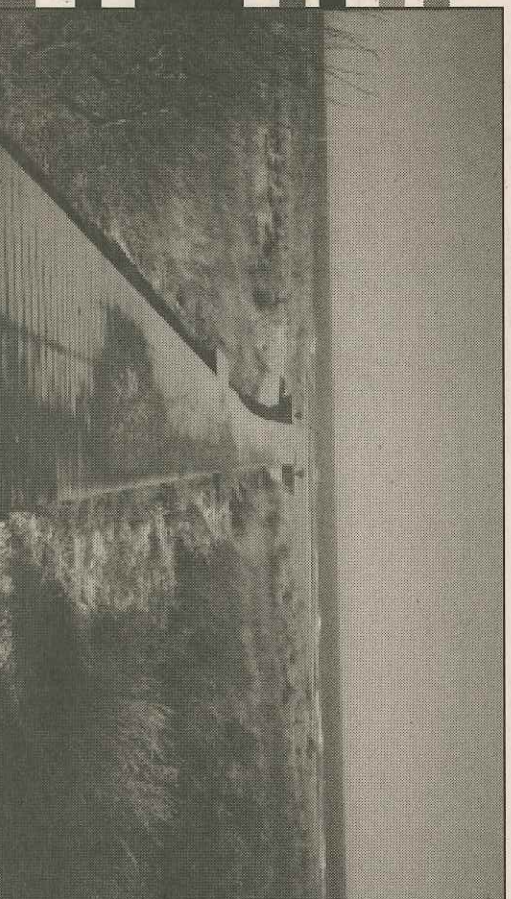
On ordinary days the Capital is interesting too. There are museums to visit and monuments to see.

"Last time I went, I went with some of my relatives and we went to the museums and had a picnic near the Washington Monument," said senior Arja Deb.



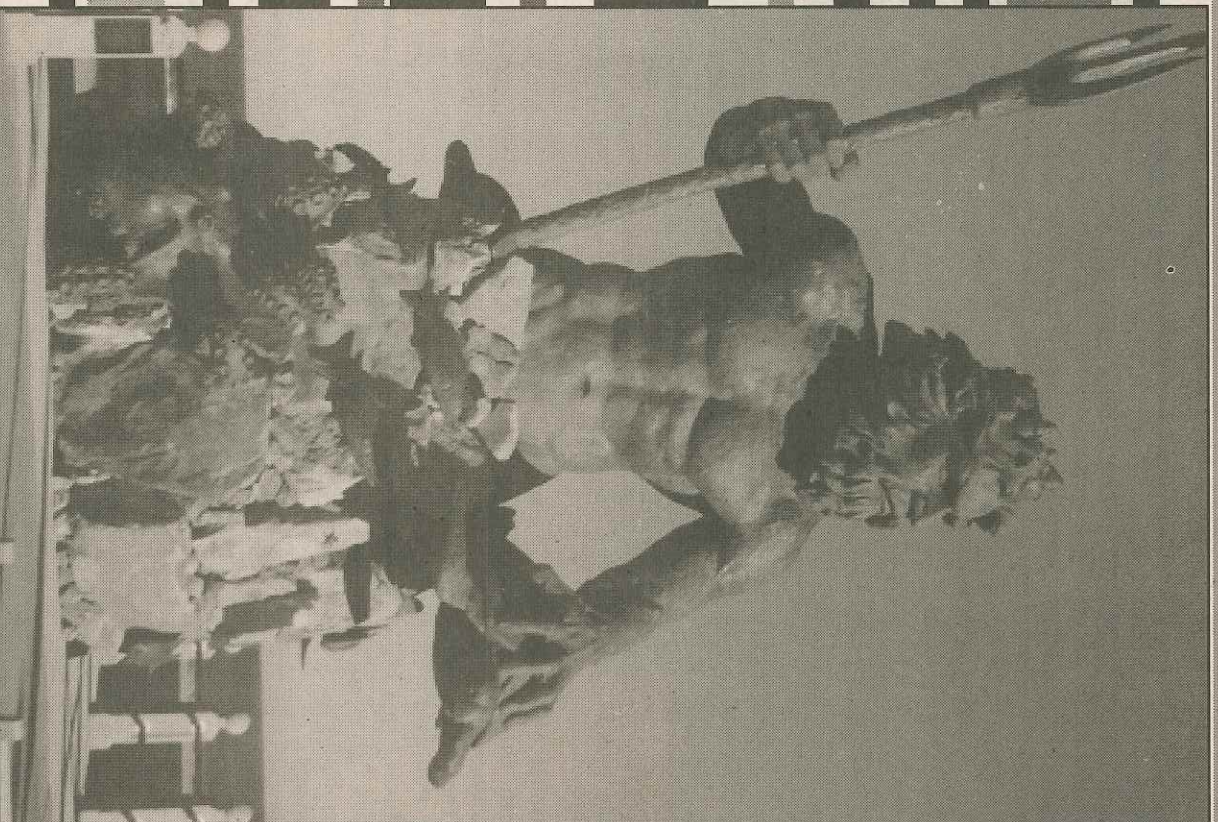
greg.abstrakt.ch

The Washington Monument is a main attraction of the Washington Mall. It is surrounded by museums and shops, which attract tourists as well as locals.

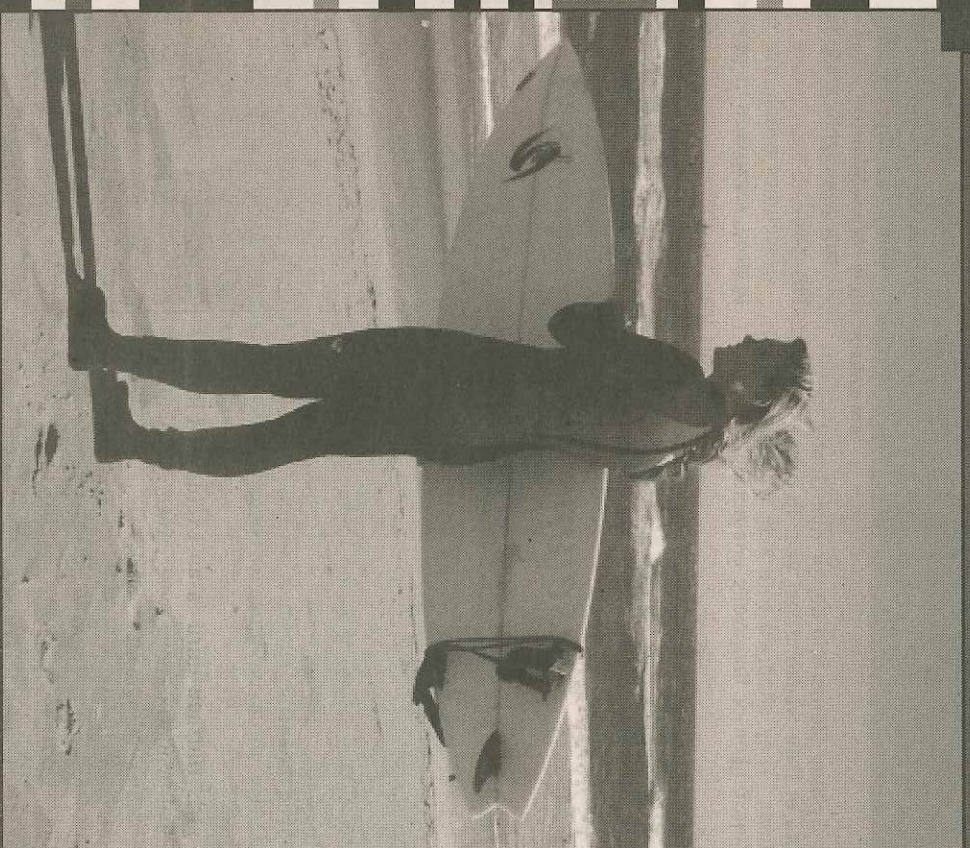


Above: The 87th Street boardwalk at Virginia Beach. During the winter season the beach is usually clear of tourists, leaving locals to enjoy the beach in peace.

“In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.” ~Albert Camus
photos by Carrie DeClark



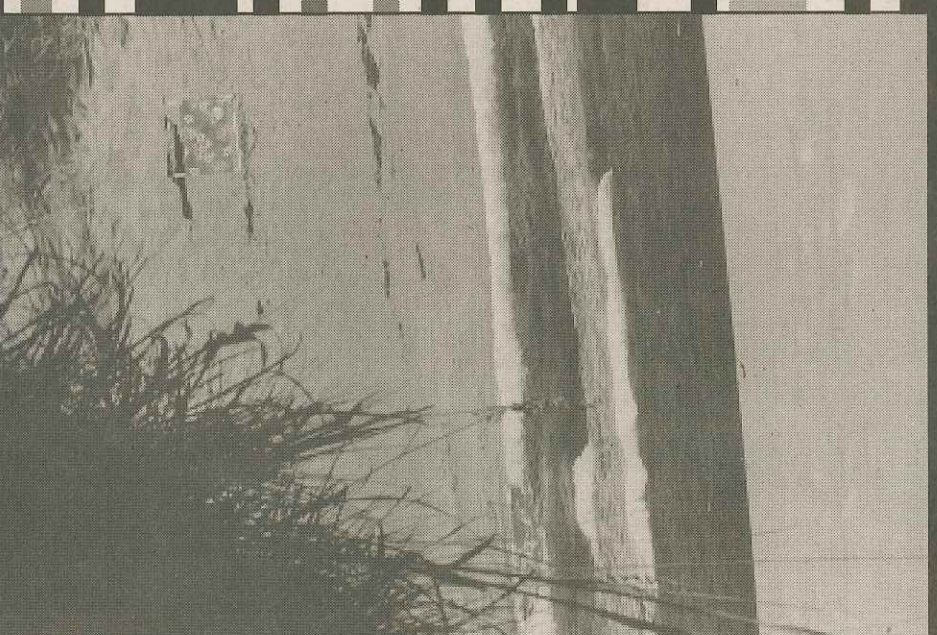
Above: The fairly new statue of Neptune (the god of the sea) on the boardwalk at VA Beach. Every fall, VA Beach hosts the Neptune Festival inviting local vendors and musicians.



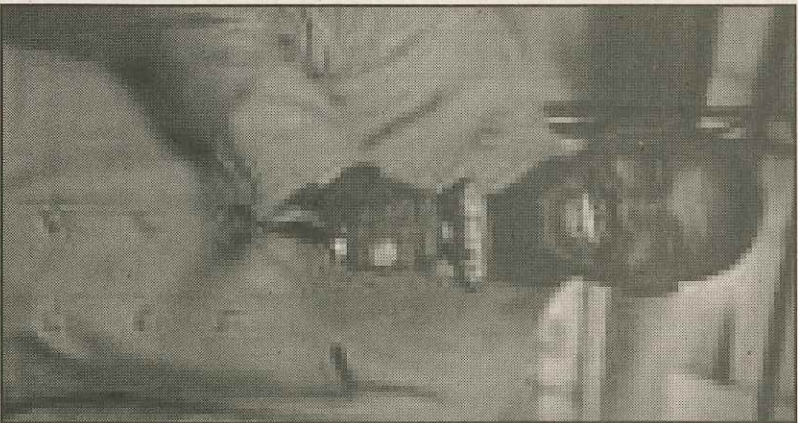
Above: Senior Chelsea Mooore gets ready to surf the waves in VA Beach. Even though the cold water may be unappealing, the thrill of riding the waves draws surfers in.



Above: As the sun sets over the horizon another beautiful day comes to an end.



Above: The lonely beach chair stares out to sea.



Former NFL player, Michael Irvin, was hired by ESPN despite drug problems.

ESPN on the wrong track

By Tim O'Keefe
Sports Columnist

I watch ESPN when I eat breakfast, when I should do my homework, before I go to bed, and times in between. But lately ESPN has made some curious moves, changes that have altered my viewing universe.

For one, ESPN decided to keep the flamboyant, former Dallas Cowboys wide receiver, Michael Irvin, on their Sunday NFL Countdown crew. Irvin, who cannot speak for more than 20 seconds with out referring to, "me, myself, or I," was taken into custody and charged with possession of drug paraphernalia back in November. A few weeks later Irvin returned to the ESPN set, acting like nothing had happened.

I would not have a problem keeping Irvin if this was a first time offense, but it was not. Irvin has had more encounters with the police, and specifically drugs, in the past 10 years than I have fingers. Irvin seems irresponsible.

"It's my brother's, he left it in there," said Irvin when asked why the drugs were in the car, according to USA Today. Guilty or not guilty, it makes me sick to my stomach to see Irvin still on the air.

Second, Monday Night Football will leave ABC and switch to ESPN starting next season. The network claims that the magic of Monday Night Football, dating back to the 1970's when Frank Gifford, "Dandy" Don Meredith and Howard

O'Keefe's Beef

Cossell broadcasted, will be just the same. But I do not buy it.

First off, there is no guarantee that the current broadcasting crew of John Madden and Al Michaels will make the switch to the sibling network of ESPN. Second, one of my favorite shows on ESPN, NFL PrimeTime may not return due to the programming change. Chris Berman's legendary phrases and nicknames such as, "daylight come and we want to Delhomme," to "rumbler"



ABC ESPN may begin broadcasting Monday Night Football instead of rival ABC.

bumbler' stublen'," and "whoop, he could go all the way," have always entertained me. I do not want that to change. Third, ABC and Monday Night Football go together like peanut butter and jelly. ESPN and Monday Night Football seem more like peanut butter and mayonnaise.

Some say that the things we love the most, we criticize the most. That statement is true for ESPN and me. I do not know what is more sad, the decisions ESPN has recently made, or the fact that I care so much. If ESPN keeps it up, I will turn to FOX Sports.

Spartans have a happy season

By Jenny Taylor
Sports Editor

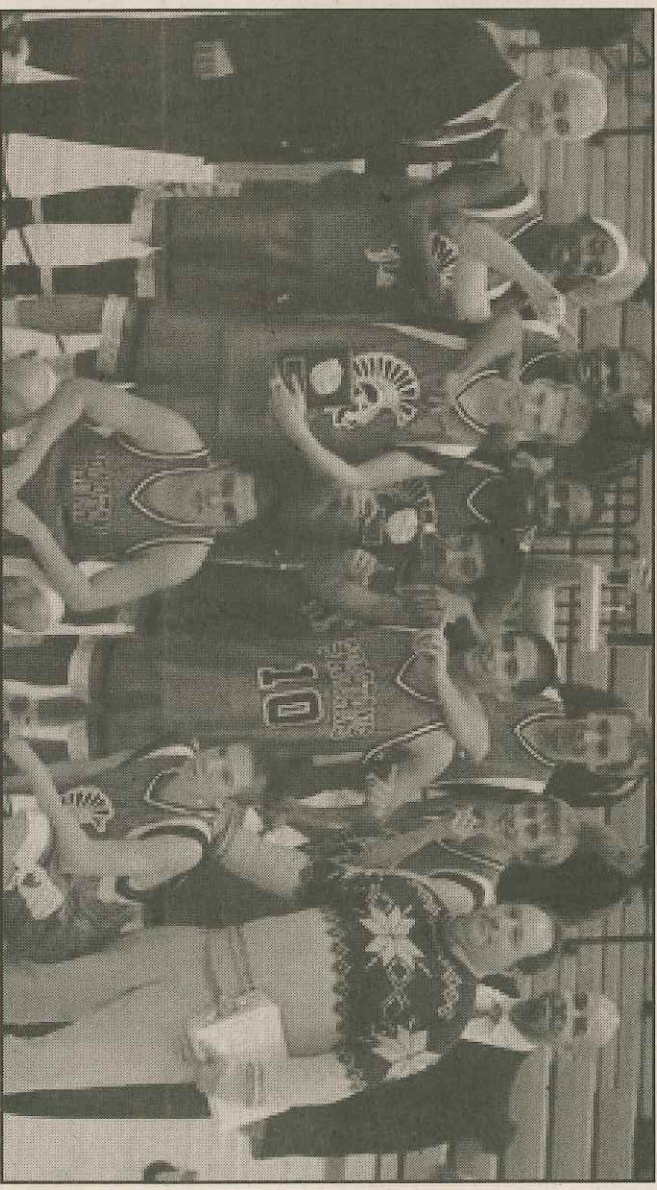
This year's holiday season brought plenty of presents for both the boys and girls varsity basketball teams.

The girls finished third in an exclusive Florida invitational, while the boys were crowned champions of their winter tournament.

For the third straight year, the girls basketball team traveled to Miami, Florida to compete in the Jr. Orange Bowl. The tournament is widely recognized for its superior teams and frequent college scouting.

"We like to go to Florida over the break, because it gives the players exposure to other states and colleges that wouldn't normally be able to see our games," said varsity coach Bill Gibson. In the first game of the tournament, WS soundly defeated Coral Gables High School 60-14. The tables turned on WS in the next game, however, when they lost by 17 points.

"It was tough to lose like that," said junior Caroline Nicholson. "We realized what we needed to work on and talked about it as team." The loss ended WS's chance at a championship trophy and the team finished the Jr. Orange Bowl in third place.



Spartan Sports

The boys varsity basketball team won all of their games at the Chantilly Pohanka Classic this winter break. "Overall, it was a successful tournament," said Gibson, "It helps to play teams you've never seen, because it shows you how much you know."

The boys varsity team stayed in Northern Virginia over the break to participate in the Chantilly Pohanka Classic. Throughout the tournament, they took on local teams such as Stone Bridge and Chantilly. The best competition, however, came from Mills Godwin High School located in Richmond, VA. The boys narrowly defeated Mills Godwin with a score of 67-61.

"It's better to play teams that you don't know,

because it lets you see what your weaknesses are," said junior Kevin Kilday.

The boys went on to become the 2005 Chantilly Pohanka Classic champions after winning all three of their games. Currently, the boys and girls varsity basketball teams are top contenders in the Patriot District and both have won 11 games.

"The tournament over winter break has really helped us to get where we are now," said Nicholson, "Hopefully, during the season our team will do as well as we did during the Jr. Orange Bowl."

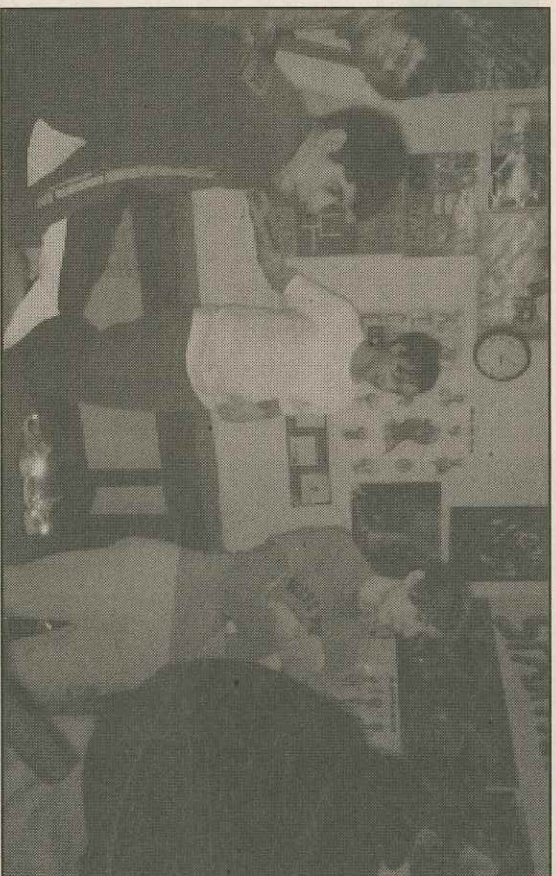
Athletes play hide and seek

By Jenny Taylor
Sports Editor

Almost every athlete who has ever endured an awful workout has, at one point, considered quitting. Excuses to stop the pain may vary, but the most effective way out of an especially difficult practice tends to be faking an injury.

The problem of pretending to be hurt is rumored to plague WS's athletic training room. Already tiny, the training room can barely hold over five athletes at once, but manages to serve about 35 athletes a day.

"It's [the athletic training room] too small, the size limits us and what we can



Leah Venetta

Some students think the athletic training room is too small for student tricks. do, the equipment we can buy and use, and the numbers of students we can serve," said athletic trainer John Shepard. Overcrowding has certainly become a problem, and some argue that students who fake injuries only add to already unfortunate circumstances.

"Kids who pretend to be hurt to get out of practice just take up space in the training room and take away time from

the trainers that could be spent on kids who are really hurt," said junior Melea McCreary, a swimmer suffering from a leg injury.

Whether or not student athletes are pretending to be hurt in order to escape hard practices continues to be disputed.

"I don't think athletes use the athletic training room to get out of practice," said Shepard. "This is my first year here so

maybe I'm not seeing it." The issue of faking injuries may have been a bigger problem last year. During the 2004-2005 season, five JV basketball players visited the training room seeking relief for sore ankles and shin splints all on the same day during practice hours. Similar events, however, have taken place at other schools as well.

"I have been at schools where athletes would hide out in the athletic training room to get out of practice or even fake injuries to go late," said Shepard.

This year, the school's two athletic trainers have taken steps to make sure student athletes do not miss practice while receiving physical treatments.

"Sometimes athletes will come in late for treatments, so they will be late to practice. But we work with the coaches to make sure this doesn't happen," said Shepard.

Despite whisperings that students without injuries are flooding the training rooms to avoid tough workouts, the athletic trainers remain confident in the honesty of their patients.

"Overall, I would say it's not a problem," said Shepard, "we stay on top of it."

Swim and Dive splash their way towards districts

Girls team is undefeated; boys are 6-1

By **Chrissy Regelski**
Entertainment Editor

The WS Swim and Dive team is in hot water. With the girls' team record at 7-0 and the boys' at 6-1, the swimming Spartans have sizzled in this season's kick-off despite some reservations.

"I didn't think the girls were going to do well because we lost a lot of girls last year," said senior Kimberly Case who is one of the team captains, "but a lot of freshmen stepped up."

Others, like head coach Karen Spooner, also noticed the higher number of younger team members.

"The main difference this year is the large number of freshman on the team," said Spooner.

Another change for the team this year is the new district, which altered the schools that WS competes against.

"The only major change this year is having to go up against new teams [like South County] and not having to face Robinson," said Spooner.

Success has not only come out of boundary alterations, but also the devotion of the team members of all grade levels and their hard work at practices.

"The team's strength this year is their great leadership from their captains and the number of underclassmen who are totally dedicated to this sport," said Spooner.

Also, the boys' one-loss blemish on the team's record has not phased the athletes' confidence in their success.

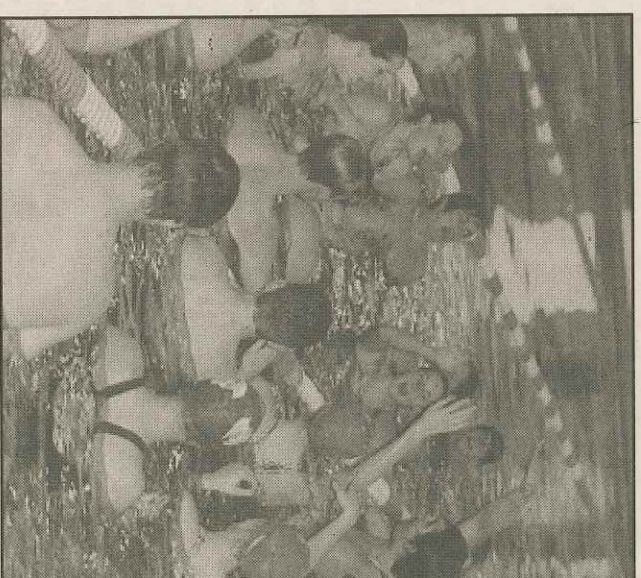
"The boys lost to [Lake] Braddock at a meet, but I know they are going to beat them at districts," said Case.

Team victories are not the only focus of swim and dive competitors. Individual achievement is encouraged by coaches.

"I'm getting to know the kids better which allows me to help them reach their goals, individual and team," said Spooner.

Besides being the team's dive captain, senior Will Richardson plans to reach his own aspiration this season.

"Personally, [I'm looking forward to] breaking the school record again and making it higher so no one can beat it," said Richardson, who holds the current WS



Leah Vanatta
Before a meet, the WS swim and dive team belts out cheers to motivate themselves to swim hard.

Creatine creates countless problems in high schools

By **Josh Lipman**
Managing Editor

Since 2003, when Major League Baseball began testing for anabolic steroids, controversy has surrounded the usage of so-called performance enhancing drugs. Anabolic steroids are controlled substances, which means they can only be used legally with a prescription from a physician.

Students don't have to go to RFK Stadium to see the effects of anabolic steroids.

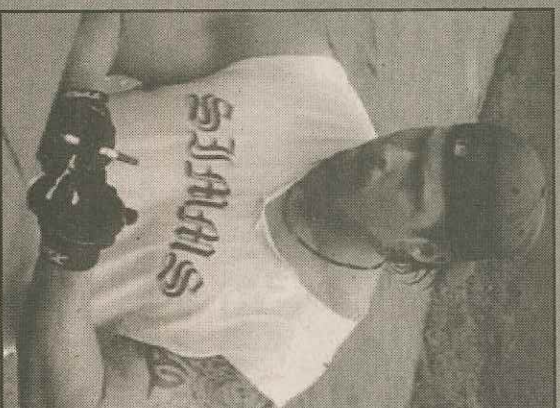
WS policy states that if a coach or other WS staff member suspects a student of illegally using a controlled substance he or she must report it to principal David Smith. He can have the suspected student suspended for drug testing if he thinks it is necessary. Director of Student Activities Mike Dobson has never had such a case involving anabolic steroids at WS.

"I think there's been a push for education about the dangers of [anabolic] steroids," said Dobson. "I think kids are working with what genes they have and not taking shortcuts."

National studies have shown, however, that a significant percentage of high school students are using steroids. According to 2003 data from the Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy, between six percent and 11 percent of high school aged males use steroids.

"I would be naïve to say nobody is going to try the latest miracle whatever," said Assistant Director of Student Activities Michael Mukai. "Our coaches know we need to look out for kids."

Not all performance enhancing drugs are controlled substances. For



Lead report

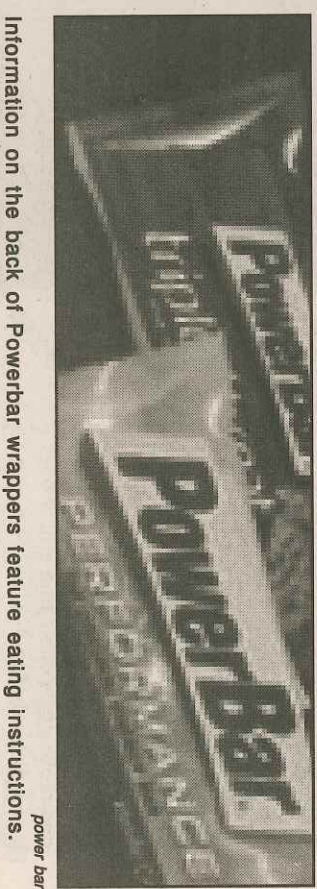
Professional baseball player Jason Giambi is one of several star athletes who have been implicated in steroid use.

example, the supplements like Creatine have no legal restrictions and can be purchased at the local GNC. Creatine is an amino acid that supposedly allows athletes to build up their skeletal muscles.

"It's not cheating," said Mukai. "[But] we're not sure it's safe."

The Sports Medicine Advisory Committee of the National Federation of State High School Associations, which includes the Virginia High School League, believes schools should not allow the use of Creatine. Mukai cautioned against looking to supplements for a quick fix to athletic problems.

"You don't want too much of anything," said Mukai. "Why overdose? Why go and buy a supplement?"



PowerBar

Powerbars to the people Health bars come with directions for athletes looking for energy edge

By **Colin Embrey**
Sports Columnist

It's time to get pumped up for the big game, so grab a PowerBar and stuff it down. There are ten minutes left before go time and you need a quick pick-me-up.

But wait! Before you take your first energetic bite, take a look at the wrapper. I bet you did not know there were directions on the back.

According to the label on the chocolate flavored PowerBar sitting next to me, there are instructions for suggested use. Below the long list of ingredients, and

written in the smallest and least noticeable space, a smart athlete can see that he or she needs to consume 60 to 70 percent of calories from carbohydrates. PowerBars provide less than a quarter of the necessary carbs recommended for top performance. The directions continue instructing the athlete to eat the bar 30 minutes before activity with 8-16 ounces of water to help absorb the nutrients and stay hydrated. Halfway through your sporting event you feel exhausted. You ask yourself,

Colin the Shots

"Why isn't that PowerBar kicking in yet?" Now you know why. It is only temporary energy. One of the main reasons athletes feel hampered by exhaustion is failure to hydrate. Before sports events, students do not drink enough water or clear fluids required to make it all the way through a game or a match without losing their energy. Every time there is an important sporting event coming up, drink plenty of water the day before, and eat right to make sure you are at the top performing level. A good source of electrolytes will also help you throughout the event. PowerBar electrolytes include sodium, potassium, and magnesium. Drinking but only a gatorade will help, if consumed in moderation. Both a PowerBar and a Gatorade before an event will help if consumed with enough time to digest and absorb the electrolytes. Now you have all the instructions you need. Should you decide to follow them, you may get the extra boost you need to beat out the rest of the competition.

What's so funny?



You haven't ordered your yearbook yet!
On sale after school February 1 and February 8 in Room 215.

Tell 'em Jerry Seinfeld sent ya!
Only \$60—checks only.

Stevie's Story Our trip on the coolest railroad in town

By Stevie Florino & Tina Wajda
ETC Editor & Photographer

The first time I heard Railroad Earth, I fell in love. Their combination of bluegrass, folk, classic country and classic rock, with some of their songs sounding similar to The Dead, got me hooked.

When I heard that they were coming to the State Theatre, of course I was going to go, I just had to find someone with the same taste in music as me. After awhile, I knew just the person to ask. Tina.

As soon as we walked through the doors of the State Theatre, we heard, "I.D.?" Since we are honest little teenagers, we responded by saying, "We aren't 21." The buff, grungy guy working the door then asked us for our hands and drew a very large black X on

each of our hands. Boy, did that make us feel young.

When we got into the seating area, I was pretty sure we were the only two people with huge, black X's—other than the seven-year-old girl eating dinner with her family.

Everyone there was a lot older than we had expected. All the men had long gray pony-tails with tie-dye steal your face Dead shirts. All the women had long, straight hair and were wearing earth colored "flowy" skirts.

Once the music started, however, we didn't feel out of place at all. Everyone was dancing with everyone and the music made us feel like we were just one big happy hippie family.

Railroad Earth played from 10:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m., and they rocked the house every single second of that three hours.



Railroad Earth fans call themselves "Hobos," and the band considers them to be the fuel that keeps the engine chugging along.

We walked away from the concert with shirts from Colorado. From the music and lyrics we gained a new perspective on life.

It's a seven story mountain, and there's a long, long way to go."

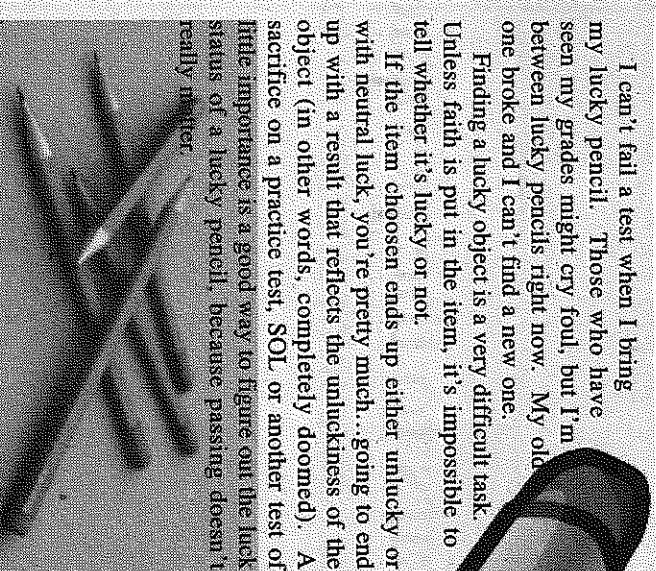
Hoagie's World

By Sean Hogan
Features Editor

I can't fail a test when I bring my lucky pencil. Those who have seen my grades might cry foul, but I'm between lucky pencils right now. My old one broke and I can't find a new one.

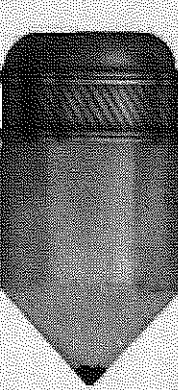
Finding a lucky object is a very difficult task. Unless faith is put in the item, it's impossible to tell whether it's lucky or not.

If the item choosen ends up either unlucky or with neutral luck, you're pretty much...going to end up with a result that reflects the unluckiness of the object (in other words, completely doomed). A sacrifice on a practice test, SOL or another test of little importance is a good way to figure out the luck status of a lucky pencil, because passing doesn't really matter.



To find a lucky pencil, you have to find something you like (for example: cocaine for Marion Barry, handguns for Marcus Vick, or babies for Angelina Jolie) and find a pencil featuring what you like on it.

Once you discover the pencil, buy between 17 and 400 of the specific type of pencil and take as many SOL tests as you can to determine which one is truly lucky. Once you find the one with real luck, use it sparingly, only when you need it.



Former Texas A&M student Brad Mason, a recreation parks and tourism major, once wrote about his lucky pencil that sadly became smaller and smaller and eventually became unusable. I doubt the luck of the pencil, however, because he probably accidentally bubbled in "recreation parks and tourism" as his major instead of something important, like "nanotechnology" or "yoga party planning."

If you can't find a lucky pencil, your life is basically over. Any chance of passing any test (including Marion Barry's drug tests) are shot (Marcus Vick is pardoning my pun right now), baby (sorry Angelina, but I couldn't fit 'baby' anywhere else in the sentence). Don't fret though, we're in the same boat (insert Minnesota Vikings sex boat joke here).

My lucky pencil broke during my first physics test, explaining my F (F is for fantastic). Maybe I relied on the pencil a little too much.

January/February



"If I knew I was going to live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself."

~Mickey Mantle

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
26 End of the Second Quarter Wayne Gretzky's birthday!	27 Teacher Work Day- No School!	28 Varsity Wrestling Match @ Amandale 1:00 p.m.	29 Happy National Puzzle Day!	30 Teacher Work Day- No School!	31 Third Quarter Begins	1 Junior Parents' College Planning Night and Beginning of Black History Month
2 Happy Groundhog Day	3 Boys Home Varsity Basketball Game Against Lee @ 7:30 p.m.	4 Track Meet at Episcaple HS @ 7:30 a.m.	5 National Weatherman's Day	6 Girls Varsity Basketball Game @ Hayfield 7:30 p.m.	7 Love Your Robot Day	8 Mardi Gras!
9 Course Selection Orientation For Rising Juniors						

'06

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

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ONE OF THE STATES LARGEST & BEST FULL SERVICE DRIVING SCHOOLS

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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 they way they want it to sound. It doesn't work that way. Go to the stats. The media might portray things without telling you or breaking down state by state as to which one does and does not have these types of laws or legislation restricting first year drivers.

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

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

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

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