



# The ORACLE

September 12, 2008 Volume 45 Number 1  
West Springfield High School 6100 Rolling Road Springfield, Virginia 22152

## We say 'goodbye' to Stevie

Stephanie "Stevie" Fiorino was a friend, an Oracleite and a Spartan. Stevie, a member of the Class of 2007, died last month. We've never lost a Spartan Journalist before; therefore, this Oracle Appreciation will seem a little "different" to some of our readers. Stevie, a three-year member of The Oracle Staff, specialized in humor. Below is an essay written by former Oracle Editor Liz Weiderhold, which captures Stevie's personality, and the pure joy with which she touched our lives. The article on the right is one Stevie wrote her senior year for this paper's ETC. section. We dedicate this issue of The Oracle to Stevie's memory.

**By Liz Weiderhold**  
Special to The Oracle

Every time I listen to my iPod, the band All Left Out comes on. This is NOT my type of music. I prefer something that sucks a little less.

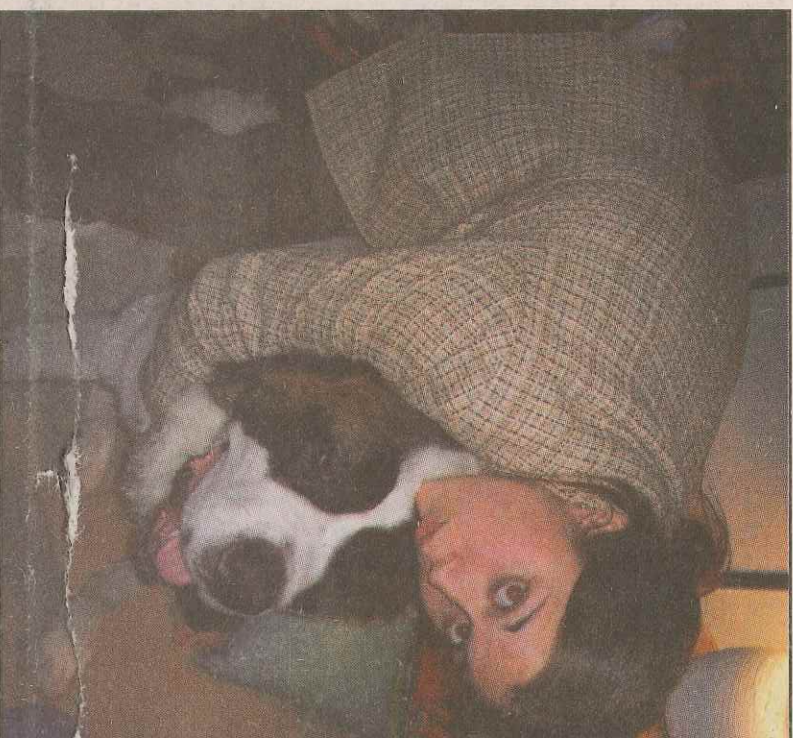
I can directly blame Stephanie "Stevie" Fiorino for this abysmally terrible addition to my music collection. Thanks, girl! However, I recently shuffled through that album that she graciously let me burn (no way did I ever listen to it) and fondly thought of her: the way she adamantly tried to convince me that this band was "awesome", but more things, the best things, I remembered as well.

Stevie was on the newspaper staff with me in high school. We tag-teamed as the combination of comedic relief and rebels. We delightfully disobeyed our adviser, Mrs.

Babbling Brooke Ramey Nelson, by spending class periods dancing like the white girls we were, surfing the Internet for inappropriate material to share with our classmates and conveniently avoiding our duty of putting together a newspaper.

I am shocked when I think of how that newspaper, *The Oracle*, ever was finished, for I have no memory of contributing to it directly and I'm sure Stevie would feel the same way.

Stevie's wit was remarkable. Nothing brought her down. As perturbed as Nelson got at us, she would react with a smart-aleck comment rather than break down in uncontrollable tears (as I frequently did). Stevie was dedicated to her cause of creating *Oracle* chaos. She mostly succeeded. This was part of her magic; to organize and lead in hopes of destructing the norm. Stevie taught me to honor my



Sue Ellen Wells

Stephanie "Stevie" Fiorino, a member of The Class of 2007 and a three-year member of *The Oracle* staff, pictured at home with her St. Bernard, Wilson, who was the topic of several of her columns for the ETC. section.

dreams, even the ones that included owning my own island. She, at least, saw possibility. She never gave herself enough credit for her unwavering faith in everyone. She was also never disappointed in people.

I have yet to acquire my tropical island getaway, but I know that it

wasn't about having dreams come true, but rather, Stevie's message meant having dreams at all.

I will always remember Stevie for her unconditional kindness to everyone who crossed her path. But, more importantly, her awful taste in music.

## Spartan Time: a waste of time?

**By Susan Nguyen & Xavia Warner**  
Oracle Staff Writers

The arrival of this new year has brought with it great change. A new school schedule, new classes, John McCain's surprising vice presidential candidate pick... and Spartan Time.

Spartan Time, which takes place every Wednesday and Thursday, is a block of 45 minutes when students in need of help may get one-on-one assistance from their teacher of choice. While this may sound ideal, countless students have already formed strong opinions on this new-fangled addition to the school's schedule.

"I feel that Spartan Time is stupid," said junior Katie Phimmassone. "It takes away from all the other core classes... plus it's only 45 minutes long. That's hardly enough to do much of anything."

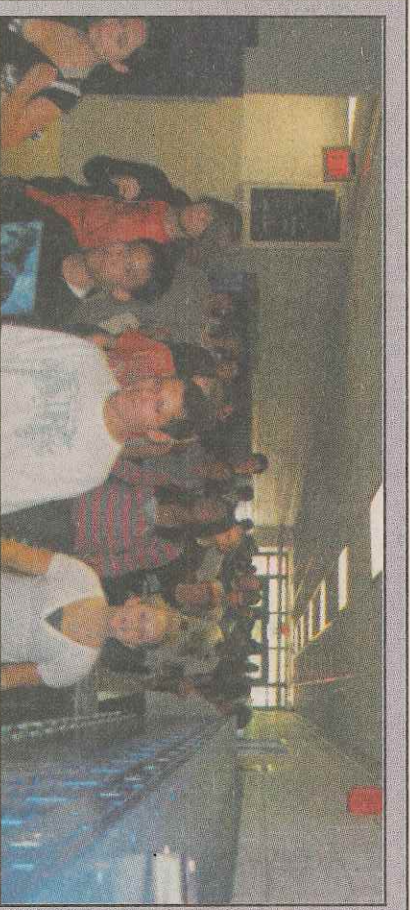
Sophomore Emily Goehring is more blunt. "Spartan Time [is] more like a waste of time."

The new schedule that supports Spartan Time was not simply created overnight. In fact, administrators held meetings with a committee of roughly 25 staff members every Monday for eight straight weeks last spring before the plan could be finalized. Meetings were held with one question in mind, according to Principal Paul Wardinski: "While we have students from 7:30 to 2:10, how can we help them the most?"

Wardinski said that WS was probably ready for a change.

"The schedule hasn't changed in 14 years," said Wardinski. "No one has any plan like us. Spartan Time... is very unique to this county. The true purpose of Spartan Time is

See "SPARTAN TIME" on Page 4.



Sarah Mustion

The new three-lunch schedule hasn't exactly reduced the crowds near the cafeteria.

## For some, new three-lunch schedule is hard to swallow

**By Ashley Brigham & Megan Winslow**  
Oracle Staff Writers

Class, then lunch; lunch, then class; class, then lunch, then class again. The new schedule is getting mixed reviews. The new bell schedule that was intro-

duced for the first time this year provides students with three lunches instead of in past years when only two existed. Junior, Kevin Sinwell is one of the students enjoying the new schedule.

"I like it; the cafeteria is less crowded, and there are more places to sit," says Sinwell. See "LUNCHES" on Page 4.

Knox is the new kid on the bloc.



Welcome, Freshmen!

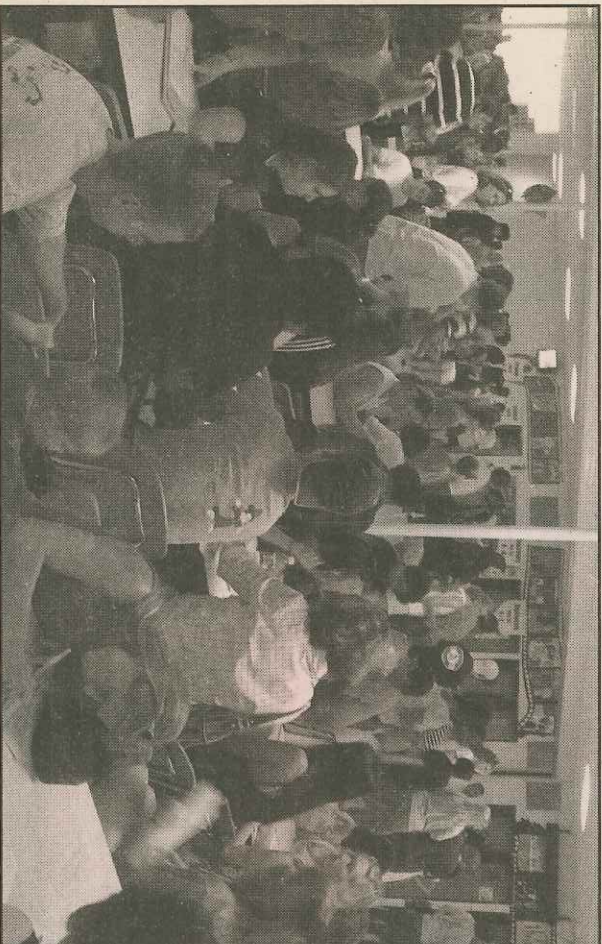


Calderwood kicks it deep.





# First Spartan Spree gets mixed reactions



Paul Wadniski

Students and parents take care of necessary forms to begin the school year in the cafeteria. In order to receive schedules, students were required to finish all paperwork.

By **Rebecca Naramore**  
Oracle Editor

Returning students faced a plethora of changes to WS, including the new Annual Spartan Spree.

The event was held to save the money that would be spent on stamping and mailing the packets of forms to be filled out by students and parents. I had doubted that many students would have come to the school before required to fill our masses of papers but many did attend.

"I don't think people expected so many people to show up as early," said Counselor Alex Gorman, "there were a lot more people than expected." Even before the spree was scheduled to begin the halls were crowded. New and old students and parents wandered the halls looking for their destination, which for a while remained unknown to me.

There were signs posted on the walls but there were very few and they were not prominently placed. Many students found themselves standing in lines that they did not need to be in.

"We waited in the freshman line because we didn't know," said junior Nate Smith. The lines wound out of the cafeteria and there was no indication on where each grade was supposed to go.

The key to getting through Spartan Spree without having to endure the crowds may have been going later in the day.

"It was not crowded, it was easy to get by," said freshman Mason Bernudez. Students who came later in the day found fewer crowds. The majority of people, it seems, came earlier to get everything finished with.

While Spartan Spree did have some flaws, some found positive things to say about the new event as well.

"It was nice to see people," said Smith. Even though students and parents had to pack into the cafeteria, aux gym, and the surrounding halls they did get to meet up with friends. The social time obtained did make the trip to school more enjoyable.

"Every time something is done for the first time some things need to be tweaked," said Gorman, "I thought it was a good event overall."

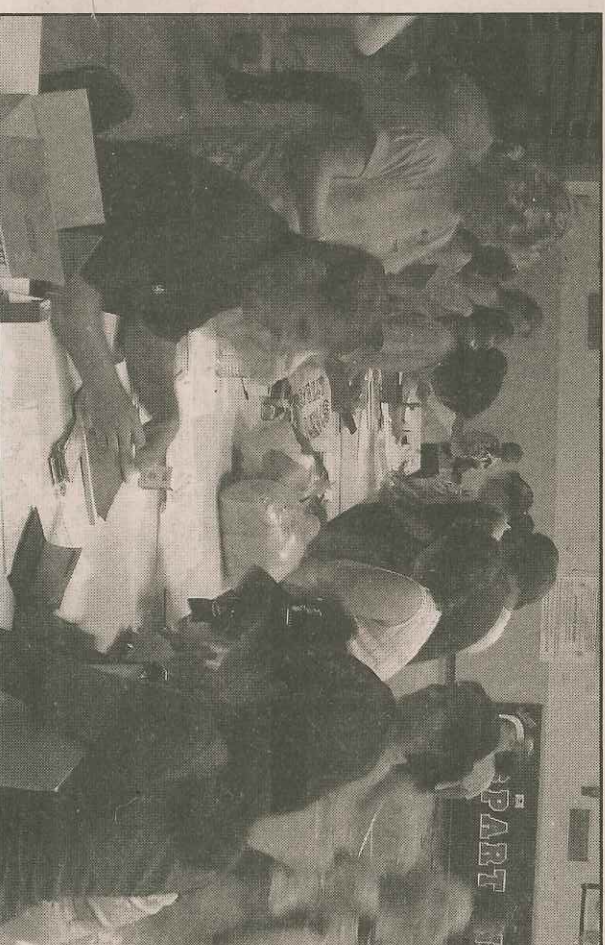
By **Monica Evans**  
Oracle Editor

For the 2008-2009 school year, WS put into action a new school event, Spartan Spree.

Spartan Spree was an opportunity for the students to fill out the appropriate forms in order to receive their class schedules and lockers. Afterwards, the students and their families were invited to watch the first Varsity football scrimmage for free.

In previous years, the class schedules were sent in the mail. The signature-requiring forms were also sent out and were expected to be returned within the first week of school in exchange for locker assignments.

To me, Spartan Spree was a success! I thought it was an awesome way to bring the community together while simultaneously saving the school money on mailing charges. 42 cents may not seem expensive for one letter but try mailing a whole school worth of mail. Yes, it could build up, especially with budget cuts this year in Fairfax County. Spartan Spree also helped a great deal



Paul Wadniski

Freshmen and sophomores buy PE uniforms in the main gym during Spartan Spree instead of on the first day so that they can be ready for class when school begins.

with helping students return their forms on time. Trust me; I know plenty of kids who didn't get their lockers for almost two weeks after school started because they didn't turn their forms in.

In addition to the entertainment aspect of the football scrimmage, there were many opportunities for families to purchase Spartan wear and even something to eat. Even I picked up a shirt for my mom to wear to my games. However, what may be more important than all the previous positives is that Spartan Spree gave the students an opportunity to see each other, many for the first time since the end of school.

For the freshmen, this event gave them a chance to visit the main and auxiliary gyms, the sports lobby (with our new spiffy bathrooms that were added last year), cafeteria and football stadium.

All together, I was happy with the school's decision to start off the year with Spartan Spree. An opportunity to save money and get acquainted with the school and students while also bringing the West Springfield community together was appreciated. Thanks!

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The Oracle is a student-run publication designed to inform and entertain the West Springfield High School community. We publish articles written with as little reporter bias as possible. Opinion is expressed in Viewpoint, Forum and ETC., and in reviews and signed columns. Editorials represent the opinion of at least two-thirds of the staff and do not reflect the views of the adviser, the administration or the Fairfax County Public Schools. The Oracle reserves the right to reject advertising deemed inappropriate. Signed letters to the editor and personal commentary will be considered for publication, but could be edited for grammar, spelling and space.

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# Knox, the new kid on the blox

## Administrator plans to challenge the Class of 2012 to be the best class

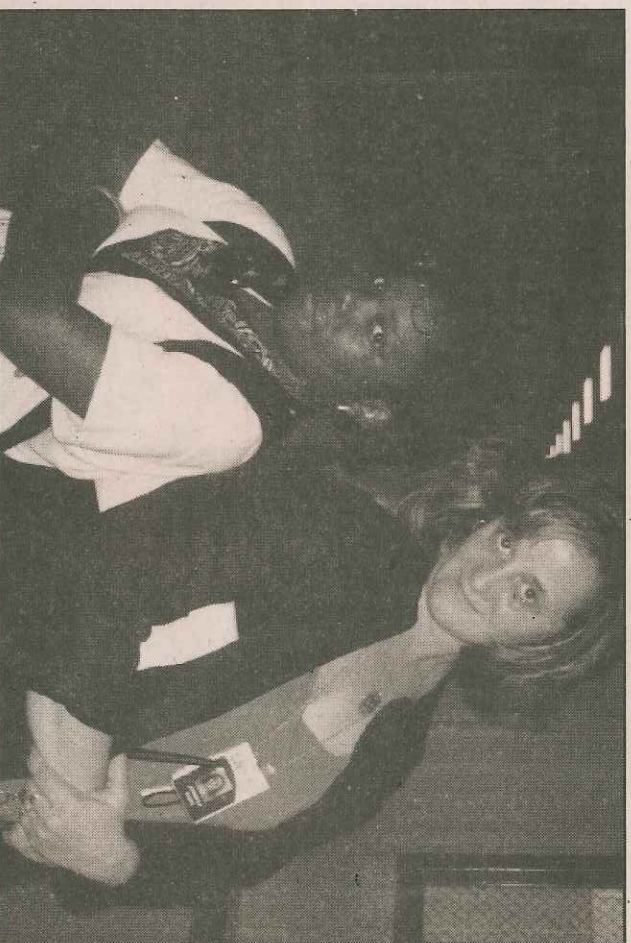
By Bridget Crowley  
Features Editor

After years of Spartan Service, Assistant Principal Joan Galdi bid this school farewell in June. Standing in her place, though, new AP Jennifer Knox watches over the freshmen.

This is all fairly new to Knox, having only worked for a year as an AP for juniors and freshmen at Clarke County High School in Berryville, Va., but the biggest difference to her is the size of the building.

Knox remembers not having to walk so far at her previous school because it was significantly smaller. She is familiar with Fairfax County, however, where she previously worked as an English and Journalism teacher at Marshall. Strong teachers are a part of the reason she joined the Spartan family.

"I picked WS as a place that I wanted to be after spending some time shadowing here," said Knox. "There's something magic about the kids and the halls and the faculty. I wasn't interested in just any job; I wanted



Gianna Balges  
Jennifer Knox, who is the administrator for the Class of 2012, takes a break during lunch to pose with junior Tiffany Allen. Knox says she wants to get to know all her students.

to be here."

There are a lot of changes going on in school right now, which could raise challenges for some of the new faculty members, but Knox is focused mainly on one thing: the students.

"You know, kids are kids," said Knox. "There is something unique about each kid, but they're also the same. I want them to achieve their goals."

She aims to focus on the freshmen this year, getting to know each one individually and all of them together as a class.

"I would love to be able to know every freshman's name," said Knox. "I'd like to challenge them to be the best class. I know it sounds like 'duh' but I want to see them through graduation."

Armed with a beaming smile, Knox is eager to be here for a long time as long as she can support the students.

"I can't say I want to do X or Y or Z because that's all about me and I'm not all about me," said Knox. "I'm about the students."

# Counting calories isn't something that weighs too much on their minds

Students cite quickness, convenience in choosing to buy lunch at school

By Julie Parisi  
Weekend Editor

Sophomore Jason Fry comes out of the lunch line holding a tray stacked with two servings of French fries, a spicy chicken wrap, a pretzel and a carton of chocolate milk. He is closely followed by sophomore Daniel Hemmer, whose tray contains a slice of stuffed crust pepperoni pizza, a frozen fruit push-up, two cookies and a carton of unflavored milk.

Fry's lunch totaled 1,073 calories, while Hemmer's lunch had 915 calories. The average teenager should only intake 2,000 calories in one day, and these school lunches take up about half of that. Whatever their reasons may be, many students buy lunch every day despite the large amounts of calories.

"I don't have any time to pack lunch in the morning. Buying lunch is the only way I can get food," said Hemmer.

Some students also prefer the fact that school lunches are made on the spot, and are therefore warmer than lunches that they bring from home.

"I'd rather have a hot lunch from the school than a cold lunch from my house," said sophomore Alice Fuller, while placing a large carton of warm nachos with melted cheese on

her tray, amounting to about 314 calories.

Other students like that they can pick what they want to eat that day out of a wide selection of food.

"I buy lunch because there are more choices and it's different every day," said sophomore Cody Cashman.

Still others eat lunch because they think it tastes good, and they either don't care or are not aware of the number of calories they intake with each school meal.

"Who cares how many calories are in the food?" said Fry. "Calories are stupid."

Students who buy lunch every day are the ones who don't even consider calories when eating and who choose food based on flavor, not calorie amount.

"I buy lunch because it's tasty. I don't care about the calories as long as the food tastes good," said sophomore Jason Pevay, swallowing the last bite of an ice cream sandwich containing 160 calories.

Students don't necessarily enjoy the food, but some don't have another option. Purchasing school lunches is the only way they can eat food and get the nutrients they need.

"I buy lunch because I don't have time to pack," said junior Gabe Mannon. "I don't really like how it tastes, but I don't exactly have any other choice."



Julie Parisi  
Despite the high number of calories, students continue to purchase lunches from the cafeteria.

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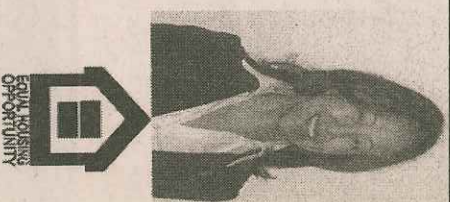
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# Stevie really coveted that Magic Bullet

“STEVIE,” from Page 1.

Being able to close the door to stressful, unhappy days and open a door to new and exciting adventures really lifts my spirits.

On January 1, I felt like a burden had been lifted off my shoulders. I am sure many of my fellow '07 graduates feel the same way. 2007 marks two major milestones for seniors. The Big 1-8—that is, if you haven't already turned 18—and, of course, high school graduation. Whether we know it or not, in less than six months we will be completely finished with our teenage high school years.

Once we are 18, we will be given more responsibility and privileges. We can no longer slack off and mooch off Mom. The time has come when we have to be able to survive on our own and act like mature adults.

Sounds a little crazy, doesn't it?

I never actually thought I would be thinking about finding an apartment of my own and asking around for roommates. I never thought I would have to start paying bills. I never thought I would finally be able to buy that awesome Magic Bullet off Channel 43 at 2 a.m.

Well, seniors, this is really it. Sooner than we think, we will be waving goodbye to WS, and for some of us, waving goodbye to Springfield.

One more thing: Don't screw up when you're almost done. Stick it out for the rest of the year. It will all be worth it in the end.



Liz Weidert, Informercial Central “Stevie” Fiorino, WS 2007, was an Oracleite who wrote about such serious subjects as graduation, and such silly topics as infomercials. She immersed herself in the ETC. Section, beginning her sophomore year of high school.



“I never actually thought I would be thinking about finding an apartment of my own and asking around for roommates. I never thought I would have to start paying bills. I never thought I would finally be able to buy that awesome Magic Bullet off Channel 43 at 2 a.m.”

—Stephanie “Stevie” Fiorino,  
Class of 2007



## Students try to adjust to schedule

“SPARTAN TIME,” from Page 1.

for kids to get remediation, enrichment, [and] make up work. It should help all kids, not just the kids who are struggling.”

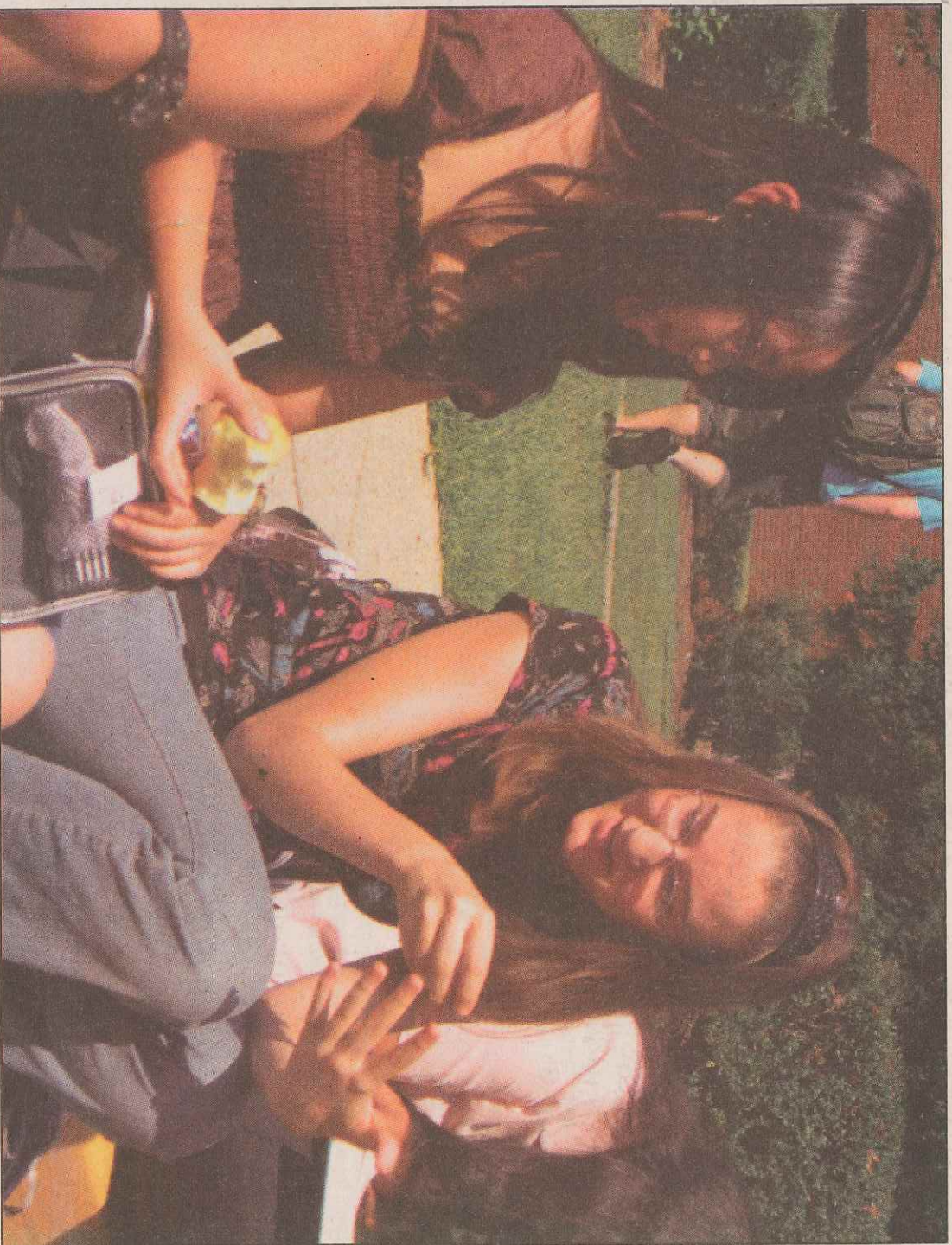
While older students are still having some trouble acclimating themselves to this year's unprecedented schedule, there were others who felt that it was the perfect time to make a change and welcomed it.

“I think it will be sweet,” said junior Sarah Roche. “It lets me do homework I couldn't do the night before.”

Without a doubt, Wardinski said, Spartan Time will most likely benefit those students who are willing to give it a shot. But this might prove to be a problem.

High school students often do not usually embrace change willingly. They like to feel that they have some control over our own lives and we prefer to keep our busy schedules and routines the same for the most part, in hopes of keeping our sanity in check. Perhaps students are generally predisposed not to like it. But this is just mere speculation.

“It should help all kids,” said Wardinski. “Not just kids who are struggling. All kids benefit from it.”



Juniors Chelsea Chinn and Ashton Jakesy enjoy lunch outside. The new schedule features three lunches this year to avoid overcrowding.

Ellie Greene

## Three's more than company this year

“LUNCHES,” from Page 1.

well.

With more room in the cafeteria there comes the downside of the chance of having fewer friends in your lunch period.

“I don't like it, I wish it was like last year because I don't get to sit with my friends,” says junior Joey DeSantis.

Along with the new schedule, there are new restrictions on places you are allowed to eat. Students are no longer allowed to eat in the Sports Lobby or in Senior Hall.

“It's not going to help. No one wants to eat in the cafeteria, people want to eat in the Sports Lobby,” says junior Casey Wesselman.

WS's new schedule was created by a group of 25-30 teachers that met for eight weeks last spring. They studied the schedules of other schools in the area and combined them to fit the needs here.

Principal Paul Wardinski is a fan of the three-lunch policy. “I think three lunches are better, because it is quieter in the instructional area [senior hall], the lines are shorter, and there is still room for students to spread out,” says Wardinski.

The main complaint with the new schedule is the time that “C” Lunch begins. Students with “C” Lunch do not get to eat until 12:45 p.m.

“The new schedule is not a good idea because the people in the last lunch have to wait

“It's not going to help.

No one wants to eat in the cafeteria.”

—Casey Wesselman,  
junior

a long time to eat,” says sophomore Kristina Scollins.

It is still early in the year, and the new schedule will take some getting used to, so for now “C”-lunchers just snack during break.

“I get really hungry,” said freshman Elena Freeman. “But I don't have to snack when I get home.”



## IN THE NEXT ORACLE...

—The Jonas Brothers...  
...Pro & Con!  
—No more parking...  
...on Rolling Road?



# WELCOME TO WEST SPRINGFIELD

## The Seniors' guide to the Freshman world

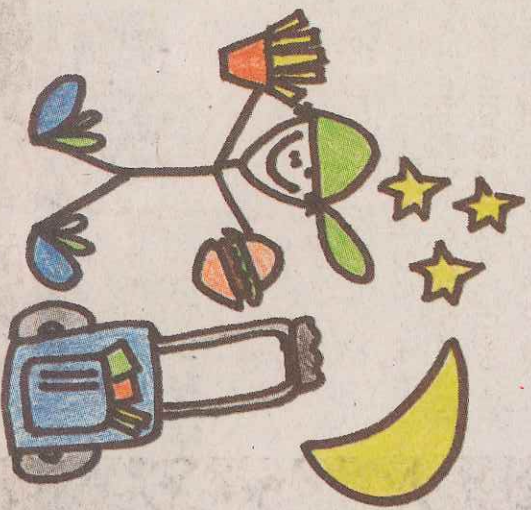


Illustration by Chloe Gould

Welcome freshmen! This is a handy manual to guide you through all **y**our new high school experiences. Make sure to keep this with **y**ou at all times or at least until you become comfortable with **h** your surroundings. Fortunately for you, we have compiled a list of tips and **a**dvice from your Senior Oracle and Yearbook staffers. Please pay close attention because **e** this information will come in handy.

"If confronted by a senior, don't make eye contact. Just drop your lunch monkey and run." —Jake Serwin

Swim and dive team's practice pool is located in the basement. Contact your guidance counselor for elevator passes.

After seventh period, all stairways are closed except the main rail. It's located at Hollywood and Vine.

For Varsity football games, the freshman section is at the 50 yard line. Bring your drums; go orange and blue!

Administrators will soon be instituting a mandatory rolling Jansport rule. Out with just came super-cute fall line!

"Tell your parents to use bleach if you ever get around to washing your gym uniform." —Ally Mackin

Remember, the buses leave the school by 2:15, so bring your running shoes!

"If class of 2012 doesn't want to look 12, then they should go hit the gym." —Kaitie Harrison

Every Wednesday morning, McDonald's will be providing an early-bird breakfast at 6:30 in the cafeteria. Don't be late!



Illustration by Chloe Gould



# Give it up for the 2008 Virgin Mobile Festival

By Chelsea Schuster  
Entertainment Editor

Adrenaln pumping, sweat dripping, body moving to the beat, fans feeling the excitement of many of their favorite musicians.

Two days full of 43 diverse artists, a techno tent and tons of diehard fans created a fun-filled weekend.

Virgin Fest was the highlight of summer for just about anyone who went. After an hour and a half drive to Baltimore in a car full of friends, anticipation heightened to an extreme.

"The car ride was full of loud music and conversations of expectations; it was a lot of fun even though it is kind of a long drive in a car with no air conditioning," said junior Hannah Kauffman.

Not only was the ticket \$175, but gas prices added to the expense tremendously. While some people such as senior Eric Colton and his brother rented out hotel rooms, penny-pinchers slept in their cramped vehicles.

"Sleeping in the car was the worst idea of my life. It was the most horrible sleep ever,

and even worse, the next morning I had to wash my hair with a water hose," said senior Carlin Birrenkott.

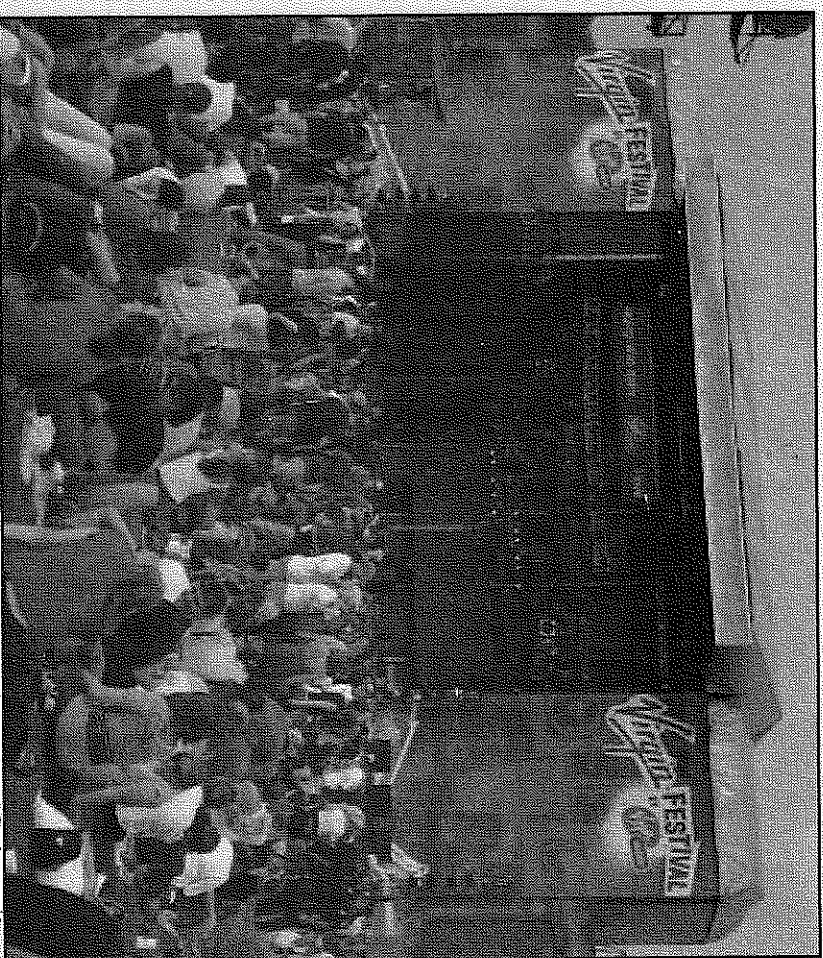
The lucky ones scored by having a friend living in the Baltimore area. They were able to crash there and save money on the side.

"I have a friend who used to live here and moved up to Maryland not too long ago and me and a few friends got to stay at her house. It was a nice refresher getting to see her and by getting a good night's rest," said junior Gabi Martinez.

Artists of all different genres, such as KT Tunstall, Soulwax, Lupe Fiasco, Bloc Party, Citizen Cope, Nine Inch Nails, Paramore, Jack Johnson and Kanye West blew fans away. Lil' Wayne, on the other hand, was one of the more anticipated artists, yet fans were disappointed when he showed up two hours late for his performance.

"I was really upset. I was really excited for him and then he disrespected us by coming so late; he wasn't even as good as I had expected," said senior Harvey Shoemaker.

Having so many different artists to choose from created many difficult choices.



Images: businessweek.com

MS students attended the Virgin Mobile Festival in Baltimore, Maryland this summer. They spent time and money to see various artists like Kanye West, Bloc Party and KT Tunstall.

"On Saturday, two of my favorite artists were performing at the same time on different stages, but I think I made the right choice," said Colton.

Although many fans had a hard time deciding, fans could rely on the techno tent. In that location there were dancing and large groups of people to have fun with.

"The techno tent might have been my favorite part, it was really intense," said

senior Chris Ovelar. Virgin Fest is still being raved about and is surely not a memory that will fade anytime soon.

"Sitting around with the people I went with, weeks after, we were still talking about it like it was yesterday," said senior Gonpo Tezing. "I am definitely going next year and I recommend it to everyone. It was worth the money."

# Twilight twinkles in teenagers' eyes

By Sam Landers  
Oracle Editor

Some recent phenomena this summer have included Batman: The Dark Knight and Michael's Phelps at the 2008 Beijing Olympics. A lesser known event is the growing popularity of the book series, *Twilight*, by Stephanie Meyer, which is coming out in movie theaters November 21, 2008.

Even though the first book in the series was published on June 9, 2006, it really became a teenage spectacular this past summer. Meyer turned her dream into a reality by writing four books called *Twilight*, *New Moon*, *Eclipse* and *Breaking Dawn*.

The series, in short, is a love story between a vampire boy, Edward Cullen, and a human girl, Bella Swan, who have difficulties during their relationship because of their difference in species.

Meyer, a mother of two, began writing the first book of the series on June 2, 2003 and ever since, the series has been a growing obsession across the country.

"All my friends read them and I refused to at first, but I gave in and loved them," said senior Kathryn Staff.



Sam Landers

This summer, teenagers all across the country read the recently released *Twilight Series* by Stephanie Meyer. Although the fourth and final book of the series, *Breaking Dawn*, came out August 2, 2008, anticipation continues to rise for the release of the movie based on the series. It will be in theaters November 21, 2008.

The latest edition to the series, *Breaking Dawn*, was just released this past August. Teenagers were lined up outside Borders at midnight for a release party celebrating the new book. Much like the release of the fourth book, the craze for the movie is already starting to build up.

"I think it will be just as good as the book, kinda like Harry Potter, where no one thought it would be good but it was," said junior Alyssa Hager.

In the movie, the character Bella is played by Kristen Stewart and Edward is played by Robert Pattinson.

"Edward and Bella are exactly like I pictured," said senior Laura Vizy, "but some of the characters are so far off."

Other fans of the series are worried about the upcoming movie.

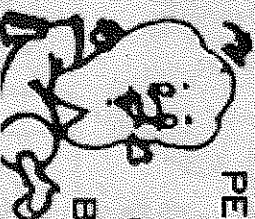
"I'm scared the movie might ruin the books for me," said senior Chelsea Blahut.

Even though there may be varying opinions on the movie, fans agree that the books are some of the best they have ever read.

"The series is] unique, I have never read anything like it before and the characters, especially Edward Cullen, are really cool," said junior Sammy Hogue.

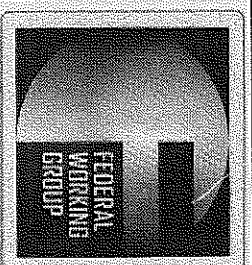
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# Just one of the guys

*Calderwood is getting her kicks as first female player since 2002*

**By Emmie Cleveland**  
*Sports Editor*

As you scan the sideline at the next football game, you might see two braided pigtails extending from number 37's helmet.

In August, senior Alyssa Calderwood joined the 63 males on the varsity football team as a kicker.

"She told us it's been a dream to be part of the football team," said Varsity Head Coach Bill Renner.

Calderwood has wanted play football since freshman year, but got the courage to go out for the team this year. She went to the coaches the day after the interest meeting and asked for the information. They looked at her perplexed and asked who it was for. She said, "It's for me."

She began training in July with help from last year's star kicker, Tyler Biancut.

"She's not the typical girl," says junior football player Tope Ayorinde, "She has a better car than all of us."

Calderwood has never been the girlie-set girl. She doesn't like chocolate or shopping, she rebuilds cars, and could beat most any guy in the video game *Halo*. She fits in on the team well, too.

"When you watch movies about football, and you know

the stereotype of the [team's] clique, I thought I was going to be a total outcast," says Calderwood, "but all the guys are tight and were really accepting."

The guys on the other teams, however, are not as understanding. Although Calderwood says she doesn't hear what the other teams say, some of her teammates do.

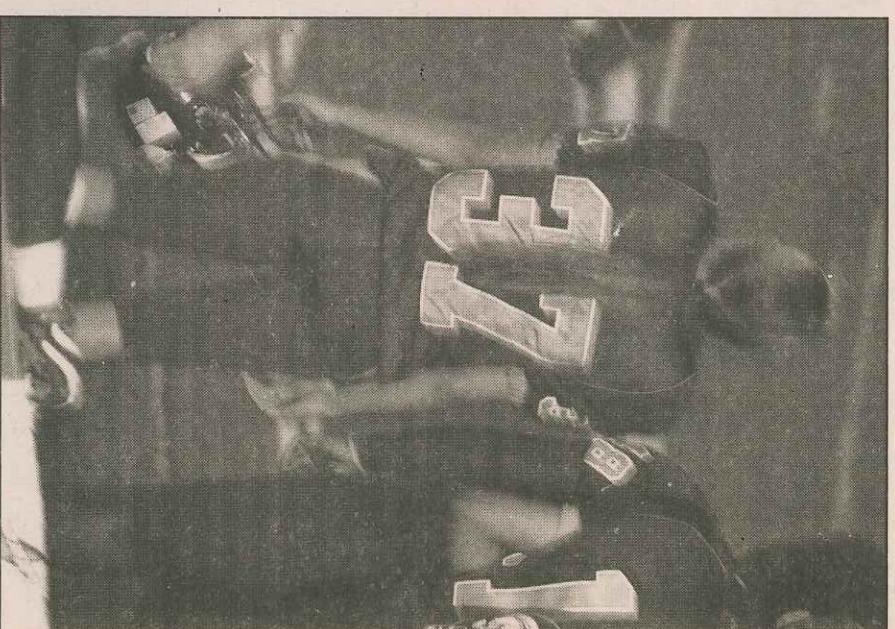
"They say we must be soft because we have a girl on our team, and that we're full of estrogen," says Ayorinde.

Her experience on the team is a unique one. Being the only girl, some of the guys jokingly give her a hard time for things like having lotion in her bag. Before games, she gets dressed alone in the girls' locker room, while around the corner, the rest of the team listens to music and pumps each other up in the boys' locker room.

"I think at a younger age more girls try football," says Renner. Most girls who play are on club teams like SYC, although girls have played high school football at Lee, West Potomac, and Robinson. In fact, Calderwood is not the first girl to play for WS. Meggie Goddish, class of 2002, was a Spartan kicker also.

Calderwood is enjoying being part of the team and is getting plenty of attention for it, but she hasn't lost sight in what's important.

"The only thing that matters to me is what the team thinks,"



*Emmie Cleveland teammates in their game against Edison High School.*

Calderwood, helmet in hand, watches and cheers on her teammates in their game against Edison High School. says Calderwood. "I want to do well for the team, more than for the fans, more than for myself. It's a bunch of the guys' senior year and I don't want to ruin it for them."

## XC team heads to WV for training camp

**By Sara Blaylock**  
*Staff Writer*

The alarm clock sounds and before you know it you're up and running with a bunch of old friends in the mountains. Two, three, four, even five miles go by and you still feel fresh and pumped.

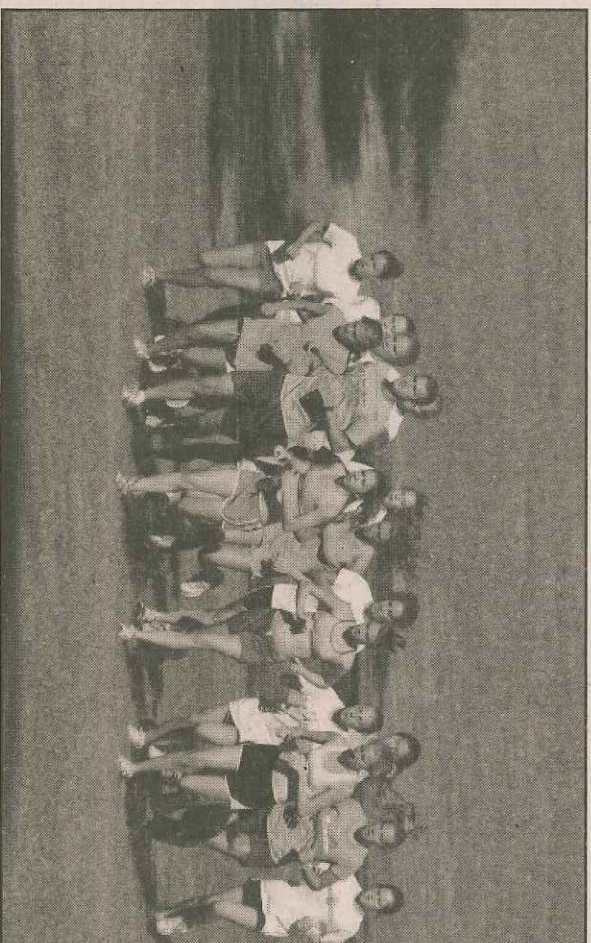
This was the daily morning schedule of the cross country team when they went to Camp Cacapon. After 35 consecutive years of going to Camp Cacapon, the cross country team seemed to get more then ever out of this year's trip.

"It was really intense training but it was fun," said XC team captain Joe Dolan, "more or less, it was most of the guys so we got to bond pretty well."

Every year the team brought along the top 10 or 12 but this year they decided to bring along more of a crowd.

"We took 17 and that was the most we had ever taken," said Chris Pellegrini, one of the cross country coaches that went on the trip,

WS cross country team running in West Virginia. The team believes that Camp Cacapon helps build their team chemistry as well as train them. "We took 17 and that was the most we had ever taken," said Coach Pellegrini, "the kids bonded more thoroughly."



*Paige Kvarnans*

"the kids bonded more thoroughly". The team stayed up in the West Virginia mountains for three nights and four days and were located on the border of West Virginia and Virginia. The team ran about two to three times a day and would have fun competitions in their running. Not only did the team "run and run and run," said sophomore Celine Donohue, but they raced for their shower time and bed choice.

"The person who ran the fastest up the four mile mountain got to earn their room" said Colin Taylor, a sophomore who attended the camp.

Overall the team had a more successful visit when they went up to Camp Cacapon. They not only had a lot of fun while training hard but it was a huge challenge mentally and physically, that worked them as a team to prepare for this season to come.

"It was so much fun and it was a really good mental achievement," said team captain, Mark Schissler. "I think we are starting this season ahead and we're ready!"

## Muir ready to make big changes at WS

**By Krista Pedersen**  
*Oracle Editor*

With some recent staff turnovers, it may have slipped the minds of some that this school now has its third Director of Student Activities in four years.

The new DSA, Andy Muir, arrives with 12 years of experience coaching field hockey at Woodson High School, five of which the team went to States. Muir also worked as the assistant DSA at Woodson.

Muir's background in athletics includes playing field hockey, rugby and volleyball during college in the United Kingdom. He emigrated to America in 1994, bringing his British accent with him. Now a Spartan, Muir looks to take an active part in all student activities, not just athletics.

"Whether it's going to a play, a musical, a dance, a fashion show, there's opportunity for students to put their efforts together and pro-

duce," said Muir. "Groups such as [Forensics, Madrigals] obviously have a skill. My job is to find ways to support them."

Muir's long-term goals for these facilities include replacing the stadium lights and sound system. He has already worked on placing protective coverings on the refurbished track and doing an overall cleanup of the grounds.

"I think the coaches and athletes respond well to [Muir]," said senior Chaz Pratt. "He is always available to help athletes with any problems or concerns they might have and works well with our coaches when it comes to finding answers to problems or obstacles that a team might face."

Although Muir has his long-term goals set, he has chosen not to make any immediate large changes in the program. The few changes he has made include adding the "Spartan Stands" and "Spartan Seats" sec-

"The school's got a lot of things that are traditional and seem to work well."

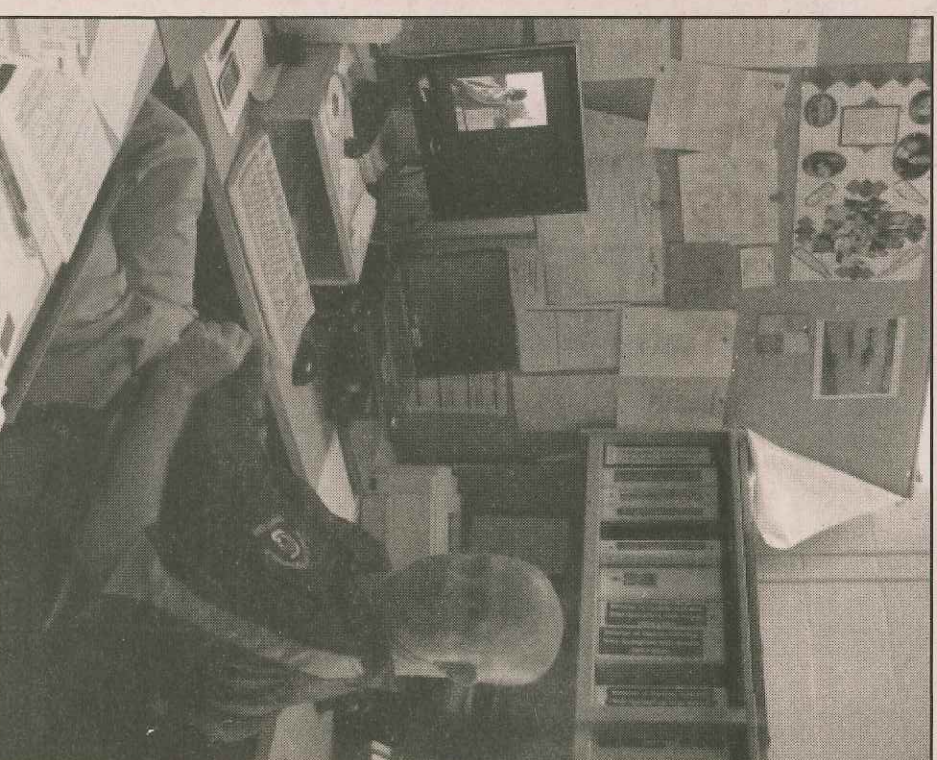
—*DSA Andy Muir*

tions at football games to separate the calmer fans from the cowbell fans.

"The school's got a lot of things that are traditional and seem to work well," said Muir. "You have to sit back and evaluate before you make changes."

In his spare time, Muir is an "avid" New England Patriots fan, plays golf, enjoys construction work and coaches indoor field hockey. He is also excited about teams going to Districts and beyond.

"WS puts out a quality product," said Muir. "At the start of a season people don't know when their season is going to end."



*Krista Pedersen*

Andy Muir, the new DSA, is looking ahead to WS's future. His goals include new stadium lights and a new sound system. However, he said that "You have to sit back and evaluate before you make changes."



# Technology encourages more than laziness

By Samuel Tak  
ETC. Editor

Technology helps keep me lazy, which I enjoy. But it has also led to my undoing.

Inventions such as the remote control, dishwashers, elevators, blenders, microwaves and the electric toothbrush all contribute to lazy habits on my part. I could go on and on listing examples, but that would mean I'd have to think, which I really don't feel like doing right now.

The prime innovation that I believe to be at the core of my slothful nature is Google. As you all know, Google is a wonderful and powerful tool to use in finding just about anything you type into its simple blank white layout of emptiness with the obtruding bold title, "Google," which takes up the whole page.

I've developed the indolent habit of looking up definitions of unfamiliar words using Google, rather than picking up a dictionary, only two feet away from my reach. For example, Google helped me find synonyms for "lazy," which I've included here. How else would I know that "slothful" and "indolent" are synonyms for the way I feel most days?

My respect for Google's bountiful resource has been very short-lived, however, and here's why.

I'm sure many of us are familiar with the age-old habit of Googling our name out of curiosity, in a desperate attempt to convince ourselves that we are "popular" and well-known enough to be included by the world in Google's search results. But we often search our names only to find out that millions of other people have the same moniker (See? Another example of Google at work). By the way, there are more than 38 million search results for "John Smith" alone. Even "Samuel Tak" turns up some results on Google: four of them!

Fortunately and for some people, *unfortunately*, our names are unique enough that we can identify ourselves in the Google search and then brag to our friends that our name

## Sam Tak's Yakity-Yak

is listed in this miraculous search engine. Sadly, my name is included in this category because I have an uncommon last

name.

So, when someone, such as a coworker, friend or a hot chick, for some reason, Googles my name, spelled like "samueltak", they'll find only two links, made by me, from StudentDoctor.net; one link, also made by me, from Phonezo.com and one false, impersonating, annoying, untruthful, de-

address.

Because of the perpetrator, with his or her malicious intent and the easy accessibility to Google, I am permanently labeled on the Internet as someone I am not—a homosexual student aspiring to become a doctor, who downloads the rap beats of Lil' Wayne to his phone.

Not only have this imposter's belligerent actions poorly affected and fouled my profound reputation as an average WS geek, but have also caused me to receive countless, unwanted E-mails. So, in the end, Google has only led to my increased desire to go back to the way it was, checking my email on Hotmail, and not for hot males.

## Clickety-clack; don't even try to talk back!

By Stevie Fiorino  
ETC. Editor, 2004-07

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

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

I learned a lot about Amman and Nowshad. They both went to Yale and they have been pretty close buds for a while now. I also discovered that they like to play practi-

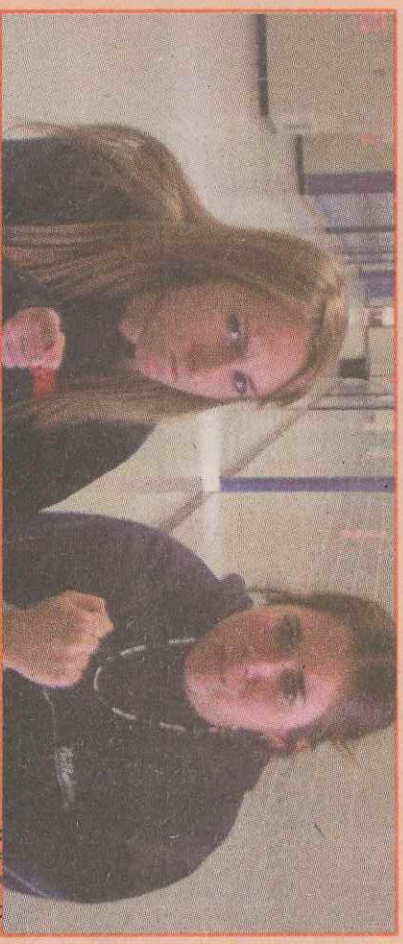
cal jokes on people. Let me tell you how I found that out.

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

My first thought was that they must be speaking their language. I didn't want to be rude and say, "Oh, is that your language you're speaking?" So I asked them what language it was. Their response was "Umbelegdo."

I definitely had never heard of that language before. I looked over at my sister to make sure she was just as clueless as I was—which she was.

They told me that there are many languages in India and Umbelegdo is one of them. I



Molly Cushing

Oracle staffers Beth Stinson and Stevie Fiorino clown around during 5th period.

### Stevie's Story October 21, 2008

wanted to learn a little bit of it, so I asked them how to say, "Hey, what's up?"

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

"My Mom has known Amman and Nowshad for a while now, and she had no clue that they spoke this language. She asked Amman, "Wow, how long have you been speaking this?"

I was expecting him to say, "Oh, my whole life," but instead he said, "I feel kind of bad now. We were just playing with you, Stevie. I didn't think you were actually going to believe us. We just like to play jokes."

I have to admit, I kind of felt like an idiot. Umbelegdo did sound pretty unrealistic. Especially with all the clicks and the pops.

## ORACLE CALENDAR—SEPTEMBER

Friday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
12 Varsity football @ Robinson 7:30 PM 	15 Golf vs. Hayfield @ Pohick 4 PM 	16 XC @ Burke Lake 5 PM Volleyball @ Langley 7:15 PM College Visit: Randolph Macon @ 10:15 AM	17 Field Hockey vs. West Potomac @ Home 7:30 PM 	18 Volleyball vs. Stonebridge @ Home 7:15 PM 
19 Football vs. Hayfield @ Home 7:30 PM	22 Senior Yearbook Portrait Makeups All Day	23 Senior Yearbook Portrait Makeups All Day Back-to-School Night 6:45 PM	24 Underclass Yearbook Portraits postponed until 9/29 Volleyball vs. Lee @ Home 7:15 PM	25 Underclass Yearbook Portraits postponed until 9/30 Volleyball @ Annandale 7:15 PM
College Visits: College of Charleston @ 9 AM & Colorado State @ 1:30 PM				