



International Night spans culture barriers in school auditorium

By **Christina Sohn**
Weekend Editor

When the lights lit up the auditorium stage last Wednesday, they shone upon the sparkling gold of Bolivian costumes, the bright white shoes of the Dynasty Step Team and intricately designed Indian dresses, called *lenghas*.

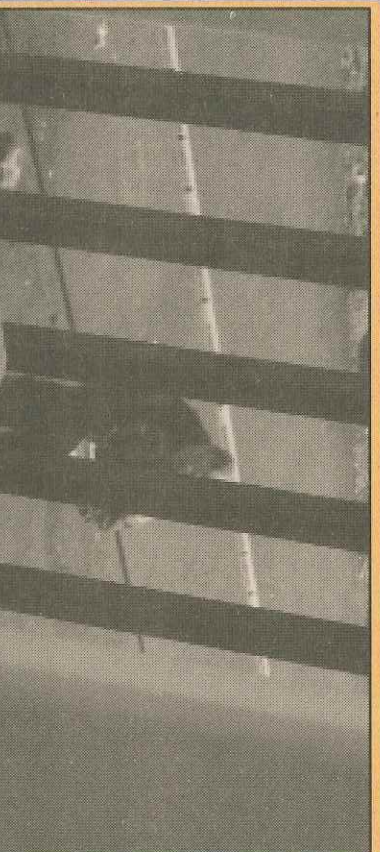
These attires were among the many that accompanied the unique music and dancing of WS's International Night, sponsored by the Latinos United Club.

"It's basically like a talent show, but from all around the world," said senior Jaime Mercado, president of Latinos United and one of the Masters of Ceremony.

"I had a lot of fun hosting because I was representing the Latino community in WS," said Mercado.

When the show started, members of the crowd cheered for their native cultures when Mercado called out the names of various countries. This small but energetic crowd stayed lively and excited throughout the whole show.

"[During our act] everyone was cheering us on and it kind of built up our self-confidence," said junior



Heather Campbell

A policeman surveys the crime scene on James Creek Circle.

Stabbing occurs near WS Victims sustain non-life threatening injuries

By **Linnette Lam**
Senior Staff Writer

Eight people were stabbed at a party early on February 19, at around 2 a.m. on James Creek Circle, a street near WS.

Police said a confrontation escalated over the appearance of uninvited guests, when the tiff moved outside and some individuals pulled out knives.

Many concerned parents thought that the incident was related to the Winter Formal that took place the same night, but WS security said that no WS students were directly involved in the event.

The act of violence added to the accumulating history of conflict near the school, which includes the shooting involving former WS students that occurred last year.

"I thought Springfield was a safe community," said junior Monica Luna. "Maybe in other places around the area, but I never thought it would happen here."

Luna's cousin was hurt in the most recent incident. The victims' ages ranged from 17 to 22. They all suffered non-life threatening injuries.

School boundary debate

WS won't grow, for now

By **Katie Bourget**
Oracle Editor

After months of passionate debate at town meetings and in local newspapers, the Fairfax County School Board voted recently not to change the WS attendance boundaries.

Had the proposal been approved, students from the Daventry neighborhood who attend West Springfield Elementary School, then Washington Irving and then Robert E. Lee would have joined the WS community.

Parents had the opportunity to voice their opinions about the possible change in town meetings at in October and November as well as directly to the school board in January.

While drawing lines on a map might seem mundane, it is a complicated process for the FCPS Facilitates Office and an emotional process for parents.

"I've talked to parents in Daventry who want students to come to WS, I've talked to parents from Daventry who want students to stay at Lee," said Principal David Smith.

Generally speaking, the parents of elementary and middle school students are the ones in support of the change. Parents who already have students at Lee did not favor the boundary changes as strongly. In addition to Daventry parents, parents from the portion of Rolling Valley Elementary that goes to

See BOUNDARIES on Page 5



Sara Kotlari
Junior Lisa Mletus twirls during the fashion show portion of International Night.



Sara Kotlari
Junior Cecilia Castro and senior Fiorella Salazar emceed the event.



9 Fresh Five mix it up.



12 Spartans pick their Oscar winners.



18 Wrestlers pound the competition.

A gripe about groups

Group projects usually consist of about four people. Out of these four people, one earns the A and the others deserve an "F."

Teachers, however, are unaware that in pretty much all group projects one person does all the work but everyone gets the same grade.

There is usually a *group leader*. This person dictates which things each group member should do, giving the most work to the nerd who the leader knows will do everything loyally, like a dog, but pretty much the smartest dog ever.

The group leader doesn't do much besides the initial assigning of work. Power-hungry, motivated group leaders end up doing the whole project by themselves just so everything is done their way.

There is also an overly ambitious student who thinks

they know everything. Sadly, this person knows less about Spanish than Yao Ming, so we call them the *doofus*. The *doofus* knows less about Shakespeare than the manager at McDonald's. This person usually gives the wrong answers, "guaranteeing" their correctness even though you have proof in front of you that they're wrong.

Editorial

There is also a person in every group known as the *leech*. This person wasn't asked into the group, they just latched on at the last minute when the were groupless. There's a reason nobody wants the leech: they don't do anything. The leech isn't assigned much by the group leader because the leader

knows the leech simply won't do the work they are assigned and will end up netting the group an F in their category.

Finally, there is the aforementioned *nerd*. This "aca-demically inclined" student does everything in the project where intelligence is required. Sometimes, nerds are also group leaders. Either way, they probably do everything just because they care about their grade and know the only way they'll get an A is if they do the hard stuff themselves.

When choosing groups, students often flock to nerds because they know they won't be required to do much of the project. We call this student the *slacker* because they intentionally find a nerd to do the work instead of them.

The point of group projects (according to teachers) is to teach students how to work well



Erica Wilkening

Students keep each other focused while working on projects. If you put four nerds in a group together, they might work well together. If you put a nerd, a *doofus*, a *slacker* and a leech in a group, each person will learn a different part of "working together." The nerd will learn that the only way to get things done is to do them yourself. The *doofus* will learn that they'd rather do things wrong themselves than be made fun of when they do things wrong with a nerd breathing down their neck. The *slacker* will learn that there will always be somebody who can't say no to you, and to take

advantage of that person by making them do your work. The leech will learn that its much easier to grab on to a group just so they can put their name on the paper, than to actually do the work. Group projects teach the majority of students nothing about working with a group other than how to avoid working altogether.

Teachers, please save the nerds and stop giving group projects. Letting each student do their own project by themselves is a good plan to avoid having the nerd do everything in a project.

Letter-to-the-Editors Help is available, but you have to ask, first

Dear Editors,

The funny thing about hope is that it cannot be given, it can only be found. Hope is the wish for something, with confidence in its fulfillment. It is the confidence that makes hope so difficult to find for so many people.

I am telling you this because one in five teenagers are in the process of losing or have lost hope mostly because they have little to no confidence. One can label them depressed, anxious or even the new favorite, "emo."

But the fact remains that the stigma that this is their own fault and their own problem only deepens the hopelessness and renders them incapable of wanting to find the support they need from our school. They ultimately find the wrong ways to cope, ranging from drug use to self-mutilation.

I am one of these people. My diagnosis, "severe depression with a self-loathing complex," was so different than any other illness. The doctor doesn't search for malignant tumors or take a throat culture.

I was tested through a series of painful questions on occurrences that began with the way I was born to the way I wanted to die. With the answers I gave, I began a cycle of neverending medicine changes, doctor's appointments with my psychologist and psychiatrist and sacrifices in my schedule in order to just simply exist.

I am one of 30 percent, statistics show, who got help (although I did not get it willingly). The other 70 percent just live with this feeling of hopelessness. These people are in our school, perhaps painfully escaping dark thoughts of getting relief by ending

their lives. Unfortunately, I am not being melodramatic. I am writing to the person who understands. The person who is lost and doesn't realize that there are people within this school, for free, who can show you how to find hope (because YOU are, despite what your mind tells you, in control). Go to your guidance counselor, the school psychologist or a trusted teacher who will guide you to treat yourself.

Sometimes hope is hidden deeper than the conscious mind knows. In my case, I would find that "light at the end of the tunnel" that everybody talks about and then it would go out or appear farther away. After a year-and-a-half of trying to hold on, I entered into a three-week intensive treatment program at the Kellar Center because my depression and anxiety reached an apex that an hour of therapy once a week and anti-

depressants could not handle. This program affected my outlook deeply, but the struggle is not over. I know this must all begin with confidence that you can "take care of yourself," as Principal David Smith would say. But those simple words hold a lot of truth. I have never met a single human on the face of this earth who is worthless enough not to deserve care. But I've met quite a few who live without hope. I urge those people and others like them to get help from the right people in the right ways NOW.

I promise that if you are among those who get help, you will find that hope that you long for, because it's yours to hold on to.

Sincerely,
A concerned student



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The halls are alive ...

... with the sounds of too much freaking bad language!

By \$#@^ (Sean) Hogan
Features Editor

I can't imagine my life without four-letter words. I use them every day. Even my name is a four-letter word. Look, I've used nine four-letter words (make that ten—wait, now 12) already!

Dr. David Smith pointed out a few weeks ago that our language is way too foul. I agree with him completely. As teenagers who try to be nonconformists, we try to be “gangstas,” rebels and as hard-core as can be.

Still, we just look like morons with no respect for anything when we go around dropping the “f-bomb” in the hallway. Cursing doesn't make you cool. I've never heard somebody say, “Hey, I saw the way you cussed that guy out. Let's be friends!”

Cussing is unnecessary in many situations. Adding extra “describing words” to talk about how you dislike

By simply trying to cuss less, students like me who don't like dirty words will be appeased enough to quit complaining and Dr. Smith won't come on to the announcements denouncing the bad language.

something or somebody is completely avoidable. I don't see why “This project is so stupid” can't substitute for “This (freaking) project is so (freaking) stupid.”

Even teachers sometimes use bad language when they get angry. Cussing is a bad habit that will end up haunting kids

when their parents, teachers, friends or employers hear them and get offended. This could end up destroying years of working on a relationship with somebody, especially a parent who hears their child curse for the first time.

The problem isn't the fact that our penalties aren't harsh enough when we're caught cussing or that the non-cussing rules aren't enforced hard enough. The problem is the fact that we don't care enough to keep our mouths clean in a learning environment.

By simply trying to cuss less, students like me who don't like dirty words will be appeased enough to quit complaining and Dr. Smith won't come on the announcements denouncing the bad language.

If the problem wasn't this rampantly bad, he wouldn't have taken the time to tell us to watch our mouths. Nobody's perfect, but the next time you have a choice



Erica Wilkening
Our esteemed principal, Dr. David Smith, thinks we're a bunch of potty-mouths. Do we care enough to clean up our language, or will our halls eternally ring with the sounds of cussing?

between saying “freaking” and like 50 Cent, but at least you'll “(freaking)” choose the first. care enough about others to maybe you won't look as much make the right choice.

How shall we honor thee?

By Linnette Lam
Senior Staff Writer

Each quarter, the report cards roll out and—eventually—the Honor Roll is plastered upon the wall across from the main office, displaying the students who have achieved only A's, B+'s, and B's in their classes.

Without the Student of the Quarter awards, everyone else would be left in the void, ignored in an educational environment that seems to be overly-devoted to grade point averages.

Those who assert that Students of the Quarter may not merit the honor bestowed upon them are feeding into the belief that letter grades are the only determinant of academic achievement. There are certain qualifications that students must meet in order to earn a spot on the Student of the Quarter list, and they are rooted in the principle of scholarship in a widely-encompassing sense, as in grades do not play a major role in the consideration.

The spirit behind the award seeks to acknowledge students who are “highly motivated,” “task-committed,” “cooperative,” punctual, and exhibit “commitment in spite of adversity” and an “eagerness to be successful.”

These qualities often result in good marks in class, but in several cases the grades do not follow. For the nonathletic on the sports field, for the less-than charming in the realm of romance, for the clumsy and uncoordinated who attempt to dance like the Fun Bunch and—in this case—for the responsible students who strive to reach their potentials in the classroom but don't necessarily score highly, trying hard isn't always enough.

Teachers are asked to nominate one student that they feel exhibits the qualities of a true student without strongly emphasizing grades. The composite list of nominees therefore consists of some of those on the Honor Roll as well as those whose hard work has not translated into A's and B's. All of them deserve equal recognition for their commitment to learning.

There are around 700 students on the Honor Roll out of a total 2400 people at WS, but this “top” 30 percent are not the only ones who live up to the high academic standards of Fairfax County.

Scholarship includes much more than grades, and it's an insult to those who have worked diligently and have earned a spot on the list of Students of the Quarter to say that it isn't. I respect the Honor Roll, but I also hold the Students of the Quarter in high esteem. They deserve it.

Students differ on effectiveness of award



Erica Wilkening

Every month, teachers nominate students for the Student of the Quarter award. The lists hang on teachers' doors and office bulletin boards throughout the school.

Before you start reading this, I want to make sure you know something. I am not discrediting, debasing, demeaning or degrading the Student of the Quarter award or any of its recipients.

There is no point to Student of the Quarter. It is a frivolous attempt at commending students for their notable improvements and academic achievements. Few students ever notice or care to read the tiny purple bulletins peppered around the school. There are no announcements, teachers never point out which of their students receive the most sacred honor and, for the most part, no one even knows we *have* such an award. Student of the Quarter simply does not provide adequate recognition for students who have met the criteria needed to win the award. I understand that the award is given to students who show marked improvement in certain areas. Some students are awarded for their all-around academic achievement, something that they're already being praised for.

Some students get left out of Student of the Quarter because of the broad criteria needed to receive the award. Students who raise their grades two or three letters before the end of the semester find that only their teachers and their parents are proud of them. Those who are learning disabled or who have ADHD miss the student of the quarter train all the time. I am an “ADD Kid,” too. Kids like us get left out of most Special Awards and Super Great Job Recognition Certificates, even though most of us are pretty smart.

The “overachievers” are missing the train, too. The All-A Honor Roll receives even less attention than Student of the Quarter. The students who truly exemplify themselves by getting straight A's are rewarded with one tiny flyer next to the front office. WS does not praise their accomplishments enough. To recognize the Students of the Quarter, we should at least put the award on the announcements, or have a ceremony every semester, or hang more flyers around the school.

Student of the Quarter is not enough recognition for the students who *really* deserve it. If the award got more attention or if more students were honored, it would mean something. We can praise everyone for doing a good job. To quote a famous Coca-Cola jingle, “I'd like to teach the school to sing in perfect harmony. I'd like to award everyone who deserves it a Certificate of Achievement, and keep them company.”

Sadie semi-formal dance heats up winter

By Sunnie Ko
Inside Editor

A week filled with snow, twins and various colors came to a close on a chilly Saturday night.

The spirit week leading to WS's Winter Formal dance began on a white note. Snow from the previous Sunday cancelled all Fairfax County schools as well as the planned Pajama Day. Even with the snow and no school, the spirit day was not forgotten.

"We really wanted to [participate] in Pajama Day," said sophomore Molly Gross. "So we thought we could do two spirit days in one: Pajama Day and Twin Day."

Other twins could be seen around school including the dynamic duo, Clay Price and Brad Surdam dressed as Mario and Luigi.

"It's awesome because usually everyone knows who I am," said Price. "But when Luigi is around, everyone *always* knows who I am."

It was color filled Tuesday, Thursday

and Friday.

On Tuesday, Valentines day, the hallways were customarily filled with red, white and pink. The battle of the classes continued as class color day returned on Thursday. Finally, the school united together as students and teachers wore orange and blue.

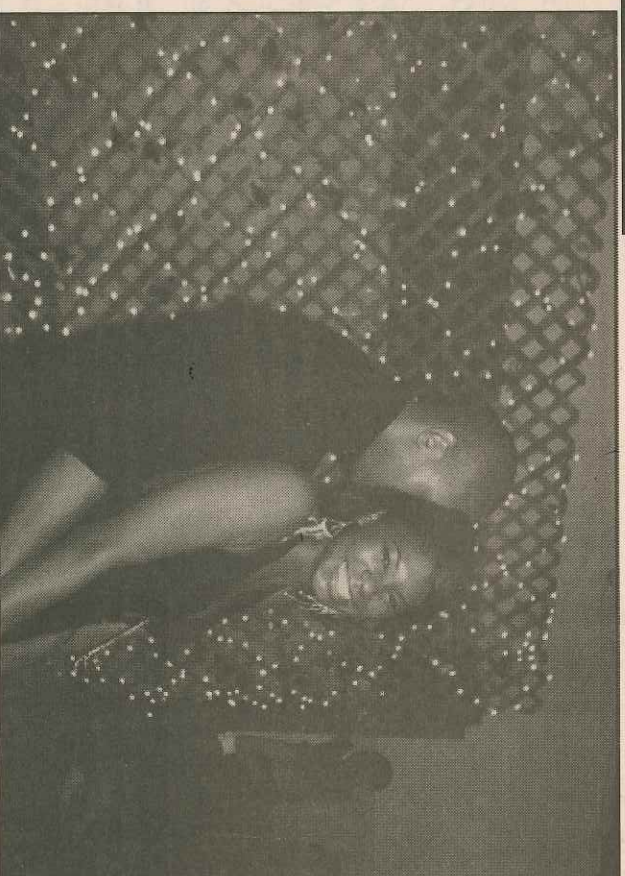
The spirit week lead up to the grand event: The Winter Formal, in the style of a Sadie Hawkins dance, gave students a chance for a second dance after the more extravagant Homecoming.

"It's nice because during the winter, there isn't anything going on," said sophomore Meredith Bernudez.

Aside from the social aspect of the dance, the SGA, which sponsored and organized the dance, has a plan for the money that was raised.

"The point of all dances are to raise money," said English teacher and SGA sponsor Simon Schatmeyer. "We want to get a new digital marquee for outside like some of the other schools have."

Schatmeyer also said that other technical advancements would be looked



Renee Newsom and her date dance in front of an SGA decorated winter-themed scene at the formal.

into as well as possibly investing the money in helping fund SGA leadership retreats.

Though the winter formal dance did not attract as many people as the Homecoming dance, students still enjoyed themselves.

"It was better like that," said Bernudez. "[The dance was] not as crowded, and the decorations were really good."

Schatmeyer stressed that he believed that the major difference between this and the homecoming dance was the appearance.

"[The SGA officers] really went all out on the decorations with the lights and the big movie screen," said Schatmeyer. "We wanted the cafeteria to lose its identity of just being a cafeteria and instead have the look of a real dance venue."

MySpace vs. MyP Parents

By Bethel Habte
News Section Assistant

With more hits than the Internet giant Google, MySpace.com has swept the nation and the lives of "wired" young people everywhere; WS students are no exception.

"MySpace has been around for a while but it's just now getting popular [with kids]," said sophomore Bianca Regan.

But recent deaths, abductions, and rapes associated with MySpace have caused worry among parents about their children's Internet activity. Richard Griffin, sophomore class administrator and Chairperson Carolyn Washington are organizers of "Concerned Parents" which meets annually to discuss issues WS students face everyday. Both deemed it necessary to hold a meeting focused on informing parents about the popular website and the risks WS teens have using it.

"[There were] fifteen parents last night and we would have had more if there wasn't a basketball game," Griffin said.

He gave a PowerPoint presentation and showed parents a sample MySpace profile filled with private information and provocative pictures. Griffin wanted parents "to know what their kids are doing on the computer."

MySpace is an online community that allows users to chat, message, and see each other's personal profiles. Students include names, ages, general interests, and may go into more detail about their lives with online blogs.

More than 500 current WS students have profiles and when expanded to include alumni, the numbers are hundreds more. Paul Rowley believes users' safety on MySpace "depends on how much information you put out there." But for sophomore Jessica Thomas, misuse of something as popular and accessible as MySpace is almost inevitable.

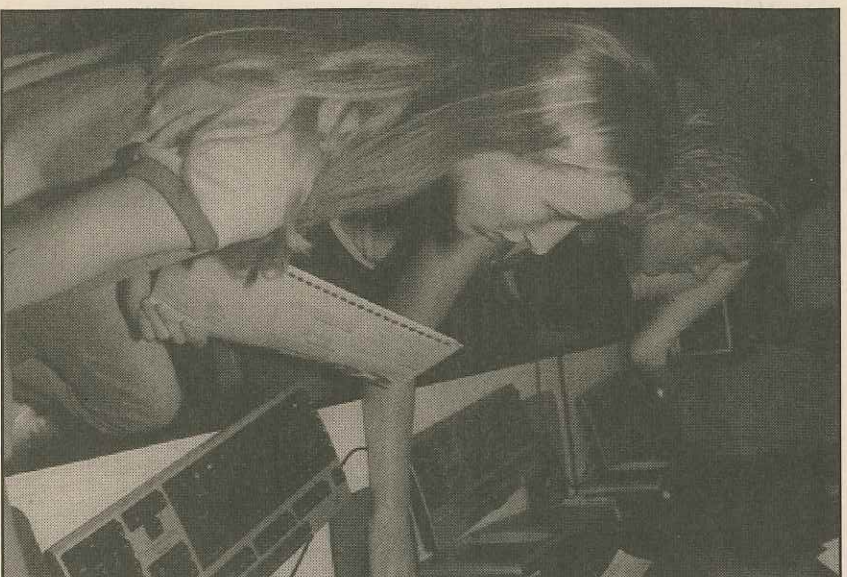
"[MySpace] is a good idea but people will always find a way to abuse it," said Thomas.

Washington agrees. The death of a Richmond college student and a Darelaine special first brought Washington's attention to the negative side of MySpace. She believes that pictures and information kids put out can give the wrong idea to dangerous people online.

"You just have to be careful," Washington said.

A recent Washington Post article has reported that colleges have been very interested in teens' profiles on MySpace which can reveal information students may not want admissions officers to see.

"[It] was another concern I had. We're not saying don't use it. Kids just need to know how it can potentially impact their future," Washington said.



Oracle File Photo
WS computers are equipped with a blocking system so students cannot access MySpace from school.

VA Representative visits WS seniors

By Laura Byland
Senior Staff Writer

On Wednesday February 22, seniors were given the opportunity to see government in action when Representative Tom Davis addressed seniors in a town-hall style meeting.

A hot topic amongst students was the opening of ports to a company under the control of the United Arab Emirates. As a member of the Homeland Security Committee in the House of Representatives, Davis has detailed knowledge of this issue.

"It is okay for a British company to run the ports, and for a Chinese company. All of the sudden an Arab company buys the British company and it is not okay. That is not a good signal to send," said Davis. "What it does to the American prestige in the Middle East is that it sets

it even lower."

Students expressed concern over many issues of foreign policy, including the genocide in the Sudan in Africa.

"What is happening in Darfur shouldn't be allowed to happen on this planet," said Davis. "Over the objections of the Sudanese government, everyone is stepping up. The US needs to take the lead on some issues. Some of these problems follow us over here."

Students brought up questions about controversial issues such as the legalization of gay marriage.

"The Virginia legislature put this on the ballot for this November as an amendment to the Constitution. It is in your hands," said Davis. "This is not an area for federal intrusion; this is an area for the states."

Davis spoke on length about the deficits in our healthcare system.

"The reality is that we can't keep putting all our money into the healthcare system. We need to come up with new strategies," said Davis. "We can be smarter about how we deliver health care."

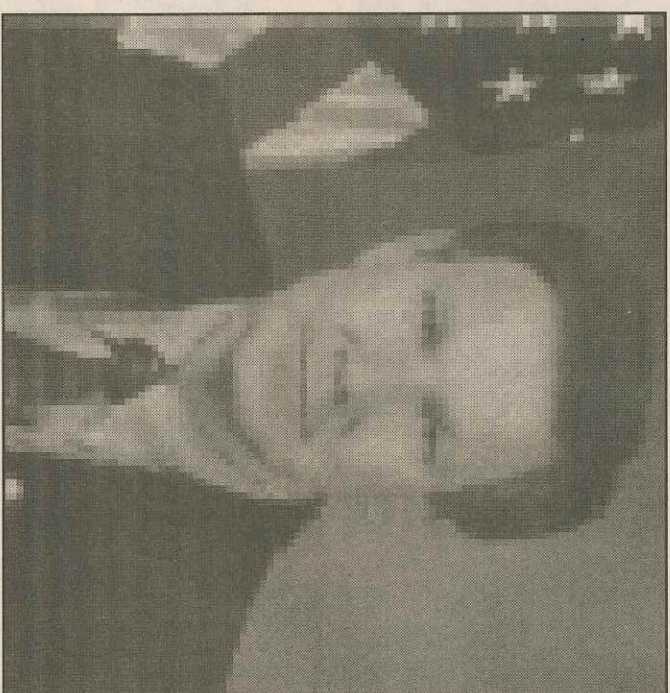
Seniors asked Davis about his opinion on stem cell research. Davis explained how during in vitro fertilization, eggs are discarded under current law.

"Why not be able to use these for scientific research?" Said Davis.

Davis was also questioned about his stance regarding abortion.

"I think it is wrong but I do not think that the government should be outlawing it in every case," said Davis. "It is a very personal decision."

As a member of the Republican Main Street Partnership, a group of moderate to liberal Republicans, Davis



Associated Press
Virginia Representative Tom Davis visited WS to discuss current issues with seniors.

says that he understands the importance of moderation in politics.

"After the election, the election should not continue. We won't solve issues with a Democrat or Republican point of view," said Davis. "I advocate sitting down to discuss problems."

Teachers' talents exposed

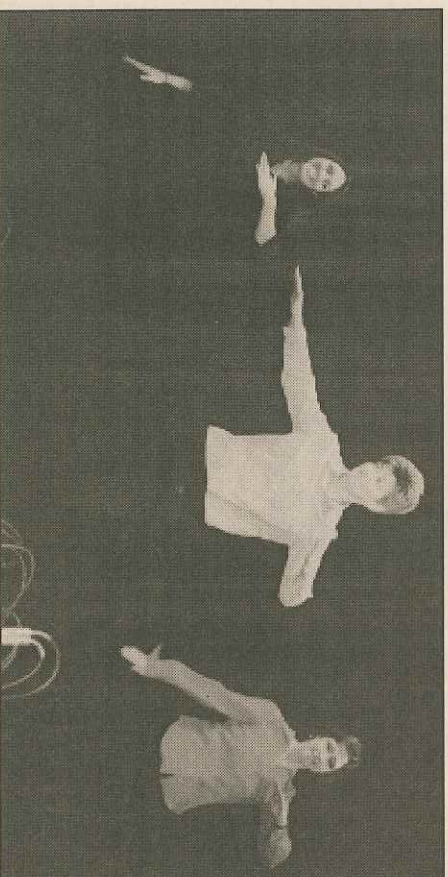
Faculty Follies flaunts staff's creativity and humor

By **Chrissy Regelski**
Entertainment Editor

The subject most students fail to grasp is not Calculus or Biology but the fact that their teachers have lives beyond WS's halls. Though it is hard to imagine guitar-playing, step-dancing, skit-acting and pie smashing in the repertoire of any of the WS staff, "Faculty Follies" proved otherwise.

"Faculty Follies" raised over sixteen hundred dollars for the Senior Prom on June 16 and was organized by special

Jamie Foxx's introductory solo and flashed a dollar bill, the team commenced to follow West's advice of "get down girl, go ahead break down." The successful performance, however, did not come without the dedication of the team members to seven to ten practice sessions over a period of three weeks. Taylor also performed a solo liturgical dance at the show's finale that she choreographed herself but judged "the step as the hardest" act she participated in.



Liz Buchheister

Teachers **Shannon Rapoza, Susan Spatcher, Drury Kevit** and **six other teachers performed a step routine chanting "OH fac-ul-ty."**

education teacher **Mary Jane Heater** and the senior class, who were called the "greatest senior class ever" by science teacher **Ed Linz** that night. Raising money, however, was not the only reason teachers decided to perform for their students.

"I like being involved," said history teacher **Regina Taylor**. "I have talents I like to share with people like in drama and dance."

Dance became one of the major talents the faculty decided to shine that night. "OH fac-ul-ty" rang through the auditorium as the Faculty Step Team, including **Lory Cohen, Drury Kevit, Barbara May, Shannon Rapoza, Marianne Razzino, Chonda Sanders, Sue Spatcher, Regina Taylor** and **Vera Woodson**, stomped to the beat of "Gold Digger" by Kanye West. After physical education teacher **Spatcher** lip-synched

"[Step] looks so complicated," said Taylor. "No, it is so complicated."

English department members **Mary Bailey, Carol Dandy, Laila Getachew, Marilyn Harriman, Daria Johnson, Kathleen Majorsky, Mary Moriarty** and

"[Step] looks so complicated. No it is so complicated."

—**Regina Taylor**
History teacher

Jocelyn Pickford danced for students with an added twist. While "I'm Too Sexy" blasted overhead, four of the teachers received sloppy makeovers from their cohorts and were then bombarded with whipped cream pies as the soundtrack switched to "Just Eat It."

Continued from Page 1
Lee rather than WS asked the school board to discontinue Rolling Valley's status as a split-feeder elementary school.

In her letter to the editor of *The Springfield Connection* in the February 23-29 edition, Rolling Valley parent **Beth Curtis** shared her opinion with school board members: "It saddens me that the only way for Rolling Valley to receive consideration is to stick out our elbows and fight with Daventry."

This is not the first time boundary issues have caused tension in the WS pyramid. Last year, the school board proposed moving Orange Hunt elementary into the Lake Braddock pyramid and the community responded enthusiastically, covering the neighborhood in "Keep Our Pyramid Strong" signs. Orange Hunt was not moved but as a result of last year's boundary study, WS welcomed about 40 new students from the south Hunt Valley area.

These new arrivals pushed WS to the brink of its capacity. According to the FCPS Facilities Office, the school's suggested capacity is 2,225. The current number of enrolled students, according to **Ronna Parrish** who keeps enrollment records for the administration, is 2,237, so the school is technically overcrowded. Still, **Smith** suggests that overall the school is able to effectively manage its full status. The

Guitar also became the staff's creative outlet as social studies teachers **Kevin Gallagher** and **Ron Maggiano** and special education teacher **Todd Johnson** each performed at "Faculty Follies." Gallagher kicked off the program with an electric rendition of the National Anthem and then the step team, was followed by the acoustics of **Maggiano**. Playing the tune of **Toby Keith's "I Love This Bar,"** **Maggiano** sang "I Love This School," making sure to note the "cheerleaders to make old men drool." **Maggiano** followed his parody by performing **Jimmy Buffet's "Cheeseburger in Paradise"** which triggered the audience to wave their flashing cell phones in higher-like tribute. Of course, education was also present as **Heater**, playing the flute, joined **Maggiano** onstage for "Ashokan Farewell" from PBS's "Civil War." As the final guitar player, **Johnson** played and sang **Bob Marley's "No Woman No Cry"** accompanied by juniors **Jared Dumble** and **Steven Flood** on percussion.

Special education teacher **Mazzie Wilson** also showed off her musical skills by playing two songs on the piano while donning glasses and a sequin hat as a tribute to the late **Ray Charles**.

Straying from music, social studies department members **Jason Croston, Maggiano, Ann Sauberman, Brad Swain, Taylor, John Thorson** and **Margaret Tran**



Liz Buchheister

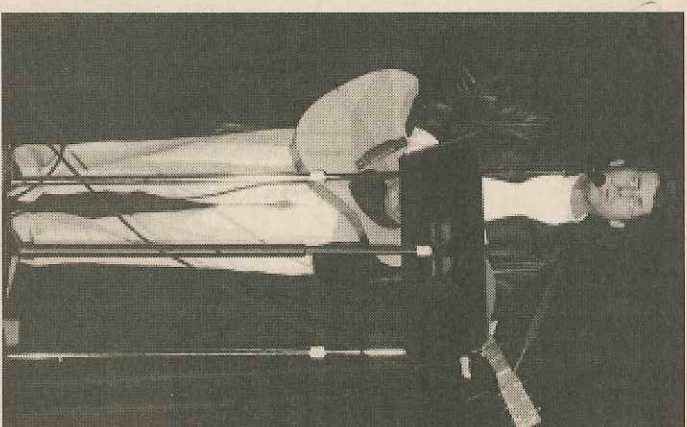
Chemistry teacher **Maria Clayton** performs a disappearing water act and pours water on senior **John Lui**.

main challenge revolves around student elective choices. To accommodate the high enrollment in two especially popular departments, music and engineering, before this school year, a small classroom was made into a storage room for the music department and an art classroom became a room for an engineering computer lab.

"What you have to do when you're crowded is look at the programs that are most crowded and try to help those programs. That's what a principal ought to do every year," said **Smith**. "They ought to look at what the students are interested in taking, what space is available and make those decisions to either come up with new spaces or reallocate spaces from one to another."

While he has no direct influence over the attendance boundaries, as a principal **Smith** has some say based on the number of pupil-placed students he approves. Each year the number of pupil-placed students is dropping, and **Smith** plans on being more restrictive in the coming years. Overall, **Smith** is happy to let the School Board make the tough boundary decisions and focus on the school's daily functions.

"I don't get involved in the arguments about what the school system should do about boundaries," said **Smith**. "I just take the position that we'll serve whoever the school system assigns to us."



Liz Buchheister

History teacher **Ron Maggiano** sang "I Love This School" to the tune of **Toby Kietli's "I Love This Bar."**

performed a comedic skit where the teachers got a chance to act like the texting and sleeping students they usually reprimand.

Comedy was the path chosen by science teachers **Maria Clayton** and **Linz** mostly because it reflected their classroom personality.

"My students are always telling me I'm like a comedian in class," said **Clayton**.

So, **Clayton** brought comedy to chemistry class as she performed a disappearing water act and caused the entire audience to sing the praises of "Double-U-A-T-E-R" to the theme of the "Mickey Mouse Club." The song, of course, was accompanied by the Mickey Mouse ears, resembling the structure of the water molecule, donned by **Clayton**. **Linz** also boasted his comedic skills in his presentation entitled "Thoughts" which laced random singing outbursts of "Aqualung" with social commentary. **Linz's** commentary included everything from unfortunate **Valentine's Day** experiences to the overseas voyage of gasoline to the United States through attacks by **Johnny Depp** and rabid hamsters.

After all their dedication to the show, the teachers still remain humble of their talents.

"The reactions I got [from students] was that they enjoyed it," said **Rapoza**. "Probably because we made fools of ourselves."



Sara Kotliff

During International Night sophomore **Pooja Malhotra** does a dance to celebrate her heritage.

Celebrating culture

Continued from Page 1

Junior **Darryl Appiah**, member of the hip-hop dance group **Fresh 5**, hopes to continue dancing as an adult as well.

"I've always looked at dancing as a possible career," said **Appiah**. "I just like being on stage and performing—showing people what I can do."

But whether they were possible future professionals or just

student who want to have some fun, all of the performers at International Night reflected the diverse cultures that make up WS.

"The main point of International Night is to get together and show the pride of the many cultures from WS," said **Mercado**.

"Even though there are many, many cultures in this school, we all make up one whole school."

Hoagie's World Celebrities say 'adios' to reality

By Sean Hogan

Features Editor

A strange trend has swept through society in the last few years. Celebrities with tons of money and power have gone crazy.

These celebrities have people to wipe their butts, people hired to take the green M&Ms out of the bag, people to wipe the green M&M taker-outer's butts and no reason to go crazy have done exactly that (no, not wipe their butts, go crazy). The spotlight of stardom has turned into a criminal searchlight for numerous celebs.

Dave Matthews Band needs people to wipe their butts, or at least keep them from dropping 800 pounds of poop on a touring ship like they did last year while crossing a bridge in Chicago.

The majority of American citizens have never dumped poop on a touring ship, nor have they shot anyone. Vice President Dick Cheney was this way until his "Cheney's got a gun" escapade where he shot a hunting buddy (no, he still hasn't dumped poop on anyone. Well, at least to our knowledge he hasn't dumped poop on anyone). I can see how he made the mistake though. All of the birds I hunt dress in bright orange vests.

While Australian actor Russell Crowe wasn't carrying a shotgun, he found a way to make a telephone into a



Associated Press

Vice President Dick Cheney receives a rifle from the NRA. Cheney shot a hunting crony on February 11.

weapon in a hotel during 2005. Instead of "Bang! Bang! You're dead!" Crowe was more like "Ring! Ring! Room service please!" and when the room service guy brought his food overcooked, he gave the guy the most painful call of his life.

Crowe wasn't the only celebrity with a phone problem. Paris Hilton's T-Mobile was hacked into last year, revealing the phone numbers of celebrities like Lindsay Lohan (whom Paris calls set up dinner plans), Ashlee Simpson (although Ashlee doesn't really answer her phone—she lets her voicemail recording do the talking) and Anna Kournikova (who saddened men worldwide by changing the number).

Celebrities need to stop taking their glamorous lives for granted. If they want to lead a life of drugs, guns and problems, they can do so without protest from me. Well, as long as they hand me the deed to their mansion and all of their money before they go out partying and throwing it all away.

Grades to green Parents reward work with cash

By Carlin Sherrill

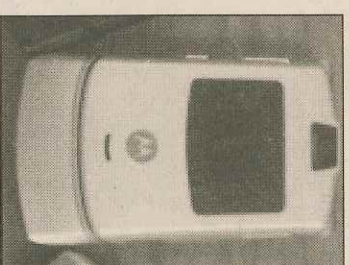
Weekend Editor

Bowl America is known for giving students free games for each "A" they receive on a report card. Sometimes that isn't enough encouragement for a striving student. While several stuck to their free games and greasy bowling alley food, others get rewarded for good grades in more lucrative ways.

For teenagers, money is usually an issue. During the weekend, they spend their money on numerous trips to Starbucks, extremely overpriced movies and expensive gas to get them from place to place. By the end of the three days, they are generally broke. So, for good grades, parents award their students with sums of money to spend any way their hearts desire.

"My parents give me money to spend on gas and going out with my friends," said senior Laura Poch. "I am normally always asking for money."

Money is the most common reward for getting decent grades. Some get more expensive items, however, like electronics, iPods, DVDs and CDs are some of the more popular gadgets



Tina Wajda
Motorola "Razr" phones are often given to students as rewards for good grades.

believe that they will study and work harder in school. Although some parents know that their peer's parents are giving their kids rewards, they still stick to their own policy.

"The most I get is a pat on the back from my parents," said Hudson. "I guess I will stick to Bowl America and take their free games."

Cash in good grades with co-op

By Alyssa Horton

Forum Editor

It is every student's dream to earn money and an easy "A" at the same time. Marketing co-operation students are able to achieve both because they get a job as part of the class.

"The Marketing co-operation program has been in the county for years," said marketing teacher Bill Gibson.

The program is only open to juniors and seniors with jobs. They work at their jobs during their 6th or 7th period (or both) or right after school. The students get paid and are also graded on their work by their employers.

"You get an 'A' for each period that you work and plus you make money," said senior Dan Park. "If you work two periods you get two 'A's, so it really helps your GPA."

The students' jobs range from K-Mart and Subway to property management companies.

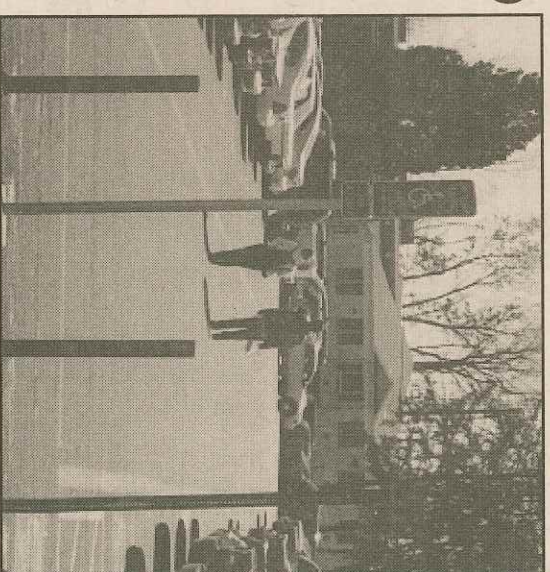
"I work for East Coast Management after school," said junior Jessie Eriksson. "I make huge newsletters, file, and deliver papers to properties."

To make sure that the students aren't goofing off at their job or not showing up at all the marketing teachers keep in contact with the bosses of the companies. "They e-mail each other so that the teachers will have daily reports.

"I stop by and see the bosses once a quarter," said Gibson.

This program is supposed to be a way for the students to get hands-on experience and apply what they've learned in the classroom to their job and in the long-run to their future careers as adults.

"It's almost like having two jobs because I have to make sure I'm doing my job right so I'll get paid and so I'll get a good grade," said Eriksson.



Liz Buchmeister
Two upperclassmen leave for work after lunch for co-op. Students get both a grade and a paycheck for the hands-on learning experience.

Five 'Fresh' men find their groove

By Stephanie Aguilar

Forum Editor

The Fresh Five are a group of young, modern and hip-hop students with a passion for break-dancing and bustin' moves. They are the newest sensation at WS and their recent performances left students craving more.

This quintet of talented dancers includes Darryl Appiah, Kevin Appiah, Jeremy Bullock, Ross Clapsaddle and Nehemiah Samuel. All of them are freshmen, except for junior Darryl Appiah. Their inaugural performance was on January 26 at the talent show.

"We heard the announcements one day and me and Ross thought about performing at the show," said Samuel.

The break-dancers started their group, originally called the Dope Boys, at the

beginning of the school year. There is no lead dancer, but the friends work together and have their own duties in the group. "We all each have special parts that we contribute," said

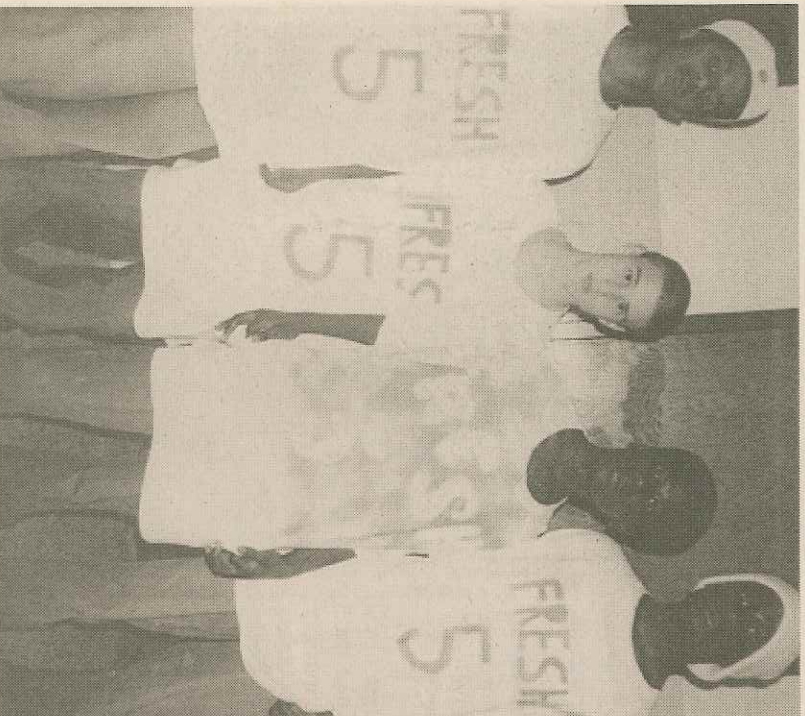
They practice outside of school so their shows will turn out perfectly. Hyping the crowd is also a big part of their performances because it gives them the adrenaline rush they need to give it their all. "We started making routines and practicing more at each other's houses," said Clapsaddle. "We just try to pump up the crowd."

Each of these dancers has their specialized talent and enjoys showing it off in their performances.

"I do the powerslide," said Clapsaddle. "I'm just here to say that some white people can dance."

WS should expect to see the Fresh Five more throughout the year as they portray their love of hip-hop through their amazing dancing skills.

"I just make the dance look fresh," said Darryl Appiah. "Chris Brown can't see me."



Tina Wajda

Fresh Five members freshmen Nehemiah Samuel, Ross Clapsaddle, Kevin Appiah and junior Darryl Appiah pose after a performance. Freshman Jeremy Bullock was not present for the picture.

Fresh Meet

Chhim got Capitol gains

By Laura Byland
Senior Staff Writer

Her students take it for granted that she will always be available for help in choosing classes, dealing with school related problems, and applying for college. During her professional career, however, Vicky Chhim was not always a guidance counselor. Before she began her tenure as a guidance counselor, Chhim was a congressional staffer on Capitol Hill for two and a half years.

During this time, she worked for two different congressmen, including David Bonior, who at the time was the House minority whip. Chhim enjoyed unusual benefits, including nearly unlimited access to the House and Senate floors.

"I was on the House floor during Clinton's last State of the Union," said Chhim. "One of my other favorite times was when I went bowling in the White House bowling alley."

After two and a half years working on the Hill, Chhim began looking into going to graduate school for policy making or getting a job working with a think tank.

"My heart wasn't in it," said Chhim. "I always wanted to feel that I was doing more to help people,

and my mentors helped me realize that I should try counseling." Chhim went on to receive her masters in counseling from George Mason University, and joined the staff at WS.

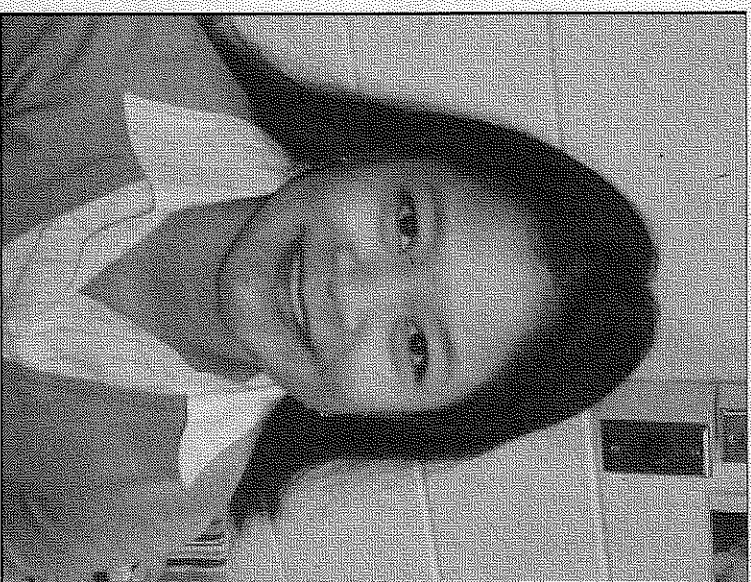
"I have no regrets about working on the Hill, but sometimes I miss the political buzz and how you are more connected there," said Chhim. "But I feel like I am where I should be. I am directly helping people here. Also, at a school, there is a more personable and compassionate atmosphere. A lot of the staff on the Hill only care about getting ahead."

From working directly in politics, Chhim has a different view of politicians than most people.

"Generally, people that are not into politics don't realize how hard members of Congress work," said Chhim. "When they leave the Hill they are not on vacation. There is always tons of stuff going on. When hot issues come up, they are there until four in the morning."

Chhim advises anyone who is interested in politics to get an internship.

"Get an internship with a district office or on the Hill," said Chhim. "Your actual time as an intern gives you an edge, and you make contacts and connections."



Erica Wilkening
Vicky Chhim was a former congressional staffer on Capitol Hill for two and a half years before deciding that she wanted to work as a guidance counselor.

Disabling common misconceptions

By Christina Sohn
Weekend Editor

A conversation with a friend caused senior Stephanie Percoco to become concerned about the misconceptions applied to disabled people.

"People with learning disabilities can try to focus as much as they can but since they have a disability, they don't always retain the information," said Percoco. "My friend didn't realize that."

Last summer, Percoco received a chance to dig deeper into the lives of disabled people while fostering the growth of her self-confidence. She was selected to attend the Youth Leadership Forum,

"The main thing I learned is self-advocacy."

— *Stephanie Percoco, Senior*

sponsored by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities. For five days in July, she stayed at Christopher Newport University with 24 other high-school students.

"It was pretty cool because a lot of the people there were from Fairfax County so I still talk to a lot of them," said Percoco.

During the conference, the participants listened to lectures from disabled people who found happiness despite obstacles.

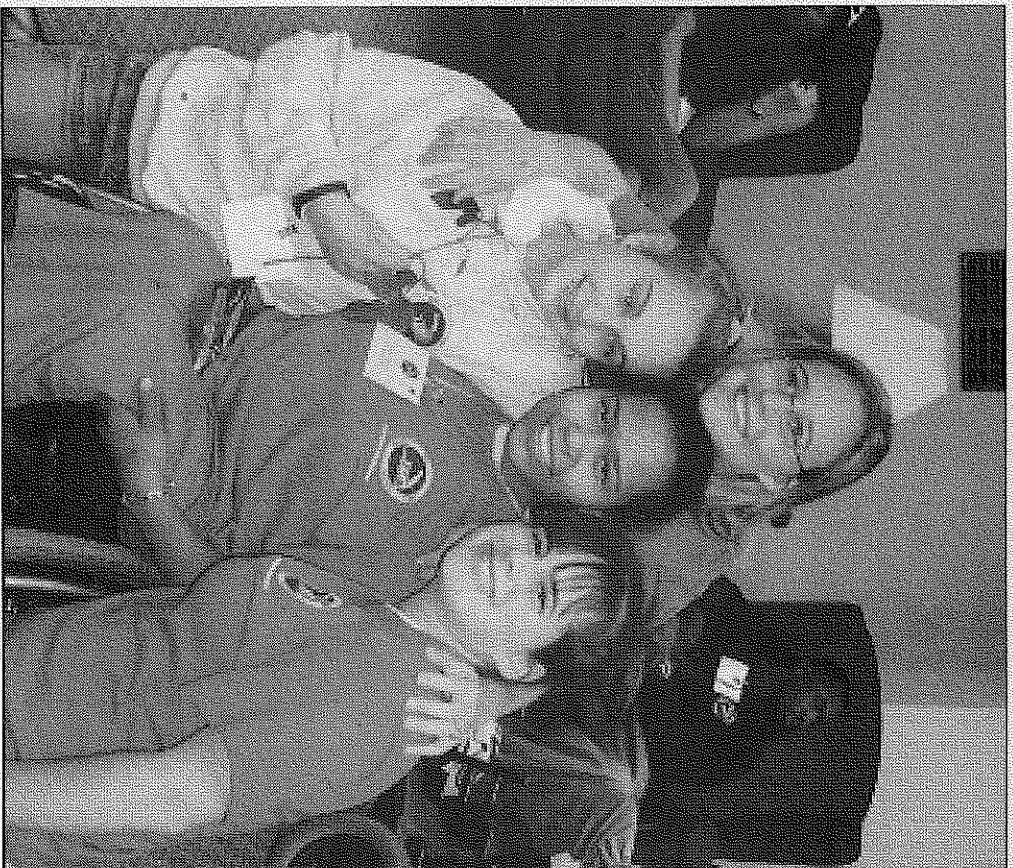
"There was this lady who was three-feet tall and she talked about how she felt that she couldn't succeed because she was short and that she would never meet anyone," said Percoco. "But then she ended up meeting someone and getting a good job."

As Percoco experienced others' lectures, she also started to sharpen her own public-speaking skills.

"We went to Richmond and we talked in front of the General Assembly at the chamber and we had mock testimonies in front of them. In my mock testimony, I said that people who don't have a disability should take a class with people who do have a disability," said Percoco. "People need to be aware about how [hard] it is to deal with a disability."

These mock testimonies taught Percoco to speak freely.

"The main thing I learned is self-advocacy," said Percoco. "If I have an issue with something, I can stand up for myself without fear of being rejected."



Liz Buchheiser

Senior Stephanie Percoco attended the Youth Leadership Forum where she listened to lectures from disabled people as well as develop her oratory skills by speaking in public.

Pushing the envelope

Katie Bourget
Oracle Editor

The man comes every day in a white truck. We are not on a first-name basis, but he will deliver my fate. He is a US Postal Service employee, and he will be the bearer of my college acceptance/rejection letters.

Having applied to seven (count them) seven schools I am expecting the same number of letters. So far, I'm 1-0-0 (an acceptance being the equivalent of a win, rejection being a loss, and deferral being a tie), but rather than relish in my sole victory, all I can think about is the six upcoming matches.

The anxiety of waiting has made January, February and March some of the most hellish months of my high school career.

While most colleges and universities promise notification by April 1 some (including four I have applied to) tease applicants with vague notification timelines like "by the middle of March" or "towards the end of February." The ambiguity is torturous.

Commentary

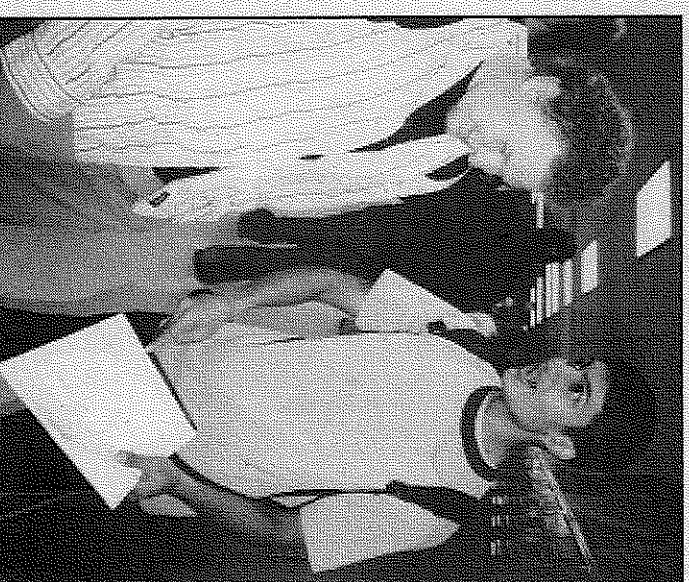
During these painful months, I have developed a new obsession. With the promise of a big envelope, or at least the little envelope saying that big envelope will never arrive, my mailbox is feeling loved (borderline harassed).

After school, I pull in the driveway, park my car, speed-walk to the mailbox and then pour because the only thing addressed to me is an offer to resubscribe to Seventeen magazine (NO THANK YOU!).

Making this situation worse is all my fellow seniors who have already received acceptance from their reach schools. I mean I'm happy for them, I really am, but

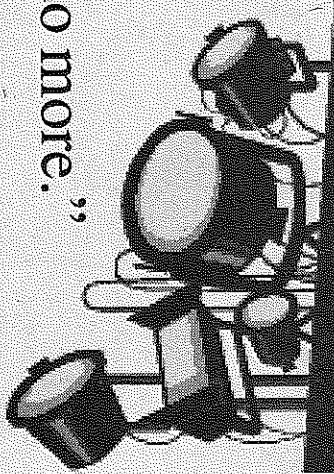
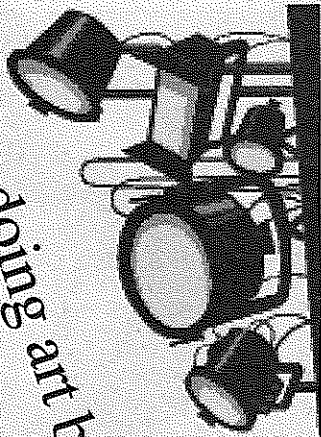
I'm just plain jealous. I want to know where I'm going to be for the next four years of my life. I'm almost at the point where I'm apathetic about the actual location, all I really care about is the end of this uncertainty.

The situation is out of my control, and I just need to be patient, as unappealing as that is. I think I'll make the best of it though and make a new friend. I'll learn the mailman's name, and maybe he'll remember mine after he sees it on the front of six big envelopes.



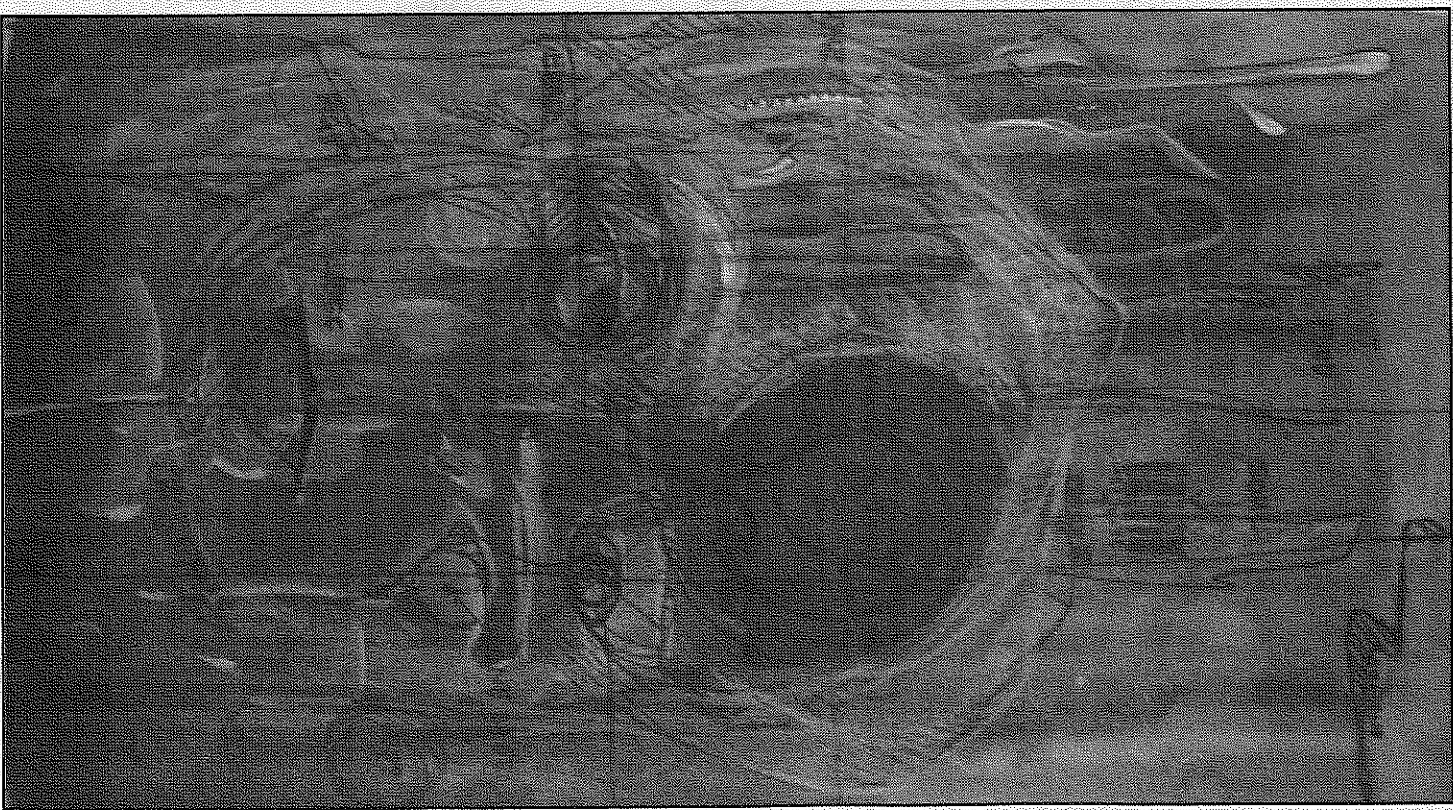
Liz Buchheiser

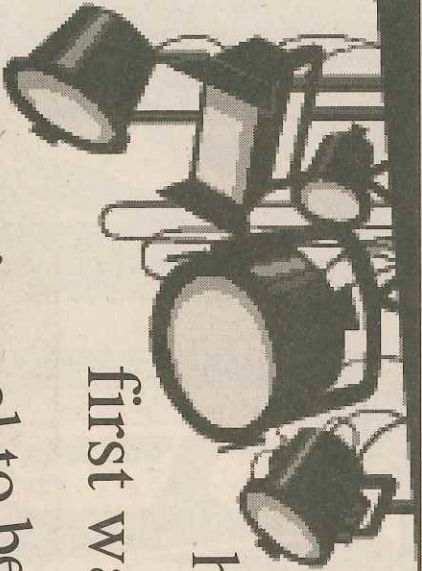
Senior Arja Deb ecstatically shows fellow senior Craig Duncan an acceptance letter from UNCW. During the spring many letters like this one will be sent to students waiting to hear from colleges.



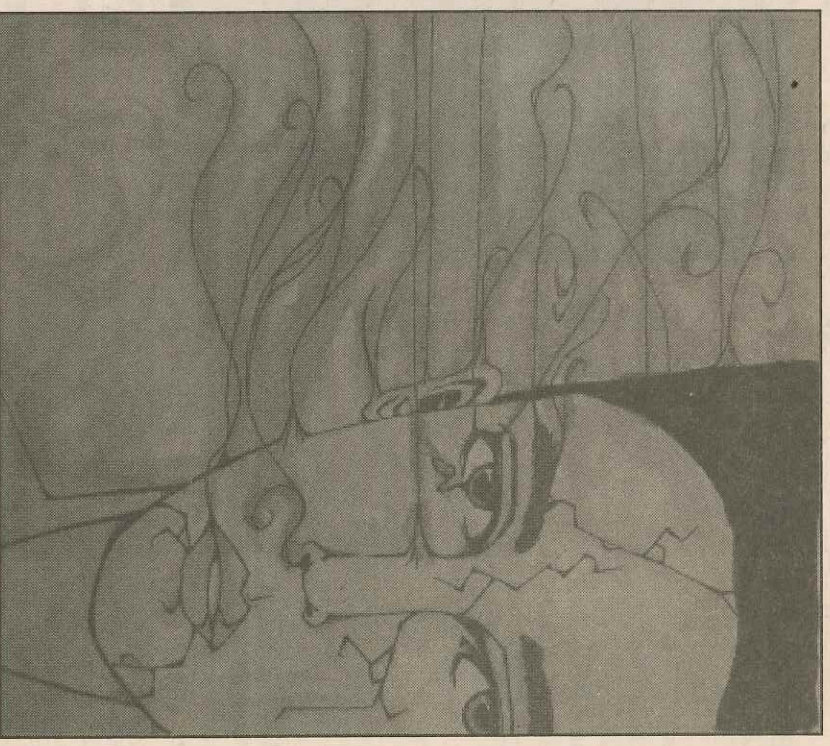
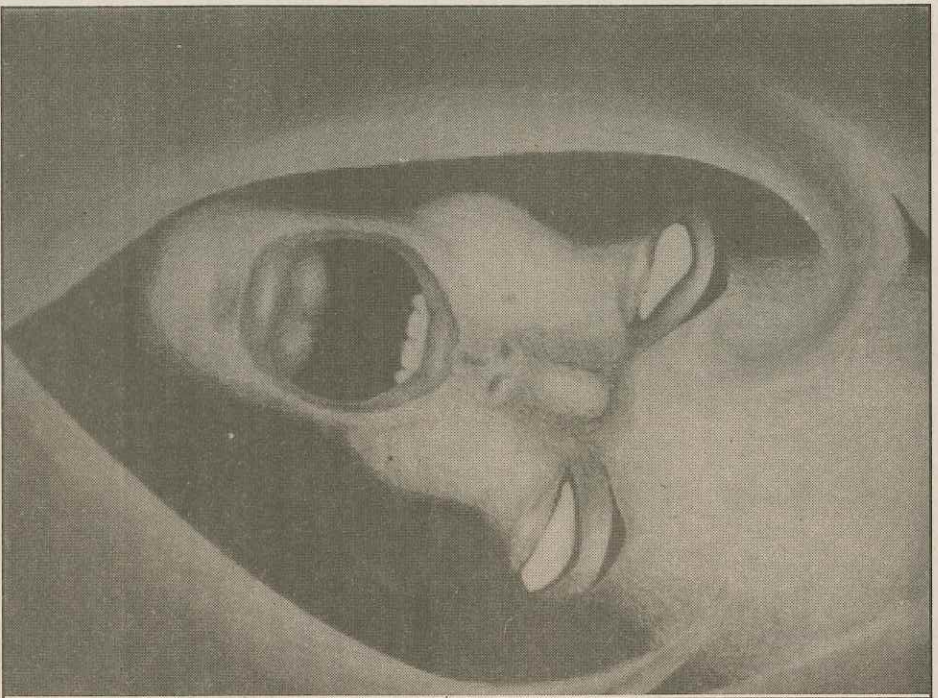
“I like doing art because I like the end result and challenging myself to do more.”

Student Spotlight
Senior Mike Cooper's art is in *The Oracle* spotlight. These pages display his different artistic talents and love for art.





“I think art, in history, was one of the first ways of communication, so it’s cool to be a part of that.”



CLASS MATRS

With course selection for next year upon us, upperclassmen pick their favorites

Pump, pump pump it up

By Linnette Lam

Senior Staff Writer

Coach Jones is awesome.

I don't know the Coach Jones from the football field, and I barely remember the Coach Jones from the auxiliary gym during freshman PE, but I loved the table-thumping, jingle-singing Coach Jones that fearlessly—and blatantly—made fun of some of the most built guys I have seen within WS's doors. The culmination of pluses associated with Coach Jones, the class full of muscular boys and the freedom to work out at my leisure has earned weight training the honorable classification as Linnette's Favorite Elective in High School.

I've had my share of honors and AP courses, and weight training was the outlet through which all of the accumulated stress could expel. For much of the year, I was the only female who participated in class (after my beloved Kim Jones left me for an SAT skills class), and it was the most horrible experience ever.

I'm totally kidding. It was amazing!

Every class began with a set of warm up drills, which consisted of doing the Dot Drill, working the core with the Abdominators hanging on the high bars, and engaging in a series of stretches that were always accompanied by the euphonious counting of one of the captains of the football, baseball or basketball teams (take your pick).

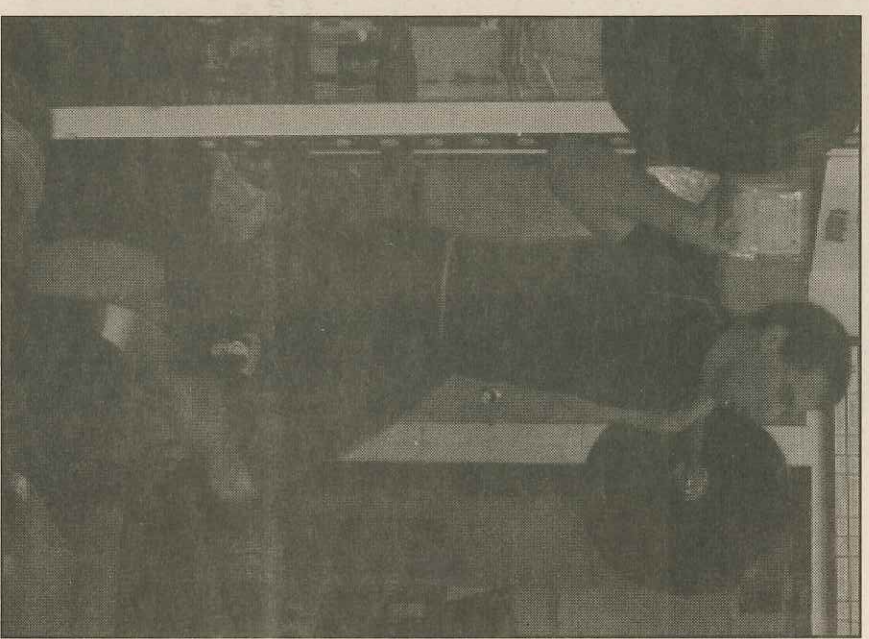
There were multiple options that one could choose from to make up a day's workout. Although there were people who chose to lounge around instead of actually training with weights (despite the course's title), a substantial proportion of the class did work.

Weight training was particularly convenient because it kept me in shape all year, whether or not I was in season for a sport. When the weather was nice, I had the liberty to run around the track until I got dizzy, jump rope outside or feel the breeze come in through the big blue doors while lifting or working with the medicine balls inside.

In between sets and various side conversations, I still had the time to study or do math homework. The class really is what you make of it; I morphed a few of mine into workout-and-study-hall sessions.

The flexibility of the weight training class created an atmosphere that was uncharacteristic of the rest of my classes. There were no deadlines to meet, no tests to study for (except for Coach Jones's annual equipment quiz and a few practical examinations) and everyone was generally in a good mood.

Maybe it was the endorphins from exercise, or maybe it was the sweaty hot boys, but whatever it was, weight training will always hold a special place in my adolescent-girl-athlete heart. I highly recommend it, fully loaded with all of Coach Jones's antics.



Junior George Sturgis "pumps it up" during a strenuous round of weight training in class.

Leah Vantiz

Don't judge yearbook by its cover

By Kristin McGregor

Junior Staff Writer

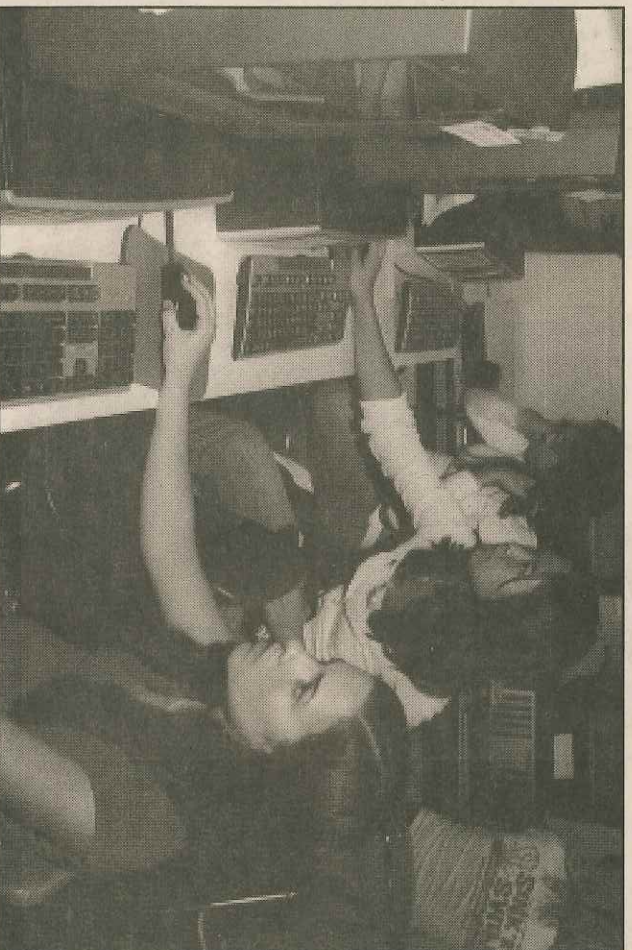
It's 9:45 p.m. on a Thursday. I'm still at school. I've got to make sure that 48 pages get out the door tomorrow to the plant and that everything goes smoothly. I still have another two hours of homework waiting for me, but I'm making the yearbook my top priority. My name is Kristin McGregor and I'm a yearbook addict.

Staying until 5 PM almost every day, was not the picture I had in mind when I applied for editor. I'm a junior, in my most critical year, and my "easy A" elective is the class I spend the most time on.

I think people have a misconception that during yearbook class we just sit on our butts. That is true, but we also create a 352 page yearbook. It takes a lot of work to make it a great one.

Every four weeks we have a deadline in which we are required to turn in a certain amount of pages. Over the year, we have six deadlines and the last one is in April. In May, we receive the yearbooks and we distribute them.

Deadlines really do "kill." Staff people are running around trying to crop pictures or get quotes at the last minute is the typical deadline day scene. I've had people cry



Liz Buchheiser

Seniors Andrea Goetchius, Linnette Lam and Laura Vantiz are busy writing stories and organizing layouts in the Journalism office. Even though Lam is not on the yearbook staff with Goetchius and Vantiz, yearbook and Oracle staffers share space.

Every other minute I spend for yearbook, makes it all worth it. I love it; the people, being in charge and learning how to work with other people. It's a lot of fun. We have parties for birthdays, holidays, deadlines and for days we just feel like it.

because of my actions and I've considered regretting doing this.

But every other minute I spend for yearbook, makes it all worth it. I love it; the people, being in charge and learning how to work with other people. It's a lot of fun. We have parties for birthdays, holidays, deadlines and for days we just feel like it.

I have learned more about myself and other people in this class than any other course I've taken. Because the people are drawn together by their passion for writing and not by what social clique they're in, it makes for a diverse class.

You're always guaranteed a couple of laughs and good times in Journalism. We're just a bunch of opinionated people who like to argue about white space on pages or if class officers should be pictured in the yearbook.

I'm proud of the work that I have done and I like having a say to what goes into the yearbook. I've enjoyed putting together this yearbook and representing the people who make up our student body.

If you have a free space in your schedule, sign up for Journalism 1. Both newspaper and yearbook are wonderful staffs to be a part of. It is a lot of work, but it's totally worth it. And hey, it looks great on your college applications.



Erica Wilkening
Carrie Meyers joined the WS staff this year and teaches our sections of AP Psychology. The class serves as an introduction to psychology and focuses on the human brain, cognition, learning and development.

AP Psych: Mind over matter

By Aaron Snow
Junior Staff Writer

Last year, as I scanned the long list of possible electives, I was unsure, to say the least, about which class best suited my personal interests as well as collegiate goals.

I sought to strike the pivotal balance between a challenging practical course that tells colleges you are a serious student without an overwhelming amount of work. It is this balance that many seek, yet few achieve, and I was beginning to fear a similar fate. Then, just as thoughts of resorting to advanced PE or international foods began to meander their way into my mind, the object of my desire was discovered: AP Psychology, the perfect balance.

Six months later, I sauntered down to seventh period into what would quickly become one of the most enjoyable classes of my junior year. Of course, this was completely unknown to me at the time, and I must admit, my first impressions of the class were not positive. For starters, teacher Carrie Myers, wore an expression that could have curdled new milk, one that seemed to invite you to talk back so she could put her fist through your face. Secondly, her opening statements included accounts of past years in which, she claimed that over 60 percent of her students had failed the first quarter. She seemed to revel at our horrified expressions and took great joy in passing out a, "History of Psychology," packet that could have easily doubled as an encyclopedia.

She instructed us to read and take notes on it for a reading quiz next class and proceeded on, eager to continue dealing out subtle hints and warnings about the improbability of anyone receiving anything over an "F" in the coming months. I left the class perplexed and frightened, sure that I had made a terrible mistake in selecting this course.

I soon found out however, that AP psychology is far from what I had feared on my first day. It has proved to be thoroughly interesting, and Myers is neither mean nor unfair. Also, despite all of the hype, 60% of her students do not fail, these warnings are merely a means of warding off less serious students. As for her facial expression, Myers explained that many people get the impression that she is angry, and that these ideas are nothing more than that, impressions.

Since that first day we have covered such topics as personality, intelligence, motivation, and brain functions, to name a few. AP Psychology allows you to better understand yourself and others. It allows you to delve into the inner workings of your mind and discover the meaning of your thoughts and feelings.

It is a class unlike math or history or science, it is a class that has true meaning to everyone, an exploration of the self. Also, for those students daunted by a heavy workload, our school offers Regular Psychology, a class for students unprepared for the rigor of a college level course. So, I encourage anyone interested in taking a journey of self-discovery to consider AP or Regular Psychology as an elective for the upcoming year.

Finding out about people and their environments

By Caitlin Laverdiere
Managing Editor

Awareness of the complexities of world cultures is imperative for understanding the relationships that govern and unite all people across the globe.

AP Human Geography is an informative course that underscores the diversity of the world population. It discusses the relationship between people, as well as their interactions with their environments. Themes include culture, language and religion, as well as a host of other topics that pertain to the study of human relationships on a world scale.

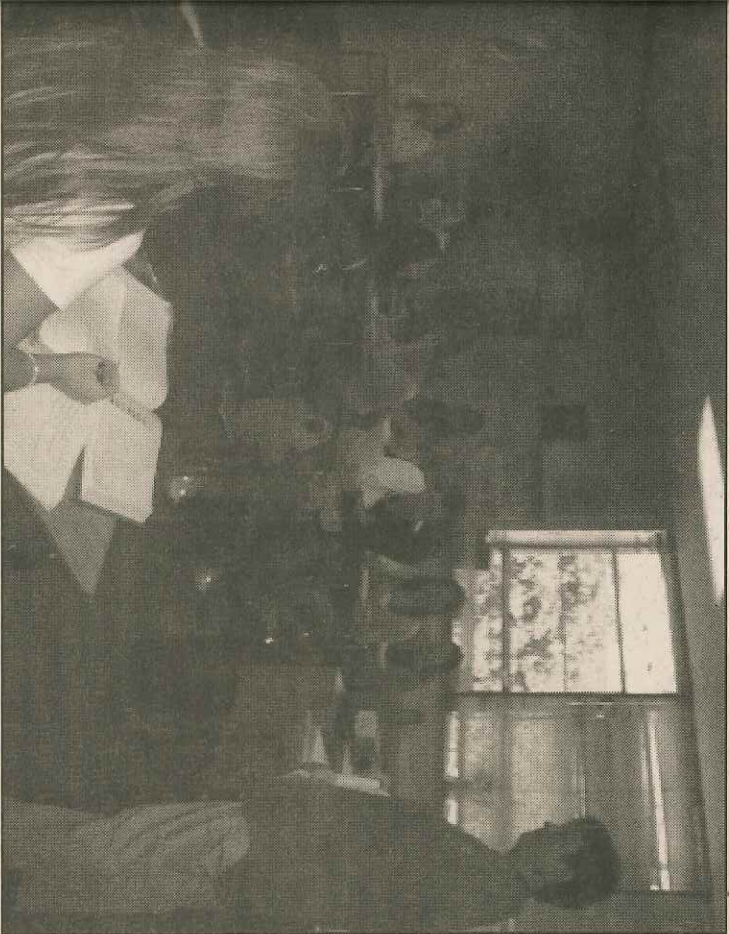
Understanding these critical human relationships that shape our behaviors

toward each other helps to broaden our perspective of the world as a whole.

In addition to being interesting, as well as pertinent – how many other classes actually correlate directly into real life? – AP Human Geography offers advanced placement credit and the extra .5 with little stress and an extremely manageable workload.

In the world of AP's, required reading that consists of, not chapters, but sections of chapters, is hard to come by. Finding twenty minutes or so to complete the homework for one class is most welcome in comparison to the required one hour plus for other AP classes.

Plus, after the AP exam, no one can say field trips to Starbucks aren't appealing.



Erica Wilkening
Jarolyn Grace lectures her AP Human Geography. This is a popular AP class because of an exciting curriculum and moderate class pace.

AP Human Geography offers advanced placement credit and the extra .5 with little stress and an extremely manageable workload.



Liz Buchheiser
Seniors Naïem Issa and Hee Jo Han dissect a cat in anatomy class.

Anatomy: the cat's meow

By Christina Araj
Oracle Editor

Getting your hands dirty while removing the hard fur that use to be a cat's coat, discovering first hand that blood vessels really are blue and red, and watching the astonished faces of students who pass by your classroom after a whiff of yellow embalming fluid; there is no better way to spend your third period than in Human Anatomy and Physiology.

But be warned: this class is not for the weak of mind or the weak of stomach. This class requires two things: a deep interest in human anatomy and a great memory.

If you are interested in the complicated inner workings of the human body, find gore and guts fascinating and are caught dissecting your chicken dinner, then this class is perfect.

Students get to learn about each human organ system, from muscular to nervous, and everything in between. The start of the muscular system marks the beginning of the much anticipated cat dissection.

No, they are not alive, but yes, you do have to skin them. This is one of the highlights for me and was one of the most appealing aspects of the class when I was

signing up for a science last year.

Students who sign up for this class, however, must be willing to put in the time outside of class to memorize and understand the material.

While class is laid back, and consists of entertaining activities to help students memorize the material, and labs that connect to the unit, outside of class is where students really need to crack down.

The tests are undoubtedly challenging, especially if you wait until the night before to study. You must be willing to study a bit each night if you want to do well. On the upside, there is very little actual homework, but like I mentioned, studying cannot be blown off. This is also reiterated by the teacher Susan Kinsley.

"It's a lot of studying; it's not a lot of outside projects or work. It's keeping up with the studying and memorizing," said Kinsley. "It's a whole new vocabulary."

The class is not only great for students interested in health careers.

"It's useful for people who are thinking about a career in health or not," said Kinsley. "It also gives you a good background on something you're going to have with you for a long time, [your body]."

WS performance picks for '06 Oscars

Best Picture

26% "Brokeback Mountain"
24% "Munich"
23% "Crash"
14% "Capote"
13% "Goodnight and Goodluck"



Yahoo! Movies

Best Actor

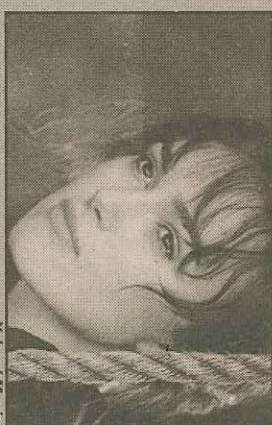
38% Joaquin Phoenix
24% Heath Ledger
19% Terrence Howard
15% Philip Seymour Hoffman
4% David Strathairn



Yahoo! Movies

Best Actress

44% Keira Knightley
30% Judi Dench
13% Felicity Huffman
7% Reese Witherspoon
6% Charlize Theron



Yahoo! Movies

Best Supporting Actor

39% George Clooney
21% Jake Gyllenhaal
18% Matt Dillon
16% Paul Giamatti
6% William Hurt

Best Supporting Actress

24% Amy Adams
22% Rachel Weisz
22% Michelle Williams
20% Catherine Keener
12% Frances McDormand

—compiled by **Aaron Snow**

Made in the '80s: Film Dedication for the Decade

'Gremlins' 1984

Although less fecal-like in appearance than E.T., the stars of the 1984 film "Gremlins" are not much to look at. Even Gizmo, a creature called a "Mogwai" and the cuddly originator of the menacing green gremlins, may be disturbing looking to some younger audiences. It is the absurdity of the film's premise, and not the scaly, crusty exteriors of its characters, that establishes its appeal. Gizmo, like some bizarre biology class experiment, will make more Mogwais if he gets wet; a delightfully quirky plot-point in and of itself. Adding to the steaming bowl of ridiculousness that defines "Gremlins" is the condition that fuzzy little Mogwais turn into demented green monsters if they eat after midnight. The fun really starts, however, after the creepy green mutants have destroyed immeasurable amounts of cars, buildings and other property. A major part of the film is the methods by which gremlins can be killed. Evidently, killing gremlin isn't like killing a roach. About an hour of screen time later, it turns out that one only needs to expose a gremlin to the sun and they start melting away like the Wicked Witch of the West. A pointy-eared teddy bear that makes little green monsters when it gets wet: 80s movies don't get much better than that.



Screenshots!

Get past the somewhat disgusting subtext that Michael J. Fox's character, Marty McFly, falls in love with the younger version of his mother and "Back to the Future" is one of the better films of the 1980s. It has something for everyone. For the nerdy, physics guy, it explores the practicality of time travel. For the car buffs, the DeLorean, pimped-out for travel across the space time continuum. Those looking for a love story will find satisfaction in the complex relationship between the high-school-aged versions of Mr. and Mrs. McFly and the anachronistically displaced Marty. To top it all off, "Back to the Future" has everyone's favorite mad scientist, Doc Brown, played by Christopher Lloyd. The ultimate blast from the past, "Back to the Future" is sure to please audiences from any time.

—compiled by **Jordy Serwin**



Yahoo! Movies

If there were ever a character in the history of cinema that more resembled the digestive result of a greasy bean burrito, it would have to be E.T. Spielberg must have only had an afternoon to come up with an idea for his next film and decided that the first thing he saw would form the basis for its main character. Unfortunately, the last thing Spielberg had eaten was a greasy bean burrito and poof, out comes the little brown alien turd. "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial", 1982 blockbuster, offered little more than product placement for Reese's Pieces and Drew Barrymore's breakout role as Gettie, little sister to the main human character, Elliott, played by Henry Thomas. Every time Steven Spielberg even hears the letters "E" and "T" in any kind of succession, all he can remember is that greasy bean burrito that began a revolution in science fiction filmmaking.

No second guessing for movie watchers

'Guess Who's Coming to Dinner' classic outlasts the '05 remake, 'Guess Who'

By **Caitlin Kenney**

Viewpoint Assistant

"Freaky Friday," "Cheaper by the Dozen," "That Shaggy Dog" and "Yours, Mine, and Ours" are all classic movies that were remade for the 21st century. Do Hollywood writers have to use remakes in order to create an interesting plot?

The classic "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" illustrates the deep prejudices

that were common between Blacks and Whites in the 1960s. Audrey Hepburn plays a young daughter, Joey, that comes home from a vacation with a fiancé that is a black doctor (Spencer Tracy). Mr. Prentice, Joey's white father, has been a black rights activist his whole life but when his daughter brings home her fiancé his real feelings comes out when he has to face his ideals. The movie received rave reviews for its message



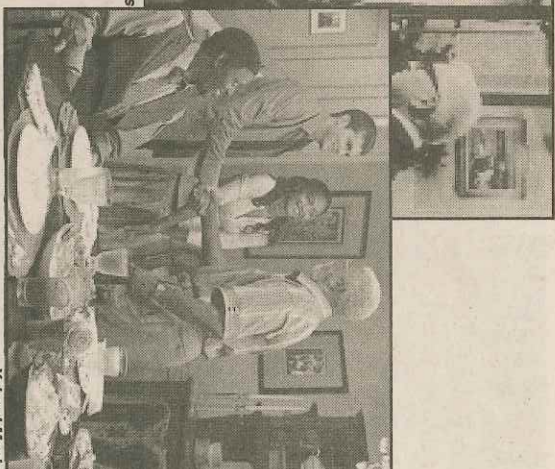
Yahoo! Movies

"Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" (above) portrayed the tension of an inter-racial relationship in 1967. In 2005, "Guess Who" puts a comedic spin on the classic dinner party.

on true love and how beauty is not only skin deep.

A remake "Guess Who" has a theme similar to "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" on love and skin color but with a different twist. Bernie Mac plays the black power house. He isn't too happy when his successful daughter brings home a white fiancé (Ashton Kutcher) who is the opposite of the qualities he looks for in a man. He doesn't play sports, wasn't raised with a father figure, and quit his high-ranking job. The movie highlights the boundaries created by interracial relationships. The modern version provides laughter when stereotypes are tested.

In both the classic and recent movies



Yahoo! Movies

a specific theme underlines the plot. It shows acceptance of the relationship first within the family and then how to deal with the world's response to such a mixture of races and cultures. Their love has to withstand every degrading look and it will define true friends.

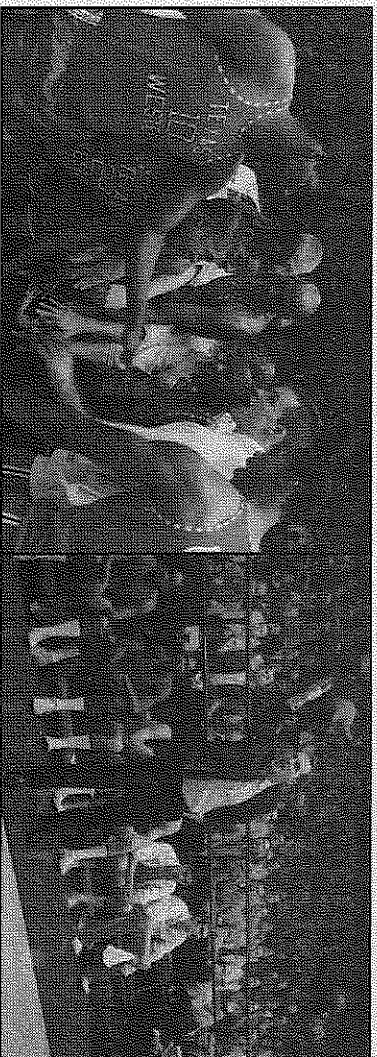
"Guess Who" gives a fresh view on the relationship between a man and a woman and the problems they face with the in-laws that don't quite get the pair. "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" has a richer plot that really shows the meaning of true love and the lengths you'll go to protect it. So instead of renting "Guess Who" from Blockbuster, I recommend the classic "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner".

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(Left) The team comes together as one to beat their opponents. (Right) Coach Haskins yells in frustration, while both white and black benched players look on from the sideline.

Film brings glory to screen

By Tim O'Keefe
Sports Columnist

Any movie that I have truly enjoyed this me at a few different angles. Walt Disney's "Glory Road" did just that. It had the climatic journey of 1966 Texas Western Miners basketball team's improbable run to the national championship.

It also had the more compelling and interesting portrayal of the racism and injustice that team endured because they play African-American players. This movie is well worth the admission, and then some.

The story centers around coach Don Haskins, the tall, intelligent and young coach, played by Josh Lucas. Haskins formerly coached girls high school basketball but gets his big break by being offered head coach at division one Texas Western. He relishes the opportunity, but wants to do things his way.

He rejected the popular belief that only white players could win in college basketball. In fact, Haskins's first move was to travel into the intercity of Harlem to recruit some of the best "playground players" to play at Texas Western. Haskins says repeatedly that he wants the best athletes to play on his team. The team and Haskins himself endures hatred because of Haskins uncommon view.

The basketball cinematography itself was less than extra ordinary. The flow of the game is somewhat choppy and far fetched. For example, there were frequent alley-oops and off-the-backboard alley oops. I know these guys were athletic, but nobody did that type of stuff in the 1960s, even if they could. It did not come close

to the classic basketball movie "Hoosiers," based on the Indiana high school basketball team. Hoosiers had a much deeper, dramatic and emotional feel. The music, images and overall feel to the game action was similar to the ambience of other sports movies like "Miracle," "Mighty Ducks" and "Remember the Titans."

The real juice of the movie was the racism and prejudice. For example, in one scene the hotel rooms of the African-American players were trashed and had blood smeared on the walls stating, "N***** must die." This was a little surprising to see in a Disney movie, but at time it gave a more raw view of the racism at the time than similar sports movies like "Remember the Titans."

The only problem I had with the race issue was the way the movie seemed to exaggerate in the championship game against Kentucky (an all white team coached by legendary Adolph Rupp, who many viewed as a racist). In reality Haskins started five African-American players because they were his best players, not knowing the racial or social ramifications. The movie made it seem that he started five African-American players on purpose to prove a point that they could win by starting five African-American players.

The good thing about "Glory Road" is that you do not have to be a sports nut to understand or enjoy this movie. The heart is centered around the social ramifications Texas Western had to deal with because of having a majority of African-American players.

Anyone who either loves basketball, is interested in the civil rights era or just relishes a good story, should watch "Glory Road."

Readers witness true 'Experience'

By Katie Costello
Features Editor

The *Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*. The title is strange, unique and intriguing, much like the book itself.

The author, Tom Wolfe, writes this edgy non-fiction novel about his experience with the Merry Pranksters during the psychedelic era of the 1960s. These Merry Pranksters led by an ex-actor named Ken Kesey of people with a background in the thing in your mind. I advocate a user expand the

Wolfe follows down on the form a tight-knit community of people from all over Hell's Angels. I share that they call *The Trip* across count painted bus, wearing and Day-Glo paint video cameras, as well pictures so that Kesey to document how effective LSD is at making everyone cooperate and live peacefully



disamborder/f

The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test, is a book by Tom Wolfe (above) about the experience of using LSD, or "acid."

lets readers into their world and *The Experience*.

He paints you a vivid portrait of how advocates of the psychedelic movement refused to let the conservative public repress their views on how to live freely and in the present. Although not a user of the drugs, he does an amazing job of getting into the minds of these acid heads and helping the reader to understand the trippy inner workings of Kesey and his Merry Pranksters.

The title is strange, unique and intriguing, much like the book itself.

Oracle Anti-Picks 'A Million Little Pieces'

Plagued with fraud and lies, *A Million Little Pieces* has quickly become a disappointment to millions of readers. The alleged "memoir" was recently denounced by one of its strongest supporters, talk show host Oprah Winfrey, who apologized to viewers for defending the book's credibility. Author James Frey is accused with having fabricated certain relationships and exaggerating facts vital to the story. In a piece meant to encourage rehabilitation, it is difficult to find inspiration from fake events and made up characters.

The December issue of *The Oracle* featured *A Million Little Pieces* as suggested reading, because it was believed to be a real life tale of recovery and hope. After the discovery of Frey's fabrications, however, *A Million Little Pieces* no longer presents this inspiring message.

'The Grudge'



Hoping to thrive on the enormous success of "The Ring," producers hastily created "The Grudge" in order to feed the horror movie frenzy that developed in 2004. Unfortunately, those producers followed "The Ring" too closely when making their next film and forgot to add the originality needed to distinguish good scary movies from downright awful ones. "The Grudge" borrows many of its thrills, such as choking noises and mysterious flies in an attempt to repeat the box office winnings of other modern horror films. Casting Sarah Michelle Gellar was another fatal mistake made by "The Grudge" crew, who should have chosen a fresh face to fill the lead role. "The Grudge" did have moments of terror but it ended up looking a little too much like previous horror hits.



lyncade

'Autobiography'

Ashlee Simpson's debut album, "Autobiography," is nothing short of catastrophic. Although it originally dominated the Billboard charts, the record was soon marred by Ashlee's infamous lip-synching scandal on Saturday Night Live. The CD lacks deep thought and is devoid of meaningful songs as evidenced by one popular chorus line, "You make me wanna la la." Another song, "Shadow," features Ashlee complaining about her sister Jessica's fame. While a minority of listeners may actually feel sorry for the spoiled star, likely more have bigger issues to deal with than a lack of attention. Overall, "Autobiography" fails to connect with its audience and Ashlee Simpson does not demonstrate the talent necessary to survive in the music industry.

—Compiled by Jenny Taylor

Eat gourmet at a beach house

Cozy and comfortable Coastal Flats offers delicious foods at expensive prices

By Christina Sohn
Weekend Editor

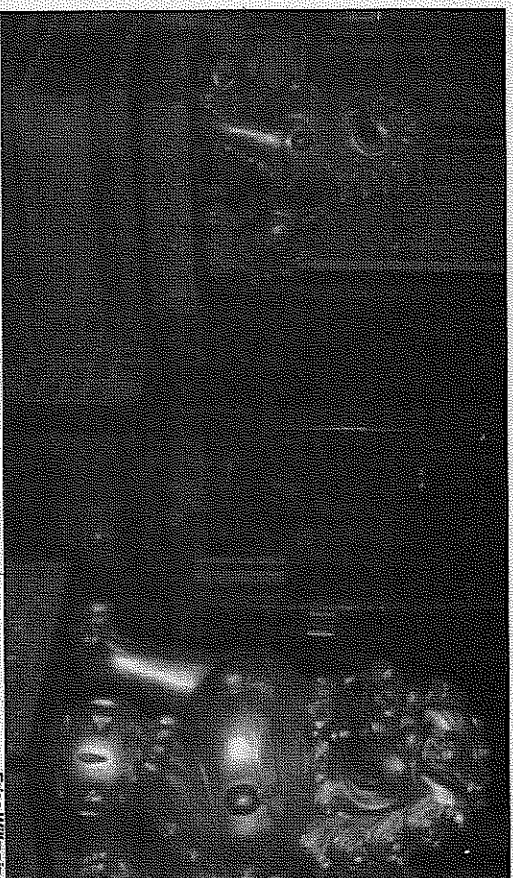
Right in the heart of Fairfax, Corner stands Coastal Flats, a Great American restaurant that reminds customers of summer nights by the ocean.

This attractive restaurant is shaped like a small beach house with sparkling lights on the porch and a "mermaids only" sign on the garage. The welcoming aura of coziness continued when I walked through the grand revolving doors.

The interior was designed romantically with a couple of modern touches. Different shades of brown found in the tables, walls, and cushions evoked a sense of warmth. Colorful lights and mermaid figures hang from the ceiling and one wall is covered in intricate paintings of summer life.

My company and I waited for about ten minutes for a table. When our time was up, we were pleased to find that everyone sat in booths. The seats were extremely comfortable and the booths added to the intimate environment.

The first thing I tasted was the fresh bread, which was warm and delicious. The Chop House salad was extremely refreshing with a hint of spice that enriched my mouth and awakened my senses.



Erica Wilkening

At first glance, the two roaring lion statues seen out of place in the shopping center across from Hayfield Secondary School, however they entice customers to enter the House of Dynasty's relaxing and elegant environment.

House of Dynasty rules the taste buds

By Colin Embrey
Sports Columnist

Convenience and satisfaction are this Dynasty's specialty.

House of Dynasty appeals to people looking for a good dinner. The wide selection of food along with the elegant setting provide a perfect time to relax and eat. If you are looking to get away from the hectic work day and enjoy a peaceful and satisfying meal, this is the place to go.

There is a serene atmosphere inside, with dim lighting and authentic Chinese decorations interspersed throughout the restaurant. The menu includes different types of meat, soup and vegetables for the whole family to enjoy.

To start, the fried wontons provide a tasty snack before the rest of the meal. Soup connoisseurs should try the Triple Delight soup, which includes chicken, baby shrimp, beef, snow peas, carrots and bamboo shoots.

Next comes the main course. You can choose from a wide variety of seafood, meat and vegetables. The Orange Chicken, Sesame Chicken, or General Tso's chicken each come with unique tastes from their respective special sauces and each comes with a side of rice. You can also get

My main course, the Hickory Smoked and Grilled Black Angus Rib Eye Steak, was served with mashed potatoes and small roasted mushrooms. The meat was very juicy and tender and the creamy mashed potatoes were neither too sweet nor too salty.

I also tasted the Wood Grilled Filet Mignon and the Hong Kong Style Sea Bass. The filet mignon was extraordinarily tender and it seemed to melt in my mouth. The sea bass was served with soy sherry broth, scallions, and sticky rice. This healthy meal was tinged with an Asian flavor that made it unique and tasty.

For dessert, we ordered the Warm Flourless Chocolate Waffle. This was served with vanilla ice cream and toasted almonds. It was a delectable dish that topped off an amazing meal.

Although I found the experience to be pleasing, there were a few drawbacks. I thought that the bar in one corner of the restaurant should be a part of a different floor. It was very chic, but as the night went on, the noise level grew as the more suits came for happy hour and the techno music got louder. This noise may not bother some, but for me, it seemed to prevent an atmosphere of relaxation and ease.

The menu was pricey so I think this restaurant is only for special occasions or for those who are able to afford shelling out twenty dollars for one meal.

different types of Lo Mein if you want a noodle combination. The shrimp, scallops, pork, poultry, beef or mixed vegetables give an abundance of delicious Chinese cuisine that will fill you for the night and leave more for leftovers.

The meal itself is affordable for the quality and quantity. The restaurant serves

There is a serene atmosphere inside, with dim lighting and authentic Chinese decorations dispersed throughout the restaurant.

enough to fill you up and still have plenty more after you are done. The average meal is about 20 dollars per person but for such a delicious meal, it's worth the money.

If you can't make it to the restaurant, which is located in the shopping center across from Hayfield Secondary School, the carryout meals are just as good. So when you get home from a hard day of school, or a hard practice, call the House of Dynasty at 703-922-5211 if you have a craving for delightful Chinese food.

Potbelly Works: reflective trek to the original 'Wreck'

By Jenny Taylor
Sports Editor

In a time when sandwich shop chains like Subway, Blimpie, and Quiznos have all begun to appear identical, it is refreshing to know that at least one place has kept its originality.

Potbelly Sandwich Works started out as a small antique store in Chicago during the late 1970s. Since business was often slow, the owners sold sandwiches and desserts to customers in order to increase their overall profits. Word quickly spread about the delicious sandwiches and eventually the antique business died out as the owners focused more on preparing their famous food.

This unusual beginning has helped create an unrivaled atmosphere in all Potbelly Sandwich Works stores, which continue to use antiques as interior decoration. Live music also adds to the relaxed mood, making Potbelly the perfect place to meet with friends. Its location in Fairfax Corner is ideal for a quick meal after a movie or in between shopping.

Potbelly's signature items are its toasted subs, made to order and served on fresh rolls. Their trademark sandwich, known as the Wreck, is prepared with salami, roast beef, turkey, ham, and Swiss cheese. For customers looking to cut



Erica Wilkening

Coastal Flats is a part of the Great American restaurant chain. It is located in Fairfax Corner and one also recently opened in Tyson's Corner.

For an experience at Coastal Flats, however, you get a lot for what you pay for. The food is gourmet and delicious and the service is always eager to please. My meal filled my stomach perfectly and it was not greasy or overly rich.

I would recommend a dinner at Coastal Flats for anyone who wants to temporarily escape to the beachside and taste amazingly delicious foods.

down on calories and carbohydrate drinks, sandwiches can be made "skinny" when the bread is sliced once more than usual.

Potbelly's famous soups and desserts help to complement a lone sandwich. Customers can choose from old-fashioned chicken noodle or hearty vegetable soups made daily. A wide

Word quickly spread about the delicious sandwiches and eventually the antique business died out as the owners focused more on preparing their famous food.

variety of shakes, smoothies and mals are also available to those with a sweet tooth. Their tasty yogurt smoothies serve as healthy snacks and come in nine different flavors. For a more traditional take on dessert, Potbelly offers homemade cookies, ice cream sandwiches and root beer floats.

With a varied menu and unique atmosphere, Potbelly Sandwich Works has all the makings of a great restaurant.

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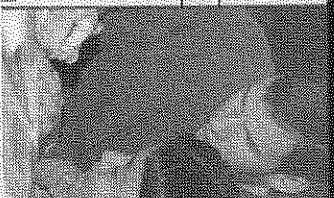
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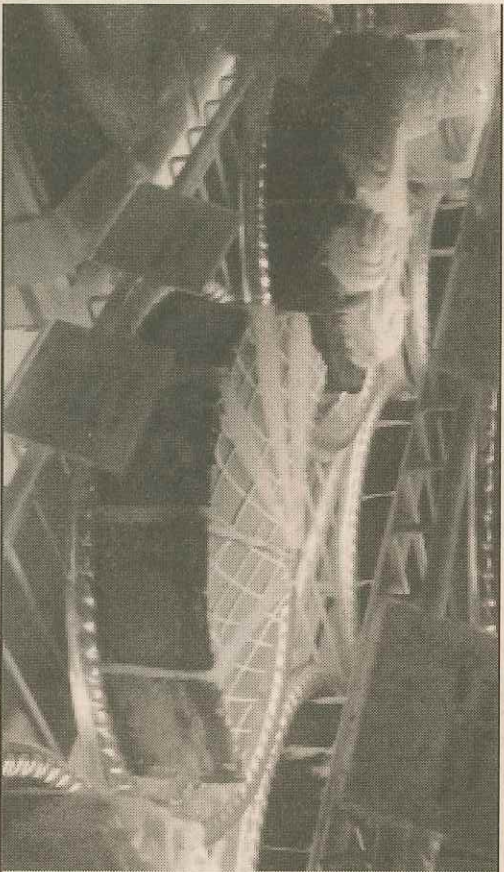
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Erica Wilkening

The Cheesecake Factory has been making homemade cheesecakes since the 1940s. Some go to the restaurant to taste the delectable cheesecake, while others just go to the local Costco to buy frozen ones.

The cheesecake is just the beginning

By Cam Rushton
Sports Editor

In a world ruled by crazy diets, dreadfully thin celebrities and low-fat, low-calorie, low-carb food, indulgences are a rarity.

A restaurant has emerged, however, to save everyone and fill stomachs again. The Cheesecake Factory, located in Arlington and Tysons Corner, offers great food and even greater desserts.

Although it is quite a trek, the food and atmosphere of the restaurant provide an excellent reason to stay a while, enjoy a meal and even return for seconds.

Always known as an excellent cook, Evelyn Overton of Detroit, Michigan created her original Cheesecake recipe in 1942. Her neighborhood loved it and, with the help of her husband, Oscar, the Overtons established a small cheesecake shop in the late 1940s. Evelyn baked and managed the office, while Oscar concentrated on selling the cakes and building new accounts. By 1978, the Overtons had earned enough funds that their son, David, opened a new store in Beverly Hills, making Evelyn's cheesecakes even more famous.

Today, The Cheesecake Factory offers 35 different kinds of cheese cakes, 26 specialty dishes and an extensive menu

that includes pizzas, pastas and breakfast omelettes. Hungry customers know to expect nothing but the best from the restaurant. Although a little on the pricey side (prices range from \$5.95 to \$26.95), the appetizers are widespread, the salads are healthy and the meals are phenomenal. Save room for dessert though because the cheesecakes will literally make anyone jump out of their seat.

For those who can not or do not want to drive to Arlington or Tyson's Corner, The Cheesecake Factory offers pre-made desserts at Costco Wholesale. Although not fresh and only a few flavors are offered, the cheesecake is still top-quality.

When customers step into the store, they are welcomed by decorative columns, hand-painted fabrics and cherry wood and oak. The welcoming atmosphere adds to the great food and desserts and makes the restaurant a great place to sit down and enjoy the unbelievable food that is served.

Customers may not have an idea of what they want to eat at the restaurant, but one thing is for sure: walk through the doors at The Cheesecake Factory with an empty stomach, a full wallet and an ear-to-ear smile.

Baja Fresh is short on taste

By Carlin Sherrill
Weekend Editor

Vicky Ragan, Julie Robert and I ventured into Baja Fresh for a romantic Valentine's Day dinner for three. My other friends had all told me that I would like it and that I would enjoy the fresh taste the restaurant was famous for. I know myself, however.

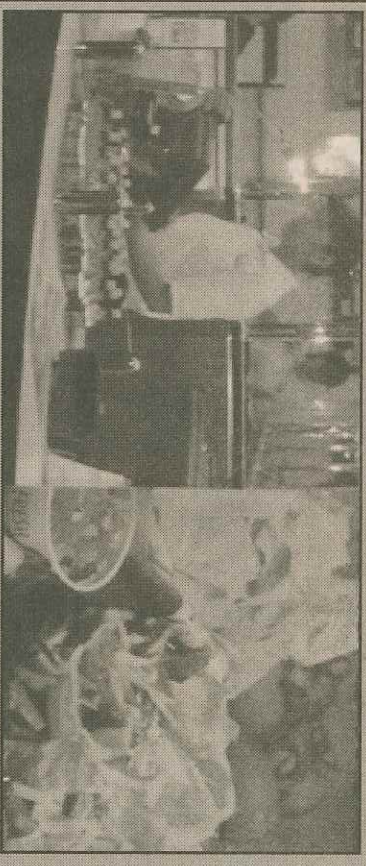
I am one of those people who orders the same three things at every restaurant I attend and the person who always has to specially order the toppings and sides with each meal. I am the person all the waiters dread serving. But I was ready to go out and try this so called "freshness" Baja offered.

I was expecting a Chipotle-like atmosphere, my favorite restaurant. Any restaurant where I can order specifically what I want on my burrito is an excellent choice for me. When I glanced at the menu, however, I realized I would actually have to order something that already had toppings on it! I was not ready for such a big step! As I stared at this complex menu, I asked Vicky if I could order a burrito with rice and beans and only that. She reminded me that I was not in Chipotle, and I was here to venture out and try new foods. I finally ordered the three taco meal, two chicken tacos for me and

a fish taco for Vicky. As I waited for my food to be prepared, I complained that Chipotle would not take this long to make my delicious burrito. When I finally got my food, I realized that they came with a small portion of plain nacho chips. Well, at least I knew I would like those.

My chicken tacos were not the exceptional food I was expecting. I thought that the tortillas were hard, and the chicken was too spicy. They did, however, taste better without the weird tasting (and smelling) green things inside the taco. You can call me picky, but I just know what I like. Vicky did not enjoy her fish taco either, although she did enjoy the parts that weren't drenched in a weird orange sauce. Although I did not like the new food I tried, at least I had tried something.

So my Valentine's Day dinner consisted of the three of us dining on chips and water. You may think that I am boring because I do not try new foods, but I just like to be safe when putting things in my mouth. Although Baja Fresh did not compare to my beloved Chipotle, it definitely had the "freshness" that it claims to have. I think, however, I will stick to plain chips and water next time I go to Baja Fresh. That's all the freshness I can stand.



Erica Wilkening

A rather empty Baja Fresh shows that the Mexican restaurant is not all it is cracked up to be. The delicious food, pictured at the right, draws customers in, only for them to be disappointed of their meal.

Ooodles of noodles

By Andrea Maxwell
Inside Editor

When your driving down the street with your stomach rumbling, of course the only thing on your mind is what to eat and where.

Initially the greasy french fries and hamburgers from McDonalds may grab your attention, but the idea is quickly dismissed after realizing that it does not even taste good. Fortunately for all of the fast food junkies out there who fear stepping into a kitchen and making food of any sort, there is a delicious and healthier option just a few minutes away.

Noodles & Company is a restaurant that is entirely devoted to noodles of every kind. As soon as the door opens, the starchy aroma of pasta and bread fills the air. Right inside the door is a huge copy of the menu. There are fourteen different pasta dishes to satisfy any craving. Each dish is clearly marked with a square, triangle and/or a circle to tell customers whether it is vegetarian, spicy or kid-friendly.

In addition to noodles there are also a few noodle-less entrees as well as salads. After the difficult decision is made, one walks to the counter where they are greeted by the smiling faces of multiple employees. In addition to the main course entrees, there is also the option to buy one of the gigantic brownies or rice crispy treats that are located on the counter near the register. After the order is placed, you are given a sign

with a number on it for your table, so the order can be delivered.

"I like Noodles & Company] because I feel like I am traveling the globe in my mouth," said senior Max Brooks.

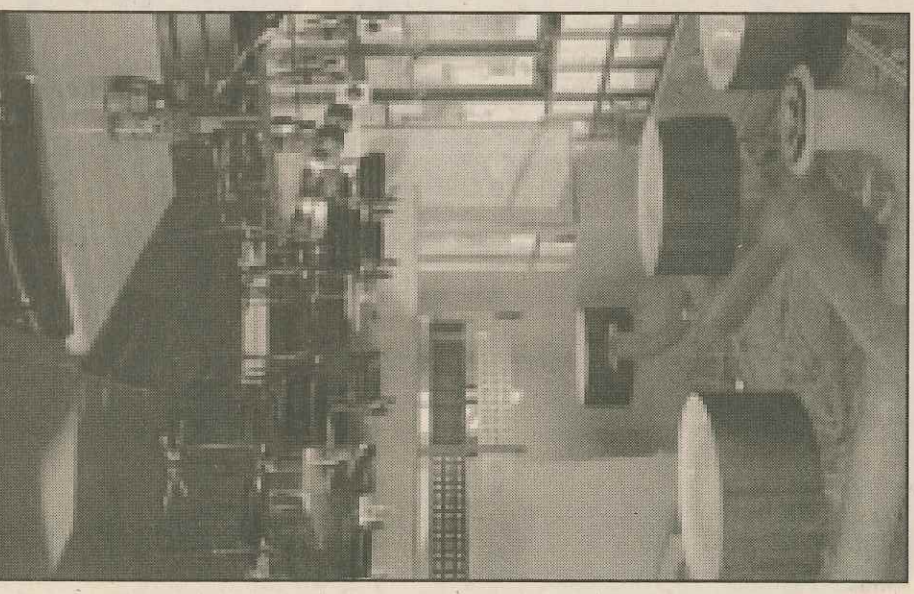
Seating is located both inside and outside. During the lunch rush, the entire place is filled with students from George Mason, business people grabbing a quick bite to eat and groups of moms chatting away. Although it is a "fast-food restaurant" your order is delivered on ceramic plates with metal flatware by one of the members of the large staff promptly after finding a seat. The restaurant is kept incredibly clean and user friendly. It is definitely not the typical, "afraid to touch the table because who knows what has been there" kind of place.

Not in the mood to eat at the restaurant, no problem. Any of the dishes are available to go in a matter of minutes.

Noodles & Company is good news for the typical teenager who walks around with seven dollars and a few pennies to last them the entire day. The cost of a heaping bowl of noodles ranges from \$2.75 - \$5.95, so a lunch out will not empty your wallet.

There are two locations near WS, one at Pentagon Row and the other on Main Street in Fairfax.

Next time your stomach is rumbling, visit Noodles & Company where a soothing environment, quick service and a heaping bowl of noodles will be there to greet you at the door.



WesternBusiness.com

Noodles and Company has a modern touch, which adds to its appeal to customers. The environment, however, is second to the restaurant's tasty noodles.

BRRR! NBC's Olympic coverage ices over viewers' hearts

By Josh Lipman
Managing Editor

My main priorities at eight a.m. on a Sunday are sleeping, sleeping and sleeping. Apparently, NBC thinks they should be different.

Thanks to a six-hour time difference between Virginia and Italy, NBC will broadcast the gold medal men's ice hockey game at eight a.m. on February 26. It must not have occurred to the schedule maker that a six p.m. start time in Torino would allow for a more bearable 12 p.m. start time back on the East coast.

Given ice hockey's already low television ratings, NBC can optimistically expect 10 half-awake people to watch the game nationwide. Out of those 10 people, about two can be

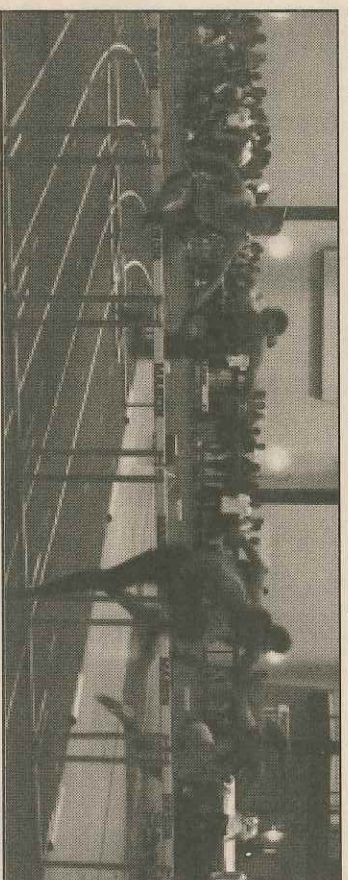
expected not to mistake the puck for Bode Miller asking them to join him on his great quest to inflate his giant ego. Mr. Miller, please take the opportunity based on what I am writing to join something bigger than yourself: The real world.

Commentary

At least ice hockey culminates on a weekend. The majority of Olympic events occur entirely on weekday mornings when students are still at school. Those interested in a particular sport are expected to sift through hours of replayed footage on NBC or they have the option to give up and just read the recap on the

web. NBC has the poor bobsted fans watching curling and the poor luge fans watching speed skating. It's hard to get excited waiting for scores from judges on tape when they have been up on the internet for five and a half hours.

So here is my suggestion: Continue to ignore the winter Olympics. We have no time to be inconvenienced by them and curling is not a real sport anyway. Instead, wait for the summer Olympics when viewers can see LeBron James dunk on a random guy from Chile. This is much better than watching team USA's ice hockey squad tie Latvia, because if the game is too boring we can always play "count Allen Iverson's tattoos."



Lean Vanatta
The boys' varsity track team finished in third place at the Patriot District finals.

Smart.

"I'm getting a head start on college at NOVA. The professors are great!"

Sylvia E.



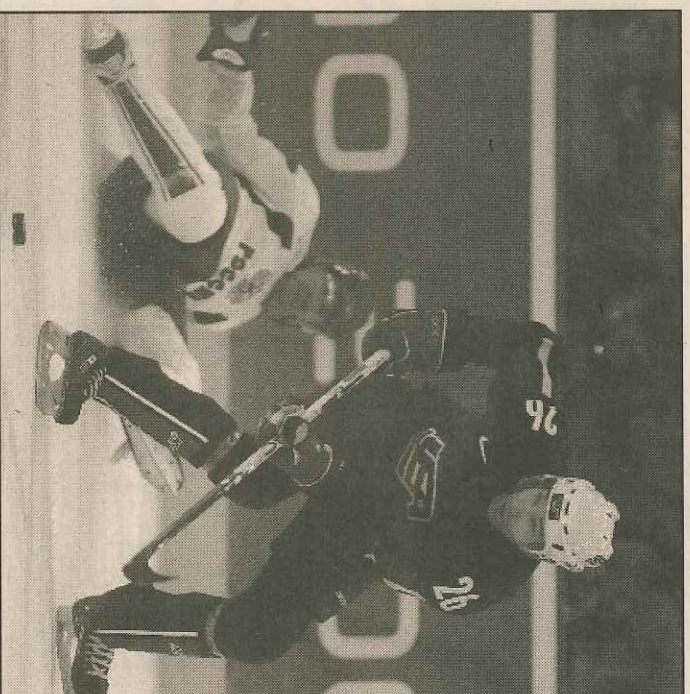
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NBC Sports

NBC has been criticized for airing the 2006 Winter Olympics during primetime, instead of when the events originally occur.

Track team lags behind in Patriot District competition

By Kelly Sipple
News Section Assistant

Each year, a student who runs on cross country in the fall and winter/spring track runs approximately 1300 miles in a year, excluding those students who do not participate in long distance events. On Wednesday, February 15, 2006, all of the miles run everyday after-school paid off.

"I think both [the girls and boys] teams master-exceeded my expectations," said head coach Mark Campbell.

The boys team finished third overall in the District competition, a disappointment for most members.

"We had higher aspirations [for Districts]. But we did everything we could have done. Lots of guys stepped up this year especially compared to last year," said junior Alex Martis, who finished third in the mile with a 4:38 personal best.

Numerically, the boys team finished just behind their opponents.

"We finished three points behind Lake Braddock," said senior Matt Hamilton

who competed in the Patriot District Championships. "We were hoping that we could win but then we realized that West Potomac was just a lot better."

Other team members had a different view of their loss. "God wasn't with us," said junior Anthony Trueheart sarcastically, who finished fourth in the 1,000 meter race. "Really, we just fell short."

Team members are optimistic about next year.

"We're all mainly juniors so we're to looking forward next year," said junior Mike Spooner, who finished first in both the 1,000 meter race and 3200 meter race and the District Champion 4 x 8 relay team.

Despite the low placings of the track team, the hearts of the team members were in the right place.

"I was very proud of both teams," said Campbell.

Regionals took place on February 25. "People either did really well or really poorly at Regionals," said Campbell. "Trish Friederich, Mike Spooner, and Rosemary Barber all did well and will be moving on to the state competition."

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Spartan Profile:

Pui Sham

Varsity Girl's Basketball

By Cam Rushton

Sports Editor

When did you start playing basketball? Who or what got you started?

I have always been shooting around with my uncles and cousins since I was very little, but I started playing organized basketball when I was in second grade. At that time, I was in this after-school SACC program so we always went to the gym to play basketball. The teacher saw that I could shoot really well and thought I should consider playing in a league. That's when I really started.



taller than you. When you're small, you have to be quicker and more skillful than them so the height doesn't affect anything.

Have any of Coach Gibson's rants or yelling been directed at you throughout the season?

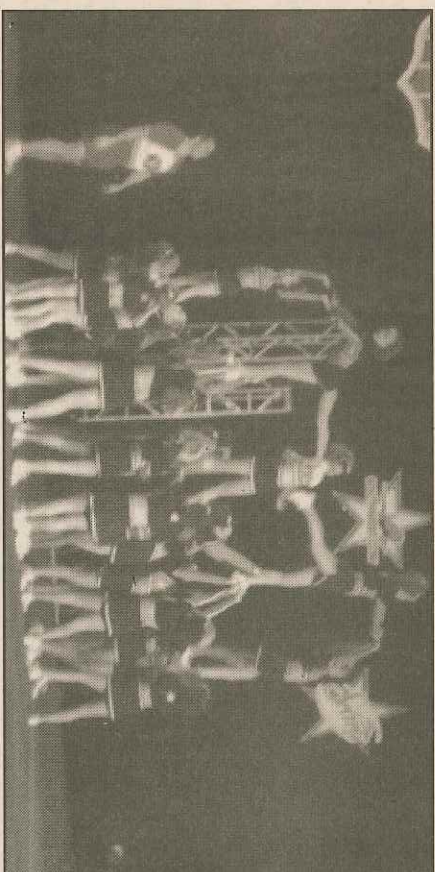
There were times where I get caught up with the post players inside when I really wasn't supposed to be there because of my size. I learned pretty quickly that I was supposed to stay out in the perimeter.

Many people have said you have one of the best shots on the varsity team. Where and how did you learn to shoot?

I used to shoot two-handed when I was little. Then as I got older and stronger I learned how to shoot one-handed with the help and training of a former Lady Spartan #10, Sara Carey Prock, who graduated in 2004. That's a reason why I have number 10 [on my jersey].

Since the varsity team has a strong freshmen backcourt, does that mean the team is going to be great in the next few years?

I think that that varsity is going to have a great team in the next few years because we have improved so much this year and we have also gained experience. This season has been great and we have learned a lot from our coaches and each other, so I think that will lead to a great future for the Lady Spartans.



WS cheerleaders perform with their club team as they execute a routine during the NCA National competition in Dallas, Texas.

Carrie DeClark

Cheers to WS's squad

By Laura Byland
Senior Staff Writer

The dream of an entertainer is to perform in the spotlights in an arena before thousands of people. WS cheerleaders were lucky enough to have this exhilarating experience when they performed during a cheerleading competition in the Dallas Convention Center from the 11th to the 13th of February.

Girls on the WS cheerleading squad went to Dallas with their club teams to compete against cheerleading squads from all over North America.

"Dallas is the cheerleading capitol of the U.S.," said junior Lauren Lawson. "At the competition there was about five hundred squads within one building. I have been a cheerleader for five years, and this was the biggest competition that I have been to."

The teams performed on Saturday and Sunday, and the teams that made it to the next round performed Monday too.

Many cheerleaders were inspired by the routine of the Georgia Allstars, who went on to win first place in the level

five division.

"Winning the huge squads was breathtaking," said Lawson. "They blew you out of the water. Their stunts and tumbling were so advanced. Some of the squads were national and world champions. You want to be put in their shoes. You strive to be them, and to do what they can do."

While the Spartan cheerleaders did not win first place, they were proud of their performance.

"We performed better as our team pulled together," said Webbers.

Some cheerleaders were nervous performing before such an audience, but as they started their routines their nerves dwindled. To others performing comes naturally.

"I am used to it," said Webbers. "The adrenaline pumps you up."

The greatest reward for some cheerleaders was the camaraderie and friendships formed during the competition.

"My favorite part of the competition was getting to know the cheerleaders," said Lawson. "I got to hear about their cheerleading experiences. Some of the friendships that I made will last a lifetime."

Seconds make or break games and legends

By Tim O'Keefe
Sports Columnist

Time was ticking, with only three minutes left in the heated playoff game, the WS basketball team trailed Annandale by three points, Junior Kevin Kilday took the game into his own hands; he hit a three pointer, made a pass to a streaking junior Tony Hall for a layup and made a steal to narrowly pull WS past Annandale. In the clutch, Kilday, the 6-1 guard who has been on varsity team since his sophomore year, wanted the ball in his hands and came through.

"I just had confidence in myself that I can make the shot or make the right play," said Kilday. "I wanted to put our team's fate on my shoulders."

How players perform in the clutch, when everyone is watching, in the closing minutes and seconds of a game, is what people truly remember. It makes a good player great.

Looking back, the moments that I remember always seem to be the last what happened in the final seconds. I remember former Phoenix Sun Rex Chapman fade away three against the Sonics in the 1996 NBA playoffs. I remember several players who had buzzer-beaters in the NCAA tournament, like Bryce Drew's lean-in-three seed Mississippi State. And of course countless Michael Jordan clutch shots that I could write one, or maybe two columns on. All these guys wanted the ball and knew they were going to make it. In basketball especially, the final ticks of a clock tell distinguish players.

On the other hand, for all those magical moments, there are those names and moments which are

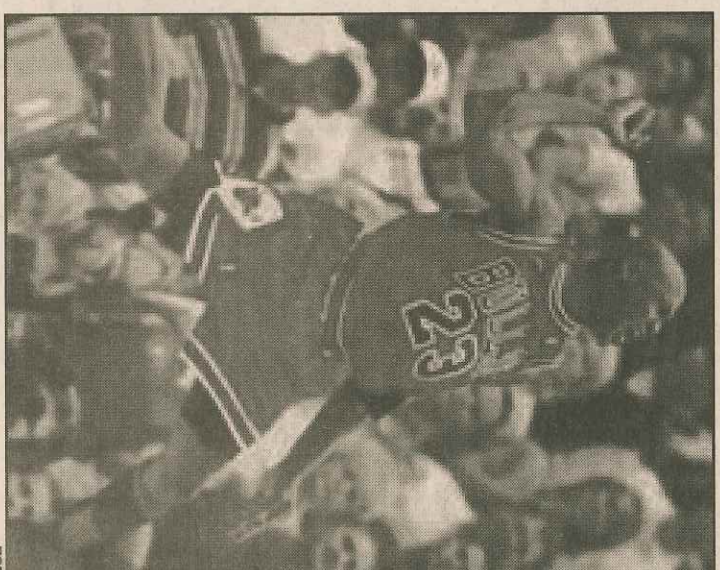
infamous. Unfortunately player's whole careers can be summed up into a few seconds of a highlight.

From former Boston Red Sox Bill Buckner having the baseball rolling through his legs, as the New York Mets won the 1986 World Series, to former Michigan Wolverine, and now Philadelphia 76er, Chris Webber calling a time out, when his team did not have one, yielding a technical foul in the 1993 NCAA championship and eventual victory to North Carolina. These somewhat comical moments, serve proof that some players react differently in the clutch.

And who could forget when poor Scott Norwood field goal kick was, "no good, wide right." Norwood, who attended James Madison University, by the way, has been blamed for the Buffalo Bills Super Bowl XXXV loss. All moments that follow the player, no matter what they do the rest of their career.

O'Keefe's Beef

Watching Kilday take over the playoff game reminded me that in the clutch players become legends, or sometimes goats, and those moments are ingrained in our minds forever.



ESPN

Arguably the greatest athlete of all time, former basketball player Michael Jordan performed extremely well when a game was on the line.

Maybe that is why sports itself is so compelling; it is unpredictable. The joy of victory and the agony of defeat are as fundamental in sports as the conflict of good and evil, heaven and hell are in life.

The NCAA tournament is just around the corner, and is my favorite sporting event of the year because of this bipolar range emotions between the team, from the one which runs onto the court after a player hits a running three pointer at the buzzer to the other side of the court where players are hunched over on the floor in shock, realizing that their basketball career is over.

Watching Kilday take over the playoff game reminded me that in the clutch players become legends, or sometimes goats, and those moments are ingrained in my mind forever.

Blondes have more fun while wrestling

By Sarah Alvarez
Sports Assistant

A greater interest in wrestling has created an influx of wrestlers this season.

This season's success has been attributed to strong leadership, an industrious work ethic, and untiring commitment not to mention very blonde hair.

Wrestling's popularity has resulted in a 10-8 record, which they have prided themselves in since 1991, long before any of these wrestlers probably even thought about wrestling in high school. There are 10 new wrestlers according to sophomore Danny McCluskey. He boasts that they have never had a losing season. The wrestling team has not had a losing season in 15 years.

The success has been a result of several admirable qualities the team and its captains possess.

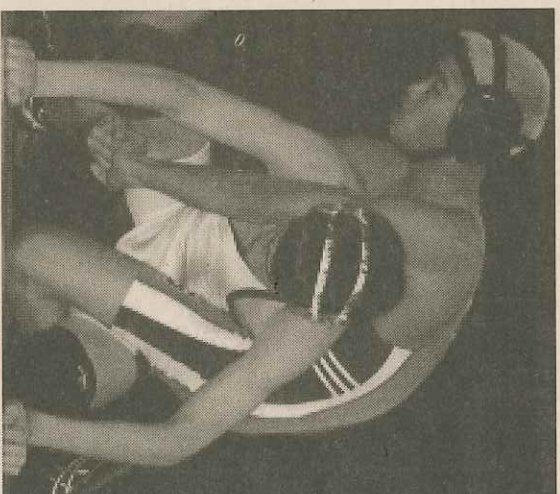
"A good core of hard-working people," said junior Robert Leporatti, was a reason for the team's overall success, "Good captains, good leadership, and good coaches."

Underclassmen on the team have stepped it up this season in hopes of filling out all weight classes in competition.

Filling weight classes has been a challenge that the team has faced because some of the strongest wrestlers graduated last season.

"We lost seven seniors last season, we thought it would kill the team, but a lot of wrestlers got better in the summer," said McCluskey.

Making weight was also a challenge for the wrestlers, and often times JV wrestlers were bumped up if they were a mere one pound over the weight restraints.



Litellouch
Senior Brian Hottel wrestles a South County opponent at a recent meet.

"Losing weight to make weight," said McCluskey, was a challenge for him. The day of a match he could not eat anything until after the weigh-in. Through all of the challenges they were able to unite under bleached blonde hair.

The hair makes them stand out from the other athletes in the school and district.

"It's to intimidate the other team and for team unity," said McCluskey.

Wrestling poses a challenge to the athletes.

"It's tough because it's one on one, if you win it's self pride and joy, but also helps the team," said Leporatti.

Guevara juggles school, sports

By Nicole Simpson
Entertainment Assistant

High school can be hectic enough with schoolwork and a social life to tend to. When varsity soccer and basketball are thrown into the equation, the results can be increasingly chaotic.

Junior Rodrigo Guevara has willingly fallen victim to this frantic predicament. Juggling a normal teen's life, school and two sports require dedication. Guevara is still learning how to adjust to these time-consuming commitments.

On an average day, for Guevara consists of attending school, starting homework at home, a two to two and half hour practice (depending on the season) and then returning home to homework and studying, with maybe some leeway in between.

In his freshman year, Guevara participated on both the JV soccer team and freshmen basketball team, mainly positioned as point guard in basketball and midfield during soccer.

Balancing out his Monday to Saturday basketball practices, Monday to Friday soccer practices, homework and studying constantly becomes even more challenging, even between seasons. Preparing for the next season, is always another thing on Guevara's to do list.

"[In the off season] I have to work out, I go running outside and lift weights," said Guevara. Although Guevara doesn't have any future sports goals at the moment, he might shoot for a soccer scholarship.

Challenging AP courses to donate extra time and effort to are a new obstacle in Guevara's daily life.

"I usually got A's and B's but now I'm taking a lot of AP's so it's a lot harder to make time to do homework," said Guevara. "I have to stay up really late

and I am always tired."

Soccer and basketball have held Guevara's interest since he was four years old, and he has no plans to give up either sport, with or without the time management

obstacles of his schedule.

"It's pretty hard to manage my time," said Guevara. "[But] I keep playing because my friends are on the time and I enjoy it."



Erica Wilkening

"I usually got As and B's but now I'm taking a lot of APs so it's a lot harder to make time to do homework."
—Rodrigo Guevara,
junior

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Is this really good-bye, Richard Walsh?

By Liz Weiderhold
Oracle Editor

I have some grave news from *The Oracle* office. Richard Walsh has been put on "The Black List." "The Black List" includes students who have appeared more than their share of times in either the yearbook or our fine newspaper and are not allowed to be interviewed, pictured or mentioned anymore. Richard Walsh was the first person to be put on this huge piece of pink poster board. His name took up half the board because he apparently appears on every page of the fall part of the yearbook, and when he showed up on the field hockey spread in that plaid skirt, the editors had had enough. His name was bolded, underlined, punched, bitten and called rude names on countless occasions for just being Richard Walsh.

I was outraged. I have never admired a human more in my entire life than Richard Walsh. And that includes Mother Theresa and Gandhi. But I don't need to tell you this because, statistics show that nearly 250 million people in the United States alone have heard of Richard Walsh, even if it's a different Richard Walsh than the one I'm talking about.

But around our school, *everybody* should know him. He gives great advice, like how he recently told me, "I think it's a good idea if you stay at least 100 yards away from me at all times...it's not you...it's

the restraining order." I mean, I could have ended up in jail if I hadn't known that! It's amazing how his advice always helps.

In addition to always knowing the right things to say, Richard Walsh also always does his homework *and* other people's homework, finds out the good qualities in an individual unless he finds out you don't like him (in which case he hates everything about you) and he has become the paragon of a friend.

I don't ever remember formally meeting Richard Walsh. We have no beginning, but I knew that every time he talked to me I felt special, even though he was calling me "Louise."

Eventually, when he learned my name, I realized he was special. He is a comedic genius and a disturbingly devoted athlete and a remarkable (but extremely slow) test-taker and a hero in the smallest ways every day. He's a teacher's dream student and best of all, he has *absolutely no idea*.

I love Richard Walsh, but I am certainly not alone. If there ever were popularity in the school, he would be the really nice Regina George (did I mention his obsession with "Mean Girls"? So that's for you, Richard Walsh.)

So, this is my plea: Get Richard Walsh off "The Black List." He is in the yearbook and newspaper because he deserves to be. Don't avoid him, embrace him...except for me, who unfortunately cannot embrace him because of that freaking restraining order.



Lauren Colferky



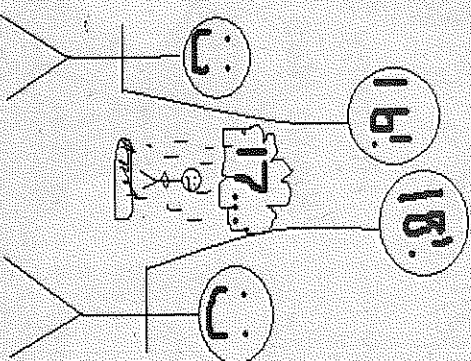
Molly Ousting



Lauren Colferky

His final appearance in our student-run publications (savor these...I know I will.)

Stevie's Story



NOT SO

Liz Weiderhold

SWEET 17...

By Stevie Florino

ETC Editor

Every age has it's ups and downs, but 17 is like driving through the desert; nothing exciting.

Age 13...cool, you're finally a teenager.

Age 14...you can now officially classify yourself as a high-schooler.

Age 15...your driving privileges are getting closer; you can obtain a permit at fifteen and a half.

Age 16...YOU'RE FREE! You can now drive on your own!

Age 17.....

Age 18...the legal age! You can now vote, buy off commercials, buy and smoke cigarettes (if desired) and get into da clubs.

Age 19...the last year of your teenage life.

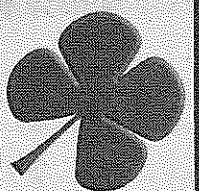
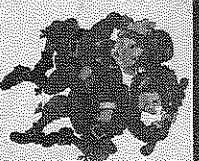
Age 20...you can have the accomplished feeling of being alive for two whole decades.

Age 21...I think you know what happens now.

So the question is, what is so great about 17? This question popped into my mind a few days before my 17th birthday on February 22. I just couldn't pinpoint anything that was exciting about turning 17. I mean, think about it. I guess there's the fact that you can now get into rated "R" movies without having to sneak in, but seriously, what is so great about the age 17?

Have you or do you love being 17? Did you or do you hate it? Tell us what you think. Submit a short explanation to room 215 by March 13, 2006, and we just might publish it in the next *Oracle*.

March '06



"Et tu, Brute?"

Jules Caesar

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3 Interims/ Track States @GMU	4 Huga GI Day	5 Healing From the Inside Out Day	6 Winter Sports Banquet	7 Stop Bad Service Day	8 International Women's Day	9 Panic Day
10 Junior Sack Lunch	11 SATS	12 Girl Scout Day	13 Boys Soccer @ Stonebridge, Girls Soccer vs. Stonebridge	14 Pi Day	15 Ides of March	16 Boys Lacrosse @ Fairfax, Girls Lacrosse vs. Fairfax/Hoegie's Birthday!
17 St. Patricks Day/Boys Soccer @ TJ, Girls Soccer vs. TJ	18 FullMoon	19 National Chocolate Caramel Day...eat it up!	20 Spring Begins! Boys Lacrosse @ Mount Vernon, Girls Lacrosse vs. Mount Vernon	21 Boys Soccer vs. Robinson, Girls Soccer @ Robinson, Girls Tennis @ Annandale	22 As Young as You Feel Day	23 Boys Soccer vs. Woodson, Girls Soccer @ Woodson, Girls Tennis @ West Potomac

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A Message from Keith

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

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

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

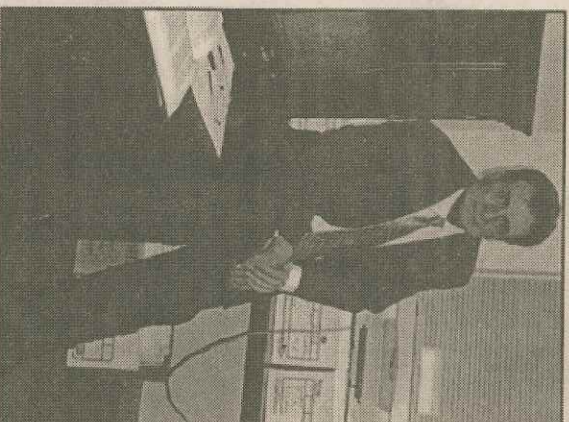
These laws allow us to eliminate some driver education establishments that are not concerned about administering the proper driver education nor the safety of your child. This also makes the driver education industry better. I have always done everything I can to educate the public, the students and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

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

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

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

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



dale, Falls Church, Fairfax, Tyson's, and McLean, they average is about 125 miles. This along with 40 hours equates close to 1,000 miles of experience before students go out by themselves. This is so important.

Senator O'Brien and myself fought for six years for the bill along with the documentation of the mileage. Nobody really wanted that, but Senator O'Brien had the wisdom to get it passed in a really good bill.

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

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

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

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.

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