

THE PRINCIPLE



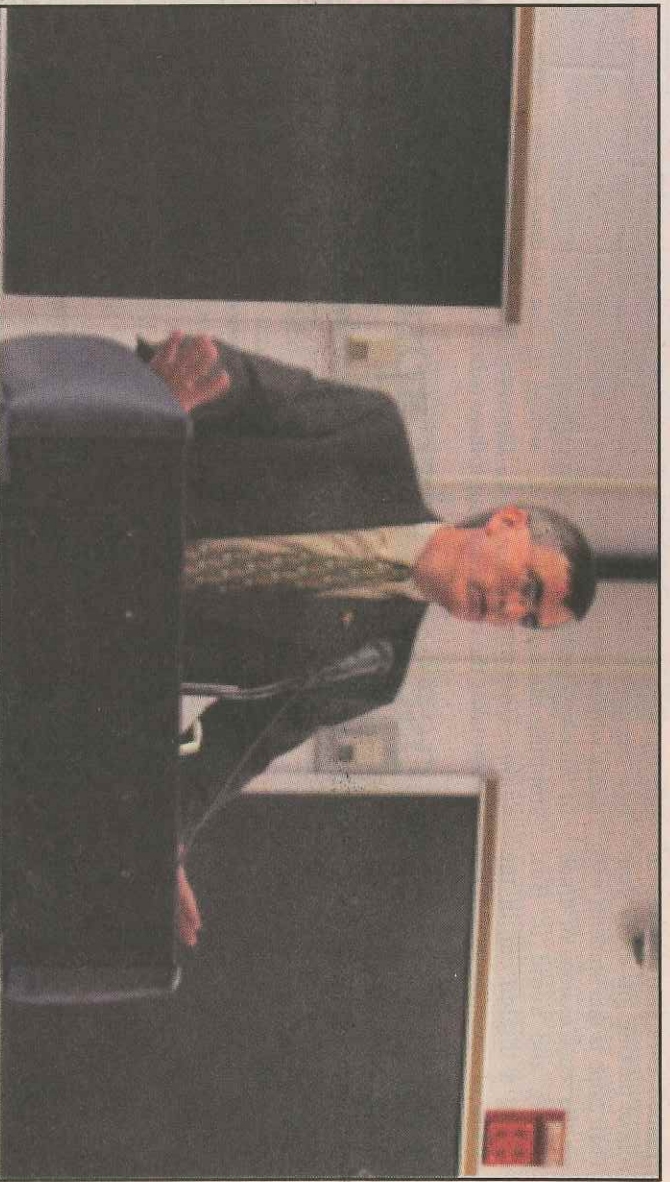
June 11, 2007 Volume 43 Number 20
 West Springfield High School 6100 Rolling Road Springfield, Virginia 22152

McLean's Wardinski announced as Dr. Smith's successor

By Kelly Sipple
 Oracle Editor

For the past 11 years, the words "Take Care of Yourself, Take Care of Each Other, and Take Care of This Place" have reverberated through the halls of WS. Now, future principal Paul A. Wardinski is hoping to "Work Smarter, not Harder."

Faculty crammed into Spartan Hall on Tuesday, May 29, awaiting the announcement of Dr. David G. Smith's replacement. FCPs Assistant Superintendent Leslie Butz, who worked with Wardinski at Marshall High School, addressed an anxious audience and briefly explained the long process of selecting Wardinski and proceeded to list over a dozen of the credentials on Wardinski's resume. Wardinski, who has been the principal at McLean High School for the past three years, has been a World Geography, Sports and



Paul Wardinski, who will replace Dr. David Smith as WS Principal next year, is the current principal at McLean High School and has been working in public education for 22 years.

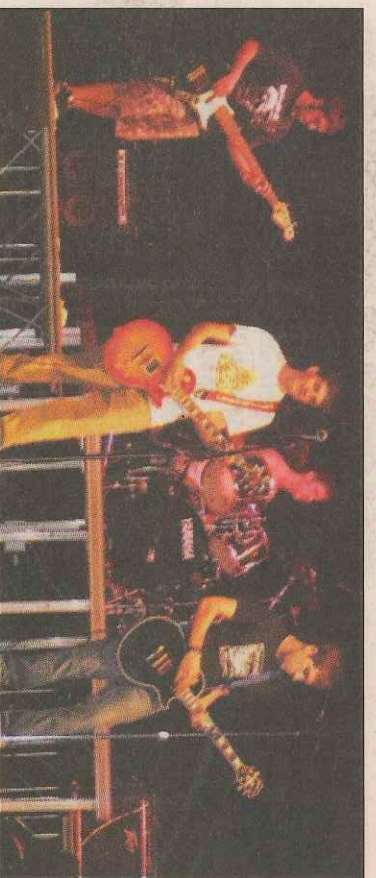
Kelly Sipple

Entertainment Marketing, and even Fashion Merchandising teacher.

He also plays an integral role in the DECA Organization and has coached both JV and Varsity football, softball, and boy's basketball. He has also been an administrator at Thomas Jefferson School for Science and Technology and George C. Marshall High School.

"I've been sitting in your seat three different times," said Wardinski. "You all looked at me like it was a zoo. Everyone came in here wondering 'Is that him?'" Wardinski gave his reason for applying for the job at WS. "Everyone talked about how great WS was," said Wardinski. "I kept waiting for the 'Yea...but.' It never came."

Wardinski proposed the ideas which he plans to see **PRINCIPAL** on Page 4



Nina Rumohr

Juniors Chris Christopher, Brian Hamlin, Mike Aft, and Travis Rumohr perform in the band Evergreen and appeared at the Battle of the Bands on June 1.

Felix Dias rocks Spartan Jam

By Sarah Alvarez
 Oracle Editor

On June 1, 2007, in the dim WS auditorium, fans eagerly awaited the commencement of Spartan Jam 2007. At 6:30 the audience began to file in: students, faculty and curious spectators.

Following the national anthem, performed by Nick Andrews, a video presentation quickly became the spotlight of the show's opening. The star of the video was "Legendary Musician Extraordinaire Bjorn Von Ponstein," who appeared in several

guitar commercials throughout the year. The idea for Bjorn's comically rambunctious metal-head attitude evolved from a performance that senior Kevin Pons and some friends took part in at Spartanfest. Von Ponstein's popularity grew, and when it was time to name MC for the battle of the bands the choice was obvious - Pons as Bjorn. Each band played between five and seven songs, most of which were their original work. The musical talent was an edgy blend of various rock music. Junior Bruno Bambarren, guitarist for The "Mo" Band, classified their music as "real rock". Other bands, however, See **BANDS** on Page 4

School shocked by writing on the wall

By Nicole Simpson
 Oracle Editor

The common perception of high school vandalism was redefined on Friday, May 25 when building engineers and teachers came across derogatory messages written on the walls in the science hallway.

The sensitive and intolerable statements that were put on display for everyone to see were removed around 6:45 a.m. the same morning it was found, luckily reducing the number of students that were exposed to what was written. Like all information circling the

hallways of WS, and despite the effort to quickly get rid of the vandalism, some students had already heard of it. The vandalism was initially brought to biology teacher Ann Wong's attention by a student before school on Friday. "I was shocked and I was disappointed," said Wong. "It's just discouraging when you see something like that written. You'd think people would be more mature."

with construction paper. When Smith came to see it for himself, he and accompanying teachers and administration came across a second case of vandalism further down in the same hallway. "I think it's kind of sad that people think they have the right to do that," said freshman Stephanie Makin. "And [it's sad] how little respect they have for other people at this school." All teachers were immediately notified in an e-mail describing the vandalism and asking for assistance with identifying who wrote the vandalism in the science hallway.

SPARKS FLY ON AMERICAN IDOL
 Question Number 1's of 20 - "Chemistry"
 Whether it's the question of a nation's composition through all
 ● Trivia
 ● Fun
 ● Extra
 ● Quiz
3

Jefferson Labs unwanted.

Pete Earley pays a visit.

Sparks fly on American Idol.

MADD fails to affect teens

It is in the school parking lot every year. The "crashed car" that was placed in the back of the WS parking lot is put there as a reminder to

make a teenager swear off of drunk driving. In most cases for teenagers, the only reason they would ever stop doing something

drunk or even rides with someone who is under the influence, they could end up in the same situation as the victims of the crashed car that is placed in our parking lot.

Editorial

practice safe driving. The only problem is, it does not achieve its intended purpose.

The organization Mothers Against Drunk Driving, or MADD, is responsible for the crashed cars that we see in school parking lots every year.

Their hope is that students will see the repercussions of drunk driving and avoid it. But, seeing a totaled car in the middle of a parking lot will not

personally affected in a negative way. For example, a teenager might not stop shoplifting until they were actually caught. It is the same situation with drunk driving. If in the past a student has been able to get home safely while under the influence of alcohol there is nothing stopping them from doing it again. Unfortunately, if a student takes the risk of driving

Teenagers need to take notice of those totaled cars and heed their warning. These cars are there to show us the consequences of others' actions so that we don't suffer the same fate. They are only there to help. Please, take notice

come to mind. Students will drive past the crashed car and think about it for a second but then they will forget about it and the next time they think about drinking and driving the image of the crashed car in the parking lot will not

come to mind. Teenagers need to take notice of those totaled cars and heed their warning. These cars are there to show us the consequences of others' actions so that we don't suffer the same fate. They are only there to help. Please, take notice

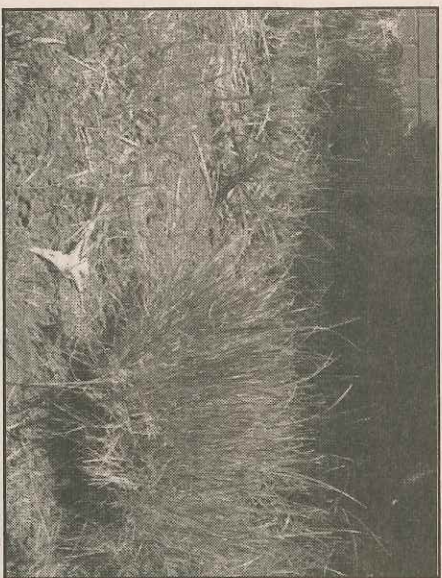
Springfield loses landscaping appeal

Medians and sidewalks across area are full of unkempt vegetation

By Monica Evans
Viewpoint Editor

When I think about the landscaping throughout Springfield, some words come to mind. Ugly, annoying, tall, overgrown, *hazardous*. The plant life on the sidewalks and medians around the area is just plain gross.

I first noticed the atrocious vegetation on my walk to school (yup, I walk to school). I walk behind the police station and the plants back there were almost as



Monica Evans

This growth in front of the school is extremely unpleasant to look at. Also the lack of landscaping portrays a lazy curb appeal for the students as well as the entire community.

The unkempt plant life on the sidewalks and medians around the area is just plain gross, and it's getting out of hand.

median coming towards them. However, the grass is so tall that if a driver's attention is averted from the right side then they cannot see a car coming right at them. Sure my dad can see over the growth — while he's driving the suburban — but not everybody has a big car.

The plant life is not only annoying to walk through and dangerous to drive by, but it is not pleasant to look at. If I was a visitor to these parts I'd think that no one cared about the curb appeal of the area. I know Springfield, VA, is not tourist central but we are near the nation's capital and we should take a little more pride in our appearance.



Monica Evans

The landscaping around Springfield is not only ugly but hazardous. The overgrown plant life blocks the vision of drivers on both sides of the median, possibly leading to an increased risk of collision.

Now, some of you are probably thinking that I should go out there and cut the grass if it bothers me so much. The point is that is not my job. If people are getting paid to maintain the medians, sidewalks and public landscaping than I have the right to complain.

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J-Labs receive bad remarks from students

By Jake Serwin
Page One Editor

To “study” for three SOLs, I took 17 J-Labs. Jefferson Lab, a Newport News-based research facility, offers SOL review quizzes for free on its website. WS teachers have snapped at the opportunity to give standardized test review without having to put forth much effort at all, and I am sick of it.

As I said before, this is quite lazy on the part of educators. Sure, the end of the year is fast approaching and we could all use a break. That is no excuse to offload all the work on poor Jeff and his Laboratory associates. In fact, that’s borderline p-word (p=**griam).

All of the teachers from whom I received J-Lab assignments have handed out review sheets in the past made up specifically by their department. It would not be so difficult, then, to splice together bits and pieces of these to suit individual classes. When a

student has difficulty with a subject on a J-Lab, it merely alerts the teacher of a problem area. It is impossible, however, to see the actual question after the test is completed, so no personal attention can be given by the instructor to fully explain the answer. While Jefferson Lab provides some explanation, it is hardly satisfactory and in some cases befuddles the testee even more.

Though the technology behind the site may be cutting-edge, the questions themselves leave much to be desired in the way of originality. In four chemistry practice tests, I encountered the same solubility question three times. The answer was C in each instance. The first time, it was a challenge. Each subsequent encounter with said question was just a waste of time.

If Jefferson Lab does not even change the order of the answer choices around, students can just memorize whichever letter designates the answer. Once they do that, they will tell their friends, who will not learn

After your teacher assigns you to do six J-Labs for a grade -they get repetitive and students can easily memorize the answers.

anything at all. Pretty soon, you have an epidemic of unprepared test-takers, which leads to low scores, which leads to budget cuts. Not only does this hurt the school district, it hurts the students.

J-Labs need to go. They hurt the test, they hurt the testees, and they hurt the testees.

Busywork breeds bobbleheads

Movies and worksheets send students to sleep as the end of the year slowly comes to a screeching halt

By Rebecca Naramore
Entertainment Editor

The birds are singing, the pools are open, schools are in session, and movies are being watched.

The end of the school year means it is time for students to finish up the year and complete any assignments that have been forgotten about since the beginning of the fourth quarter. Although the end of the year is supposed to be a productive time, it has been transformed into class after class of busy work.

Teachers submit students to all form of busy work such as, work sheets, crosswords, and other puzzles. But the most prevalent activity used to occupy our ninety minute class periods is by

watching movies. When walking down the hallways one is able to see a movie playing in what seems to be every other classroom.

Movie watching is not all bad. Some movies provide an excellent recap of the year. I am not saying that we should only watch educational movies at the end of the year, movies such as *Hotel Rwanda* provide entertainment and a history lesson. When the films teachers play actually relate to all the things we have been studying they are easier to follow. I would much rather watch *October Skies* than *Shrek*.

Watching movies is, however, better than listening to teachers start to educate us off of random thoughts and tangents. When a teacher has no lesson plan that runs along with what we have



After your teacher assigns you to do six J-Labs for a grade they get repetitive and students can easily memorize the answers.

been learning the entire year it makes more sense to watch a movie, or do other various forms of busy work.

This editorial is not meant to ridicule teachers and their lesson plans at the end of the year. Rather, it is meant to encourage new forms of education to avoid endless piles of work sheets.

Busy work is useful when it gives students a chance to relearn what they may have forgotten while providing some down time for the class.

It is not productive when students complete massive amounts of worksheets just because there is nothing better to do.

Spartan Spotlight on Vandalism



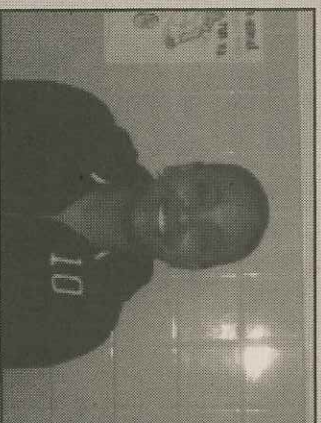
Sam Landers

“I think vandalism makes our school look less professional and it’s a bad learning environment for the students.”
—Maggie McGavin, Sophomore



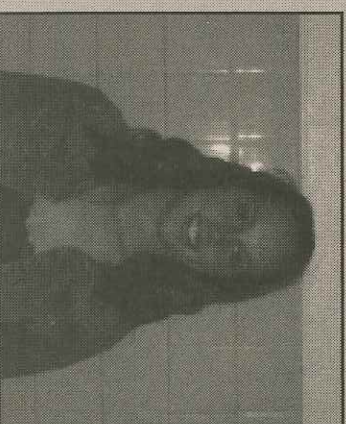
Sam Landers

“I think vandalism is a freedom of expression as well as art and and it should not be frowned upon.”
—Haley Mara, Sophomore



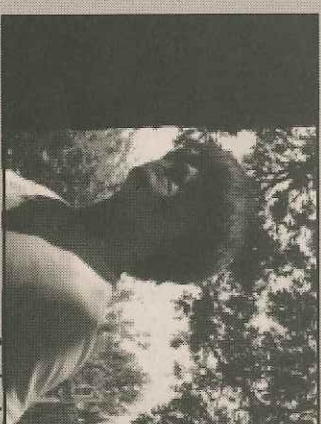
Sam Landers

“It’s inappropriate and meaningless. I don’t know why young people these days would do something horrible like vandalism.”
—Yodite Negash, Senior



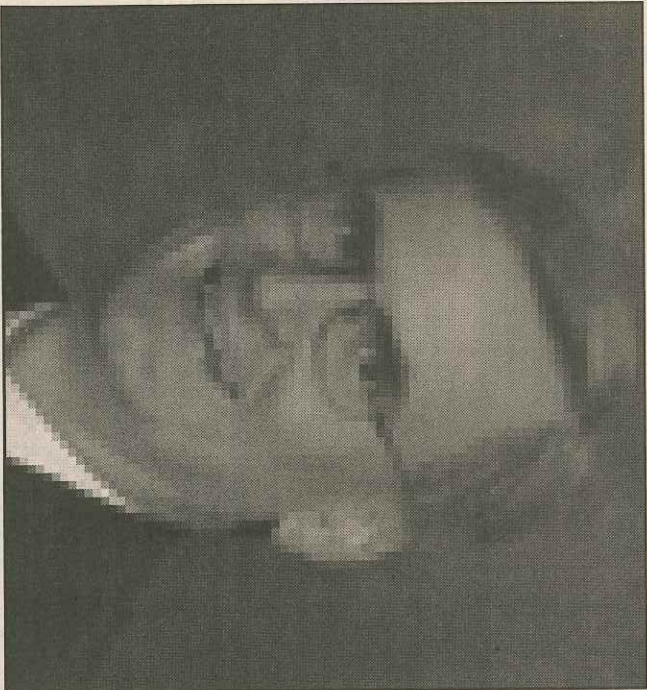
Sam Landers

“Kids should have better things to do with their time then sit around and vandalize people’s stuff.”
—Becky Hundemer, Senior



Sam Landers

“Vandalism in the restrooms is disturbing because names and numbers are written and carved in the walls with inappropriate pictures.”
—Danny McCluskey, Junior



Fairfax County Public Schools
Paul A. Wardinski, formerly of McLean High School, will succeed Dr. David G. Smith as WS principal.

There's a new principal in town

PRINCIPAL from page 1. APs," said fine arts teacher Dorothy Swaggard. "He [Wardinski] seems to be a well-rounded person who's had his hands and feet in just about everything."

"You don't know when a lightbulb's gonna go off for every kid and that's why I believe in supporting all the activities," said Wardinski.

For teachers who do not teach a core class, having a principal who supports all activities is a relief during a time when non-core classes are often put on the backburner or cut all together.

"There is too much emphasis on academics and

my wife, think they are sometimes tacky and can't believe I will wear the ties to places like interviews. But that's a part of who I am."

Wardinski says his dedication to his ties serve as a reminder to be a kid and because of his respect for the visionary Walt Disney.

Retiring principal Dr. David Smith feels WS is in good hands.

"I'm delighted to be passing off the principal's chair to Paul Wardinski," said Dr. Smith.

With a blessing from Dr. Smith, Wardinski is optimistic about next year.

"You have a great school and I'm excited to be a part of it," said Wardinski.

Spartan bands kick out the jams

BANDS from page 1. PROVIDED a more motley mixture of genres, pulling aspects from both punk and metal as in the music of Blame the Influence or applying facets of an Incubus meets Our Lady of Peace style as in the harmonies of Evergreen.

Each band had its own cluster of fans who encouragingly cheered as they performed. They congregated at the base of the stage to show their support for the bands. Bands like Felix Dias and Blame the Influence specialized in getting the crowd involved.

"Felix Dias was awesome they way they got the crowd into it," said Junior Andrew O'Donnell, drummer of Puppet.

The only obstacles holding some bands back were technical issues that

impaired sound equipment. While they were quickly resolved, they still had an adverse effect on the overall consistency of the performances, which some say affected the judges' opinions.

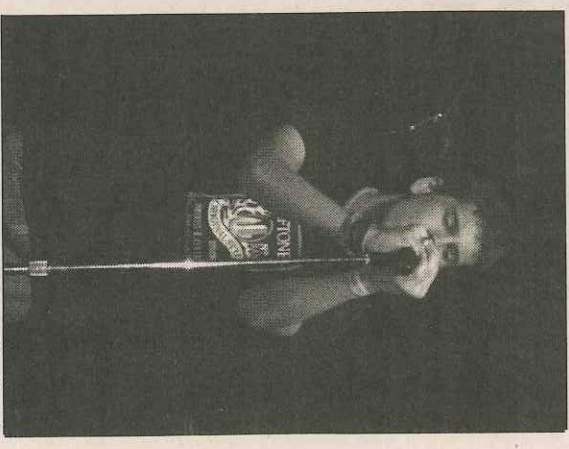
Unfortunately, some bands were inhibited by technical problems, as some sound equipment failed to work during their performances.

All types of crowd approval grabbed the judges' attention as well. Judges John Connelly, John Schucker, and alum

Tommy Beekman all had different criteria however they found agreement in choosing the band Felix Dias as the winner. The champions, vocalist and guitarist senior Blake Lewis, bassist senior Esther Erbe, violinist senior Carlo Canlas and drummer senior Eric Highfill won a \$150 gift certificate to Melodee Music. Last year's winner Puppet got second, receiving \$100 to Melodee music and The Da'Ove placed third and received \$50.

Despite from the general competition between the bands to win, there was some camaraderie amongst the musicians.

"It was awesome to be around all the other bands," said junior Travis Rumohr. "Music brings people together."



Nina Rumohr
Junior Travis Rumohr and his band Evergreen were newcomers to this year's battle of the bands competition.

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 Teen Commandments

1. Don't let your parents down; they brought you up.
2. Choose your companions with care; you become what they are.
3. Be master of you habits or they will master you.
4. Treasure your time; don't spend it; invest it.
5. Stand for something or you'll fall for anything.
6. Select only a date who would make a good mate
7. See what you can do for others; not what they can do for you.
8. Guard your thoughts; what you think, you are.
9. Don't fill up on this world's crumbs; feed your soul on the living bread.
10. Give your all to Christ; He gave His all for you



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 CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS BUREAU
 INFORMATION BULLETIN



MISSING JUVENILE



NAME: KRISTIN V. FRANKLIN
 DOB: 1/03/90
 DESCRIPTION: W/F
 HEIGHT: 5'06"
 WEIGHT: 106 LBS.
 HAIR COLOR: BROWN
 EYE COLOR: BROWN
 HAIR MAY BE SHORTER AT THIS TIME.

ANYONE WITH INFORMATION REGARDING KRISTIN FRANKLIN'S WHEREABOUTS IS ASKED TO CONTACT THEIR LOCAL POLICE DEPARTMENT OR THE FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT AT (703) 691-2131. INFORMATION CAN ALSO BE PROVIDED BY CONTACTING DETECTIVE S. BARRICKMAN AT (703) 246-7876. CASE: 07136003085
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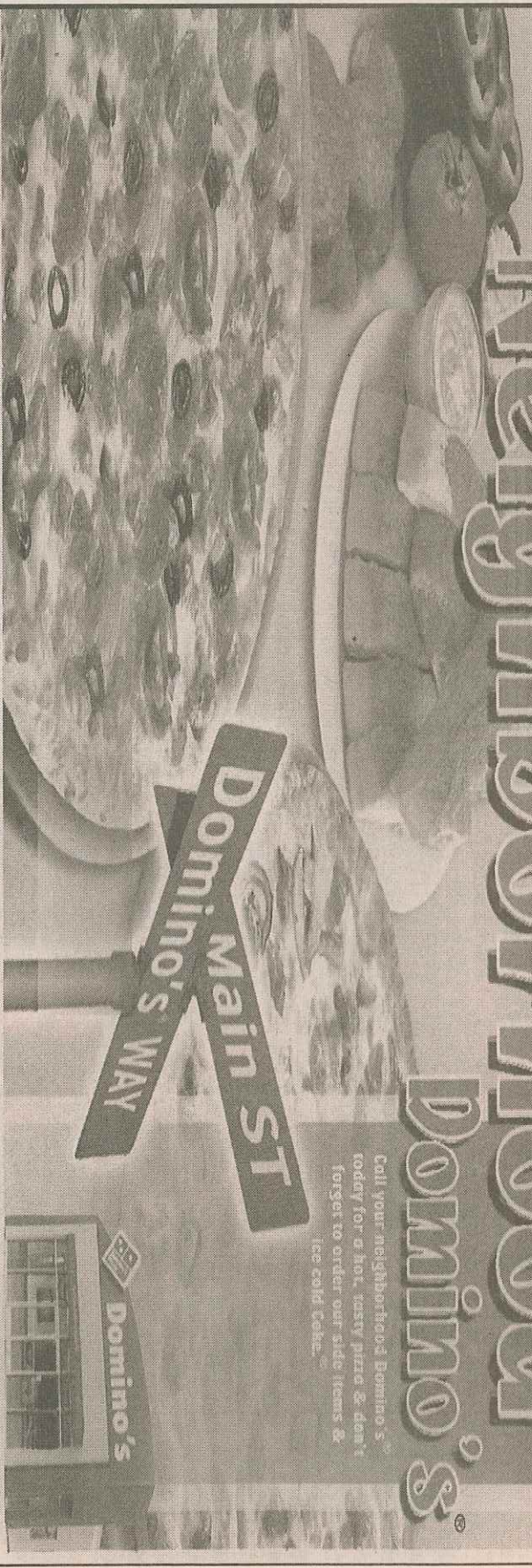


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Navigating the corridors of

Beth Stinson

Oracle Editor

Lindsay Bruhn and I, two hard-boiled reporters, attended a conference on suicide and depression—and set out to meet a journalistic god.

In May, the Youth Suicide and Depression (YSAD) Task Force and the Fairfax Partnership for Youth, sponsored the third annual Conference on Suicide Prevention and Mental Wellness at St. Matthew's United Methodist Church. This year the conference focused on the transition to adulthood and the challenges teenagers face; hence its title, "Bridging the Gap: Emergent Adulthood."

The Book

But why would two stereotypically apathetic teenagers want to go to a very adult conference on mental health? The inspiration came from AP Psychology teacher Carrie Myers' incendiary rant on America's faulty mental health system. Her rage was stirred after reading an expository nonfiction book called *Crazy: a Father's Search through America's Mental Health Madness* by Pete Earley, a former *Washington Post* reporter and Chantilly resident. Earley's son, who has bipolar disorder, broke into a neighbor's house while having a manic episode. The book tells the story of the mental health system's "revolving doors," bureaucracies, and bad judgment through the eyes of a father and of a reporter.

The Mental Health Gods Smile upon Us

Myers recommended the book to her students. The next day I went out and bought the book, and halfway through (already as incensed as my AP Psychology teacher was), I decided it to share it with my *Oracle* classmates. I caught the attention of my co-reporter, Lindsay, who bought the book and read it with equal ferocity. By that time both of us were burning with rage with the spirit of activism, and decided to write an editorial. It was then that the mental health gods spoke to us. One day, Lindsay handed me her sister's South County newsletter and pointed to a specific advertisement. I looked at it, noticed that it was for a conference on mental health. That would certainly help with our story. She told me to keep reading. The keynote speaker was Pete Earley!

At the Conference

And there we were, two weeks later, in a church. Giddy and uncomfortable, we made notes of about everything around us, especially the fact that we were the only people there under 25. After picking up our name tags and conference folders, we wandered shyly around the science-fair-style organization displays. We found seats in the second row of pews in the sanctuary, which served as the meeting hall for the conference.

Our eyes wandered around the church, and low and behold, there he was. Earley, in his perfectly tailored navy blue suit, stood smiling congenially, shaking hands and chatting with fellow colleagues. Interrupting our giddiness, the Reverend Jeri Fields of Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church approached the pulpit to give the opening prayer.

"We'd like to get started now," said Fields, "the Fairfax County Police Department's Honor Guard is here, so we want to respect their need to start on time."

One year ago that day, on May 8 2006, two police officers, Vicky O. Arnel and Michael E. Garbaino, died when Michael Kennedy, a mentally ill 18-year-old opened fire on the Sully District Police Department with a semiautomatic assault rifle. The Honor Guard entered: six officers, four holding flags, two holding drill rifles, silently entered the sanctuary. Their gleaming patent leather shoes creaked under the weight of their reverent dignity. The "National Anthem" was sung by a female officer, and the conference was underway.

Among the opening speakers were Fran Gattin, Co-Chair of the conference and Robinson High School psychologist, Susan Lydick of the Fairfax Partnership for Youth, and finally, the conference's keynote speaker, Pulitzer Prize runner-up Pete Earley.

Like Meeting the Pope

Earley started by reading excerpts from his book, in which he tells the story of his son, and touches on mental health issues such as the "Imminent Danger Clause," which states that a mentally ill person cannot be involuntarily admitted unless they "pose an imminent danger to themselves or

others." This clause has prevented many thousands of mentally ill patients from receiving treatment, because many refuse to take their medication and do not want to be admitted into a psychiatric facility, mainly because they are mentally ill. Earley also railed against the nation's system of treatment, where the mentally ill are sent back and forth to emergency rooms, jails, treatment facilities, and the streets — a cycle that lasts years for many people.

Earley went on to thank those present for advocating for change. He cited the New Testament story of Jesus stopping a stoning, by saying, "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone."

"By coming here today, you have chosen to be stone catchers. You have chosen to protect those being punished for having a mental illness," said Earley. "Thank you for being a stone catcher. Thank you for being an advocate." Needless to say, he finished with a standing ovation and, pushed for time, dashed out the door.

Chasing Pete Earley

We chased after him, hoping to get an interview. We waited in the hallway outside a conference room, waiting for Earley to get done with interviews from more prestigious members of the press. We sat at a table with Shannon Bream of Channel 4 and a WTOP reporter. Finally, he emerged, and our superiors swooped in on him. He was asked about the shootings at Virginia Tech, and about detective Arnel, who was in charge of his son's criminal case.

"She was a genuine human being," said Earley, "and it is really a tragic irony." The ironic thing was that she was known for dealing with the mentally ill, and was known as "Our Protector," to the many she helped.

The Interview

When Earley was done, we nervously introduced ourselves, and he seemed pleased that members of the younger generation had taken interest in the cause of mental health reform. His grandfatherly air put us at ease as we discussed the major issues facing young people, especially in light of the tragedy at Virginia Tech.

"[Sueng-Hil] Cho [the Virginia Tech shooter] is the face of the flawed mental health system," he said "Tragedies like the one at Virginia Tech are preventable." Earley also stressed the need for young people to communicate with adults. Parents do not experience the same society that their children do; they have a different perspective, and therefore need to effectively communicate with adults.

"Parents don't understand a lot of what goes on in [teenagers'] lives. You are instrumental in this process, and you need to communicate to us," said Earley.

It Was a Good Day

He gave us autographed books and posed with us in a picture. Exasperated, we returned to the sanctuary for the rest of the conference. Lindsay stepped up to a microphone to ask if police officers working in high schools (SROs) have Crisis Intervention training. One of the officers replied that some do. Another spoke up right after, saying, "They will." A panel of young adults spoke eloquently about suicide; many had close friends or relatives who committed or attempted to take their own lives. Their moving video, "The Truth about Suicide: Real Stories of Depression in College," was a realistic look at those who suffer as a result of suicide. We talked with Dr. Simpson, a West Springfield alumni who had a lot to say on the issue of teen depression. At the end of the day, we found ourselves just talking to other attendees,

Websites:

American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

www.aacap.com

American Association of Suicidology

www.suicidology.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

www.afsp.org

Families for Depression Awareness

www.familyaware.org

listening to their stories. We came with curiosity and rage-induced activism, but left with knowledge and peace of mind.

Go, Rams! (Sorry)

But what have we done at our own school to fight the widespread epidemic of untreated mental illness? Would it be so hard to follow the example of other high schools?

At Robinson, Gattin has set up an annual "Depression Awareness Day." She and a group of students get together each year and advertise free depression screening in the guidance office, removing the stigma in having depression and making treatment readily available.

"On the Home Front"

Few students even know that we have a school psychologist. We do. Her name is Janis Johnson. We also have psychologist Marie Johnston, resource counselor Sharon Driscoll, social worker Lynne Orens, a substance abuse counselor and an army of guidance counselors. These invaluable staff members hold various lunch groups, offer help to students, and hold seminars within the school for parents and students.

But is this enough? Looking back at previous years, looking back on Virginia Tech and looking at the tragedies at our own school, it seems that we need to do more. Many students fail to realize that mental illness is the same as any other disease. You would not make fun of someone with diabetes, so why would you make fun of someone with depression? All of us have been, will be, or are affected by mental illness. It is time for students to educate themselves about a very real and very widespread problem. As we say good-bye to the class of '07 and welcome our new principle, it is imperative that we continue "Taking care of each other."

"Teenagers need to be aware of their peers," said Earley. "They need to notice the warning signs of mental illness; they need to look out for one another."

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Kristin Borrks Hope Center

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National Mental Health Association

www.mppowerouth.org

US Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

www.samhsa.gov

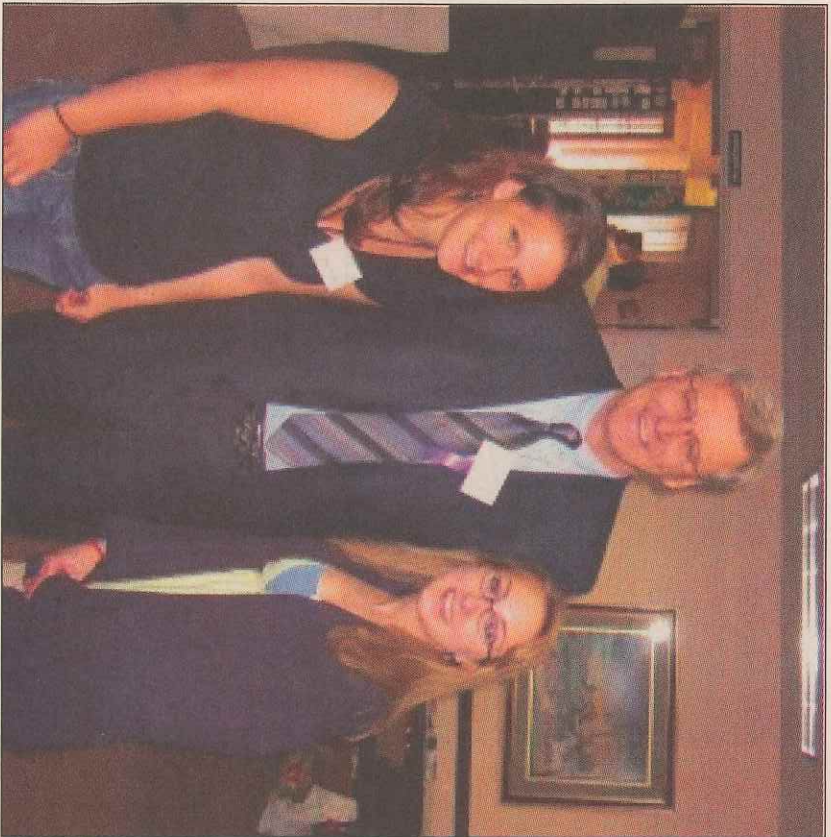
Active Minds On Campus

www.activemindsoncampus.org

Campus Blues

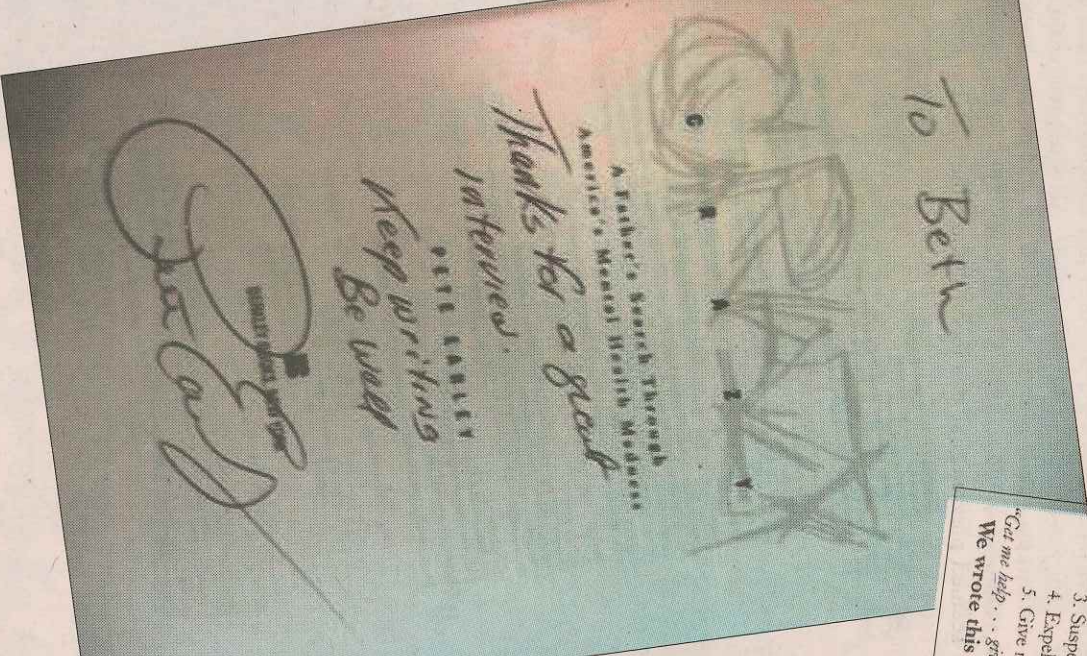
www.campusblues.com

Mental health



Beth Sinson

Above: Lindsay and Beth with former *Washington Post* reporter Pete Earley. Earley has published ten books, most notably his expository non-fiction books in which he investigated the witness protection program, life inside state prisons, and the criminal justice system. He has also written three novels. Right: Earley signed a copy of his book for both Beth and Lindsay. Top Right: Some very helpful tools for parents. Bottom Right: Five Tips if you suspect someone is contemplating suicide. Bottom Left: A business card for the Inova Kellar Center. Top Left: Crisis Link is an organization that provides valuable resources for people suffering from mental illnesses, especially those who are struggling with suicide and violent psychoses.



What Our Sons and Daughters Want From Us

As parents of adolescents, it can be difficult to know how to address alcohol, tobacco and other drug use. This survey was distributed to a representative group of students from our schools. These comments and answers were responded. Here is the survey and the top five responses to each question.

Community of Concern Schools' Substance Abuse Survey
Please let us help you. We will be writing an Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Handbook. The most important aspect of the handbook is to provide information that will be helpful to you, your parents and fellow students. We would like your input. Please give us your suggestions about this important topic!

1. What is the most important thing that people should know about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs?
1. They can hurt you and are bad for you.
2. They are dangerous and can kill you.
3. They negatively affect your future and mess up your life.
4. They are addictive.
5. Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are not cool.

2. What is your message to younger students about alcohol, tobacco and other drugs?
1. Don't do them - Just say "NO".
2. Resist peer pressure - find people who don't use them.
3. Be careful.
4. Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are not cool.
5. Don't drink and drive.

3. What do you want your parents to do if they suspect you are using?
1. Tell me - confront me - talk to me.
2. Get me help.
3. Call my parents, pastor or counselor.
4. Take the alcohol, tobacco or other drugs away - cut off the source.
5. Be considerate and support me.
6. What do you want the school to do if you get caught using alcohol, tobacco or other drugs?
1. Help me - get me to rehab.
2. Punish me - progressive actions, e.g., suspension, probation and rehab.
3. Suspend me.
4. Expel me.
5. Give me a second chance.
6. Get me help... give necessary punishments.
7. We wrote this Substance Abuse Manual as a guideline for us and for our sons and daughters.
The Georgetown Prep Parents' Substance Abuse Manual Committee

4. What do you want your parents to do if they think you have a problem?
1. Talk to me - confront me - ask me.
2. Help me - get me to rehab.
3. Stop me - help me quit.
4. Punish me.
5. Search my room for alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
6. Get me help as soon as possible without regard to my feelings about it.

5. What do you want your friends to do if they suspect you are using?
1. Tell me - confront me - talk to me.
2. Get me help.
3. Call my parents, pastor or counselor.
4. Take the alcohol, tobacco or other drugs away - cut off the source.
5. Be considerate and support me.

6. Get me help... give necessary punishments.
7. We wrote this Substance Abuse Manual as a guideline for us and for our sons and daughters.
The Georgetown Prep Parents' Substance Abuse Manual Committee

Five Tips if You Suspect Someone is Contemplating Suicide

1. Talk with them as soon as possible.
2. Get help from a mental health professional immediately. Ex: School Psychologist.
3. Contact a Crisis Center. Ex: Crisis Link.
4. Check your support groups.
5. Educate yourself. Ex: Webpages.

Books:

- The Gap Year Advantage: Helping Your Child Benefit from Time Off Before or During College* -K. Jaigler, R. Nelson
- Getting Ready for College: Everything You Need to Know* -Polly Berent & The Princeton Review
- The Ultimate College Survival Guide* -J. Worthington, R. Farrar
- The Naked Roommate: And 107 Other Issues You Might Run Into in College* -Harlan Cohen

Phone Numbers:

- Crisis and Suicide Hotlines**
- 1-800-273-TALK
- 1-800-SUICIDE
- 703-527-4077

National Counseling Group, Inc.

- Community-based Services**
- 1-877-KNOW NCG
- 1-877-566-9624

The Jed Foundation

- www.jedfoundation.org
- "One Source" Military Website**
- www.militaryonesource.com

Suicide Prevention Resource Center

www.sprc.org

For more information on local youth programs and services, visit:

www.fairfaxyouth.org

www.fairfaxyouth.org

¡Nos encanta Puerto Rico, viva español todos los dias!

By Erika Gleason
Entertainment Editor

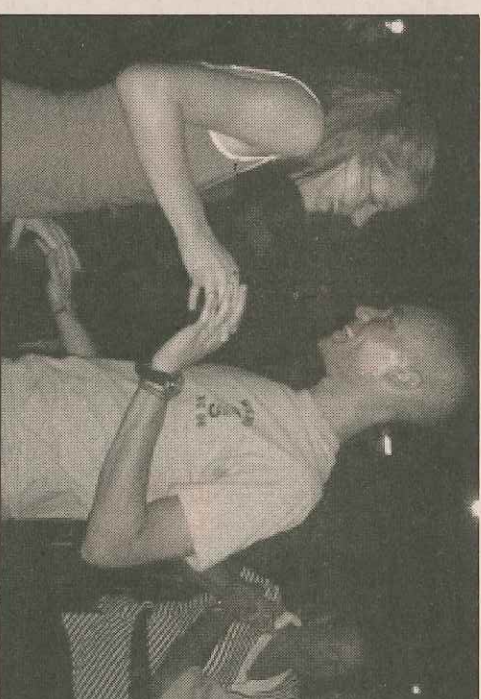
For four days, Spanish 5 students and a handful of AP Spanish students left the comforts of home to travel 2,000 miles off the coast of Florida to Puerto Rico, with the sole purpose of finding out more about the culture.

Thirteen students went on the trip accompanied by four adult chaperones, including teachers Michelle Plummer and Susan Lampazzi.

"[The purpose of the trip was] to practice speaking Spanish and to immerse the students into the Puerto Rican culture," said Plummer.

This is the second annual Spanish department trip to Puerto Rico and they hope to have more in the future. The only possible barrier would be the loss of support from the school, as WS changes leadership next year with the arrival of a new principal. However, Plummer remains optimistic.

The students had many opportunities to learn more about Latin American culture while there. They went to museums, restaurants, and, according to senior Ian Smith, "this really good ice cream

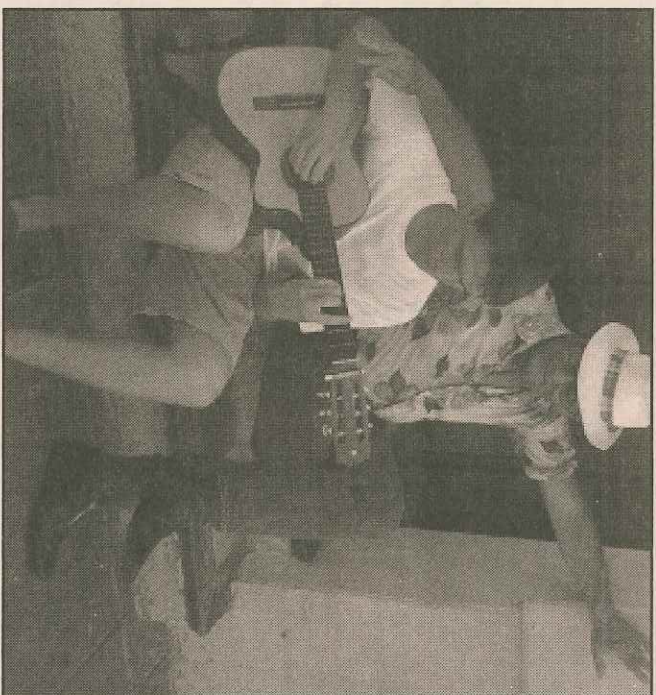


Senior Katie Barber and senior Ian Smith dance among local Puerto Ricans during their leisure time out at a restaurant.

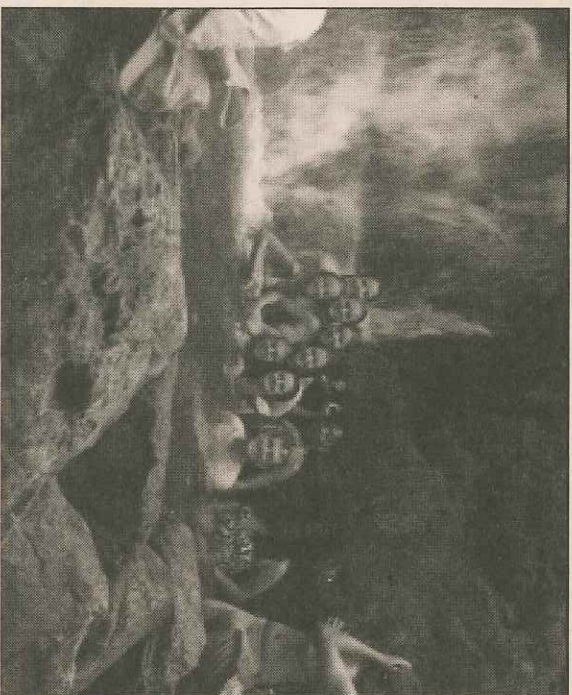
shop." While the students spent time shopping and doing the typical tourist things, they also took time to head into nature, including a beach called La Playa Luquillo, a rainforest known as El Yunque, and plantations. All of which helped to enrich the experience.

"[My favorite part of the trip was] just hanging out with people and having fun. I liked the beach, the restaurants, and just talking," said Smith.

Of course there was more to the trip than just hanging out and having fun. All students were required to speak in Spanish while ordering food and shopping. They were



Senior Levi Dudt strums the guitar with a Puerto Rican fellow on the streets. Culturally immersing oneself in the surroundings was one of the main goals for Spanish students during the trip.



AP and Spanish 5 students enjoy the refreshing waterfall at El Yunque; one of the plus sides of visiting an exotic country.

Summer is early for AP students

Teachers turn to videos and fun activities to keep interest

By Beth Stinson
Oracle Editor

The proctor looks up and whispers into the microphone "The test period is over. Pencils down." A great sigh of relief waves through the auxiliary gym. No more squeaky chairs or splintery tables. The Advanced Placement exams are over and many students believe that AP classes are over too.

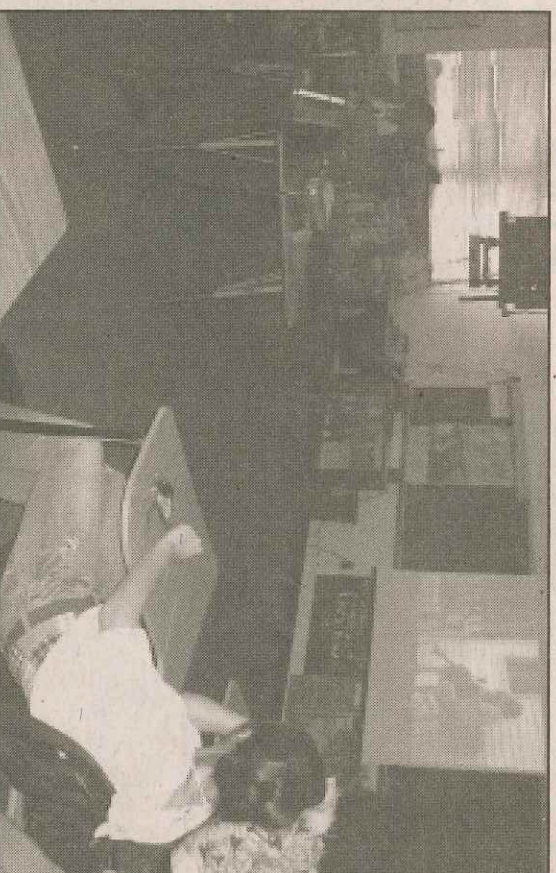
However, this is not always the case. In June, students shut their brains off in preparation for summer, teachers struggle to continue teaching. As their minds are sowed with the salt of apathy, AP teachers must come up with creative ways to plant remaining seeds of knowledge.

Students come to class expecting to watch movies and eat bagels, but are disappointed when they arrive to find a new assignment on their desks. But teachers are sympathetic and do understand that the exams are, in fact, over.

"After the rigorous AP exam, I slow the pace of the class down significantly," said AP Language and Composition teacher Leslie Simmons. "Students complete a choice book project, we review for the final, and we have a breakfast party."

The rest of WS' AP teachers take similar approaches. Movies are a popular activity for post-exam students, board games are made educational, and simple group projects serve to ease boredom and fight laziness of the mind.

"In AP Lit we get into groups and read a book, then present our project to



Beth Stinson

AP teachers mitigate the workload in creative ways to keep the interest of the students. AP US teacher, Andrea Schlegel, began a video project after the exam. Classes like AP Chemistry, work curriculum into fun projects and activities.

"We are doing chemical demonstrations. This one kid made a solution and saturated it in a piece of paper, and let it dry for a day. He hit the piece of paper with a yardstick and it popped and purple dust came out," said junior Jessie Thomas.

Other chemical demonstrations included dissolving zinc from a penny, attracting flecks of iron from a bowl of wet cheerios, and creating an intensely burning, firework-like candle.

Some teachers take a more practical approach to teaching their fast-fading pupils. Physics teacher Ed Linz teaches

his students useful skills that, interestingly enough, are used later in life.

"He is teaching us about cars. He showed us how to change tires, and next class I think we are learning how to change the oil in a car. We also learned the Greek alphabet."

Activities like these keep students interested in school and prevent them from tuning out too early. Be it breakfast parties or bingo days, teachers do their best not to finish work early, while still giving their students a hard-earned break.

"Kids have worked hard from September through May," said Simmons, "and they deserve a less-structured end-of-year."

Congrats, Oracle Seniors!

Sean Hogan
Josh Lipman
Jordy Serwin
Chrissy Regelski
Katie Costello
Libby Bursley
Jenny Taylor
Sunnie Ko
Colin Embrey
Sara Kofalt
Molly Cushing
Camm Rushton
Carlin Sherrill
Andreanna Maxwell
Christina Sohn
Ariane Irvine
Aaron Snow
Zohra Alnoor
Kristin McGregor
Stevie Fiorino
Lindsay Bruhn
Gauri Khanna

Show me the money!!!

Students earn summer wages coaching

By Monica Evans
Viewpoint Editor

Contrary to the old saying of "those who can't do, teach" there are few students at WS that do both.

For these students, summer is not only going to the beach and sleeping until 3 in the afternoon. It's also going to be about a summer of coaching.

Junior Samantha Kojm currently watches over all age groups at the Walden-Glen

Swim and Racket Club but specifically over the 8 and under swimmers.

Although she has been a part of the team for some time this is her first year coaching the summer team

"I'm not a big fan of kids but they're okay," said Kojm.

She remarked that the most enjoyable part of coaching would be just watching the kids improve over the summer.

Joining in the ranks of summer coaches is freshman Sean Knickley. Knickley will be a coach at the Hunt Valley Swim

Club. He said that the coaching position came easily because he swims every summer. In addition to that coaching runs in his family; Knickley's mom is a coach too.

"Yeah, it's fun to get to teach [the kids]," said Knickley.

Knickley is going to be watching over the younger kids ranging from 4 to 9 years old. The summer coaching will be his third year coaching and probably not his last.

"It feels good," said Knickley. "When one of your swimmers does well."



Alyssa Horton
Junior Samantha Kojm, a Varsity WS swimmer, coaches kids at Walden-Glen Swim and Racket Club.

Spartans sound off in the Patriot District

By Bethel Habte
Oracle Editor

The school year is wrapping up with satisfied Spartan athletes. Across the board, from fall to spring sports, teams have made milestones and reached once unattainable goals.



File Photo
Spartan fans cheer at a football game. This year, overall, Spartan sports experienced great success.

At one point this school year, Spartans could be seen decked out in orange tees celebrating the boy's varsity basketball team's place in the regional final four semifinals.

Those cheering them on the hardest fared well their season as well. Girls cheer won districts and placed sixth in states.

The golf team remained undefeated in districts and placed sixths in regionals, still beating out rivals Lake Braddock.

The boy's winter track team shined indoors as they became Patriot District Champs for the first time ever. Spring track's boy's 4x100m race broke an all time WS record with a 43.9 s time.

Both girls and boys varsity lacrosse teams made it to districts, boys for the first time in 16 years.

"Everyone stepped up during the playoffs to try to win districts," said sophomore Corey McCrea, who felt good about the season even without taking the title.

The girls varsity lacrosse team remained undefeated until their own regional final four against W.T.



File Photo
Track is one of the sports that favored in the championship season. Here, sprinters train for a race.

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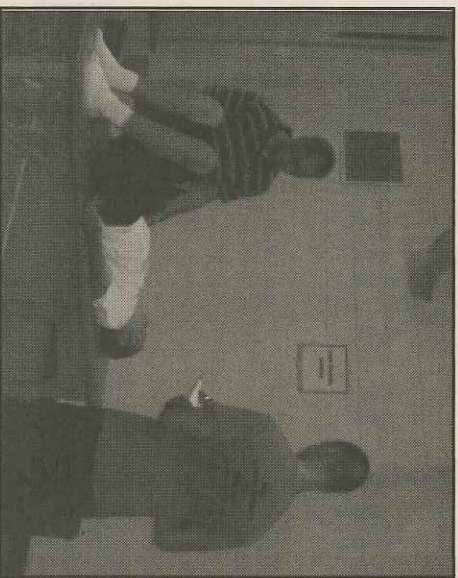
Sports Physical Night provides an easier, more accessible option for all student athletes

By Caitlin Kenney
Oracle Editor

The laidback atmosphere, kids chatting on the cell-phones while completing the visionary screening test (yes, the "m" is pointing down), all contributes to the overall appeal of Sports Physical Night.

The \$40 dollar evaluation adds more than money to the Booster Club fund. It provides convenience and frugality to the parents and student athletes attending our school.

"We sell out every year, and even had to cut down on the number of days. We only evaluate one day now," said physical trainer and teacher John Shepard.



Caitlin Kenney
A student athlete is tested in the flexibility station by an athletic trainer and sports medicine student.

From an outsider's perspective it may seem that the whole process is fairly simple and straight forward but what one doesn't take into account is the amount of equipment and man power that goes into Sports Physical Night.

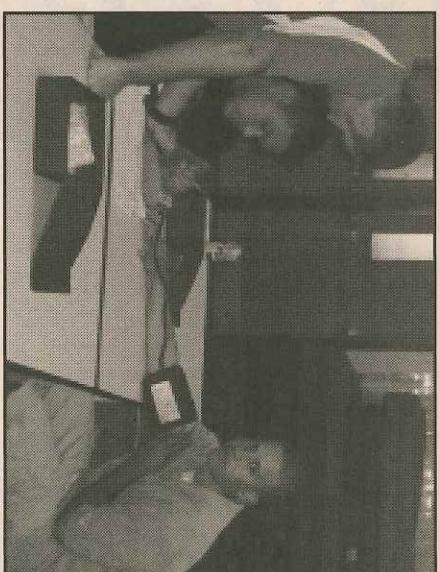
"We have around ten student assistants, from my Sports Medicine class, as well as four doctors, and anywhere between five to eight athletic trainers," said Shepard.

The equipment, such as the pulse and blood pressure machine, originate from the Nurse's office, the athletic training program, or the wrestling team (who in this case provided the scale). Volunteers around Fairfax County, including doctors and athletic trainers, come to help out for this busy annual event.

One trainer from Annandale, Alison Lane, volunteered at the Body Fat Screening station which computed a percentage through measurements that were recorded and then ran through a computer program. WS uses body fat percentage, rather than BMI or Body Mass Index, because it is a more accurate measurement.

"Trainers all over the county come to help out because we are all familiar with one and another and do the same thing at our own schools," said Lane.

This yearly event provides student athletes with not only a cheaper option for the required sports physical, but a more individual oriented exam and an opportunity to meet the WS trainers who are there to help during the season. The evaluation is composed of eight different stations that record: height and weight, eye screening, blood pressure and pulse, posture, flexibility, concussion test, and body fat. A



Caitlin Kenney

John Shepard double checks the blood pressure and pulse recordings by a sports medicine student. This eighth grader plans to tryout for both a fall season sport, football, and a spring season one, baseball. Physician goes over any material that they feel is necessary to cover. This complete exam allows the trainers to jot down injuries or abnormalities that stick out to them, so they can help treat an athlete in the future.

"[Sports Physical Night] makes the job a little easier for the trainers," said Shepard. "For example this baseball player that I evaluated earlier had extremely weak upper body muscles. After talking to him I gave him upper body strengthening techniques that he can work on over the summer to have an even more successful baseball season."

The physicians are one of the most important components to the physical, and volunteer several hours of their practice time to visit WS and evaluate the 100 plus student athletes. One such amicable sports and family doctor, Garry Ho, discovered the program through a esteemed colleague and has donated his time for the past two years.

"My main objective in athlete assessment is to catch things that are out of place and make sure that students are healthy in order to prevent injury with exercise," said Dr. Ho.

Sophomore shows supreme dedication

By Stephanie Aguilar
Managing Editor

Since the age of two, Sophomore Jay Friedel intertwined perfectly with the art of gymnastics. Thrown into the sport in order to save stress from his mother's busy schedule, Friedel hasn't stopped in his mission to climbing to the top.

Friedel has been a member of the Capital Gymnastics National Training Center for 14 years.

"My sister was born and I was a hyper kid. My mom couldn't handle us both so she put me in the gym," said Friedel.

He began in the developmental section of the gymnastics department at the age of two, moved up to the Preteam, a non-competitive level, and is now in the Elite team, which is also a travel team.

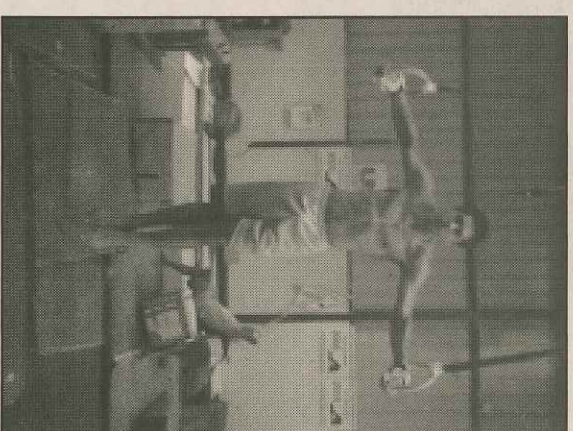
"I never did any other sport. I kept moving up and got scattered into competing teams," said Friedel.

One of the most important people behind his efforts in succeeding in gymnastics is Friedel's parents. They have been supportive since the beginning and try to aid their talented son in any way possible.

"They keep me motivated. It's not often that they do this, but they help me out a lot in keeping my time organized," said Friedel.

Another benefit Friedel receives as being part of a gymnastics team is that he doesn't need to take P.E. anymore and hasn't since the eighth grade. There is a county program called Credit by Objective that allows students who are nationally ranked in the sports swimming, ballet, tennis, or gymnastics to not have to take P.E.

"I work out in the morning or some days I'll sleep in because I get exhausted from so much training," said Friedel.



Stephanie Aguilar

Sophomore Jay Friedel spends 20 hours a week practicing his gymnastics.

The story of my addiction

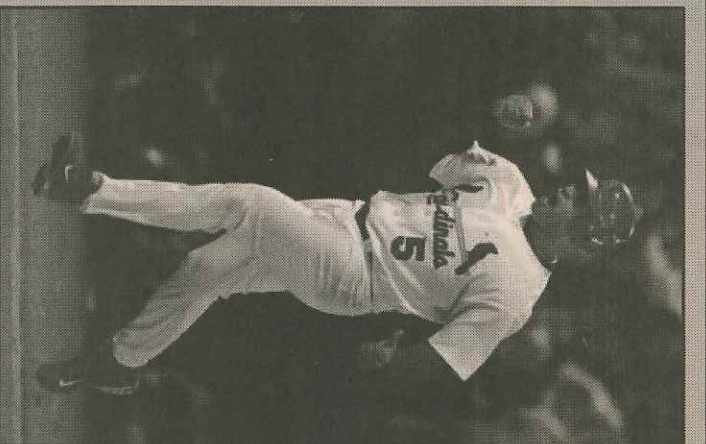
By Cam McCallum
Sports Editor

As I stumbled out of bed this morning, my first thought was not to brush my teeth, take a shower, or get ready for the day. Instead, I sleepily wandered toward my laptop to check the statistics of the players on my fantasy baseball team.

Unfortunately, I have developed an almost geeky addiction to this game. I spend many a night when I should probably be doing homework tracking my players, and adjusting my lineup so my team will have the best chance to win.

I even convinced my mom to get the Extra Innings cable package, which allows me to see all the games every night. Like I said before, this mild obsession has gotten a bit geeky.

Unlike fantasy football, fantasy baseball requires your attention daily, since there are games every day. The best part is that it lets you track players throughout the league, not just on your favorite team. As a result, you become a much more knowledgeable fan, and very unlikely to lose any argument relating to baseball. I can reel off stats faster than I can do a math problem. I can tell you the number of



Fox Sports

I could easily tell you Albert Pujols' slugging percentage before I could solve a simple math problem.

home runs Albert Pujols hit last year (49) much faster than I can tell you 22 times 13 (where's my calculator?). Maybe I should've taken fantasy baseball instead of Algebra II.

One of my favorite parts of fantasy baseball is the team names. Basically, you try to come up with the most ridiculous thing you can think of. Several examples from my league include Crunk Juice, The Barry Bonds Pharmacists and Bradgelina. Trash talking to the fellow members of your league is also an important part of fantasy sports, and is important if you want to have a good time. One guy in my league sends me a message every time we play saying he hopes all my players get severely injured or attacked by wild animals. The more creative the trash talk, the better, I guess.

Fantasy sports are sometimes called Dungeons and Dragons for sports fans. I guess that makes me a level 40 baseball master. Now if you'll excuse me, I need to go check my lineup.



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Fantasy baseball has started to take over my life: body, mind, and soul.

Sweet tunes on 'Idol'

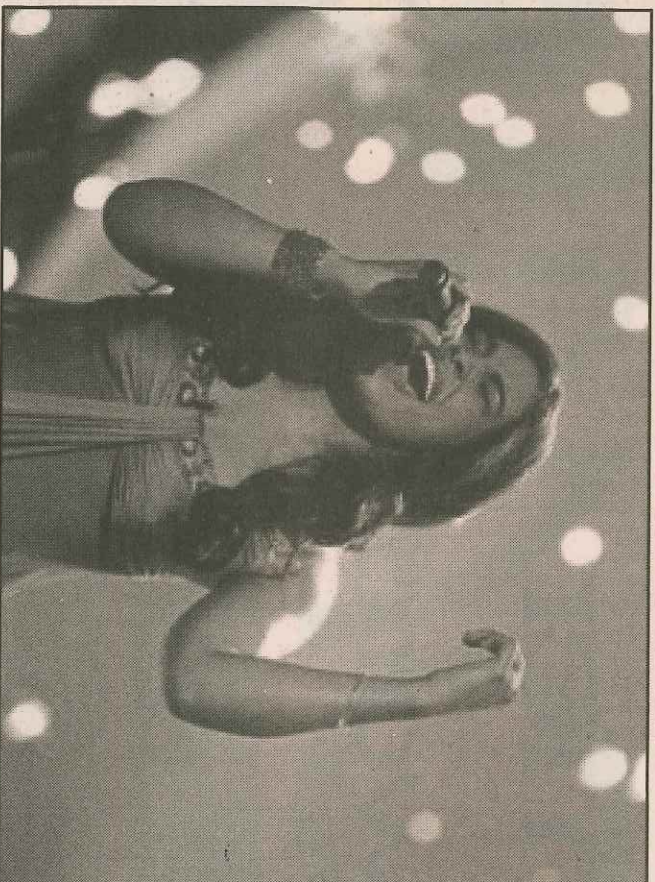
Sparks sings her way to a sweet 6th season victory

By Caitlin Kenney

Oracle Editor

American Idol's season finale shocked no one. Jordin Sparks may not have been able to beat box her way into the finals, but her bubbly personality and wide range of vocals outshined the rest of the competition.

The beginning of the competition started out a little shaky. At tryouts you had the girl who actually *knew* she couldn't sing come out for the show, and after failing miserably had a meltdown begging the judges to teach her. It left little hope that the show could weed out thousands of people to find



"American Idol" winner, Jordan Sparks, sings her final song during the sixth-season finale. She beat out Blake Lewis to win the recording contract.

the next Idol. After that major breakdown came the bush baby man with eyes the size of plate saucers, but luckily he took criticism well, even after receiving a golden idol award. Being unique was an appealing quality to an extent.

American Idol changed a few things this season, reaching out the communities in Africa and the United States with their Idol Gives Back campaign to help out orphans. For every phone call a sponsor donated a dollar to Charity

Project Entertainment Fund and raised a ton of money for the organization. The two-hour show, however, was drawn out too long with people with hip replacements on stage singing their gratitude. Plus in the spirit of largesse, no one got booted off that episode. How lame. Idol was full of controversy this year with the votefortheworst.com claiming Sanjaya as their candidate. Ostensibly, that is the only reason Sanjaya made it to the top ten and managed to escape the bottom two for several weeks. The only engaging quality Sanjaya possessed was an ever-changing hairstyle that clearly outshined his vocal talent. Come on, a pony hawk, who does that?

American Idol

Was season seven a step above the rest? In my opinion, the final three was the best *American Idol* has ever produced. The show, however, tended to drag on a bit too long with mundane celebrity performances and quite outdated material.

Even the more contemporary artists' performances, like Gwen Stefani, proved cacophonous for both live and at home viewers. The extra material stole the thunder from the contestants that were competing, maybe next season won't be as inflated as the past one.



Capt. Jack Sparrow sails with many new pirates in Disney's third film.

Last

Is Pirates at it's End?

By Stephanie Maxwell

Scoop Editor

Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End is the third, and possibly final, movie in the series. The movie winds you through a web of complicated plots and complex characters that perplexes audiences, leaving them wondering what had just taken place.

The movie begins with the heroic rescue of Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) from Davy Jones' Locker. While many people thought that this would be the movie's true agenda, William Turner (Orlando Bloom), Elizabeth Swann (Kiera Knightley), and others successfully saved him 30 minutes into the three hour film. After this, a web of smaller plots began to unfold.

Although the movie was difficult to follow at some points, it had many redeeming qualities. Viewers were constantly laughing at the quick wit of

Captain Jack Sparrow and the other pirates. The large amount of fighting was not boring either. This film was full of fights on both land and sea which made the story interesting.

After the second movie viewers were left with a multitude of unanswered questions. *At World's End* did a great job of answering them. The loose ends from the previous two films were all tied up but by the end of the movie viewers were left hanging as new questions arose. Like the other films, however, if you were patient enough to stay through the credits you would see yet another scene that ties up this story and opens another.

If you have seen the first two movies you should not skip this one. Even if you have not seen the first two *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End* is a good way to spend a Friday night. The characters are sure to capture your heart and leave you wanting more.

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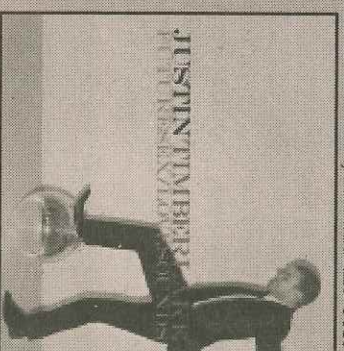
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Oracle Summer Picks



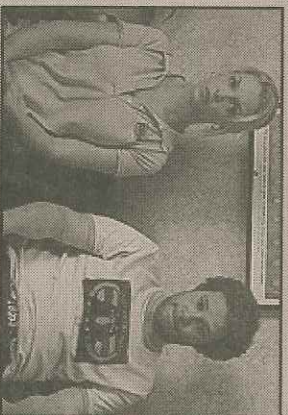
Overdrive

Boy Meets Girl by Meg Cabot
Told entirely through e-mails and instant messages, this novel is quick and easy to follow. The book tells the tale of the lives of a newly-fired HR Representative Kate and her lawyer Mitch in New York City...who can't keep their hands off each other, of course. The story is extremely tight and Cabot is very humorous. This book is frivolous, fun and the best poolside reading you'll find.



WorldKushin

"Future Sex / Love Sounds" by Justin Timberlake
Not a CD for the faint of heart. Very trendy and well-done, it doesn't offer much intellectual power. The perfect disc to pop in for that drive to the beach. Suggested tracks: Sexy Ladies/Let Me Talk to You, Chop Me Up, and of course, Summer Love.



Knocked Up

Whitlives

Imagine a Wedding Crashers about pregnancy. Yeah, it's that good. The opening credits show some raunchy 20-somethings engaging in macho wrestling, drinking and roller coaster riding. But Ben, the leader of these manly activities, suddenly finds his world transformed when his one night stand partner from eight weeks before calls him to reveal she's pregnant. Hilarity ensues, and the entire film is a brilliant but horribly awkward theatre-going experience. It's basically the greatest frat film ever, on steroids. There are a few uncomfortable nudity scenes though, so it is not recommended that you see this movie with anyone that you would want to talk to afterwards.

—Compiled by Krista Pedersen

