

# THE PARADE

November 3, 2006 Volume 43 Number 5  
West Springfield High School 6100 Rolling Road Springfield, Virginia 22152

## David Smith—a man for the decade *Principal proud of school's accomplishments since 1996*

**By Becky Cryer**  
*Forum Editor*

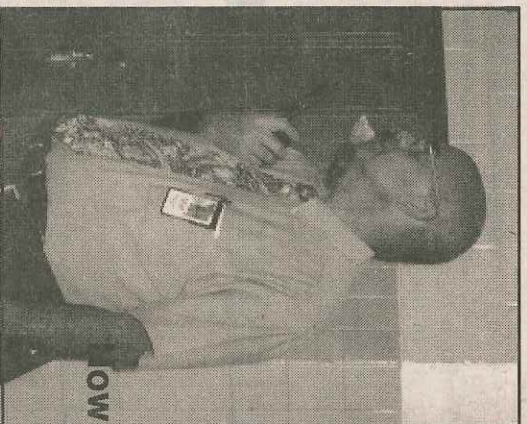
From projectors to smartboards, WS has changed a lot in the past 10 years and Dr. David Smith has been here every step of the way.

This month marks Smith's 10-year anniversary. In 1974 he began his career in education by becoming a social studies teacher at Loudoun Valley High School. Since then, he has been a summer school principal, principal at Glasgow Middle School and then the leader of the Spartans.

"I think my first impression was 'I'm going to like this man' because he has a mannerism about him that's easy-going," said Sally Feldner, who has been Smith's secretary for his entire tenure.

Ever since his first year here, Smith says he has been striving for improvement and change.

Ten years ago there weren't even enough computers for each teacher to use but now the school has portable



*Dr. David Smith was named WS principal in November 1996. Ten years later, he says he's proud that we still "take care of ourselves, each other and this place."*



*Then*

labs, smartboards and laptops for each teacher.

"We're looking to improve from a good position already," said Smith.

One of the most dramatic changes at WS were the AP testing statistics. In

1998, there were 539 AP tests taken by students.

This past school year, WS nearly tripled that amount, by administering 1,447 tests.

"He wants to see every kid succeed

in all phases of his or her life," said Assistant Principal Richard Griffin.

Smith always emphasizes the phrase "take care of yourself, take care of each other and take care of this place," which he once heard in a speech and found relevant to the environment of a school.

"I chose to use that phrase as a quick, concise, memorable way to convey a message about how this school should be," said Smith.

Along with being a principal come long hours and never-ending meetings. Smith wishes he were able to spend more time in classrooms. Still, students who know him believe he is doing a good job.

"I think he's really awesome," said senior Sam Hart, "really relaxed."

Although technology has changed the way we do things within the school, Smith still focuses on fundamentals.

"He keeps the main thing the main thing," said Assistant Principal Joan Galdi, "and that is student achievement and good citizenship within the student body."

## Trivia

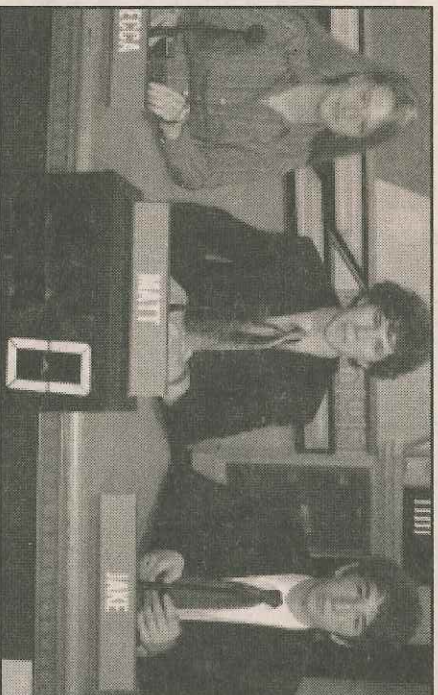
## Titans

### *It's Academic team KO's competition*

**By Stephanie Aguilar**  
*Features Editor*

After buzzing in for about two hours in front of cameras, WS's It's Academic team walked out of the NBC studio with an invitation to come back in March to the next round.

Sophomore Jake Serwin, junior Becky Koenig and senior Matt Scott, won the first round in the academic trivia competition against three opponents. The George Washington University and Giant Foods-sponsored show



*Rebecca Koenig, Matt Scott, and Jake Serwin represented our school on It's Academic and beat Parkview and Suitland high schools with a final score of 545.*

awards scholarships to winning schools, and hopes to foster a passion for knowledge.

"I was really nervous to be on TV," said Koenig. "I didn't want to let the team down if I rang in the wrong answer."

Math teacher Sandra Novak has been sponsoring It's Academic at WS for 23 years

out of her 27 years of teaching. Practice is held once a week in her room to improve the rapidness of answering

questions in the least amount of time. This involves reading off questions and practicing buzzing in for about an hour.

"One of the first things is to be able to buzz in first in the opening round because that round breaks the ice," said Novak.

The final score of 545 points was attributed to the distribution of knowledge

See **ACADEMIC** on Page 5.

## Administration holds key to safety in wake of incidents across US

**By Katie Costello**

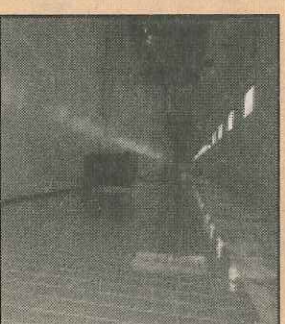
*Oracle Editor*

"West Springfield High School is officially in lockdown."

Five minutes after this announcement, made via walkie-talkie from Officer Shaaron Williams to Dr. David Smith, the signal was given that the school lockdown drill was successful and students could return to the hallways.

The recent increase in school shootings has made schools reevaluate, as well as heighten, their security. For WS it is not a matter of adding new security, but of making sure that what is already in place is enforced.

"When I say no [to adding



*Kristin McGeogor*

The halls are empty during the practice lockdown.

more security] it sounds like we're not doing anything but that's not the case," said Smith. "We are run through scenarios to test our readiness and we've had threat assessment training. We also have crisis management plan procedures for teachers."

See **SAFETY** on Page 6.



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Things get messy at Spartanfest.



14

Senior faces discouragement at golf tournament.



OMG15

Internet acronyms g2g.



## Security crisis heightened in WS Fairfax County can afford better protection

It's time for Fairfax County to put its money where its kids are.

There have been five gun related incidents at schools across the country this fall. In three of the attacks, at least one person was killed, not counting the shooters.

Our county has to strengthen its safety policies. We need to try a new approach, like having a security officer with a walkie-talkie at each

**"I think [adding to the security team] would be money well-spent."**

— **David Smith, principal**

entrance of every FCPS school.

According to the school website, WS has 11 people on its administrative team. WS has

12 entrances, which means even if the only job the

classroom. Principal David Smith will run a few lockdown drills a year from now on. The

### Editorial

administration had was to watch the doors it wouldn't be able to do it. Most of the administration spends its time actually running the school.

Watching the doors falls into WS' four-man security staff's duties. With 12 exits, there is at least a 67 percent chance if a gunman approaches WS he won't be met by a security guard.

Even if we were to make the naive assumption that the security staff can devote all of its time to sitting at the exits, there's no way they could do it effectively.

The problem isn't that the administration isn't trying to keep WS safe. There are crisis manuals in every WS

so possible assailants can't time attacks for when the guards won't be out there. In the event of a shooting they would do their best to try and contain the attack.

The problem is that Fairfax County can do a lot better. With all of the attention in the news being given to concerns about preventing foreign terrorism, let's not forget about preventing the domestic kind. Violent deaths are violent deaths, no matter who is doing the killing.

According to *The Washington Post*, Fairfax is the second-richest county in the country. If any county can afford to properly protect its students, it's Fairfax. Even if

travel in random routes outside WS security guards



Officer Shaaron Williams stands outside entrance 11 during AI lunch, talking on the radio to other patrolling security personnel.

the school board won't listen to its students, maybe it will listen to someone who deals with WS for a living.

"I think [adding to the security team] would be money well-spent," said Principal David Smith.

## Self-piercing trend turns infectious

By **Lindsay Bruhn**

Senior Staff Writer

When I am eighteen, I am getting my belly button and eyebrow pierced. I am waiting until I am eighteen because my mother won't allow me to get it pierced, so I have to wait until I am an adult.

There are many students who already have piercings. Some of them got permission from their parents but some were more creative when getting around the fact that they aren't legally adults.

"Friends" who "know how to pierce" are common in high school. Give a student a safety pin, a sewing needle or any other sharp object and a match to sterilize it, and they believe that they can successfully pierce anything.

When I express my desire for a pierced belly button or eyebrow, I am presented with many offers from

"friends" that are willing to do the little stab for me.

First of all, the chances for infection are much greater when it comes to piercing yourself as opposed to getting a professional to do it. I don't want someone's sewing needle going through my belly button, let alone my face.

I have many friends who have experienced infections thanks to creative piercing techniques. An older friend, who will not be named, had his face infected after piercing his own lip with a safety pin. With the piercing so close to his brain, the infection was incredibly dangerous.

Secondly, precision is not guaranteed. I want my piercings centered and level. I have a couple female friends with belly button rings that sit slightly to the left or right...not by choice.

Yes, it is unfortunate that we must wait until we are eighteen to pierce whatever we want, but it is much better to wait then get infected!

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The  
**ORACLE**

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# Aaron Snow is in the KNOW!

*Republican political figures skew American image*

**By Aaron Snow**

*Senior Staff Writer*

With slumping poll numbers, and a host of issues threatening to oust Republicans from control of both the House and the Senate, Conservatives across the country were looking to the future. They were, to borrow a phrase from Garrison Keillor, hoping to, "turn over a new page."

Failure, however, greeted Republicans with open arms by virtue of Congressman Mark Foley's far too literal interpretation of the phrase. Foley, a Republican from Florida's 16<sup>th</sup> district, and ironically co-chair of the Missing and Exploited Children's caucus, sent sexually explicit e-mails to former male pages.

Pages are high school students who work on Capitol Hill as messengers. Foley's exploitation of these pages has not only undermined many of the values Conservatives constantly tout, it has also called into question the entire page system.

While Foley's actions are certainly not a reflection on the overall character of the Republican Party, voters are seriously questioning the honesty and morality of their elected officials on the right.

There are also questions concerning a possible GOP cover-up of Foley's actions. Foley, apparently, had inappropriate conversations with pages in the

past which GOP Congressional leaders neglected to investigate.

Though the nature of Foley's relationship is deeply disturbing, there is another often overlooked side of the scandal that speaks directly to our national culture. Why is such outrage reserved for an issue affecting such a small number of people? Why is the same anger not shown to the laundry list of poor decisions, and rampant deception that have marked the last six years of our nation's history?

**Foley, a Republican from Florida's 16<sup>th</sup> district, and ironically co-chair of the Missing and Exploited Children's caucus, sent sexually explicit e-mails to former male pages**

We sit back as thousands of troops die for a war without a clear strategy, moral justification, or foreseeable end. We watch as senior citizens are forced to make a weekly choice between food and medication. We stand idle as the crisis in Darfur moves well beyond civil war, and into the realm of genocide.

We pretend not to hear the scientific community's

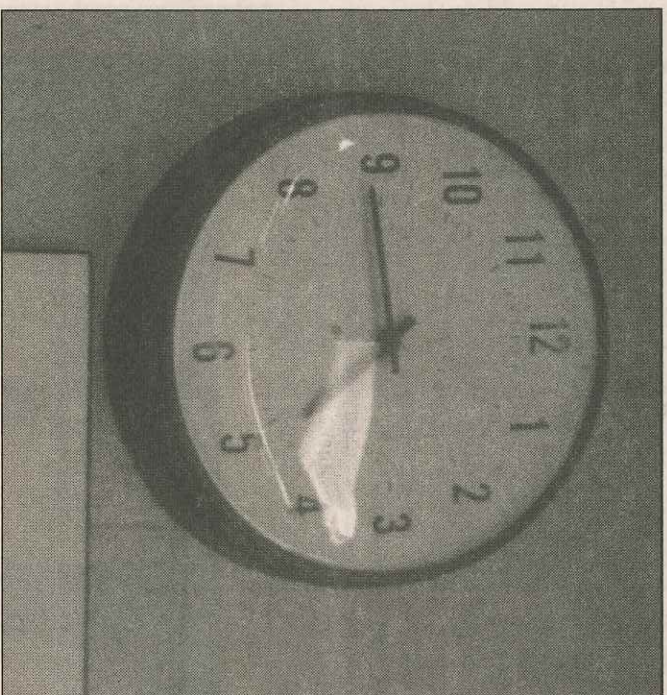


*Associated Press*

**Republican Mark Foley addresses the public and apologizes about his sexually explicit e-mails to former congressional pages.**

pleas to address the growing threat of global warming. All the while, our president christens us saviors of the world, ignoring mankind's most dire threats.

If only Mark Foley was our biggest problem.



*Sara Kolar*

**Throughout homecoming week, WS clocks were frozen at 4:45. Many teachers and students were frustrated without the clock to signal when the bell was about to ring.**

## Time stands still

**By Sunnie Ko**

*Senior Staff Writer*

When things don't operate I don't either.

On October 16, many of the clocks in the English, and History hallway mysteriously shut down and so did I.

Usually in one class period, I'll look at the clock about five times, on the more tedious days it adds up to somewhere around 70, but on the days time stopped I looked about 83 thousand times, and worst of all, I never got an answer.

The worst part, aside from not being able to see when class was going to be over, was not being able to look at my cell phone due to FCPS policy (not that I ever have my cell phone on during school).

The more I didn't know what the time was, the more I couldn't concentrate on my work. I would find myself trying to count my own seconds and tallying the number of minutes that went by, or the minutes that I thought went by.

Without the clock there to tell me what time it was, my tasks wouldn't always get done. I remember I had "15 minutes to do a quiz, not a minute more," and on question six out of 10, it was time to turn my soon to be F quiz into the bin.

Now I know what you're thinking, why wouldn't you just ask how much time you had left? It was either me just trying guessing how much time was left or my peers and teacher hearing me constantly ask variations of the question "what time is it?"

Things are back to normal now, and time has started up again. I'm still a little scared from the whole thing but I think I'll get over it, but just in case I'll keep my sundial in my backpack pocket, there's no FCPS rule against that...I hope.

## The Caitlin and Beth Show: On teenage Internet abuse

**By Beth Stinson & Caitlin Kenney**

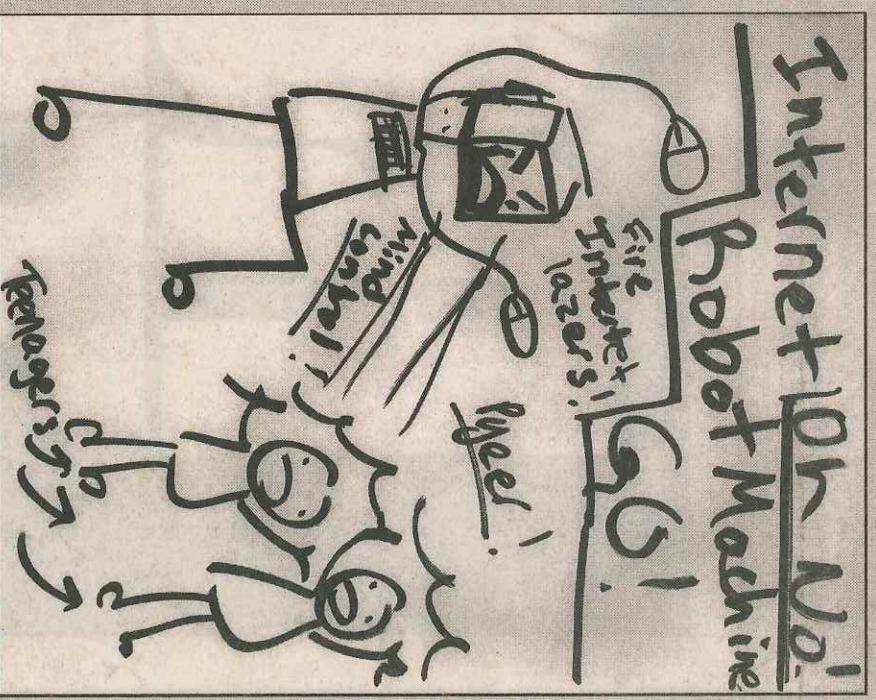
*Viewpoint Editors*

In the last decade, our generation has become surprisingly attached to the Internet. It has become our source of entertainment, information and communication. And for some, it is the only place they are able to have a feasible social encounter.

As teenagers, we are genetically predisposed to stupidity. The Internet has only made this problem all the more relevant and noticeable. For example, we have all heard about the "9-11 Conspiracy of the Government to Take Over the World." Some people take this absolutely ridiculous idea and make Powerpoints out of it, displaying their ignorance to all who stumble upon their online stupidity repository. Why? Because they can. Do teenagers believe it? Of course we do.

An example of teenage stupidity occurred when Caitlin's cousin (we'll just call him Bob) was so confused about the events of 9-11 that he decided to ask Caitlin's father—who works at the Pentagon. The Internet site he stumbled upon said that 9-11 never happened and was a big government conspiracy. The ironic thing is Caitlin's dad took Bob on the token Pentagon impact-site tour the summer before his recent confusion.

Our generation is notorious for being victimized by the ravages of the Internet. You have probably noticed the strange and often sexually-charged bulletins your friends



*Beth Stinson*

**A savage Internet beast targets the teenage community in order to take over the world. The Internet intentionally deceives feeble minds who don't take the time to do their research.**

have been posting on Myspace. This is because your friend, thinking that he really would receive a free iPod for voting on the legalization of marijuana, downloaded a virus. Your friends don't really have a Webcam and Tom is not actually "closing" Myspace.

Your friend has downloaded a malicious program aimed to spread itself to you, relying on our generation's ignorance to thrive.

That is why this is so upsetting. Whatever the Internet throws at you is considered the ultimate and absolute Truth. WRONG. We

have been told over and over about how the Internet is the tool of the devil, and how it sucks teenagers into a black hole of brainwashing and pornography.

Perhaps we are just too trusting of the world. Perhaps we are as naive as our predecessors claim we are. Perhaps they are right when they say we are selfish, obnoxious, and apathetic.

If you agree with them, we give you my permission throw yourself into the mouth of an active volcano. After all, ignorance is bliss. Right? RIGHT?



## Spartanfest '06 puts fun in annual fall fundraising

By Sunnie Ko  
Senior Staff Writer

A damp and mucky morning turned into a beautiful crisp fall day. Although the weather outside said that autumn was officially here, it was the festivities inside the school that defined it.

On Saturday October 28, the annual Spartanfest took flight with full force. Clubs, organizations, vendors and performers all gathered within the halls for a day where the community is brought together.

Spartanfest is also a chance for clubs to do some quick fundraising for their specific needs through unique tactics.

### Students get serious on nights of fun

By Libby Bursley  
Oracle Editor

Homecoming night ended early for students who decided to drink irresponsibly before attending the dance.

"There were some students who had been drinking before Homecoming, and then at the dance they displayed obvious physical signs of intoxication," said Principal David Smith.

The administration discovered one individual who had been drinking, which led to a chain of students being found under the influence.

Nothing to this extent has ever occurred at a WS Homecoming before, although the administrators are sure that a few students do drink before going to school-sponsored functions. The students who were

One of the largest attractions for children and high school students alike was the moon bounce, run by the girl's lacrosse team.

"It was really profitable," said senior captain Alex Flamma. "It collapsed like four times but that didn't stop the kids from coming back."

The moon bounce raised more than \$200 for the girl's spring trip down to Florida.

Several honor societies also raised funds with their own distinctive booths. English Honor Society sold soup,

American Sign Language Honor Society had chocolate covered pretzels and See SPARTANFEST on Page 5.



Sara Kofalt

Physics teacher Kevin Jones endures repetitive whipped cream pies in the face for a Science Honor Society fundraiser at Spartanfest this year.



WRC-TV

An Oakton High School junior died in this crash Saturday night. Police say alcohol was a factor in the crash. caught are required to spend three of their five days of suspension in a standard program teaching them about alcohol.

Students who do not participate in drinking think that underage drinking is dangerous and unnecessary to have a good time.

"I personally think that [drinking] is stupid, and I don't want to be a part of that," said senior Nick Andrews.

Andrews is concerned that his friends' drinking could result in severe consequences.

"I always hear about people in the school, in the news, and even people close to me who have died because of alcohol related driving deaths. I always keep the option open that my friends can call me if they need it," said Andrews.

In 2005, alcohol-related deaths surpassed the 300 mark in the state of Virginia. Designated drivers like Andrews can prevent such fatalities by making sure their friends know that they are available for them if they are too intoxicated to drive. Even though calling for a ride could mean the difference between life and death, some students choose to drive under the influence anyway.

In one such incident, two students from Oakton High School were involved in a fatal crash on October 28. The 17-year-old driver was charged with a DUI. The passenger, 16-year-old Christopher Keams, died when their car crashed into a parked vehicle.

The administration is doing their part by not letting underage drinkers' actions go unnoticed.

"We can do things to remind students that there are laws, and remind folks that if they choose to violate them, there will be consequences," said Smith.

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## Vandalism suspected from HS rival

*Lee students seem to be the leading suspects for recent vandalism to the wooden benches in Spartan Park*

By Rebecca Naramore  
Forum Editor

On Sunday, October 22, the benches that surrounded Spartan park were victims of destruction. All seventeen benches had their backs kicked off and were dismantled. Although there is no proof as to who broke the Spartan Park benches, there are many different assumptions as to who committed the acts of vandalism.

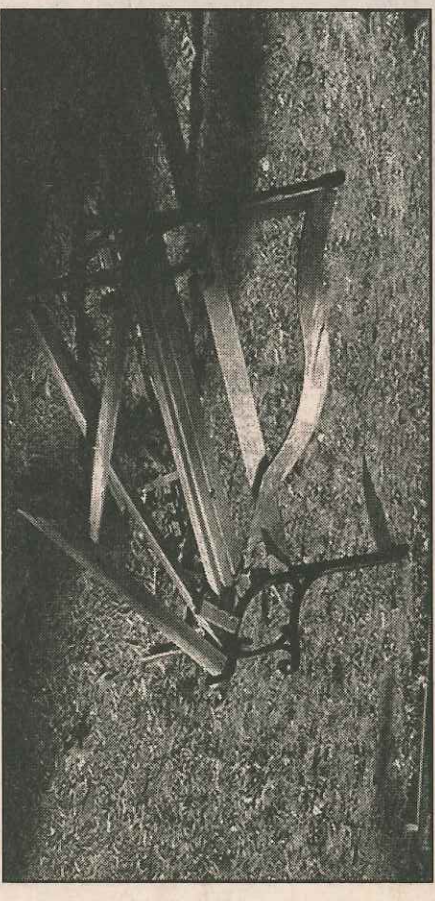
The majority of suspicion rests on WS's rivals the Lee Lancers who were at WS during Friday night's homecoming game.

"We're not pointing fingers at Lee," said head of security Mike Ukele, "But

the administrators at Lee have been notified." Ukele cannot say that it was the WS rivals who destroyed school property, but he did point out that there had been problems between students that night.

"Some of the WS coaches and players had arguments with Lee players on the field," said sophomore Chaz Pratt, the football team manager. Along with the Spartan Park benches the boy's locker room experienced problems homecoming weekend. Name tags were pulled off the lockers, and football jerseys and cleats were taken.

Police cars were present at the end of the game to help escort cars that were trying to get out of the lower parking



All seventeen benches in Spartan Park were wrecked by unknown vandals at the end of WS' homecomings week.

lot. WS's homecoming game had the most traffic out of all the games this year.

"The police were only there to decrease accidents," said school resource officer Shaaron Williams. There is no way of knowing who was responsible for the destruction of the

benches, or if it happened at Friday night's homecoming game. After the third quarter, there is no longer constant supervision in the parking lot.

"Most of those benches were older and dedicated by past classes to the school," said Ukele.

## Spartanfest windy, wonderful for fundraising

SPARTANFEST from Page 4.

almost no one passed up the chance to pie a teacher in the face, courtesy of the Science Honor Society.

Another new successful fundraiser was held by the boys and girls crew team who challenged anyone to row against them.

"I think the whole concept of trying to a rower attracted people," said Crew captain Matt Miller. "I was pleased with the profits, not just the money, but the fact that people know more about the sport itself."

Clubs were not the only ones who were looking for a buck or two. The All Night Grad team held a "spooky



Sara Kotrla

The Forensics team sells food and drinks at Spartanfest to raise money.

"spa" which was free, but tips were greatly appreciated.

"We just wanted to bring in what we could," said All Night Grad Chairperson Kerry Maxwell. "It was big hit with the girls, and even some boys."

From face paint to Fizzies, Spartanfest offered something for everyone despite the windy weather.

## 'It's Academic' team advances to next round

ACADEMIC from page 1.

between the subjects and the three team members strengths. Their victory will be aired on October 28 at 10:30 on Channel 4.

"I think this year's team was a very coordinated team," said Novak. "It was the first time I've seen three people coordinate well and checking each other."

The three competitors received much support inside the studio itself. The Jazz Guitar Combo, directed by Keith Owens, and freshmen cheerleading team, led by Tiffanie Klud, cheered on the WS students standing behind the buzzers, along with the contestants parents.

"I thought I would get nervous but I actually wasn't," said senior Matthew Scott. "We had the confidence and I think that's what helped us to win."

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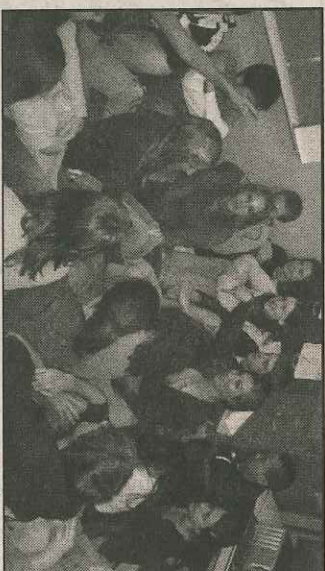
## WS locks down WS students examine their own safety after recent PA shootings

SAFETY from Page 1.

Having lockdown drills and constant walkie-talkie communication between administrators is beneficial to keeping the school safe, but the overall environment of the school is another factor in preventing violence.

"The best defense isn't locking doors, it's a daily environment where stuff like bullying isn't tolerated," said Smith. "If we have a school where bullying is tolerated that's what people react to - that's a problem."

Resources such as peer mediation and counseling allow students to deal with anger problems without feeling the need to resort to violence. It is the



*Kristin McGregor*  
Students gather in the corner of a classroom during a practice lockdown.

responsibility of the student, however, to get help if they or someone they know is upset and might do something drastic.

"Eighty percent of students who shot up a school have told someone beforehand," said Smith. "It's a tough thing for a student to tell someone if they know something, but that's the key."

Due to all that WS is already doing, students do not feel more extensive measures need to be taken.

"I think the school is safe," said sophomore Hillary Jett. "I would rather have the school stay how it is now than have to resort to things like metal detectors."

## Seniors' suffrage overridden by apathy

By Aaron Snow

Senior Staff Writer

A recent poll ranked the US 129 in overall voter turnout when compared to other democratic countries in the world. Placing the US only a spot ahead of Mexico, the poll suggests relative apathy on the part of our citizens.

Particularly dismal were the numbers regarding the 18-25 year old age group of voters. This demographic posted only a 42% voter turnout rate, a decline by nearly a third since 1972. With midterm elections looming and control of both the House and the Senate on the line, it remains to be seen whether or not this trend will continue.

It is a relative mystery why Americans

and young people in particular, vote in such poor numbers. The US is the

world's only remaining superpower, and its elections have truly global implications. With this in mind, the expectation would be that America would also lead the world in voter turnout. US Government teacher Martin Kaltenbaugh offered a possible explanation for this strange phenomenon.

"A lot of people today don't vote because of apathy," said Kaltenbaugh, "they don't think their vote will count."

Kaltenbaugh also cites another possibility.

"A lot of people are turned off of both of the parties because of all of the corruption," said Kaltenbaugh. "They

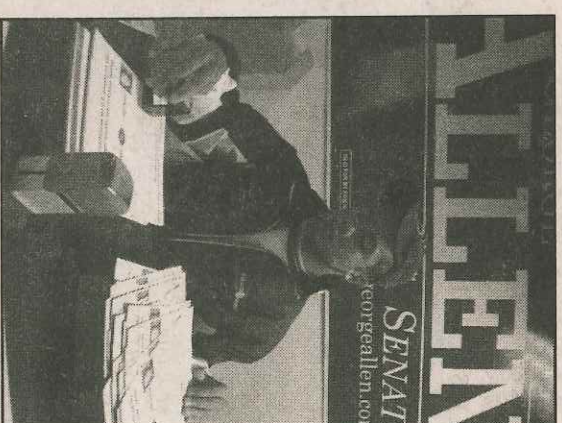
see that the people in charge have all of the money."

Another possible explanation poor turnout among young people is pure and simple laziness.

"A lot of teenagers don't vote because they didn't take the time to register, it's too much work," said senior George Sturgis.

Whatever the reason, a lack of participation in the political process is severely detrimental to a nation's government. The downward spiral in voter turnout could spell disaster for the US.

"Voting is really important because the people we vote for are the people who pass all of our laws," said senior Trey Hagy.



*Colin Embrey*  
Senior Joey Ibanez volunteers for a campaign of his choice as a part of a government requirement.

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# Exchange students say 'Guten Tag!' to American culture

By Chrissy Regelski  
Oracle Editor

As WS celebrated Homecoming, concentrating on spirit days and sporting events, 12 new students joined its crowded hallways.

For two weeks, 12 German exchange students visited WS from Heisenburg Gymnasium in Dortmund, Germany with their English and Social Studies teachers, Ilona Gross and Christine Dobbstein. Living with WS students and their families, the German students were able to experience an American high school homecoming by attending events such as the Homecoming Varsity Football game, the Powderpuff games, the Mr. Spartan competition and the Homecoming Dance.

Their activities, however, were not reserved to the school walls. The students visited Washington, DC, went shopping, and spent a day at Kings Dominion.

"[My least favorite part of hosting is] they always want to go shopping," said senior Joanna LaCroix. "Sometimes, it's too much."

At WS since 2002, the exchange program has proven to be sibling-induced, as there were three sets of brother-



Courtesy of Allison Campbell

German exchange students spent two weeks with WS student hosts and attended various Homecoming festivities. sister hosts this year. Also, the fact that older siblings hosted when they were at WS influenced current hosts to participate in the program.

"I host because my older brother did it and I just followed suit," said Joanna LaCroix.

Joanna's brother, junior Joe LaCroix, agrees that past experiences with their brother as a host wanted him to continue it.

"We have done it for years now because my brother started it," said Joe. "It's fun to show people our culture." American culture, however, proved to be very different than some of the German students imagined.

"I thought [Americans] were more controversial but they aren't," said Jan Werner. "It's more relaxed [here] than I thought it would be. I thought it was very strict." The exchange students also enjoy American food, refusing to leave without taking some with them.

"The biggest thing [different for the German students] is the food," said Joe LaCroix. "Usually, before they leave, they go to Giant and stock up on Doritos and Skittles. I don't know why."

The German students were not only exposed to American culture, but they learned its laws as well.

## Siri Benn foils mundane extracurriculars

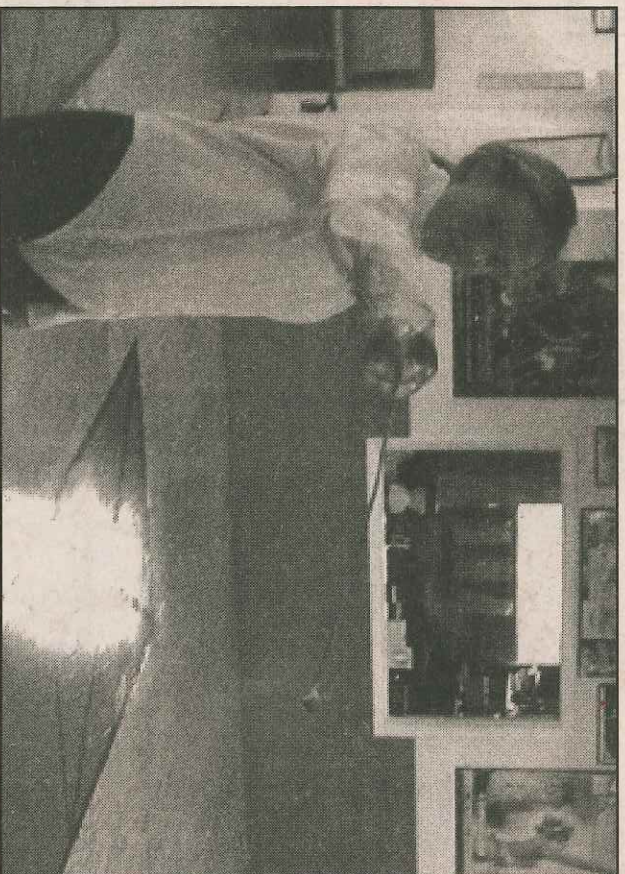
By Caitlin Kenney  
Viewpoint Editor

Orlando Bloom and Johnny Depp, swashbuckling pirates and romantics in *Pirates of the Caribbean*, often accompany the definition of swordplay. WS fencers would tell otherwise.

It is hard to pick out fencers in the crowded hallways of West Springfield because they do not fit any stereotype. Fencers are not identified by the powerful biceps associated with wrestlers or the gangly legs of runners. No, fencers are unique.

Freshmen Siri Benn has been fencing since the seventh grade. "My friend's sister did it and we thought it'd be fun to try the class," said Benn.

Fencing is fought in bouts in which an individual is scored by a judge on his or her technique, aptitude to parry the hits, and success in pinning the target. The



Courtesy of Siri Benn

Freshman Siri Benn finds fencing an original and worthy sport that teaches her how to work under pressure.

## Freshman scores Varsity squad spot

Baker gets moved up in time for District competition victory

By Lindsay Bruhn  
Senior Staff Writer

The Varsity Cheerleaders won Districts last week, and came in second in the Northern Region. They were not, however, competing with their normal roster.

Freshman Julianne Baker got a rare chance to compete with the Varsity Cheerleading squad. This is especially significant because this is Baker's first year cheerleading and she only began tumbling in the middle of last year. Baker is on the Freshman squad but the Varsity squad needed alternates in case of emergency for competitions.

The squad had tryouts for alternates at the beginning of the season. The girls had to be able to execute a toe-touch back-handspring in order to be considered for an alternate position. Baker completed the task and was one of five girls chosen to be alternates.

target is usually around the chest region. The intention of the game is not to hurt the opponent but to hone valuable defensive skills. A fencer is clad in white: jacket and pants as well as a protective pads and a mask. The sword itself is a carbon flexed-tempered steel blade.

Benn finds fencing a unique sport that enables her to stand out among peers.

"It's an interesting conversation starter; you never know who plays it," she said. Benn is surprised by the amount of things she has learned from participating in the sport.

"I can think clearly under pressure now and I've become much more determined after learning to master moves over and over," said Benn.

Fencing is a challenging combination of physical and mental strategy and ability.

"Since you're fencing with an opponent you have to be sneaky," said Benn. "It's like chess only instead of pieces, you're playing with your body."

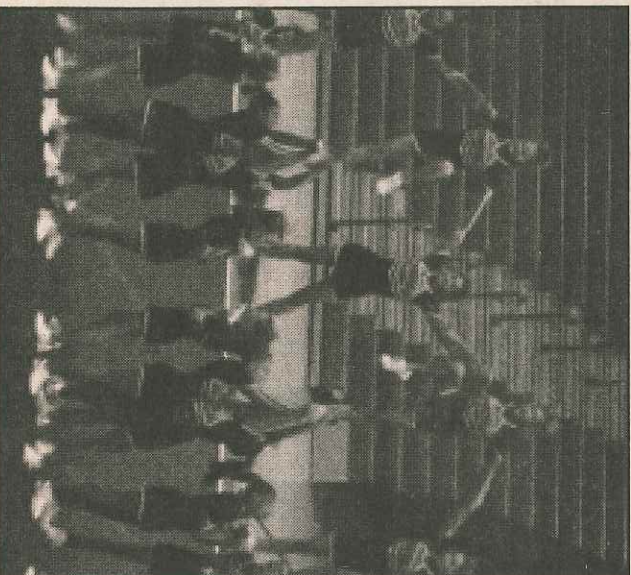
Recently the Varsity squad found itself in need of two of the alternates due to a knee injury and a suspension.

Two bases were needed for the Varsity competition. Junior Hilary Jett, a JV cheerleader, is competing. The other two JV alternate are not bases. That left freshman base, Baker to support Varsity...literally.

"If there is [any negative feedback over a freshman competing on Varsity] I haven't heard it," said Baker. At the competition, Baker gave her all and experienced a Varsity competition as a freshman; something that not many girls can say they have done.

The Varsity cheerleaders were anxious about the alternates taking their teammates place, but they ultimately supported the girls and tried to have a good outlook on the situation.

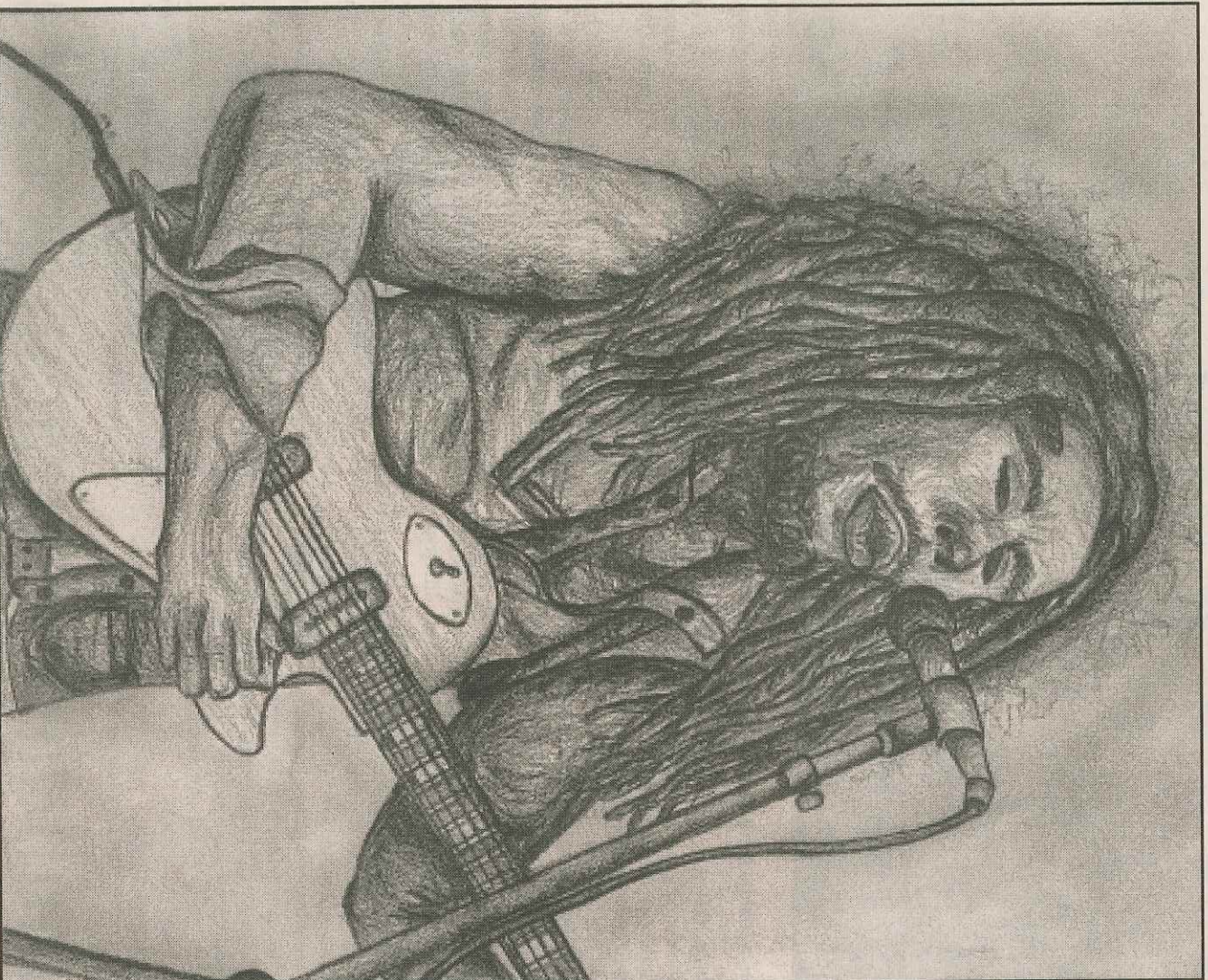
"She doesn't have as much experience but she is probably one of the best we could have pulled up," said Varsity cheerleader, junior Sara Meinhofner.



Edward Locke

The Varsity Cheerleading squad competes at Districts.





Mount Zion

Brian Hamlin, junior

### A Price for Peace

I walked upon the valley of  
darkness  
Shadows forbade my entrance  
The skin upon my arm had  
grown much more tense  
What kind of shadow could  
bring forth so much heinous

The shadow was the world  
Wrapped in immorality  
And wreathed in fatality  
It was falling ever more

I ran to the seas  
Yet stained red they were  
I turned and ran to the fields  
But battle has sent them astir

The world cried in tears  
The time was coming  
I fled far from the world  
But ever they were near

No peace would there be  
For no one realizes it anymore  
That for there to be peace  
There must be death

Jeremiah Strunk, sophomore

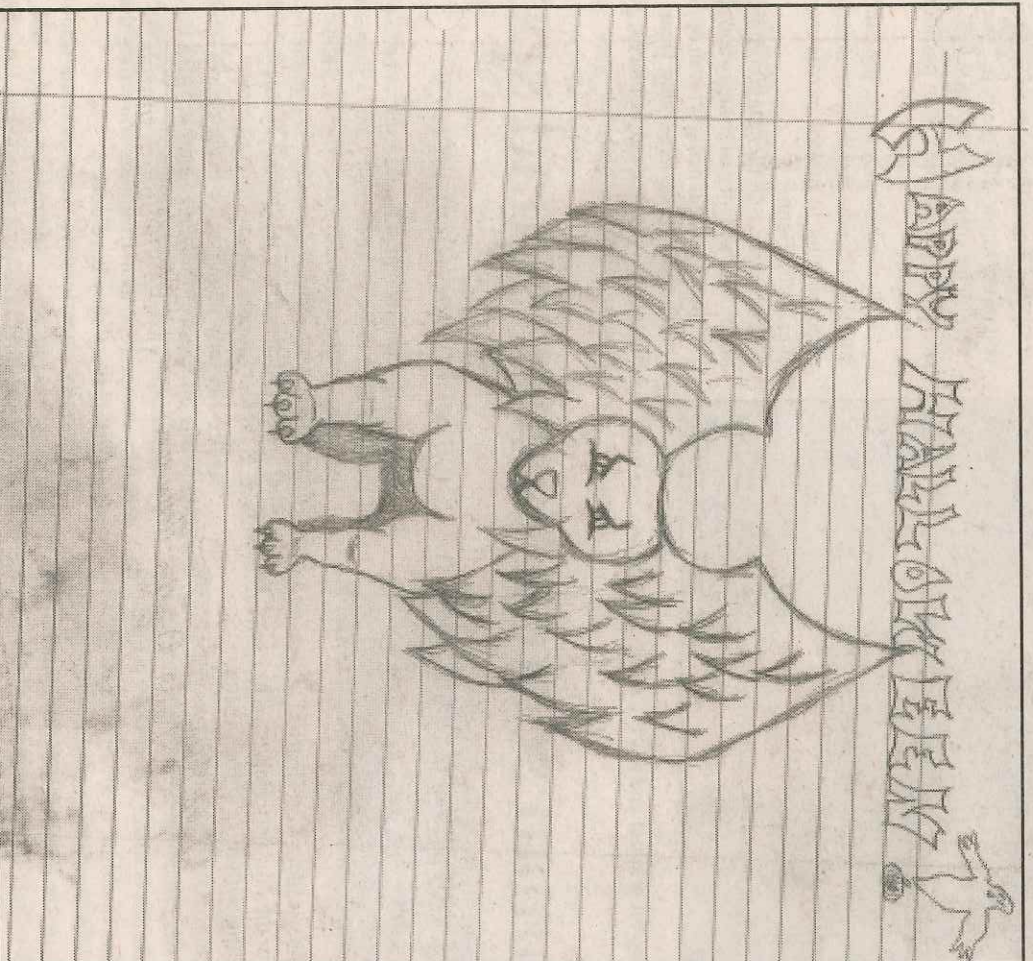
### The One

I thought you were the one  
The one I could count on  
The one I could talk to  
...My guardian Angel...

But it seems as if I was wrong  
As if my heart had deceived  
me  
As if you were never truly there  
And as I fall asleep with tears  
slowly falling

From my eyes  
...I can only think of you...

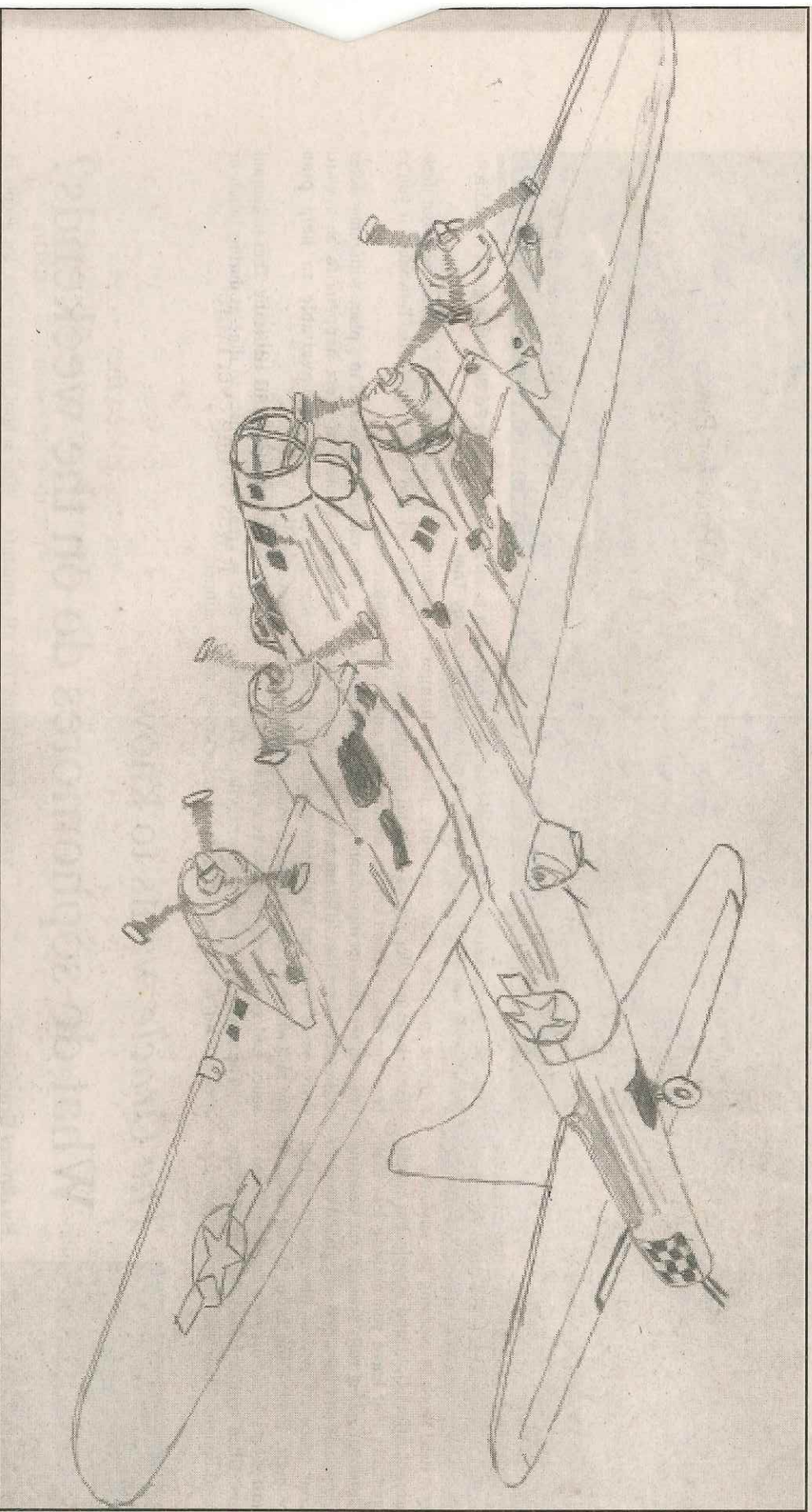
Virginia Thai, sophomore



Happy Halloween

David Nelson, senior





*Gajindra Surujpaul, junior*

Untitled

I once beheld my flower,  
 Beautiful, rare, and wild.  
 Content to sit and smell it,  
 Giddy, naively, like a child.

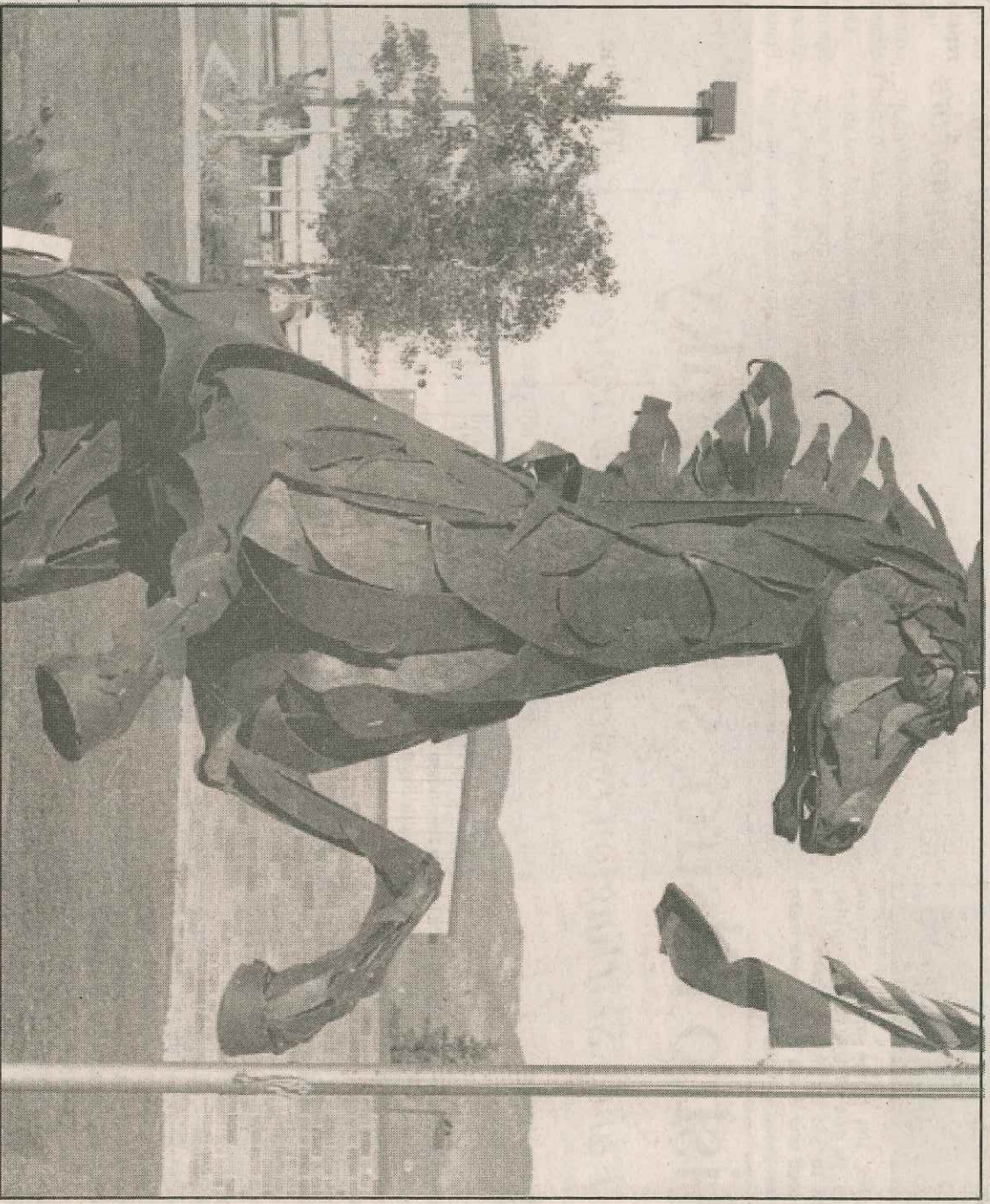
Everyday I loved it,  
 Gave it water, room to grow.  
 Until my flower grew thorns,  
 Grew into something I didn't  
 know.

It didn't smell so sweetly,  
 Its colors weren't so bright.  
 It's petals became toxic,  
 My flower changed over night.

I turned around and realized,  
 No longer was it mine.  
 I'd lost my favorite flower,  
 But I knew I'd heal with time.

I shed a tear for my flower,  
 I shed one last tear for you.  
 I won't forget when I loved  
 him,  
 Trust in that it's true.

Cat Black, junior



*Alanna Sheppard, junior*



# Try Thai

By Sunnie Ko

Senior Staff Writer

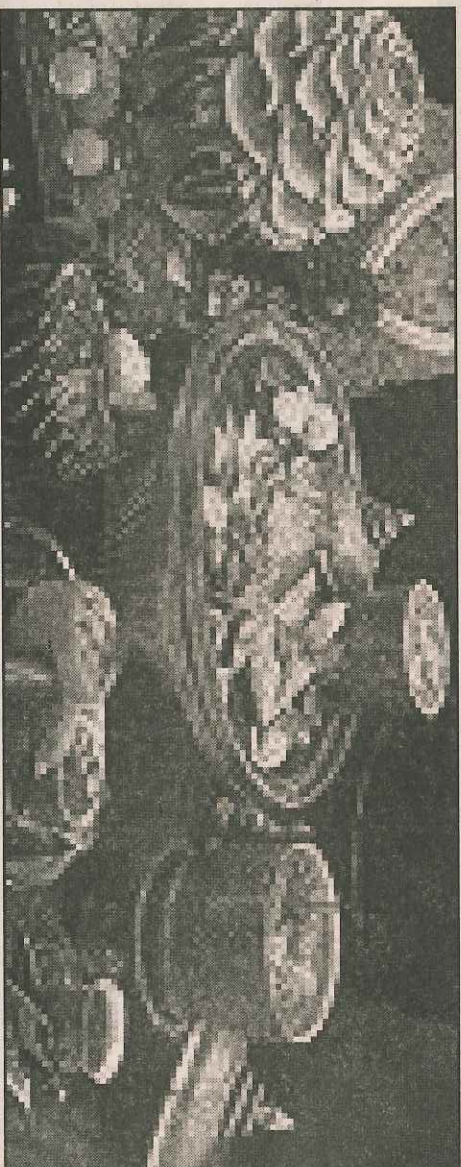
Authentic was the first word that came to mind at the restaurant.

Located at 3807 Mt. Vernon Avenue in Alexandria, Po Siam Restaurant serves authentic Thai food with a unique home-style flare.

The walls are decked out in art work that makes the restaurant authentic and serene. Po Siam is family owned, and it shows in every aspect of dining, especially their hard work in pleasing the customer.

The restaurant offers light and simple but mouth watering appetizers that leave you nothing less than satisfied. Traditional spring rolls brought out steaming with fresh vegetables and fried fish and glazed over in sweet and sour sauce are two of the appetizers that delight taste buds. Everything brought out taste so fresh, it almost seems as if you were eating at home.

Their menu filled with a wide selection of ethnic foods is sure to delight. Their pad Thai was served in



Thailand-Guide

Thai food is fantastic for taste buds but many believe it is an acquired taste. Po Siam is a great restaurant with a wide variety of tasteful dishes for those that enjoy Thai.

a huge portion that certainly pleases hunger. Chantaboon noodles are mixed with shrimp, peanuts, bean sprouts, chopped chives, shrimp, tofu and a few other miscellaneous ingredients are fried together in a skillet, combine the different tastes into one amazing dish. Aside from pad Thai, their menu also includes pra ram which is a chicken that is sautéed in a broccoli sauce and several other meals sure to delight.

The service at Po Siam is also excellent. The waiters are friendly making dinner comfortable and

pleasurable. Not only do they serve the food, but these waiters can also teach you a little Taiwanese if you're interested.

The restaurant is located in a place with other stores and great scenery if there happens to be a wait. Reservations are also available to help plan accordingly.

Po Siam is a wonderful, authentic Thai restaurant that is great for families to dine at during lunch or dinner.

## The Oracle wants to know: What do sophomores do on the weekends?

By Jimmy Bradshaw  
Sophomore Staff Writer

With the opening of new movie theaters and professional sports teams relocating to Washington DC, the area is just bombing with things to do and places to go for WS sophomores.

RFK Stadium located just a couple blocks from the capital, is a very popular hangout place during the summer, with low price tickets, and decent proximity to Springfield its become very popular to WS students to go. Home to the Washington Nationals (baseball) and DC United (soccer), RFK is a heaven for sophomore sports fans.

"RFK Stadium is a great place to hangout and watch the Nats play," said sophomore Geoff Harris.

For those not into sports, but still enjoy entertainment, Kingstown offers

various attractions for all students. Kingstown includes a 16 theater, movie theater and various restaurants, including Chipotle and Panera Bread.

"The movie theatre at Kingstown is huge, it has a ton of food courts too," said sophomore Omid Abbsazadeh.

**"RFK Stadium is a great place to hangout and watch the Nats play."**  
— Geoff Harris,  
sophomore

Kingstown also boasts a state of the art driving range. Top Golf. Top Golf also includes a putt-putt course and pro shop in addition to the unique driving range.

Starbucks, located in several local outlet malls, is known as a prime hangout

after school for all grades, for people in the mood for chilling out and having a coffee.

"Starbucks, is a great place just to hang out," said sophomore Sung-Ho Na. Of course all teenagers love to flock to the malls around the area in their spare time.

"I shop at Potomac, because it has a huge variety of stores," said sophomore Achin Jaitly.

Many sophomores have gone outside of Springfield to shop due to the opinions of Springfield Mall and the reputation it possesses.

"Springfield Mall has a bad community and its getting outrun by other malls," said sophomore Min Yu.

Despite people not going to Springfield Mall, they have seeked alternative malls near by, including Pentagon City, Potomac, and Tyson's.



shopsandservice

Chipotle, the home of the famous burrito, is one of the most popular places to eat on the weekends. Its great food and fiesta atmosphere make it a great place to hang out.

## Bistro Bistro: stinky stinky Fancy Shirlington restaurant fails to impress

By Alyssa Horton  
Features Editor

The name Bistro Bistro gives off a certain flair when said by a person. It makes one think that it would be a nice restaurant with good service, but then you would be sorely mistaken.

Bistro Bistro is located in Shirlington, roughly 20 minutes away. The directions to this restaurant are very confusing because there is only one exit sign that says "Shirlington" so if you miss it you go in a totally different direction.

"We couldn't tell what the directions meant so we ended up missing the exit and heading toward Richmond," said junior David Zeppieri.

Once you do arrive in the town of Shirlington you find that there is very limited parking. The street in front of the restaurant is narrow so parking can only be found about a block away, if you get lucky.

The restaurant gives off a very homey, quiet feeling when you walk inside and is very nicely upholstered. The tables have little candles on them and there is a napkin at each place folded and placed upright. At first, one is very impressed.

But then, after the waiter sits you down, instead of automatically asking everyone what they would like to drink he leaves and does not come back for a good 15 minutes. After finally taking the drink orders the drinks are brought and instead of immediately taking the food orders, like waiters do at most restaurants, he

leaves for another 15 or 20 minutes. At this point stomachs are growing because the complimentary bread that they brought you is not satisfying everyone's hunger.

At last the menus are given to everyone. After all this time of waiting one would expect to be able to flip through a decent sized menu of three or four pages, but no, it is written in tiny pretty print that can barely be seen unless you hold the menu up to your face and it is only one page long. Plus, the cheapest thing on

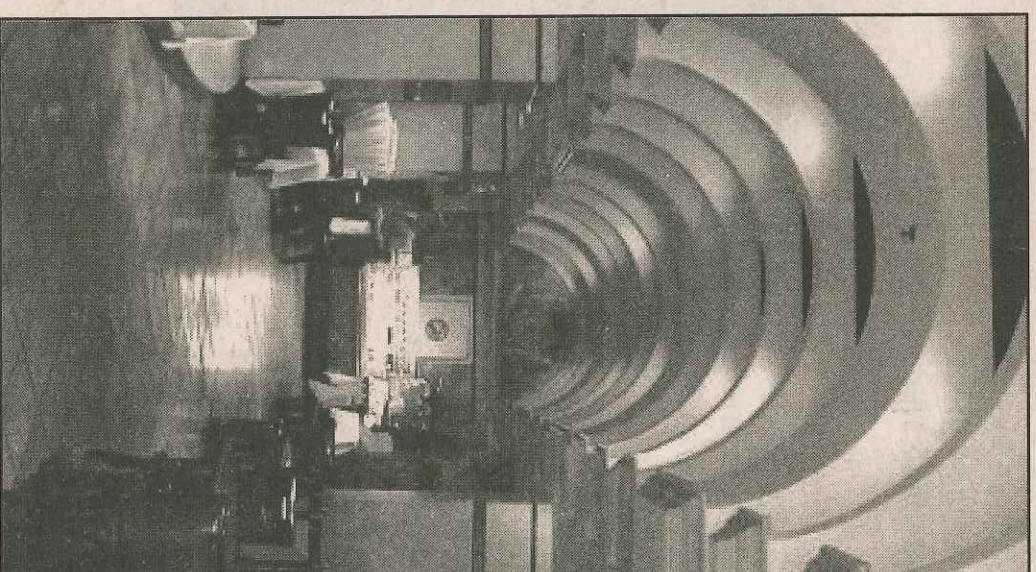
## Commentary

the menu is about 13 dollars and most of the meals average around 20.

The only good thing that can be said about this experience was that the food was amazing. If you are patient enough to wait an hour and a half for your food, then order the "Duet of Chicken" because it was very good.

But then, the meal ends on a bad note because the bill is extremely high. For our group of 18 people the bill was over 300 dollars, including the tip (thank goodness).

"It was ridiculous how long it took for our food to come," said junior Kelley Williams. "I was so mad at the waiter and I do not plan on going there again."



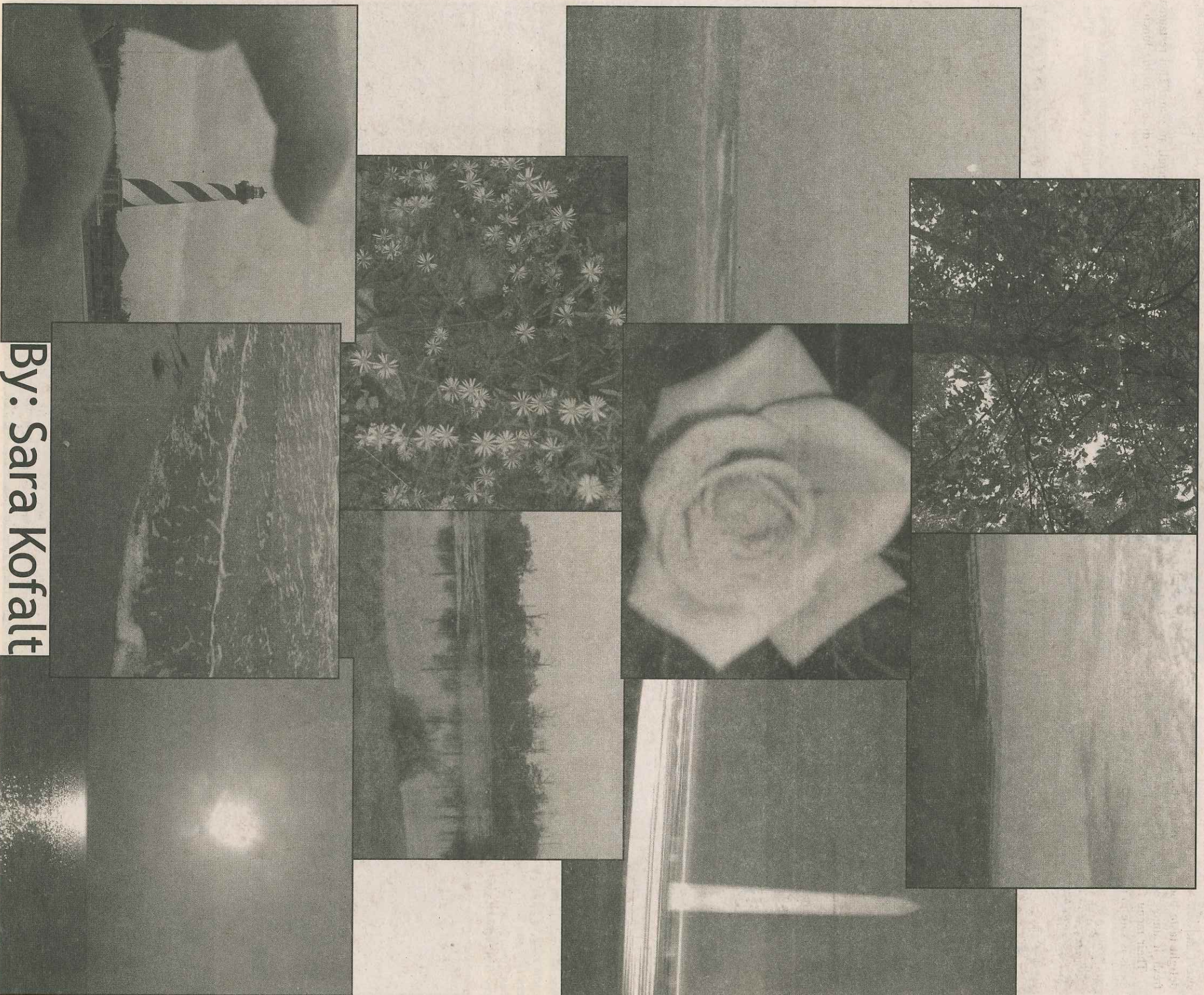
Bistro Bistro

Though classy and delicious, Bistro Bistro lacks fast and polite service. Bistro Bistro averages \$20 a plate and is located about 20 minutes away from WS.



*“The really happy person is one who can enjoy the scenery when on a detour.”*

*-Unknown*



By: Sara Kofalt



# Moving shapes life of one military brat

By Joe LaCroix

Journalism 1

Military brats. Here in the DC area, they're a dime a dozen.

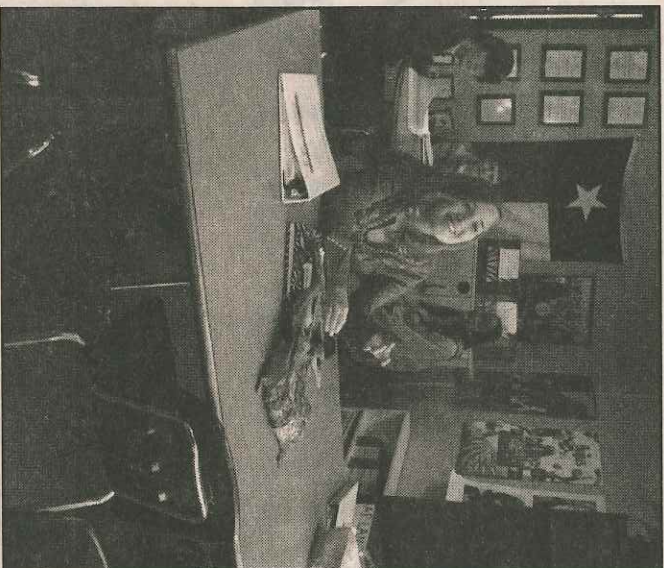
Most of them, however, are often bitter about their forced immigration across the country and sometimes around the world. At WS, where the "military" student population sometimes reaches 75 percent, moving frequently is a fact of life.

But as senior Kat Davies looks back on many moves throughout her 18 years, she has fond memories and seems grateful for the experiences she has had.

As she draws a map of the Azores on the board in order to give the class full of eager interviewers an idea of the islands' location, Davies is laughing. At a classmate's request, she recites a timeline of her various homesteads. This takes some time to accomplish. Davies, who has moved nine times, says that not everything is great about the constant change of scenery.

"I don't want to get too connected to some people," said Davies, who moved to Springfield from Wyoming the summer before her senior year. She says that the constant moves often make it difficult to have a real relationship with a boy.

She also says that it is sometimes difficult to get new schools to accept her old credits when switching



Kristin McGregor  
Senior Kat Davies, who has moved nine times in 18 years, hangs out in her Journalism 1 classroom during 4th period. Davies volunteered to be interviewed by the class, and spoke about her experiences as a "military brat."

"I serve my country as an American citizen. I don't need to join the military, I've already sacrificed for them."

— Kat Davies,  
senior

the pizza.

"American pizza sucks. It's disgusting compared to what it's supposed to be," said Davies.

Self-described as "artsy," Davies is proud that she has supported her father—who serves in the Air Force—and the military, but feels she has more than fulfilled her duty.

"I serve my country as an American citizen. I don't think I need to join the military," said Davies. "I've already sacrificed for them."

## Class of 2007 paints a spirited picture

By Kenan O'Keefe

Journalism 1

Starting their freshman year, the Class of 2007 had little to no school spirit. But since then, their camaraderie has grown to something to get excited about.

From winning the spirit stick during pep rallies to the flash of the '07 "gang sign," the seniors this year have a sense of unity.

"When I finish high school, I'm going to look back on how well our class has bonded," said class officer Amy Zinicola.

The fall pep rally would have been dull if it weren't for the seniors. Students say that new mascot Matt Kawamoto represents the spirit of the Class of 2007. During the mascot competition, which was held during the pep rally, Kawamoto came running shirtless down the bleachers twirling his white T-shirt over his head, then surfed a crowd of football players. The seniors roared.

"This is the only time of year we have a lot of school spirit," said senior Matt Scott.

The only thing that is missing from seniors' spirit this year, some say, is a winning football team. But other fall sports, such as golf and field hockey, have had good seasons, so why not rally 'round them?

"People should concentrate more on the golf team," said senior Andy Adell. "We're undefeated."

Football games, though, are where the seniors show their true colors. At every game, a group of body-painted seniors sits near the front of the bleachers, banging on trash cans.

"Looking up in the fans and seeing school spirit motivates the team," said football player and senior George Sturgis. Class unity has taken some time, though.

"Being a freshman and a sophomore, it's hard to have much school spirit," said Zinicola.



Amy McGregor  
After being summoned to cheer for the Class of 2007, seniors Travis Blair, Nikki Black and Caitlyn Grace show their spirit during the pep rally.

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# Spartan athletes take advantage of scholarship opportunities

## Students excited about continuing athletic careers

By Krista Pedersen  
Scoop Editor

When Matt Kawamoto was named to the second All-District lacrosse team as a freshman, high expectations were set for him. Now a senior, Kawamoto has been granted a scholarship to Ohio State as a defender.

"I verbally committed [the] second week in August," said Kawamoto. "I chose [Ohio State over Bucknell or Drexel] because of the school more. Second because I like the coaches a lot."

In order to recruit students to play for them, some colleges offer full or partial financial aid. Division One schools usually have the most to offer, while some lower-tier schools, like Division Three Christopher Newport, are prohibited from awarding sports scholarships.



LiteTouch

Senior Matt Kawamoto will play lacrosse for Ohio State University next year. Kawamoto based his decision on the quality of the school and the coaches Ohio State provided.

"Scholarships are difficult to attain even for those who may be accomplished in both academics and activities," said Athletic Director Tim O'Reilly. "To be a college athlete demands a level of dedication, commitment, and hard work that not only applies to sport but also your academics. The tradition of strong athletic programs coupled with the successful academic program here has created a culture for which these opportunities [for scholarships] exist in our community."

Besides Kawamoto, there are many other student-athletes from the senior class receiving scholarships. Among them are several members of the girls Varsity

"I'm really excited [about the scholarship]. It's just nice to know that I can help my parents out."

—Corinna Strickland, senior

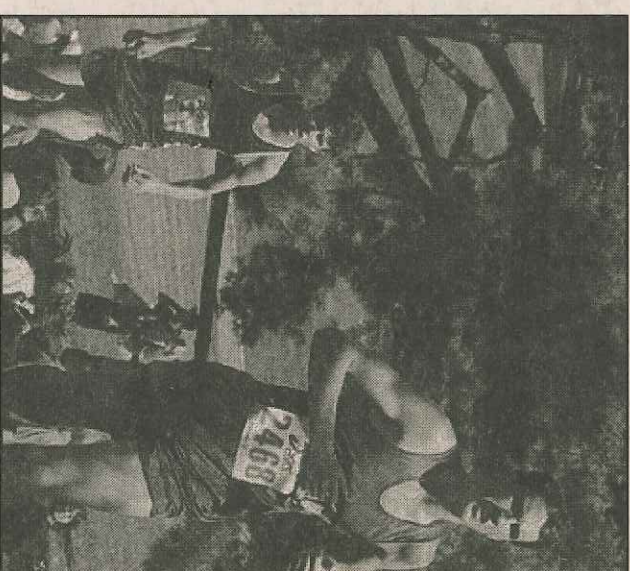
soccer team, in particular forward Laurel Pastor and defender Corinna Strickland.

"[I've played] since I was like five," said Pastor, who will attend VCU in fall 2007. "Soccer pretty much is everything."

Strickland had been contacted by several schools including Virginia Tech, William and Mary and Rice, before committing to James Madison.

"I just really like the atmosphere at JMU and all the girls seemed really nice," said Strickland. "I wanted a good education paired with a good soccer team."

Most high school athletes like Pastor, Strickland and Kawamoto all received multiple offers. Then there is senior Mike Spooner, who was contacted by "anyone you can think of."



Spartansports

Senior Mike Spooner will look to continue his success at the University of Tennessee.

Spooner, a cross-country and long-distance track runner, finally committed to the University of Tennessee, partly because he wanted to be highly competitive year-round in both cross country and track, instead of one or the other.

"It came down to Purdue, NC State and Tennessee," said Spooner. "[I chose Tennessee because] the campus is great [and] there's a lot of great tradition at Tennessee. Our two best runners in the past [Jeff Day and Steven Tobin] have gone to Tennessee. The [WS] coaches are familiar with how the program works also."

O'Reilly recognizes Spooner's achievements. "[Spioneer] certainly came into his high school career with talent and in-season success. He is a very hard worker and his coaches have much praise in that regard," he said.

No matter how prestigious the team at a certain school, each scholar-athlete will receive a quality education and aid to help them attend college. As Kawamoto puts it, "money is money."

"I'm really excited [about the scholarship]," said Strickland. "It's just nice to know that I can help my parents out."

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# Competition results with an unsettled score

## Senior Aaron Snow is disqualified at States for a score card error

**By Ariane Irvine**  
*Senior Staff Writer*

Aaron Snow, only the third person at WS to compete in the state golf tournament since 1998, was disqualified due to a scorecard error.

"It eventually happens to everybody," said Chip Horan, another member of the Golf team. "But he didn't deserve it."

Snow, after getting through the Patriot District individual tournament by tying for sixth place and winning in a playoff, was disqualified in the first day of the tournament. The person keeping his score card wrote down a lower score and Snow, not knowing that his score had been changed, signed off for it.

"I was disappointed," said Snow. "I did everything you're normally supposed to do."



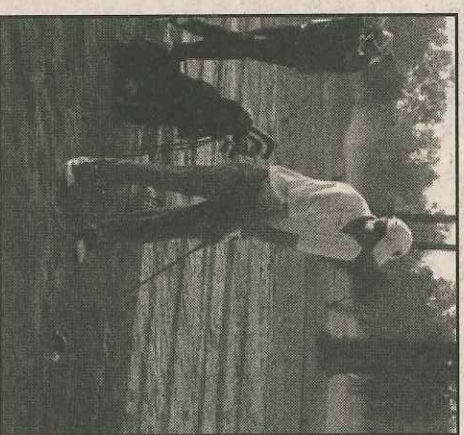
*Spartan Sports*  
Senior Aaron Snow after placing 5th in the Patriot District Golf Tournament.

After finding that his score was recorded as a point lower than what he knew it was, Snow reported the error and had the score changed.

"To anybody else it seems unfair," said Susan Spatcher, who has been the WS golf coach for 13 years. "But it's the

rule of golf. When you sign a score card with a lower score, you're disqualified."

In golf, it is required for a player to know what their score is. If the person marking down their score gives them one more point than they actually earned, the player is disqualified. If the scorer



*Spartan Sports*

Senior Aaron Snow warms up on the driving range before the Virginia state tournament. Although Snow played a good round of golf, he was disqualified due to a scoring error.

marks them down as having one less, the player has to keep the higher score. "It was honorable of him to confess," said Spatcher.

It is extremely important for players to make absolutely certain that their score is correct, especially before signing off for it.

"I checked with the kid who was keeping my score three times and he said it was okay," said Snow. "Always take the score from the kid who's keeping it and look it over."

# Title IX opens some doors, but closes others

**By Sean Hogan**  
*Oracle Editor*

Title IX was created in 1972 to require gender equality in all educational funded by the federal government. It did so for more than 30 years, but college sports are no longer equal.

In theory, Title IX is a great idea. According to TitleIX.info, only two percent of college sports funding was given to women's sports before Title IX was formed, a figure that is so unfair it's almost incomprehensible.

Now Title IX is oppressing men's sports. On September 29, James Madison University cut ten sports, seven of which were men's, because the sports

participation was not directly proportional to the student population, a Title IX rule. The "tragic" percentages: JMU is currently comprised of 61 percent women and 39 percent men; 50.7 percent of athletes at JMU were women and 49.3 percent were men before the cuts.

This all being said, JMU isn't at fault completely. While the number of reported male athletes at JMU was inflated (382 was reported to the Title IX folks, whereas only 340 were on official rosters) and female athletes deflated (most notably the Track & Field team), Title IX is outdated and now pushes college sports to the unfair side for men.

## Commentary

On the "Facts and Myths about Title IX" section on the official Title IX website, cutting men's sports as well as the basis that football and men's basketball fund most other sports are dismissed as myths with statistics. I would accept these statistics, but they are incredibly outdated. The most updated statistic is as of 2000.

The reason of Title IX was to give women more opportunities in college athletics. Little did we know that these opportunities would eventually end dreams



*Lifetouch*

## Spartan Spotlight: Alex Watt,

### freshman, Cross Country

**By Inderbir Bal**  
*Business/Systems Editor*

**How do the upperclassmen treat you on the team?**  
They treat me nice but they joke around.

**Why do you think you're so good, is it because you train or what?**  
I am a natural and I have long legs.

**What do you like about the cross country and what do you not like?**  
I like my teammates and coaches but not the workout, like the distance running.

**How does it feel when you get a good time at a meet?**  
I feel really well when I get a good time?

**How do you feel when running against people older than you?**  
I don't mind, I am tall so I look older.

**Are you going to continue cross country for the rest of high school or are you going to join another sport?**  
I will do cross country and I will do something in the winter and track in the spring.

**How do you think you'll do this year?**  
I think I will do pretty good, because I've finished pretty well and the coach has been training us.

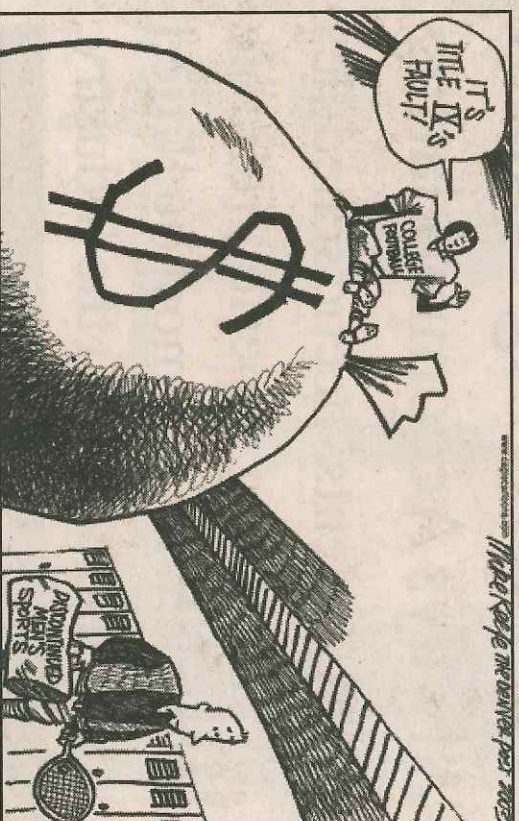
**When did you start running competitively or, is this your first year?**  
This is my first year and it started in August.

**Why do you run competitively, rather than playing other sports like field hockey?**  
I have been good at running and I thought it would be fun.

**What do you like about the coaches and teammates?**  
The teammates are encouraging and the coach tells the truth about what you need to work on and the coach is positive.

**How do you feel right before the meet?**  
I get really excited, like some girls get nervous but I don't.

**How do your parents support you?**  
My parents encourage me and my dad was a runner in high school and college so he helps me out.



*Washington Post*

for men in college sports, like WS senior Andy Adell, who was planning on JMU's Track & Field team next year, but now will not get the chance.

Title IX needs to stop punishing men for being active. No sport should ever be cut because of issues like this. If the number needs to be equaled out, sports should be added on the women's side and not subtracted on the men's side.



*JMU sports*

The James Madison University men's archery team practices before a match in 2005. JMU cut ten sports teams this year due to Title IX, including both men's and women's archery.

**Congratulations!**  
Boys Varsity Volleyball  
Boys Cross Country  
Varsity Cheerleaders  
Patriot District  
Champions!  
And to Dr. David Smith, for  
completing the Marine Corps  
Marathon—his second!





A contestant on "Parental Control" kisses up to his date's parents in an attempt to take control into his own hands.

# MTV lacks music, quality

By Molly Cushing  
Photographer

As I shift through the channels broadcasting reality TV, I always find myself coming back to the same surprising channel: MTV.

Music Television is a very inappropriate station name. It seems to me the channel should be called "HIRTV" (Highly Improbable Reality Television). Aside from their occasional music video montage, MTV only plays outrageously ridiculous reality shows. The question is: which is the most horrible reality show on MTV?

I have pondered this question of life, and I have determined it is without a doubt "Parental Control." The idea of the show alone is absurd. A set of

parents picks two different spouses for their child because they hate their current one. Their child then goes on a date with two of the chosen people and must decide between their parents spouse or the fresh meat their parents have selected for them. I am so irate!

If I was ever in such a situation, I would get out of that relationship and never look back. It shocks me that some couples who have been dating for three years split up as a result of this show.

Why on earth would you date someone for three years if you have no problem dumping them for a complete stranger? Is it because you're an emotionless robot, or in dire need of fifteen minutes of fame?

I think yes. Although some fans may be obsessed, "Parental Control" should get a big "NEXT."

## Airbrushed cartoon shirts are looney

TV cartoons depicted as gangsters, pimps

By Zohra Alnoor  
Senior Staff Writer

I hate them. I really do. I think everyone does, but no one has admitted to it, because they think that the cartoon characters are too cute to make fun of. But if they hate them, then why do they exist?

I'm referring to the airbrushed figures of Daffy Duck, Tweety Bird, Scooby Doo and other various loved classic cartoon icons printed on oversized t-shirts. The characters, once merely thought of as happy cartoons that entertained little kids, are now being used to promote drinking, smoking and "bling."

It's a shame that teenagers are taking these once-innocent characters and transforming them into intimidating "hardcore" icons by gallivanting through schools and malls wearing them as if they are cool. They're not. Why can't they just leave Scooby Doo to solving mysteries instead of making him look like a gang member? Is it so wrong that Bugs Bunny has a carrot dangling out of his mouth instead of a fat cigar?

Little kids are going to be confused and upset when they are walking through the mall with their moms, and pass a window displaying shirts with Bugs Bunny, not as a wascally wabbit, but as a hardcore gangster.

This repulsive "fashion" does not only consist of Looney Tunes characters. Now the disease is spreading to other innocent TV show characters like Spongebob Squarepants, the infamous yellow sponge who repairs, 'I'm ready,' on his way to The Krusty Krab. The naïve and sometimes annoying character is now being represented as a drug dealer, a pimp and even a basketball player. Though this last representation is not as dumb as others. Mr. Squarepants lives in Bikini Bottom located in the ocean, he can't play basketball when the ball just floats up to the top of the water. The shirt goes against the laws of physics, which proves that the next generation will suck at science. We must stop the insanity now.

These repulsive shirts were seen everywhere during my freshman year at WS, but luckily it's starting to calm down now. I think teenagers today are getting some sense, but there are still young ones caught red-handed wearing these shirts.

If you like Bugs or Bob, watch the show and keep it at that. If you want to wear a cool shirt with a cool TV character, I'd suggest Clifford the Big Red Dog.

## Jake Disagrees Internet acronyms: Convenient timesaver or bane of Man?

By Jake Serwin  
Etc. Editor

My computer spoke to me.

"Hey kid, I'm a computer," said the computer.

"I am aware of that," I said. "Why are you talking to me? It's so unlike you."

"I wanted to tell you that you are a sloppy meatbag completely devoid of motivation," said the computer. "I am also curious as to why you have chosen as your desktop wallpaper an image of the male cast of *Dawson's Cre*."

I shut him down. The terrifying sentient machine has a point. American teenagers are lazy and incompetent because of computers. And *Dawson's Creek*.

Most of the people I know, myself included, use some form of instant messaging program, namely AOL Instant Messenger. This program will bring about the downfall of human civilization. I am sure of it. We adolescents aren't even willing to put forth the



The drastic increase in usage of internet acronyms and subsequent growth of the energy drink industry has left hundreds of thousands of woodland creatures without homes. Many of these adorable critters must pose for humorous picture websites to survive.

effort to type full words anymore. Instead of "I am laughing out loud," you type "lol." Though you have the capacity to laugh audibly, you choose instead to hunt and peck those three keys. All that strain leaves you weakened and reaching for an energy drink (probably made from the tears of deforested animals)

"It would reflect very poorly on our country if the seat behind the United States placard at the UN had a piece of paper taped to it that said "BRB."

I understand where these acronyms came from. Online team-based computer games require both communication and complete control, so brevity of typing time is integral to surviving your simulated anti-terrorist operation or retrieving the Uncomfortable Wool Swimsuit of the Monkey from a level 34 dungeon.

There is no excuse for using abbreviation when you are sitting at your desk in a bathrobe talking to

your friend in Iowa about a video of David Hasselhoff singing to a giant boot. In German.

If we, the next generation of presidents, prime ministers and baron-administrators, cannot be trusted to spell a word all the way, how can we be trusted to balance government spending and properly dispose of nuclear waste? Dan Quayle couldn't always spell correctly, but at least he tried the whole word.

It would reflect very poorly on our country if the seat behind the United States placard at the UN had a piece of paper taped to it that said "BRB."

If my cynicism proves correct, as it always does, international efforts to bring internet access to third-world countries will create an entire global population of sloppy meatbags.

The current generation of world leaders is brimming with practical thinkers and supporters of intellectual progress. We should be more like them.

Take charge of the future, American adolescents. Use full sentences. Spell out whole words. Choke on a pretzel.



# Product prank calls produce problems

By Cam Rushton  
Sports Editor

In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell and his assistant, Thomas A. Watson, were seated in adjacent rooms when Bell accidentally spilled battery acid onto his clothing. Quickly, Bell reached for his remarkable new invention, his "harmonic telegraph," and said, "Mr. Watson, come here. I need you."

Thus, the first telephone was born. The little known response of Watson, however, went something like "Is your refrigerator running, Mr. Bell? (pause) Well, then you'd better go catch it!"

Thus the first prank call was born. Obviously, Watson's response was not humorous, largely in part to the fact that his boss was sitting at his desk with battery acid in his lap. Somewhere throughout the course of history, though, prank calls developed, and have remained a popular hobby for bored teens everywhere.

I recently went on a prank calling adventure, and found some interesting information about certain companies. For example, I called Aquafina, not to ask for nutritional facts or comment on the taste of their water, but instead to find out how long the receiver of my call would keep me on the line. I never made it past five minutes. My conversation went something like this:



The Green Head

Moe Sizlack of "The Simpsons" was the unfortunate recipient of many of Bart Simpson's prank calls.

**Aquafina:** Hello, sir, what is your comment or concern?

**Me:** Yeah, hi, um...my friend sitting here next to me just took a drink of my water and now it's green.

**Aquafina:** Sir, please call back some other time when you have a valid question... (click)

Blast, my plan was foiled.

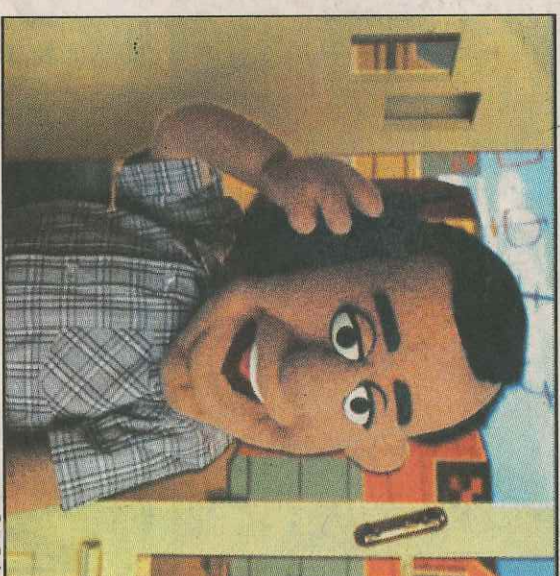
After that call fell through, I decided upon a company that I could really stick it to and really have fun with: Fruit of the Loom.

**Fruit of the Loom:** What can I help you with today, sir?

**Me:** Yes, do your boxer briefs include real fruit?

**Fruit of the Loom:** Excuse me?

**Me:** You know, the boxer briefs...do they come with real fruit?



Sir Puisse

Comedy Central's "Crank Yankers" features real prank calls made by celebrities like Jimmy Kimmel reenacted by puppets.

**Fruit of the Loom:** Sir, that is only the name of the company, so there is no fruit included with anything we sell.

**Me:** Well, do the sports bras come with real fruit then?

**Fruit of the Loom:** (click) Dang, stymied again.

At this point, I was becoming a little hummed because the places I would call would not play along with my jokes. So, I turned to comedian and Blue Collar Comedy Tour alum Bill Engvall for inspiration, in which he writes a letter to Preparation H.

"Dear Preparation H, I ate this whole dang tube, and I still got these hemorrhoids. Man, my mouth's so small, I can't eat a jelly-bean anymore. But, I can whistle really good."

# Which Muppet would make the best president?



Northern Pine

"**Cookie Monster**, because he'd give everyone cookies."  
— Lizzie Williams, sophomore



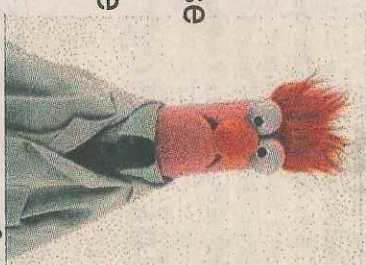
National Orcaal

"**Gonzo**, because there's this one episode where he's Rumpelstiltskin and he appears out of thin air, and that was cool."  
— Jordan Kronz, junior



Unsees

"**Elmo**, because he's cute and because everyone loves Elmo."  
— April Chicko, sophomore



Cozmo

"**Beaker**, because he's a strong leader. He'll make noises for the nation."  
— Caitlyn Heine, junior



Friendster

"**Miss Piggy**, because she'd be a good woman president. She's headstrong."  
— Jay Friedel, sophomore

— compiled by Ariane Irvine

# NOVEMBER '06

Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
3 Varsity Football vs. Hayfield @ home, 7:30	4 SAT (not at WS) Sadie Hawkins Day	5 Roy Roger's Birthday 	6 TEACHER WORKDAY National Nachos Day	7 TEACHER WORKDAY Election Day	8 Second Quarter Begins Dunce Day	9 JV football vs. Fairfax HS @ home, 7:30
10 Varsity Football vs. South County @ home, 7:30	11 Cross Country State Championships @ Great Meadow	12 Pizza but No Anchovies Day	13 Robert Louis Stevenson's Birthday	14 Spicy Guacamole Day	15 America Recycles Day	16 Quit Smoking Day <b>NOTICE</b> NO SMOKING UNLESS YOU'RE ON FIRE