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Young Scientists Get It Done

Katie Staples

Features Editor

Over twenty students represented this school at the regional Science Fair at Robinson Secondary High School on April

zoology, to mathematics, to environmental science. In each category, projects are graded first, second, third, or as an honorable mention. There can be several of each in a single category, depending on the grade the participants receive from three judges.

Nick was not the only Jachowski to impress the judges that Saturday. Younger brother, junior Dan Jachowski also participated at Regionals, and placed first. Other first-place winners from this school included seniors Beatrice Capestany, Marissa D'Orazio, Patricia Hoen, Laura Regensburg, and juniors Kristina Dahmann, Elizabeth Grady, Alyssa Kuhn, Diana Burke, and Thao

In addition to be graded by judges at Regionals, businesses and organizations also judge the projects. The organizations award exceptional projects with certificates and money. Such winners at this school included Nick Jachowski, who won 100 dollars, and Dan Jachowski, who won 250 dollars.

At the State Science Fair, only six qualifiers out of the eleven presented their projects; they were Burke, Do, Dan Jachowski, Kuhn, Dahmann, and Grady. "I didn't go because my partner wasn't going to be in town and I didn't want to go by myself," said Regensburg. Burk followed with, "I don't



Junior Diana Burk looks over her materials one last time before the judges come to look at her project at the Regional Science Fair.

2. From the one hundred plus participants, ten with exceptional projects were chosen as grand prize winners. They are to represent their projects at International Science Fair in mid-May in Phoenix, Arizona. Senior Nick Jachowski was one of the selected entrants to win this award. Jachowski's project, "Phytoplankton Response to Nutrient Enrichment", won both first place in its category, Earth and Science, and the grand prize.

Categories in the Science Fair range from

Do. They advanced to the State Science Fair that at Randolph Macon College on Saturday, April 9.

Second place winners at Regionals were seniors Alexander Arnold, Taurin Barrera, Rachel Chaney, Stuart Trouton, and juniors Owen Blair and Molly Turner. Third place winners from this school included seniors Patricia Clay and Joy Yoo.



Junior Thao Do, Burke's partner, gathers data for their project using a school microscope.

blame people for not wanting to go; it was all weekend, hard work, and very stressful." Hopefully all that hard work paid off.

Forensic Files

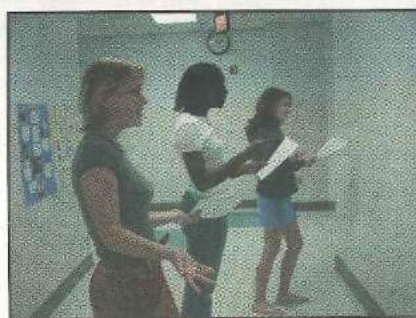
Laura Lofgren

News Editor

When most people think of forensics, they picture crime scene investigators using science and math to determine the criminal in a murder case. West Potomac's forensics requires a bit more creativity and artistry; it is the art of speaking. People involved in forensics need to know how to communicate their thoughts or even their sense of humor in inspiring, imaginative ways. Whether your category is prose (10 minute or so monologues), humorous interpretation (comedic monologues), serious interpretation (serious monologues), original oratory (you write your own piece), or duo interpretation (a dialogue), the method in which you get your story or idea across is what you are judged on.

West Potomac's forensics team this year is one of the most dedicated in comparison to past years. Though there are less people on the team (the old coach and English teacher Mr. Johnson is no longer here to give out extra credit to his students who participate), the team members say that the new coach, Mr. Ellis, is doing a wonderful job keeping his team's morale up and encouraging them to do well.

Throughout the year, the participants have been going to monthly tournaments to show off their pieces, many coming



Seniors Marissa D'Orazio, Jeoma Nwatu, and Bea Capestany practice for their Forensics Tournament.

Photo by Houston Murphy

No More Teachers

Hana Beckerle

Editor-in-Chief

Every year, school districts across the nation must handle the yearly process of deciding upon faculties and staff for the following school year. Fairfax County is no different, and every school will be affected by teachers leaving and arriving.

There are various reasons a teacher might leave a school where he or she was working, mostly personal. "There is no normal rate of teachers leaving, it varies from year to year," said Principal Rima Vesilind. Because of this, it may be difficult to compare the hiring situation at any given school to a trend or average.

Every spring at Fairfax County High Schools, teachers are asked to fill out a form to declare their intentions to stay, leave for another teaching job in or out of the county, or leave the profession. For teachers at this school, these forms were due April 15. However, positions may fluctuate until as late as July, which is

around the end of the time that new teachers can be hired.

This count is also encountering a unique situation concerning the new South County High School that will open next school year. "This year, every school feels a push from



Veteran Science teacher Susan Piskor has decided to leave this school to be the head of the Science Department at South County.

South County," said Vesilind. At this time, there are five teachers from this school leaving for South County. Among these is biology teacher Susan Piskor, who will be the science Department Chair at the new high school. The other teachers leaving for South County are math teacher Kate Wolling, gym teacher

See Teachers, page 5

See Forensics, p. 7

Awash in a Sea of Orange

Dear Editor,

This school has serious gang problems. The obvious violence aside, the vandalism adorning the bathroom walls and lockers brings serious light to the ongoing conflict some gangs with members in this school. Even so, it appears our school's administration has chosen to focus on smaller, more mundane aspects of the voluminous Student Rights and Responsibilities book.

While fights occur on a nearly daily basis, it seems the administration has deemed it more important to condemn spaghetti straps and tank tops by forcing girls to wear the correctional-institute-inspired orange t-shirts, pointing out offenders like the Scarlet Letter. Personally, I don't know anyone who even noticed dress code offenders until the orange shirt initiative was implemented.

Another somewhat superfluous initiative in place of dealing with real problems is the "take back the hallways" plan, introduced by Mr. Dan Fitzgerald. The plan, which entails oversized orange passes and roving hallway patrols at the beginning of each class, may actually be aimed at stopping gang violence during class time. However, a small freshman girl who happens to need to use the restroom during a 90-minute class has no need to carry a large orange sheet of paper to go a few doors down the hallway. Also, the passes could potentially spread germs and sickness, since everyone uses the same pass to go to the bathroom. When one sick person declines to wash their hands, everyone else using that particular pass becomes susceptible to the sick person's germs.

Going along with the day-glo orange motif of the hallway passes and dress-code offender shirts, a preponderance of orange cones is being used to create the new traffic pattern, an utterly useless endeavor. I have never had a problem getting to class on time because of traffic because I simply make the effort to wake up on time. Sure, the new traffic pattern gets us into the school faster, but it seems like a random initiative when our school simply has more important problems.

Though all the new initiatives seem to have admirable goals to alleviate a few potential headaches, they do not deal with our school's real problems.

David Hanson; senior

A Step in the Right Direction

Dear Editor,

I am writing this letter because I want to discuss two things: the new dress code and the hall passes. I think they are good ideas to prevent the students from wearing inappropriate clothing and also to stop them from loitering in the hallways during class hours.

Asking students to wear the shirts saying, "I Will Dress for Success" is a step up in improving the style of clothes teenagers wear today. This might discourage some students from wearing clothes they know every adult will disapprove of. It also saves the more conservative students from seeing things that shouldn't be seen, like tattoos and piercings.

The hall passes are also a way to encourage students to stay in class instead of wandering around places they shouldn't be. This also helps teachers keep track of the people that constantly need to go some place else, like the bathroom or water fountains.

In conclusion, these two will eventually help both the teachers and the students in achieving their goals. Teachers will have an easier time teaching his/her students without having to worry about nothing else but the task at hand. Students will also have no other choice but to go to class because they will not be allowed to wander around other parts of the school.

Angela Franco; freshman

An Easy Commute to School

Dear Editor,

I would like to give a compliment to the faculty on the new traffic route in the morning. It is noticeably faster moving going up and down Quander, and on the road that enters onto the West Potomac campus. It seems to be making a big impact on student drivers, because they are not rushing as much to get into the parking lots. They do not have to wait in the line where students are being dropped off, allowing a much quicker time getting to class.

It is a lot less stressful for parents too, who are going to work after dropping off their student(s). My dad is one, and he is very pleased with the traffic route. I hope this continues to run well.

Hooff Cooksey; freshman

Rants and Raves

A **Rant** for the new traffic pattern force-fed to us in the middle of the week. At least give us a small chance to adjust.

A **Rave** for those who came to support *The Wire* at our Uno's fundraiser. Thanks for your generosity!

A **Rant** for the cold, rainy late-April weather. They say April showers bring May flowers, but the weathermen are mostly wrong...



A **Rave** for the opening of the Washington Nationals season at last. Buy me some peanuts and cracker jacks...

A **Rant** for the sudden, paranoid onslaught of the new bright orange hall passes. It's just another bureaucratic idea to complicate an already-complicated school day.

A **Rave** for the calendar's speed. Only two months to go!

I Will Dress...To Impress

Ah, spring! It is a time of sun, baseball, and outdoor barbecues. Yet, to the consternation of this school's administration, the season also marks the reappearance of warm-weather clothing. The heat drives the student body out of the sarcophagi of sweaters and coats and breathes new life into limbs that are freshly exposed to the world. Diminutive, light, clothes that provide a refuge from the oncoming heat are the scorn of teachers and faculty alike.

This new, airy, appearance, scandalous in its contrast with the voluminous layers of winter, sends the administration into conniptions. So, in an irrational move that can only be a demonstration of authority, it has introduced a new policy of punishment involving the now-infamous orange t-shirts. These t-shirts, of humongous size and girth, sport the motivational statement "I will dress for success!" across their fronts. This is akin to shooting matches at an arsonist in the hope that it will inspire him to drop his lighter.

The new policy reflects the fact that the administration simply does not understand the psychology of the high school mind. The new policy will not solve the problem; in fact, by attempting to hide the external symptoms of risqué clothing, the administration is actually reinforcing the

behavior it condemns.

There is no doubt the school's leadership is justified in its concern for the dress code. Revealing clothing poses an unnecessary distraction and places a disproportionate emphasis on the social aspect of a high school education.

However, the administration fails to recognize the root cause of the problem. Revealing clothing – both the subtle and the absurd – is an extension of the teenage desire for acceptance, identity, and, most of all, attention. A short skirt, a low-cut shirt, an obscene slogan – all scream "Look at me! Look how I stand out!"

By requiring certain students to don the orange t-shirts, the school rewards those seeking attention with even more eye-catching garb. All these students want is a reason to stick out, to be unique. The t-shirt does not signify shame or embarrassment in these students' minds. It is a badge of honor, a bright orange spotlight that will, at last, illuminate their face alone from the midst of the crowd.

So, beloved administration, stop wasting money on the t-shirts. Instead of reinforcing the behavior you oppose, reward that which you support. Provide a new spotlight, a new stage upon which the student body can strut to the sound of the world's applause.

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Down with Usury! Death to the Debt!

Drew Macklin

Opinions Editor

A hush enveloped the classroom in suffocating silence. The faces of usually jovial and loquacious students were, instead, turned upwards towards the television in disbelieving awe. Eyes that usually danced contemplating the trivialities of high school were blank windows to minds which were working feverishly in an attempt to make sense of the astronomical thing on the screen. And over it all, the rhythmically monotonous intonation of the teacher filled the air.

It was just another tranquil afternoon in my government class, and students all around me had been succumbing to that universal urge to take a blissful siesta after lunch. Suddenly, without warning, the monstrosity appeared. It was summoned practically mid-sentence, with a few simple words, used to politely request that one student pull up a certain website on the screen. Next came a terse introduction: "Ladies and gentlemen, the National Debt". And then - silence. The number has climbed by tens of billions of dollars since then, but at the time it read, "\$7,797,007,185,609.02." As in seven *trillion* dollars. Just to clarify how large that number actually is, if the debt was divided up among every single American, each individual would still owe \$26,352.33.

Perhaps your thoughts right now mirror the question that first shattered the silence in that classroom. Who exactly do we owe? Frankly, the short answer is, who knows? The longer answer is no better at clarification and certainly no better at producing optimism; it seems roughly 40% is owed to parts of the government itself, 23% is owed to foreign governments and investors, and the remaining 37% is to be scattered to the four winds, presumably in the hopes of appeasing Gaia, the earth goddess.

Therein lies the utter inanity of the entire concept of the National Debt. The US Government owes over seven trillion dollars to some collection of individuals or countries or whatnot. This amount of money, which is rapidly approaching the fabled "zillion bajillion" of our preschool days, will never be repaid. That last fact is morbidly undeniable and, yet, almost comic when considered with another equally astounding fact; despite the impossibility of repayment, the record of the debt is carefully and painstakingly kept. Why? God only knows.

How does the debt accumulate? There are a variety of factors that lead to the escalation of the monstrous number, but, indubitably, the most culpable is the tendency of our government to work within

the limitless constraints of a budget deficit. The principle is simple: a certain amount of revenue is brought into Washington every year through taxes, investments, and other cloudy sources that lie far below the surface of comprehensible finances. When Congress and the President prepare their budgets, they usually deign to spend more money than is available from this revenue. To make up for the shortfall, they simply write a massive and



Photo by Evan Dobbs

metaphorical "IOU" to some future generation of taxpayers and continue on their happy way.

There is a name for such a scheme. It traces its origins to a man who was, perhaps, more brilliant and nefarious than any man yet to live. Simple greed drove him, like it does most Americans, but his method was ingenious as only a future government program can be. Ponzi's scheme was simple: he asked people to give him \$25 and promised to return \$50 to them after two weeks. A few

adventuresome souls took him up on his remarkable offer. With a small amount of capital, he repaid them in a timely manner. Within days, the word was out and thousands of people flocked to his door. Despite the then-astronomical amount of five million dollars trading hands every day, Ponzi's scheme persisted. He simply used money brought in on a certain day to repay those who had paid two weeks ago. Brilliant though it was, Ponzi's scheme was as short-lived as a match's flame on a windy day. Eventually, the entire system collapsed under its own weight, and the great Ponzi was subjected to scorn, derision, and jail.

Perhaps Ponzi's scheme seems vaguely familiar, like the bearded face of a childhood friend. This is probably because the current budget practices of the US Government amount to little more than a state-run, large-scale Ponzi Scheme. Hopefully, their fate will not match his.

Regardless, the number on the debt clock will continue to grow; it will be, like Dorian Gray's portrait, the hideous, monstrous reminder of unspeakable financial sins which, nevertheless, still fail to deter the expensive dreams of our Government. Perhaps one day the awful secret will be revealed and financial restraint will rule once more. Until then, start saving - your share of the debt is now \$26,354.28.

Musings of Girls and Mulch

Marissa D'Orazio

Focus Editor

The other day, this lady came into the hardware store where I work. "May I help you?" I quickly asked as she tried to walk right past me.

"Yes, I need to talk to a man."

Not someone in charge, not anyone with any authority at all, but simply a man. Any man, in a hardware store, would suffice.

"Well, can you tell me what you need help with? Maybe I can help you find someone..." I ventured, playing her game.

"No, no... you don't know anything."

"Well, I do know about some things..." I replied, getting more and more irritated by the minute.

"Darling, PLEASE!" She finally interjected, before laughing in my face and rudely turning to scout out the nearest male.

Later, as I rung her up, she smiled at me patronizingly. "See?" She pointed at her can of paint like a babysitter presenting her calculus homework to the five-year-old she was taking care of. "I told you that you wouldn't know."

Maybe no one else is exposed to it enough to notice, but older people really harbor sexism that only they would know. In our world, we think men and women are pretty equal. A man can be a brain surgeon. A woman can be a brain surgeon. Men and women can share almost any career imaginable. Women are still paid less, which makes no sense, but

at least they have the same educational and career opportunities as a man.

Most older people probably scoff at this. "A woman? A brain surgeon? Oh, fiddlesticks! Has that girl lost her mind? Back in our day, women didn't go to school! They stayed home, and took care of the homestead just as they oughtta."

Later, another elderly fellow also walker right by me, shushing my "May I help you?" with "I don't think you can."

He finally came to the register asking for shredded hardwood mulch, our most popular type. I don't think there has been a day yet when I haven't rung up at least five people for this type of mulch. So how does he expect me to respond when he says, "See? I knew you wouldn't know that," about something so obvious? Does he want me to say, "Oh gee, you're right. Why, I just can't catch on to a thing! It's surprising that my kind even know how to speak! Can you believe that, that female brains can actually form words? God, the universe is a strangely frightening place."

I told him, "Actually, sir, that's our most popular mulch. I did know what it was called."

"You did?!" Of course I did!

After chatting a little bit, after the man had condescended my intelligence, high school, and just about every statement I made, he asked me if I had any plans for next year. When I told him that I planned to attend

college, he cocked his head and gave me a strange look. "College..." he pondered aloud, as if he were pondering the statement, "I plan to join the intergalactic alien-ninja peace corps next year."

Maybe sexism comes from certain ancient religions. For example, men in most religions can devote their lives to God and become sociable religious leaders who get to know their congregation and preach about their religion. Women, however, usually have to work behind the scenes and live submissively. If you visit my place of worship and look around the room, you see mostly heads with gray and white hair. These people cling to their beliefs, and would probably become outraged upon the sight of a female leader. Maybe women using their intelligence to do something creative seem sacrilegious.

Sexism shouldn't be an issue. People who regard men and women as equal individuals should not be considered "liberal" in their views. Men and women are equal, and people who realize this just possess common sense.

Don't get me wrong, old people are great most of the time. I have no real prejudice against the elderly. Sure, some of them are painfully slow at driving, walking, getting out their change; some of them are rather grumpy and mad at the world because they can't do all of the things that they used to, but still, many of them are kind people with many interesting stories.

On the other hand, a large number of them have their prototypes of what is socially acceptable set in 1940. And until they begin thinking in the present, no one is going to be able to stand them.

The LaBarrometer

Measuring the Pressures of Daily Life



Photo by Kim Wagner

Choose or Die!

Ansley LaBarre

Editor-in-Chief

When having to decide between ice cream and cake, I'll end up hungry.

Typical teenagers believe they are on top of the world, but, when it comes to making decisions, they fall right back to the bottom. Most high school students have not reached full maturation and are not independently decisive. Before you, the rebellious teenager, decide to throw down the newspaper in a disbelieving rage, consider this: it is possible to sum up a youth's entire Friday night in one short conversation.

"So, what do you want to do tonight?"

"I don't know, what do you want to do?"

Indecision does not mark failure, but it can create some over-complicated situations, or extremely boring Friday nights. But does this mind-boggling frustration diminish in the presence of age? I cannot guarantee it does, but it appears to. Adults always seem to make the right decisions, or at least don't let us know they have made a mistake. Even at our age, we are capable of clearly seeing the right path for others' decisions, and even provide advice for them. However, we still cannot decide the best course of action for ourselves. The grass always seems greener on the other side.

As a senior in high school, I have been bombarded with more decisions than I want, or can handle. And as time dwindles, I still cannot choose the best place for me to spend the next four years of my life. Yet, I can perfectly determine the school where my friends belong, making it seem so much easier for them. Why can I not see this clearly for myself? And as I pondered in a restaurant following a campus tour, I realized I couldn't decide what I wanted to order from a measly menu, but I'm expected to make one of the biggest decisions of my life.

I think we all have a gut feeling as to what the right choice would be, whether it's Coke or Sprite, or UCLA or UVA. But, we are afraid of being wrong or regretting our initial impulse. Being a teenager means making poor decisions, and then being able to learn from mistakes. This should guide us so that when we have to make the major decisions in life, we will have confidence and ability, instead of picking a husband through the process of enny-meeny-miny-moe.

Although we are teenagers and doomed to mess up every now and then, we should understand that decisions will not get any easier unless we try a little harder. And we can start with more productive Friday nights.

Euthanasia: Death in the Balance

Finding New Hope in Death

Ansley LaBarre

Editor-in-Chief

I cannot imagine being unable to move myself from the same position for over fifteen years. I cannot imagine living that long off a feeding tube, having to be changed by someone else's hands, and being unable to communicate with the ones I love, even in their presence. I cannot imagine being alive without knowing I am.

Protestors of euthanasia believe it is morally wrong to kill someone, but how do you kill someone who, in essence, is already dead? An individual who is suffers from brain damage shows no signs of life, except a heartbeat. An earthworm can accomplish more than that.

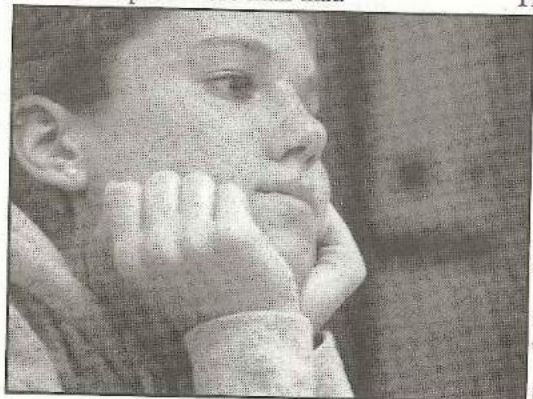


Photo by Evan Dobbs

Euthanasia is not about murder, it's about releasing a struggler from the restraints which bind them in misery and disability during their life on earth. It is impossible to tell what occurs after death, but it holds more hope than depending on food through a tube.

In technicality, it seems ruthless to pull the plug on someone who is unable to support themselves. Through the morals which society has stressed, I would be unable to abandon someone I love in a time of dire need, it seems simply inhumane. For example, I believe it is vital to give children all the support and nourishment they need to be successful in life. But children have a chance, and goals to develop and achieve in the future.

Those in a paralyzed state of mind do not, and are awaiting death without even being able to realize it. Even if their condition improves, they will never be fully functioning or achieving again. Therefore, letting go in this case is not so much abandonment, as it is providing peace of mind for those in pain.

Darwin's evolutionary theory explains survival of the fittest. An organism does what it can to survive, and the strongest thrive to create a better species. If an individual cannot survive on their own, then they were not meant to survive at all. It is at the expense of hospitals and tax payers to allow someone to live on an infirmary bed for the majority of their lives.

The state does not feel the need to intervene in euthanasia cases; it does not feel it has the right to decide individual situations of life and death. This should be applicable to all bystanders, as it is ridiculous to think anyone but yourself should be able to determine your fate. If you are unable to make this decision, then nature should simply take its course.

Families who fight to keep their brain damaged loved ones alive are acting out of selfishness. They are keeping them alive because they cannot bear to let that person go, regardless of the expense to themselves or the hospitalized. These families cannot comprehend that the course of nature may provide a better situation for the injured than their gloating over someone who probably cannot even hear them.

As much as our society values human life, there is no need for unjustified extremes. Death is apart of life, and keeping someone alive when they cannot function is unnatural. I would much rather see what else awaits me, than live a thoughtless eternity as a vegetable.

Pulling the Plug on Humanity

Hana Beckerle

Editor-in-Chief

Euthanasia. When I was younger, this word conjured up in my mind images of Asian children playing, because I had thought it was "youth in Asia." Since then, however, I have learned the true definition of this word.

Euthanasia is defined by Merriam-Webster as "easy death." However, this doesn't even begin to cover the controversy that surrounds the practice. Every situation involving this issue very complex. Many of those who oppose euthanasia do so because they do not believe that we, as humans, have the right to take the life of another person.

I believe euthanasia to be wrong because it involves the taking of another human life. The Constitution does not read "life (except for those already near death), liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Even in cases where one is near death, the sanctity of life takes precedence.

There are distinctions that must be made as to the exact nature of euthanasia. A cancer patient who is informed that she has two months to live unless she opts for an experimental treatment has the right to refuse such treatment and choose to live out the rest of days naturally. A man who is suffering from a respiratory disease from which he will never recover has the right to take out his breathing tube. However, if a person has time left to live, even if it is a short time, it is not within anyone's rights to cut that time short.

It is not up to us to decide when it is someone's time to die, or even our own time to die. We did not put ourselves on earth; we were put here by something entirely out of our control. Whether you believe this to be God, spirits, basic biology or any other force, beliefs are determined by the individual. However, no matter what you believe, you cannot deny that we did not decide when to arrive; therefore, it is not within our power morally to decide when to leave, or when it

is time for another human to leave.

In our nation, only one state (Oregon) has an explicit law legalizing "doctor assisted suicide," but many do not view the practice as dangerous or even morally objectionable.

If voluntary euthanasia is made completely legal, we will soon find ourselves on a very slippery slope. How long will it be until involuntary euthanasia



Photo by Evan Dobbs

is made completely legal? Removing all legal barriers to this practice would create enormous potential for abuse, and soon we may see many more patients "dying with dignity." There is nothing dignified about the taking of a life, even if it is your own.

The controversy surrounding euthanasia was recently publicized with the death of Terri Schiavo. Terri died at the hands of her husband, who requested the removal of her feeding tube, although she was not on extraordinary means of life support. The judges' decision concerning her case had to do with legal processes, however, when we allow legal technicalities to stand in the way of saving a life, something is wrong.

The thing that saddens me as I write this is that euthanasia is not illegal, and it is not viewed as unnatural or wrong by much of our nation's population. If any good has come of the Schiavo case, it is that we have begun to rethink our priorities on life and death. We as a nation need to send the message to the rest of the world that we value life.

Racism Can Run in All Directions

Joy Yoo

Wire Reporter

This month, I was rejected from my top three college choices. I understand the college admissions process becomes even more competitive and strenuous every year; yet, as I was reading my rejection my letters, I could not help but become bitter towards the "system." So much of the admissions procedure has become flawed, simply random and unreasonable.

Since I am an Asian-American, many people quickly assume that my ethnicity works to my advantage for admissions; however, my ethnicity is a disadvantage. Out of all of the options to fill in on a college application regarding

race, Asian-Pacific Islander is the most damaging. Since universities set aside a certain number of slots for all minority groups in advance, the admission officials are forced to compare applicants within each category against other applicants of the same racial descent. As a result, regardless of my continuous hard work throughout the past four years, I fail to live up to the Asian stereotype and "model standards": next to a 4.2 GPA and 1500-1600 SAT score, and my relatively strong 3.8 GPA and 1350 score does not cut it. In fact, my stats look almost like a plea for acceptance. Aside from solely comparing applicants in a predestined pool, affirmative action also provides an excuse for

many students to slack off while others are fervently working to fulfill certain expectations.

The college admissions



Photo by Evan Dobbs

process creates so many more disadvantages to numerous people and groups of people. For instance, a fellow friend of mine is a quarter-Hispanic yet was raised in a typical, American household with practically no Hispanic influence. Another

friend of mine was raised in a 100% Caucasian-background household with problems, dealing with alcoholism; this anonymous student did not even have one of their parents in their house during their junior year. In this case, the former student will have a greater chance into gaining admission into colleges than the latter just for filling a simple bubble, acknowledging his/her Hispanic descent.

Also, many universities accept a certain number of students from different areas. For instance, the University of Virginia's 2004 freshman class was approximately 68% in-state students. Of those in-state acceptances, a certain quota, assigning a limited percent of applicants from different

regions in the state, must be met. So, the following scenario is discomfotingly common: an applicant from the northern Virginia area with an application that is more qualified than that of a southern Virginia student is rejected because a certain number of people need to be accepted from the southern regions.

My alternative proposal to the college admissions process is logical. It would cause admission offices to acknowledge every applicant's socioeconomic environment. With this consideration, applicants will be selected more on their merit and hard work, considering the fact that some are not born into well-financed and safe environments, regardless of their race.

Sarah's Scholastic Section

Sarah Raser
Wire Reporter

Hey seniors, do you know where you're going to college next year? Know how you're going to PAY for college next year? Well listen up!

Mrs. Galeota in the Career Center urges all college bound seniors to fill out the FAFSA form, in order to be eligible for government financial support. There are also many scholarships available for everyone available on the "Scholarship" bulletin board in the Career Center or online through www.fcps.edu on their scholarship database.

Here's a short list of some up and coming scholarships to apply for:

Fairfax County Council of PTA's Scholarship
Scholarship Deadline - May 1, 2005
Scholarship Amount - \$300 - 1500
Requirements- Letter(s) of Recommendation, Essay

Society of Women Engineers Scholarships
Scholarship Deadline - May 15, 2005
Scholarship Amount - \$ 1000 - \$5000
Requirements- Extracurricular Activities, Letter of Recommendation, Female, 3.5 GPA, U. S. Citizen

Inova Fairfax Hospital Auxiliary Scholarship
Scholarship Deadline - May 1, 2005
Scholarship Amount - \$ 2500
Requirements- 3.0 GPA, Healthcare Major, U. S. Citizen

Also, if you are eligible for free and reduced lunch, see Mr. Schmidt in the Career Center. Schmidt is the school's sponsor for the FSF (Fairfax Scholarship Fund), a program organized to provide financial aid for those unable to pay for college.

If you would like to apply for any of these scholarships go to <http://www.fcps.edu/ssseapps/scholarshipdb/listcurrent.cfm>, and see Mrs. Galeota in the Career Center. Seniors, take advantage of these wonderful opportunities!

Teachers, from Page 1

Erich Gunderman, and biology teachers Danielle Schoolcraft and Liz Harrison. All of these teachers have worked at this school for several years.

"Most teachers leave for personal or professional reasons," Vesilind said. This seems to be the case for many of the teachers who are leaving for South County.

Piskor, when asked about why she applied for the position at South County, said, "There's something about working within my own community. I'm looking forward to starting at a brand new school and helping to shape things."

International Night Excites

**Sara Mathewson and
Jocelyn Finfrock**
Special to the Wire

People of many races and backgrounds gathered last month on March 17 to participate in International Night; an educational and fun celebration of the diversity at this school. Friends and families came together to try foods from around the world and to enjoy the cultural dances and performances. There were many types of

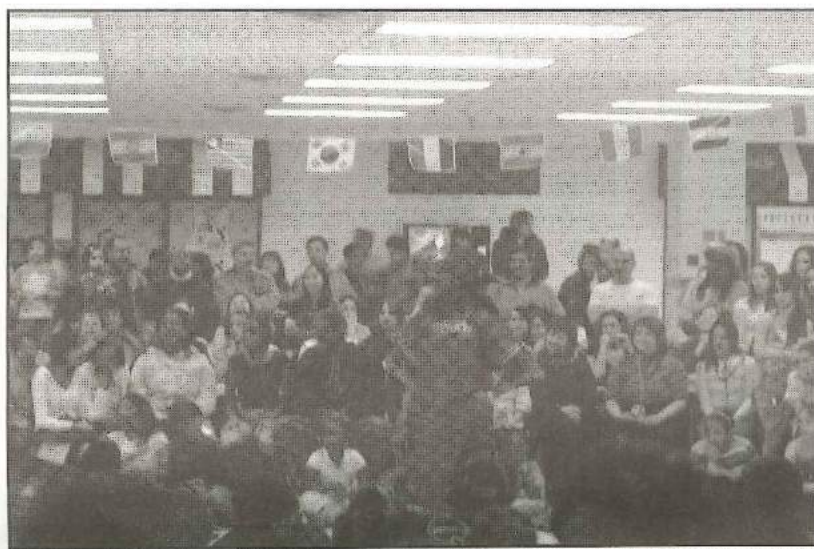
foods from countries such as Peru, Somalia, Czech Republic, China, Ghana, Serbia, and Italy. Teachers, students, and parents enjoyed pizzas from Italy, chicken from Ghana, and fried rice from China.

The performances included ritual dances and ceremonies. These included a fashion show with garments worn by women in countries including Africa, India and South America.

The cafeteria was decorated with an array of different national flags and cultural art. Multiple stations were set up to display different pieces of pottery, dolls, clothing, and other works of art from other countries. A screen was also set up in the middle of the cafeteria to display pictures of people from various countries.

Some students came dressed in traditional national outfits from India, and other countries, and some came in regular school day clothing. A dance group from Africa wore skirts depicting cultural patterns during their routine. Cultural music was also played during International Night. Music from renowned artists such as Jamaican native, Sean Paul, was played.

Teachers, parents, and students all took pleasure in international night. History teacher, Bill Rhatican was one of the many teachers who attended International Night. "It gets bigger and better every year. We ought to change the name of our school too, 'West Potomac International School'. We have many students from different countries here and we should boast about it and enjoy it," said Rhatican.



Students of all grades and ethnicities gather to watch one of the many performances given in the cafeteria on International Night.

Photo by Sara Mathewson

A Cinderella Story

Sarah Raser
Wire Reporter

The second annual Princess For a Night will be taking place on April 29th and 30th at Edison High School. The goal of this event is to lower the cost of prom dresses so that the less fortunate can enjoy the memorable night.

Bucknell Elementary and Edison High School social worker, Kathleen Basinski, is sponsoring the event after she heard of a similar organization out west. When she realized there was nothing like Princess Night in Fairfax County, she felt the need to step in and create one. "Last year was great success! Every girl that participated in the event went home with a beautiful dress," says Basinski.

The prom dresses are donated by people from around the county who didn't need them anymore. Around 30% of the dresses are brand new, never worn, and the majority of them are bridesmaid dresses worn once for a wedding. The sizes are anywhere from size 2 to beyond size 20, and are available for anyone who needs a prom dress and isn't willing to spend hundreds of dollars for one. There will be handbags, shoes, and jewelry donated by Claire's as well.

The dresses are completely free, but donations will be accepted for the Carter Fund, a financial fund created to make educational opportunities possible for under-served children and to assist in housing stability so that children may remain in the same school throughout the year. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to get a free and beautiful prom dress.

Directions to Edison, starting at WPHS:

- 1) Head to Rt. 1 from Quander Road
- 2) Turn RIGHT onto Rt.1 going north
- 3) Merge onto the CAPITAL BELTWAY toward RICHMOND
- 4) TAKE the VA-613/VAN DORN ST EXIT 173- toward FRANCONIA
- 5) Turn RIGHT onto S VAN DORN ST
- 6) End at: Thomas Edison High School

Cate Draws Great

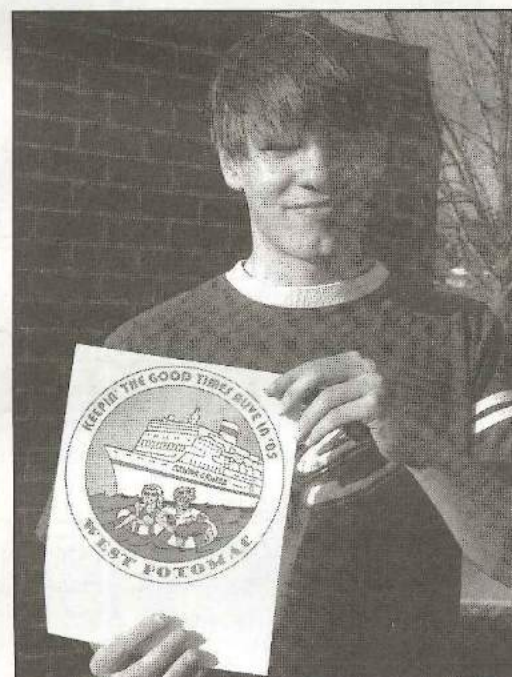
Rob Jones
Wire Reporter

Last month, fine arts department chair Ben Premeaux held a contest among the senior class to determine the logo that will be used to promote the Senior Cruise, an all-night graduation party sponsored by the school. Entrants included Wook Jang, Nida Khan, Chris Dell, Daniel Hernandez and winner Brandon Cate. The contest called for students to design a logo reflecting this year's motto, "Keepin' the Good Times Alive in '05!" "I was inspired by the water...the water of the Earth...in which the boats cruise," said Cate.

The PTSA voted on the entries, seeking one that demonstrated the themes of the senior cruise. "They liked Brandon's design because it was partially hand-drawn, as opposed to others done almost entirely on the computer," said Premeaux. Other considerations included a cruise-party theme with festive colors and boats.

Guidelines for the contest ruled out even the most obscure references to drugs and alcohol. "I had originally drawn the picture with a shark swimming by," said Cate, "but I had to remove it on the grounds that a shark could symbolize 'dangerous activities'."

The Senior Cruise will be held at Dave & Buster's at White Flint Mall, immediately following graduation on the night of June 23. The drug and alcohol-free event will last all night, and arcade and billiard games will be open for student use. Buses will be provided to transport seniors to and from the party, but ostensibly for safety reasons, students will not be allowed to drive themselves. Prices for tickets, which students may purchase in advance, have yet to be determined; funds raised at the April 16th Mr. West Potomac pageant will go to support the event.



Senior Brandon Cate displays his winning logo for the Senior Cruise.

Photo by Houston Murphy

Internships Open Doors for Students

Jeff Snyder

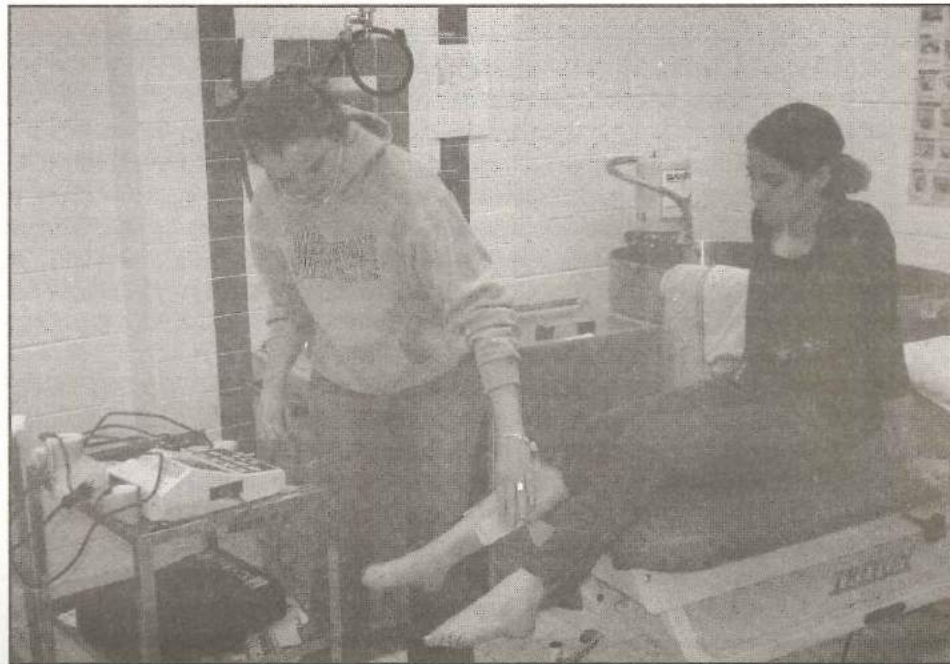
News Editor

The West Potomac Academy is currently giving its students real world experience in career fields such as physical therapy, criminal justice, and education. West Potomac Career Experience Specialist, Manny Bartolotta, has provided many options for Academy students to choose from to help give them realistic career experience. First year Academy students spent every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of their third quarter at their internship while second year students started going every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday on April 18, 2005 and will continue until the end of the school year. If a student working at their internship shows true passion and skill in their interest, they could be offered jobs or asked to return the following year.

In the Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy (PTOT) class, seniors Amy Dobson and Kate Griffin have been very promising students. Griffin, a first year PTOT student spent her third quarter participating in an internship at Mount Vernon Hospital. Their renowned rehab program provided Griffin with hands on experience. Along with learning how to get patients back to their normal, physical lives, Griffin shadowed a therapist to see what they encounter on a day to day basis. "We were able to observe and learn about so many different conditions and treatments. The physical therapists were always teaching us about their patients and going in depth into all different aspects of their therapy. They were really supportive in our learning process," said Griffin. Returning for her second year at Dewitt Army Hospital on Ft. Belvoir Military Base, Dobson has set up ice and heat packs, ultrasounds, and has sit in on patient evaluations. Along with her training at Dewitt, Dobson will be attending various health fairs, typically at retirement communities.

The health fairs will allow Dobson to focus on the geriatric side of physical therapy and broaden her familiarity with the different forms of therapy. Under the guidance of PTOT teacher, Chris Marrow, Dobson has acquired numerous skills with physical therapy in a clinical setting. Another first year student, junior Becky Boucher also worked at Mount Vernon Hospital. Boucher shadowed therapists that focused more on stroke patients. Her experience taught her about every type of stroke and how it can affect the body.

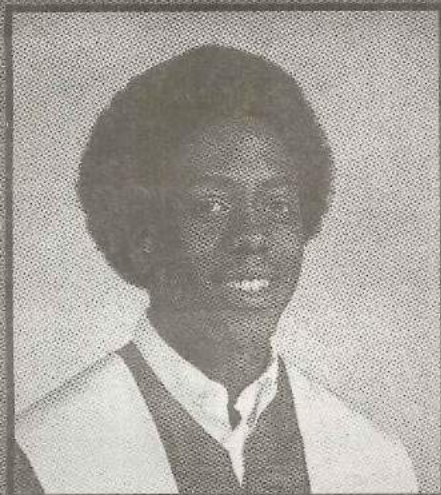
The Criminal Justice class is also allowing students to enjoy life-like experience in the field of law enforcement. Their internship program is very eclectic and broad. The Criminal Justice class is broken into many different groups of three or four students. Each group spends four weeks at a designated work place. Criminal Justice students at this school rotate their internships between the Mount Vernon District Station, the Reagan National Airport, and the Huntington Metro Station. "Working at the District Station



Senior Amy Dobson practices the training she has learned at Mount Vernon Hospital on a fellow student in her Physical Therapy/Occupational Therapy class.

has reinforced what I learned in the classroom and shown me the good and bad sides of a job in law enforcement," said senior Kelly Robinson. While working as intern in the Criminal Justice class, students have been given the opportunity to attend several shooting ranges to learn safety principles and a driving track where new officers are trained for various law enforcement situations.

The West Potomac Academy will continue to provide school's students, as well as other schools', with authentic work experience to prepare them for the real world.



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WEST POTOMAC UPCOMING EVENTS

- May 2
 - AP testing for English Language (AM), French Language (PM), & Human Geography (PM) in Small Gym
- May 6
 - Academy Dance Recital in Auditorium (7pm-10pm)
- May 7
 - SAT Testing (730am-2pm)
- May 9
 - AP testing for Biology (AM), Music Theory (AM), & Physics B/C (PM) in Small Gym
 - JMU Percussion Concert in Auditorium (730pm-930pm)
- May 10
 - AP testing for Chemistry (AM), Environmental Science (AM), & Psychology (PM) in Small Gym
- May 11
 - AP testing for Government & Politics (AM) & Comparative & Art History (PM) in Small Gym
- May 14
 - Jazz Band Dance in Auditorium (7pm-11pm)
- May 16
 - SGA Blood Drive in Small Gym (8am-2pm)
- May 18
 - Interims distributed in 7th period classes
 - SOL testing in 1st period classrooms
- May 19
 - SGA elections (TBA)
 - SOL testing in 2nd period classrooms
- May 20
 - JTP church concert in auditorium and other classrooms (4pm-11pm)
 - SOL testing in 3rd period classrooms
- May 23
 - Band concert in Auditorium (7pm-930pm)
 - SOL testing in 4th period classrooms
- May 24
 - Academy Awards Ceremony in Kogelman Theatre (630pm-8pm)
 - SOL testing in 5th period classrooms
- May 26
 - SOL testing in 7th period classrooms
 - Band Concert in Auditorium (7pm-930pm)
- May 27
 - SOL testing makeups (Cafeteria-AM; Library-PM)

Forensics, from Page 1

back with places. However, never have three of West Potomac's own made it all the way to States in Culpepper. Senior Beatrice Capestany made it through with third place in the regional competition with a humorous prose piece about a kid's last name getting mutilated in elementary school. Senior Ijeoma Nwatu also placed third in the category of impromptu, where the speaker is given seven minutes in which to plan and give a speech on an unknown, random topic. Senior Marissa D'Orazio placed first with her mysterious original oratory.

Our forensics team holds in great esteem their originality. "The first oratory I ever saw, I thought it was really original how the girl talking about consumerism presented her thesis, saying: 'First, we need to step into aisle one and identify the problem, aisle two to identify steps we can do to help the problem, and finally aisle three, where we create a permanent solution to the problem.' Then when the next kid, doing an oratory on television, said the exact same sentence, replacing 'aisle' with 'channel', I caught on. This was the cookie cutter oratory, and judges ate those cookies right up," said Senior Marissa D'Orazio.

Though the streets paving the way to the states forensics meet were named "Success Drive" and "Achievement Lane" (literally), these girls had no success or achievement. They tried their hardest, but the "cookies" won the judges over. Better luck next time!

Teachers for Hire

Katie Staples

Features Editor

Many of the students at this school were shocked to hear a rumor that former Assistant Principal Gregory Oliver had once been arrested at his prior job at Battle Creek High School in Beaufort, South Carolina. Oliver has recently taken a leave of absence from his position at this school. He was arrested March 23, 2000 and charged with intimidating a 15-year-old student and obstruction of justice. The student had accused her ROTC teacher of crude conduct, and said Oliver had contacted and intimidated her about accusing the ROTC teacher. Although Oliver was proven innocent and released, he was required to state on his application for Fairfax County Public Schools he had been arrested and what the charges were. Because the charges on Oliver were cleared, he passed the background check and was hired by Fairfax County Public Schools in September 2004.

The hiring process is very tedious. After taking the Praxis exam, which assesses and certifies teachers, prospective employees must apply for a position with Human Resources. Then, they are e-mailed and asked to

prove they are certifiable (they have passed the Praxis exam). Not passing the exam will immediately eliminate a candidate's potential. "If someone is not certifiable, we can not even think about hiring them," said Principal Rima Vesiland. Once hired, employees must undergo a meticulous screening to ensure they are honest. Besides being fingerprinted, all employees must have their police record screened. "They check so thoroughly that there is no possibility of FCPS hiring a person with a criminal record," added Vesiland.

Background checks on employees are crucial, especially because some people with criminal records are not always honest. When nine-year-old Jessica Lunsford was found missing from her home in Homosassa, Florida on February 24, 2004, her father and

grandmother did not know whether or not their little girl was coming home. They also didn't know the kidnapper was neighbor John Evander Couey, a repeated sex offender in the state of



Background checks are a very important part of the hiring process but their findings are not often broadcasted.

Georgia. Although Couey was arrested in Georgia several times, labeled as a sexual predator, and has a 30-year criminal record, he did not file as any of these when he moved to Florida. He was then hired at three different elementary schools in Florida, all of them blind to Couey's past felonies. Because that county did not require employees background's to be checked, Couey was hired despite his history.

New Pope Brings Hope

Jason Yaworske

Wire Reporter

It has been almost a month since Pope John Paul II passed away at age 84, ending his 26 years as head of the Catholic Church. The Pope's long battle with Parkinson's disease ended on April 2nd in the Vatican's Apostolic Palace. The news of the Pope's death did not come to as a shock, as his condition had deteriorated quickly weeks before his death. The pope had been suffering from Parkinson's disease for quite some time, and in late March his condition began to deteriorate quickly, as the pope when he developed a urinary tract infection and high fever, which caused septic shock and kidney and heart problems. Nonetheless, his death has had a great impact throughout the world.

Monday, April 18th, marked the beginning of Conclave, the process in which all the Catholic Cardinals convene in the Sistine Chapel, and isolate themselves from the outside world until they choose one of their own to represent the Church. Their only way of communication with the outside world is the burning of the ballots, which can be seen from outside as it flows through the chimney of the Chapel. Black smoke means that they have not yet decided on the new pope, and white smoke means they have.

Once the white smoke rose from the Sistine Chapel and the bells began to toll, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Germany, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and one of Pope John Paul II's closest and personal advisors, was elected the 265th pope of the Catholic Church, Ratzinger, 78, chose the name Benedict XVI as he addressed the crowds at St. Peters square, honoring Saint Benedict,

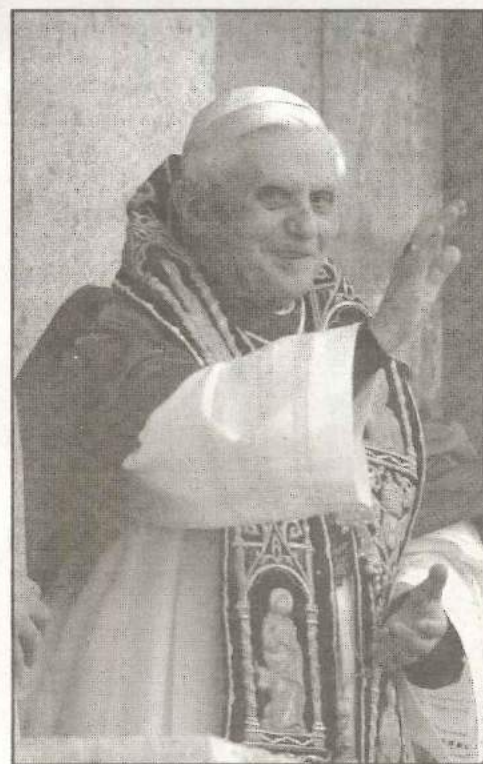
the patron saint of Europe, and Benedict XV, the pope who attempted to impede the First World War. He wore the white skull cap reserved for popes and the red mantle over his shoulders, as the crowd roared their approval in St. Peter's Basilica.

The challenges for the new pope will be plentiful. Like all popes in recent history, Benedict XVI will have to make crucial decisions about the present and future of the Catholic religion. Many will try to push him to reform certain church practices, such as not allowing women to become priests, as well as fundamental issues regarding science (such as stem cell research, etc.) However, Ratzinger is considered a "hard-liner" by most, and gave a speech stressing the importance of maintaining church doctrine at all costs only days before Conclave, making this an unlikely result of his term.

In fact, the election of Ratzinger as pope is considered by many to be a statement to the world that the church is planning to stick to its roots, disappointing many who saw Conclave as an opportunity for change. A surprising amount of this dissension comes from Germany, Ratzinger's homeland, where a recent poll indicated by a considerable margin that there more Germans were opposed to Ratzinger becoming pope than those in support, a stark contrast to the

late Pope John Paul II, who was greatly revered in his home country of Poland.

Like all popes before him, Benedict XVI will undoubtedly face a constant and aggressive pull from both sides of the religious spectrum, but he will be adored nonetheless. The Catholic Church, which has over a billion members worldwide, will look to Benedict XVI to lead them in what they hope will be an influential and successful future.



Pope Benedict XVI, the successor of Pope John Paul II will work to uphold traditional Catholic values.

Photo Courtesy of Laurent Zabulon, Abaca Press

Sports Aren't Just Taekwondo it!

Joy Yoo
Wire Reporter

With its introduction as an official Olympic sport in the 2000 Olympic Summer Games in Sydney, Australia, sport taekwondo has gained newfound, universal recognition. It had been included in the 1988 and 1992 Summer Olympic Games as a demonstration sport, where the medals awarded did not count towards a country's official medal standing. Today, taekwondo and judo are the only two martial art disciplines that are among the official games in the Summer Olympics. On the other hand, karate, often mistaken as taekwondo, is not a full-contact sport and solely focuses on the martial arts aspect. As South Korea's national sport, taekwondo is practiced in over 150 countries by more than 30 million people worldwide.

Most fail to recognize the difference between sport taekwondo as opposed to its traditional role as a martial art. Taekwondo, especially in the United States, is instructed in its traditional martial art sense where stress is placed in one's progression through the belt system with each color belt signifying the level of understanding of the techniques taught. Taekwondo is one of the most systematic and scientific traditional martial arts; it teaches more than just kicking, blocking, and punching. It is a discipline that shows ways of enhancing one's spirit and life through training one's body and mind.

Sport taekwondo refers to the full-contact combative aspect between two players. A player's physical ability - stamina, agility, balance, speed, power, timing, skill, among other traits - affect a match's outcome. Players are awarded points. With three rounds, three minutes each, players are judged by a point

system. The four corner judges decipher whether or not a player is awarded a point. A player can gain points in two ways: one point for a hit in the stomach area and two for a hit in the head area. In the situation of a KO (knockout), the injured player will be forced to forfeit the match. The center referee monitors the entire match, penalizing players with warnings, falling into two categories: physical contact and impediment of the match. Players can be penalized a half-point or an entire point. In extreme cases, if a player injures the other tremendously with intent, then that player will be

disqualified and the other declared the winner.

An official ring's dimensions is 12' x 12'. Players have a set of equipment: a chest protector, shin guards, arm pads, headgear, and a mouth guard. Male competitors wear a blue chest protector and the other a red chest protector.

Even though sport taekwondo is not as well-known in the United States as other sports, its popularity is distributed more on a global scale. Competitors are distributed into age groups; yet, only the competitions for Juniors are restricted

by age. There are many players under eighteen who are competing with the senior competitors and are able to represent the US senior team at international competitions.

Most players start at a young age around ten or eleven years old. Learning the strategy of the sport is by far the hardest part. Offense and defense are what make the match; being able to score a point without being countered or scored on as well is key to success. Many players have a signature technique they consistently use throughout their matches, and since they have become an expert in these technique(s), matches are strategic for the other players since they must figure out how to avoid them. Any sport challenges one mentally and physically, especially in contact sports. Think of sport taekwondo as boxing, but with your legs rather than your arms.



At the World Championships, two-time Olympian and three-time World Champion Steven Lopez wins his final match.

Photo courtesy of Joy Yoo

On the Edge

Marissa D'Orazio
Focus Editor

Too fast-paced a person to walk somewhere? Dislike biking because you aren't able to talk to your friends? Grab your roller blades!

It doesn't matter if you're terrible and think you'll die at the bottom of that hill. As long as you go in a group, you guys can form a huge chain and laugh at how incredibly ridiculous you all look. On the bike path, you can zoom past people, and pretend like you know what you're doing for about ten seconds, whereupon you begin screaming "I'M GONNA DIE! I'M NOT EVEN JOKING!" Your friends will probably just point and laugh, hoping no passers by will associate them with you.

Are you reading this and thinking, "What? Rollerblading isn't that hard?" Then, maybe it's time you challenged yourself a little more. If you enjoy rollerblading and aspire to do tricks, you should take up aggressive rollerblading.

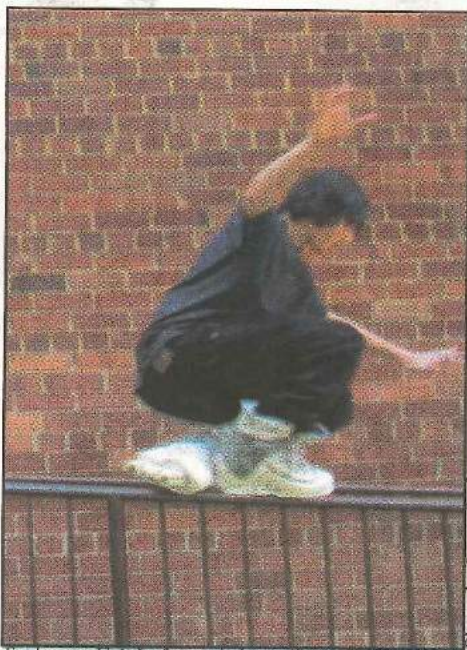
Aggressive rollerblading requires a different type of skate - one with smaller, harder wheels and a thicker, plastic frame rather than an aluminum one. When you break in your skate, you make a groove on the plastic frame, so that when you grind, it stabilizes you on the grinding surface. In theory, you can grind any surface that makes a 90 degree angle, but most skaters prefer rails or curbs.

There is an ongoing war going on between the skateboarders and rollerbladers. Senior and rollerblader Chris Dell said, "Skateboarders need to keep their boards from flying all over the place and running in to us at the skatepark." Other rollerbladers were interviewed, however they preferred to keep themselves unknown to maintain their underground rollerblader culture.

Unfortunately, there are no skate parks in close proximity to this area, but there are some in driving distance - Alexandria Skate Park and Wakefield, for example. Much to the dismay of many local skaters, Van's skate park in Potomac Mills closed recently. This forces skaters to be more creative in where they choose to skate. Any area

with many rails and sets of stairs will do; most of our area's skaters prefer the Bellevue area.

And if you don't feel like going all the way to Bellevue, you can bring the mountain to Mohammed. You can purchase your own grind rails and other skater paraphernalia online or at sports authority.



Sophomore Eric Lofgren grinds a railing at Waynewood Elementary School.

Photo by Laura Lofgren

Giddy Up!

Laura Lofgren
Photo Editor

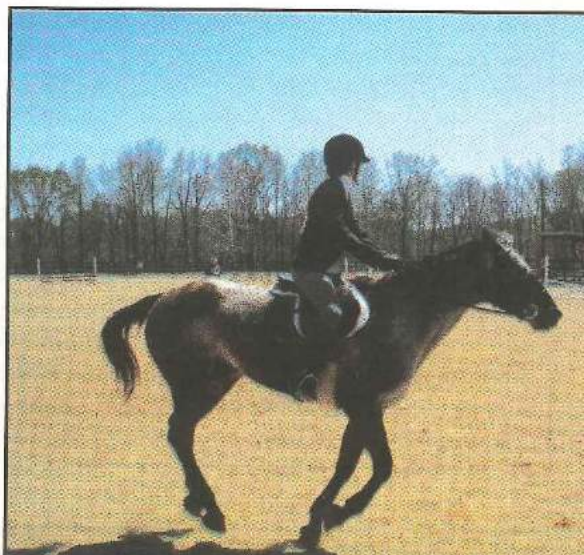
You can always distinguish the horseback riders from the outside world though one quick visit to their room. Horse posters and stuffed animals clutter their walls and shelves, and monstrous, gleaming awards adorn their bookcases. To these people, horseback riding isn't just a sport, it's an obsession. For those individuals, visiting the barn becomes an everyday routine.

The wind in your hair as you race your horse across the barn seems to be a compulsive sensation; horseback riders can't get enough of it. And even though the exciting tricks, such as trotting, cantering, and jumping are enjoyable to learn and master, the horses must be groomed to keep that sleek shine, and fed and cared for each day. Though this can be grueling work, dedicated and obsessive riders spend hours caring for their horses and cleaning the stalls everyday. And the commitment doesn't stop there. Horses can run at an average of \$350 a month plus money for a vet, a farrier (the

person who cares for the horse and food. That can add up to a amount of dough.

The devotion of horseback truly shines in event of a trauma. For example, Senior Sandy Gilliland's Woodlawn, was struck with a horse abuser, who would so mistreat the horses at night. She the rest of her barn became so worried about it, that they spent the night in stalls in order to scare away the abuser. Eventually, the abuser disappeared and the barn members triumphed.

Though most horseback riders are very passionate about their sport, a can do it once in a while for fun.



Senior Sandy Gilliland competes at a horse show at the Woodlawn Stables.

Just For School!

Spinning Spokes

Drew Macklin

Op-Ed Editor

In a sudden, blazing rush of pollen and sun, spring has come to West Potomac. The advent of warmer weather seems to inspire within the student body an inescapable urge to be active. There is, perhaps, no activity as frequently overlooked as the ancient art of biking, and that is, to be frank, a darn shame.

Biking is the quintessential way to enjoy one of the many magical spring days present this time of year. The stunning juxtaposition of sun, breeze, and scenery, with the added bonus of good, old-fashioned cardiovascular exercise, should be enough to choke the sidewalks and bike paths of the area every afternoon. Yet, biking is the rare sport that offers a little something more in the way of sentiment. Place both hands on the handlebars and both feet squarely on the pedals and watch as memories

of the days when a driver's license seemed a million years away come pouring forth. Back then, our friendships were based on little more than proximity. If you could reach someone's house on a bike, chances were you called yourself their friend.

Unlock those memories of the golden years of our youth. Grab your bike, pump up the tires, and hit one of the numerous trails just waiting to be explored. The bike path on the Parkway is easily accessible and is the gateway to the wonders of Old Town and DC. Or, try heading south toward Mt. Vernon. Lock your bike outside of Mt. Vernon and grab some amazing ice cream from the food court inside. If you're the adventurous type, the woods behind Mt. Vernon Rec Center offer up mountain bike trails of all sorts. Just be prepared to get a little muddy and sore. Wherever you choose to ride, do it on a bike.

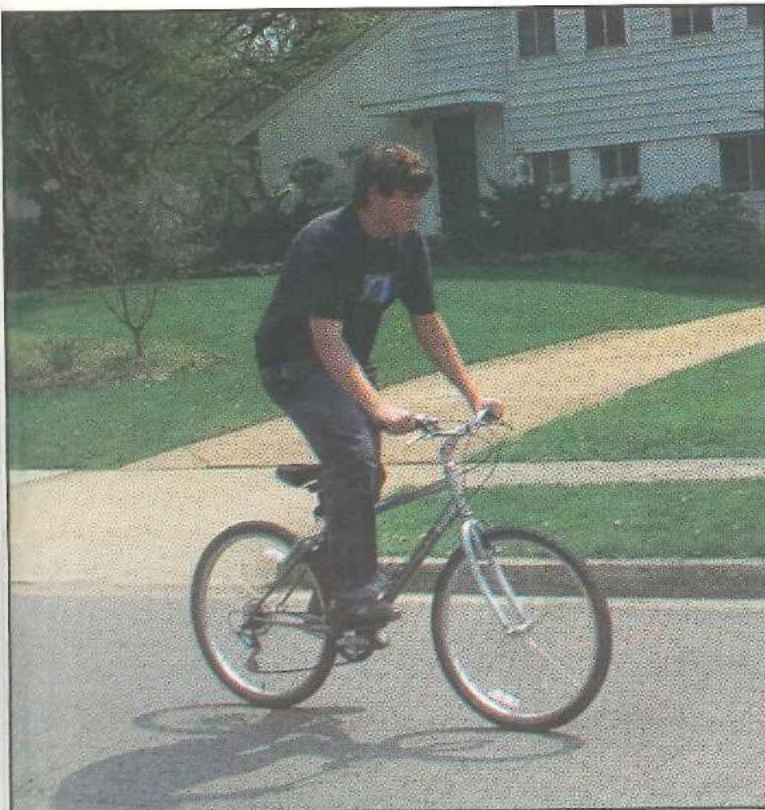


Photo by Laura Lofgren

Charlie Boyce rides through local neighborhoods on a sunny day.

Capoeira

Evan Dobbs

Photo Editor

Back flips and spin kicks are often associated with break-dancing. The origin of break-dancing's best flips and kicks comes from Capoeira, a Brazilian martial art mixing dance and fighting styles.

Capoeira dates back to the 1500's, when the Portuguese captured slaves from Africa and took them to Brazil for sugarcane and cotton. These different African groups did not lose sight of their culture, and eventually, it was used to up-rise against slave owners. While masters thought that slaves were dancing, the slaves were plotting to escape.

Capoeira teaches more than just kicks and punches. The music associated with the dance is Brazilian folklore. The berimbau, a long stringed instrument, is used in the "jogo de Capoeira", the actual game of Capoeira. A *roda* is

when all the Caporistas form a circle to sing, play, and spar. To enter the *roda*, one must face a partner and flip or cartwheel into the center. Many groups play different games when in the *roda*. "Mines" is played when the group throws in their sandals and when moving, if you step on the shoe or "mine" you loose and must leave the *roda*. Like other martial arts, there is a belt system also, they are called chords. There are different forms and variations of Capoeira. Including angola, regional, abada, and others. Each variety has a different for of practicing, fighting, and music. Some slow, and others move closer to the ground.

Capoeira is a fun and challenging sport. Groups act as a second family, other Caporista are close and work together to help progress in skill. It is a great after school activity, and not only teaches you how to move, but how to live.



Photo courtesy of Benjamin S. Kaplan

An Angola Capoeirista performs an Armado, a common move used by Mestres.

Stretch Your Worries Away!

Sarah Raser

Wire Reporter

Yoga: a traditional Hindu exercise practiced as part of self discipline to promote control of the body and mind; an activity practiced by many West Potomac members.

Unlike stretching or cardio, yoga is more than just variety of physical poses. It is a practice of motions connecting the mind with the breathing rhythm of the body. After many repetitions the body tends to become looser and more flexible. "My parents used to teach yoga and their lives seemed less stressful," says Senior Natalie Titerance, "It requires a lot of focus and balance to perfect the poses."

Yoga is outlined in a 2,000 year Indian guidebook called the *Yoga Sutra*. The book focuses on the eight branches of yoga: *yamas* (restraints), *niyamas* (observances), *asana* (postures), *pranayama* (breathing), *pratyahara* (withdrawal of senses),

dharana (concentration), *dhyani* (meditation), and *samadhi* (absorption). With these all these elements combined an individual can achieve a true therapeutic feeling.

Ashtanga or "Power" Yoga is a more extreme form of yoga with intense heat to detoxify the body through profuse sweating. As a result you experience increased circulation, a strong body, and a calm spirit.

Gentle Yoga and Power Yoga classes can be taken at Gold's Gyms seven days a week at different times each day. There are also independent yoga studios that focus solely on the practice such as Moska Yoga & Holistic Health Center located on Route 1.

Yoga is a great activity to relax those who are stressed and to loosen up those who are tense. It is a highly recommended by doctor and trainers alike!

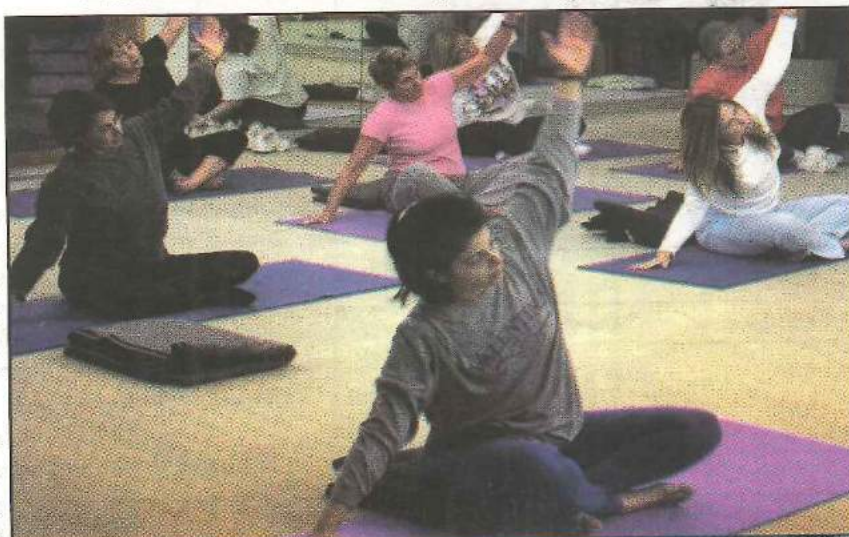


Photo by Jim Gehrz/KRT

Men and women of all ages can take relaxing classes in yoga.

Senior Leadership Paves The Way

Veteran Lacrosse Team Looks For Key Wins in the District

Houston Murphy

Photo Editor

When you are a senior, you have a lot of things to think about over the course of your final year. Many seniors focus the most on their first semester and then try to cruise through the rest of the school year before going off to college, but this is not the case for the students who play lacrosse at this school. These student-athletes have another whole season of work to concentrate on before graduating. This year's lacrosse team is full of seniors, many of which are looking forward to proving that all of their hard work up to this point has paid off. With eleven seniors on the roster, the leadership on this team that is coached by second year head coach John Baer is what will be the driving force of how they will succeed this season.

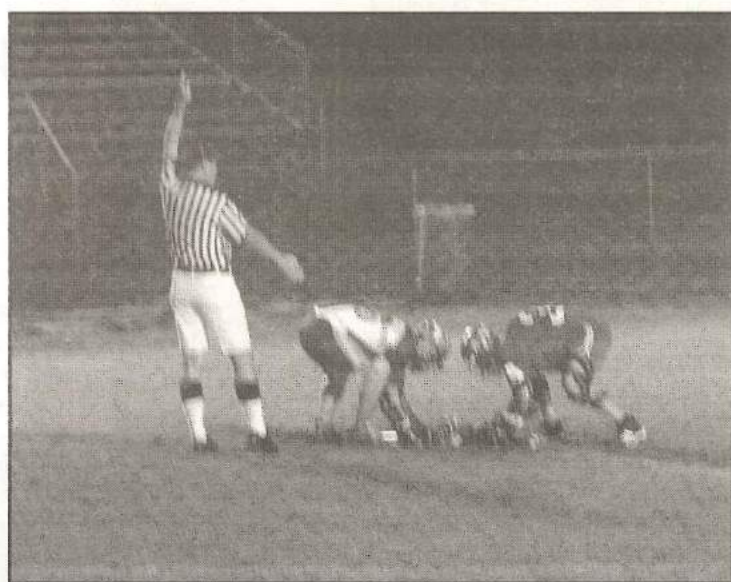
Coach Baer has instilled an attitude that to get what you want out of a sport, you must first put forth the appropriate dedication, as the team's motto is "Let's go to work!" Coach Baer has used several strategies to get his team pumped up for each game. "Coach Baer always gets our heads into the game by telling us all the things we need to do to win," said senior captain Brandon LeBlanc.

While on the sideline of a home game against Wakefield, it was noticeable that Coach Baer was wearing a white hardhat. This hardhat was explained to be one of Baer's motivational tactics to encourage tough and emotional play from the team. "Each game, Coach wears a hardhat that your name gets put on if you are the hardest worker of the game," said senior captain Tom Viilo. "Whoever's name is on the hat the most times by the end of the season gets the hardest worker award and keeps the hat." That game against Wakefield was one of the team's best of the year, as they shut out the opposition 17-0.

The next home game against top district team Robinson, was one of the most important games of the season for this team, and proved to be a truly hard-fought battle. After a

mediocre first half of play with Robinson up 10-2, Coach Baer got the squad fired up to get back out there to compete for a win, and to show Robinson that this squad full of seniors is not here to play around. "At halftime Coach told us that we could be competing with these guys, and we really thought so too, so we went into the second half playing to beat them, said junior Eric Pratsch. The Wolverines came out and scored six straight goals to start the second half, and sent the message that Robinson couldn't sleep through the rest of this game. The Wolverines ended up playing the best half of the season, including several highlights that fired up the crowd. Flashy goals were delivered consecutively from senior captains Tom Viilo and Patrick Dewey, and the hardest hit of the game came when senior Matt Zehner punished a Robinson player going for a loose ball. Though the team played with the intensity to get them back in the game, they fell just short of a victory to Robinson, finishing with a score of 14-8.

Before an away game against T.C. Williams, Coach Baer wanted to make sure the team wasn't still thinking about the tough loss to Robinson. He split the team up into a few groups and handed each captain a piece of paper, telling them to read among the group what it said. Not knowing what was going on, most players thought Baer was playing a joke, or just giving them a random piece of literature to read. It was soon discovered that Baer had given the team an excerpt from "The Art of War." As a few players started chuckling at the notion that a lacrosse game was like the "art of war," Coach Baer clearly stated that this was no laughing matter at all. "That isn't a little joke," said Coach Baer, giving a disciplinary speech to a couple players. "If you can't take that [The Art of War] seriously, then maybe you aren't ready



A member of this school's boys' lacrosse team faces off against a player from the Annandale Atoms. The player won the face-off but, unfortunately, the team lost the game 6-3.

Photo by Houston Murphy

to be here." This determined attitude that Coach Baer is showing the team is a characteristic that they will need to have in order to finish well in the tough Patriot District, which includes top teams Robinson and West Springfield.

Though the art of war was fresh in their minds, the boys suffered a tough loss to T.C. that night. Up 7-6 in the first half, the Wolverines weren't able to hold on to the lead for the rest of the game. "Instead of trying to win the game, we played timid and just tried to hold on to the lead that we had at the time," said junior Brian Allik. The Wolverines fell to T.C. with a final score of 12-7.

The boy's lacrosse team is currently 2-8 through April 21, with wins over Wakefield and independent lacrosse team, West End lacrosse club. With several tough losses that were close to being wins, the team is optimistic going into districts, which starts on May 11.

Softball Swings For The Fences

Looking to Improve on Last Year, Team Finds Hope in Teamwork

Jason Yaworske

Wire Reporter

This school's softball team came into the season with high expectations. All the returning players made for a very senior-heavy team. They also consider themselves

a very close group. Early in the season the whole team took a trip to a place in the middle of nowhere, called Graves Mountain, where they stayed in relatively cramped conditions. The trip was set up by sixth-year coach Dennis Day in the hopes of getting the girls to participate in light

workouts, but mostly for them to bond and enjoy being with their teammates. The team participated in an area tournament to spend some time together and get in some extra practice before the season started. A lot of the girls also went on a trip down to the University of Virginia to watch the Virginia take on Tennessee in college softball. They also have a lot of team dinners.

All this, combined with the intense practices every day after school, has prompted many of the players to joke that "softball = life". However, all this bonding has paid off on the field, as they have started the season strong. They even surprised themselves when they went to Robinson to play the Rams, then the sixth-ranked team in the metropolitan area, and almost pulled out a victory. The game ended with Robinson scoring in the last inning to win 6-5, but the game was a real confidence builder for the team. "We are a really tight-knit group," says senior Neely Edwards. "I really think that is an important factor in our success."

The team is greatly improved from last year. Not only have they had the benefit of returning the core of their team, but many

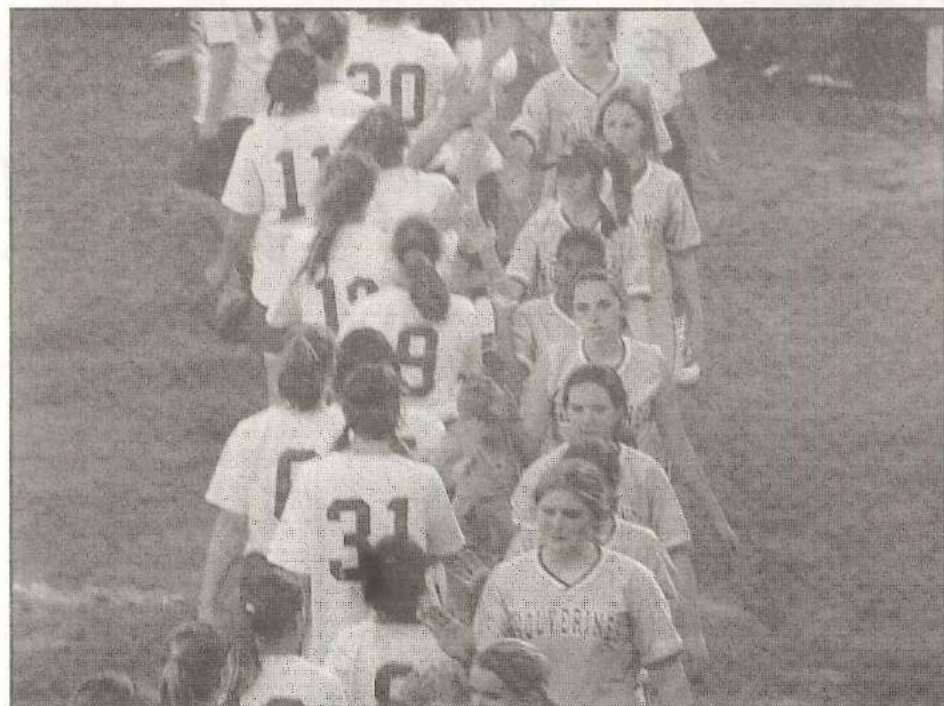
of the girls played on travel teams together in the off-season to hone their skills. It has really paid off too, as this school has one of the most potent line-ups in the district, making every inning a threat, and making every out tough on their opponents. But while batting is their strong point, pitching, an equally important aspect in softball, will be vital if their success is to continue. Junior Becky Boucher, who has pitched almost all

"All the pieces are in place for us to make a run and surprise a lot of people."

~Senior Tanya Walsh

the entire season, has pitched extremely well, recording two shutouts already this year. The team hopes her arm will hold up for the rest of this grueling season.

Led by senior captain Tanya Walsh, Boucher, and junior Sarah Jacobs, the softball team knows that this might be the year to win the district. "This is our year to go really far," says Walsh. "All the pieces are in place for us to make a run and surprise a lot of people." The team hopes to do just that, and finish what they started at Graves Mountain only months ago.



Varsity Softball players from this school slap hands with the Annandale Atoms after their game.

Photo by Houston Murphy

Spring Track Running For Their Lives

Boys Team Looks for Fourth Straight District Title

Ashley Newcomb

Style Editor

There has always been a spotlight on major spring sports, like lacrosse, softball, and baseball. However, there is one spring sport in which this school is well-ranked, that is constantly overlooked. Spring track has always been one of this school's best ranking sports; however, it seems to always get stuck in the shadows.

This year's spring track program is working on their fourth straight district championship. Going into the meets knowing they are not the favored team, is a factor that forces the team to be united. Their position is considered through overall points the teams is predicted to score in the meets. Going up against stronger teams like Hayfield and Lake Braddock, this school's spring track program shows great strengths in the field events, long jump and triple jump.

Two weeks ago, the Scudieri team challenge was held at this school. This meet is dedicated to Michael Scudieri, who was a devoted jump coach, who coached nine state champions. After

his death in September 1997, Coach Donald Beeby and Inez Bryant dedicated the team challenge to the greatly missed coach.

Moving from winter to spring track, many of the winter track team members are lost due to other spring sports, especially soccer and also this season, senior Chris Jones due to injury. However, this year, girls who were on the winter team look forward to gaining a stronger finish from their fourth place position from indoor track. Coach Corey Bowerman, believes the boys' team will use their "runner-up position from regionals to catapult to the outdoor season."

Junior Antwane Minter has been on both winter and spring track since his freshman year. At the Scudieri meet, Minter placed first in the triple and long jump. "Track has been a great sport for me at West Potomac; it's given me lots of medals, two straight district championships, and hopefully more to come. If you ask me, we're the best program in the school, and much underrated," said Minter.

Both boys and girls teams have great seniors leading their teams. Charles Jones, who

has been on the track team all four years of high school, is one of them. "Each year he works even harder. He is one who leads by example, which has proved to give him a district championship, regional championship and placed fourth in the state," said Bowerman. On the girls' team, Laura Regensburg has been a girls' captain for the past two years. "Laura is a really hard worker with a positive 'never say die' attitude," said Bowerman.

Unlike most sports, tracks season mainly depends on the last three meets. The other meets throughout the season are looked at as preparation for the major meets. The Patriot District Championship meet is going to be held on May 18th at this school. With the anticipation growing for possibly obtaining their fourth straight district championship, many of the track team members are working their hardest while training for the big day. "We have a lot to live up to, but we are going to do our best to fill in the big shoes left behind with the help from young rising stars and old farts," said junior Kristina Dahmann.

This season holds high expectations, as the team is hoping to go the distance.

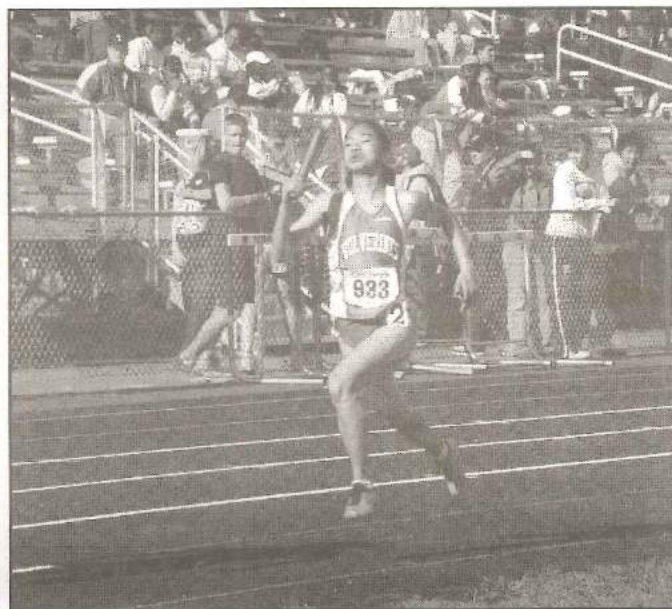


Photo by Houston Murphy

Freshman Kat Lee leads the team to victory in the 4x400m relay on Saturday.



Photo by Houston Murphy

West Potomac runners line up for the start of the race at the Scudieri Invitational held at this school.

In the Numbers



Goals scored by the Girls' Lacrosse team in a 9-8 win over T.C. Williams.



Goals allowed by the Boys' Soccer team defense in a 0-0 tie against Hayfield.



Goals scored by the Girls' Soccer team against Wakefield.

15

Minutes it took for an ambulance to respond to Varisty Lacrosse player Ryan Shumate's crushing hit against a Hayfield player.

5-3

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Nationals Shouldn't Be Something To Bicker About

Alex Keckeisen

Sports Editor

Every once in a while a baseball team comes along and changes everything. Problem is, Bud Selig and Major League Baseball thought once in a while meant 34 years. Luckily, we have a team of our own playing at RFK Stadium and we better be grateful about it or they'll make a run for it in no time.

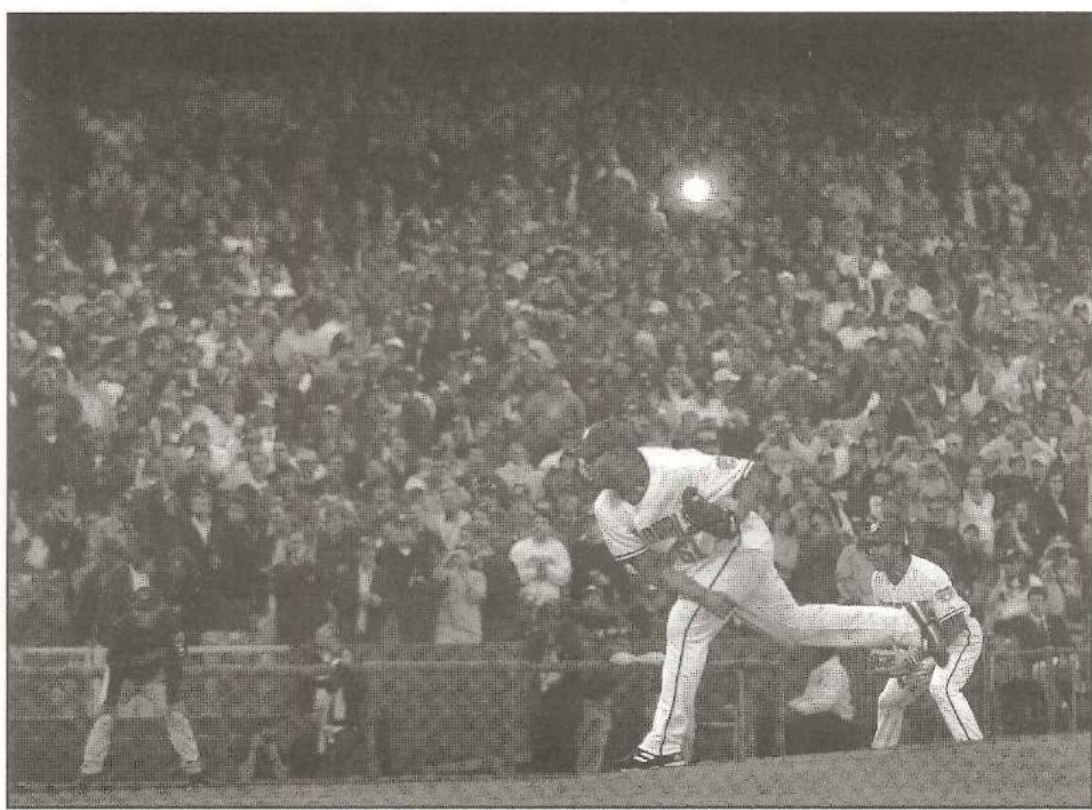
Let me break something down for you about Washington sports teams. We as citizens of Virginia, Maryland, and the District love to criticize our team if they ever do the slightest thing wrong. It's almost our duty as sports fans in the area. But if any of these teams are on course to win a few games or have already made it to the playoffs of their respective leagues, suddenly everyone's the team's biggest fans. It's definitely visible now as we see the Wizards head into the postseason for the first time since 1998. How many of these people were thinking about the Wizards at this time last year? Not many.

(Brief Side note about the Wizards. I've been a fan of the Wizards since they were the Bullets and Chris Webber and Juwan Howard were playing for the team. I'm a fan, yes, but I'm not jumping on any bandwagon. I wish them the best in the post-season, but has anyone else seen their playoff record from the last 20 years?)

There is no aura about Washington sports.

The Redskins haven't won a Super Bowl since the first time Joe Gibbs was coach, the Bullets/ Wizards haven't won since Wes Unseld was playing, and the Capitals have never won a Stanley Cup ever. But this leaves us average and deprived sports fans only one thing to do: Complain. Isn't it a great thing, too? I've grown up around it and grown accustomed to it, and I find myself complaining too. It's a horrible place to be a sports fan because you don't really know what winning is like.

So for once, let's please not bicker about OUR new team. Let's enjoy it, grow accustomed to losing, but let's do it with high spirits. Already the team has kept us entertained as they won their first two games ever at home against the Arizona Diamondbacks. Most likely, though, they will fall into a deep hole in a few games and we will probably just forget about them (sorry that's the Washington Sports Fan talking). For once can we just keep high hopes in OUR new team no matter how bad they



Washington Nationals starting pitcher Livian Hernandez throws out the first pitch on Opening Day at RFK stadium to a packed house. The Nationals won their first game by a score of 5-3.

George Bridges/KRT

lose? It's been 34 years that we have been bickering that we don't have a sports team and if we bicker after they finally give it to us, we will finally know why they waited so long to see if we deserved it. The truth is, we don't deserve a baseball team. There is one

in Baltimore just as bad as any Washington team we already have.

Let's not take this team for granted because they might want to leave again just like the Senators did 34 years ago, leaving yet another void for us to bicker about.

SPORTS CALENDAR

Friday, April 29

Varsity Boys Lacrosse	7:15 p.m.	vs Mt. Vernon
Varsity Girls Lacrosse	7:15 p.m.	at Mt. Vernon
Boys Tennis Match	4:30 p.m.	vs Annandale
Girls Tennis Match	4:30 p.m.	at Annandale
Varsity Baseball	7:00 p.m.	at T.C. Williams
Varsity Softball	7:00 p.m.	at T.C. Williams

Saturday, April 30

Crew Regatta	TBD	at Occoquan
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Monday, May 2

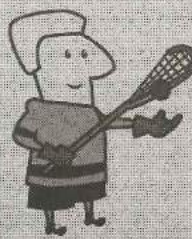
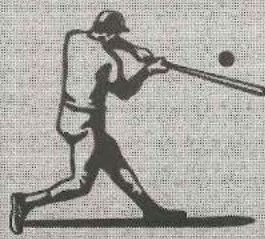
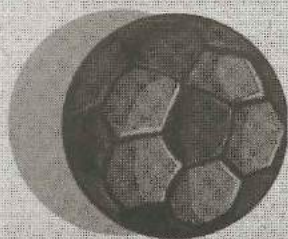
Varsity Baseball	6:00 p.m.	vs West Springfield
Varsity Softball	6:00 p.m.	vs West Springfield

Wednesday, May 4

Spring Track	5:30 p.m.	at Robinson
Varsity Baseball	6:00 p.m.	at Hayfield
Varsity Softball	6:00 p.m.	at Hayfield

Thursday, May 5

Varsity Boys Lacrosse	7:15 p.m.	at Lake Braddock
Varsity Girls Lacrosse	7:15 p.m.	vs Lake Braddock
Boys Tennis Match	4:30 p.m.	at Lake Braddock
Girls Tennis Match	4:30 p.m.	vs Lake Braddock



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Classic, but Not Ancient

Houston Murphy

Photo Editor

I don't know what made me do it, but a few years ago I picked up one of my mom's Led Zeppelin CD's to see what tasteless music she used to listen to. Not recognizing the name of the legendary band, I expected some cheesy music with no appeal at all. As I anticipated gathering evidence worthy of which to pester my mom, I suddenly realized there was something about this group of guitar-riffing, drum-bruising, easy-voiced artists that immediately caught my ear's attention. Realizing its significance little by little, the brilliance of classic rock has become special to me.

Listening to the classics over the years, I have discovered several bands that I often wish I were alive to hear while they were in their prime. Among my favorites are The Ramones, The Clash, Zeppelin, The Who, AC/DC, and The Doors. But aside from these popular bands that most people who know music know about, I have searched for other bands from the Classic Rock era. Even though several of my friends are music aficionados, even they did not know of some of the bands I have come to appreciate. Bands such as Yes, with their epic songs full of musical vividness and guitar riffs that go on for days, and Eric Clapton with Cream, whose music can give you the blues and excite you at the same time, are rock pioneers that have components that most bands today are lacking.

Prior to my classic rock-discovery days, I would have never imagined a ten-minute song. *Close to the Edge*, one of Yes's best albums, has only three songs. Despite this, the album seems to play forever, with songs that are eighteen minutes, ten minutes, and over eight minutes long. The eighteen-minute song, *Close to the Edge*, seems like it is several songs all blended into one that grows with each progression. But the greatest song on the album

is *Siberian Khatru*, a song that immediately struck me with its tremendous energy and unique sound.

Several of these classic bands who peaked before my peers and I were even born still have a great effect on how young teenage bands create their music. Senior Juan Fonseca has been in a band and also teaches guitar. As he was learning to play the guitar in the seventh grade, Fonseca taught himself the fundamentals. "Whenever anyone asks me who taught me how to play, I say Jimmy Page," says Fonseca. "It's sad how many people go 'Oh! Who's that?'"

"Listening to the classics gives me a false sense of nostalgia that makes me feel like I want to go back to the time when they ruled over the world of music."

~ Houston Murphy, 11

up a band. I can hear how The Clash or Ramones may have influenced Green Day, how Eric Clapton could have influenced John Mayer, and how The Beatles or Talking Heads may have inspired bands like The Killers or The Strokes. Even though it would be crazy to think that some contemporary bands are even comparable to the classics, it is obvious they have been influenced by them.

It is amazing listening to these immortal bands and noticing how they have subtly worked their way into modern bands' styles. Listening to the classics gives me a false sense of nostalgia that makes me feel like I want to go back to the time when they ruled over the world of music. I realize that good music never goes away. When I get older, whoever asks, I can tell them that I was just "talkin' 'bout my generation."

HFStival Without a HFS?

Alex Keckeisen

Sports Editor

After going off the air in mid-January, the Legendary WHFS is back. On January 12 of this year WHFS, which is owned by Infinity Broadcasting, changed format to Spanish pop music. Now after a brief absence, this alternative rock station was resurrected on 105.7 in Baltimore.

The format change was sudden and unexpected and caused mass protest throughout the area. "You protested, you called, you wanted HFS back. Someone listened," said the radio before playing the classic, "Sweet Child of Mine" by Guns n' Roses. After changing formats not only was the radio stations future but also the uncertainty of whether one of the largest concerts in the area, HFStival, would take place. Fortunately the station did come back on but few changes have been made to largest alternative event in the area.

105.7 FM in Baltimore is a daytime

talk-radio station that includes such icons as David Stern and Don and Mike. HFS plays its signature anti-play list alternative rock on weeknights and all the time on weekends. The time that they are not on the air, talk-radio takes over.

The 16th annual HFStival will take place at M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore, rather than RFK where it has taken place since 2000. The last time it took

and the Bunnymen, Garbage, They might be Giants, Louis XIV, the Stereophonics, The Bravery, Good Charlotte, Social Distortion, Sum 41, New York Dolls, Unwritten Law, Citizen Pope, and Pepper. It will take place Saturday May 14th and tickets are still on sale for prices ranging from 40 to 60 dollars.

While many changes are being made, the annual Big Break competition, that gives one local band the chance to perform on stage at the event, went on as planned with Gold Mind Squad winning the competition. One previous winner, Good Charlotte, performed on stage at HFStival in 2000 and went on to sell millions of records.

Reception in our area is sub-par but the station is offered online through streaming. Infinity Broadcasting put 11 of its leading daytime talk-radio stations online and made it free to the public.

Luckily the format change on 99.1 was only temporary and the Legendary HFS is back on the air once again.



Photo edited by Laura Loggen

place Baltimore it reached a capacity of 80,000 people in attendance. It will also not be as extravagant as it was at RFK due to the lack of space but the line-up of bands represents the station is 34-year history with bands like Coldplay, Billy Idol, Interpol, Jimmies Chicken Shack and the Foo Fighters. Other bands include Echo

STYLE Pope Turned Pop?

*Humor Columnist Offers
the Church Some Sugges-
tions*

Rob Jones

Wire Reporter

As you probably know by now, the nominating convention for the new Pope has ended. The convention of cardinals was not too long ago embroiled in a battle royale, using a broad array of papal weaponry such as mind control, flaming swords and monkeys armed with Pez dispensers. Of course, I am only joking. Monkeys cannot operate Pez dispensers.

The various factions of Catholicism have come to an agreement and elected a Pope. It seems that the Catholic Church has been stuck in a rut for the last 2000 years. No matter how many popes they go through, they never seem to make any significant policy changes. It is time the Church moved ahead into the 21st Century.

The first thing to get rid of is this old-fashioned Conclave business. Secret meetings in sealed cathedrals are so Middle Ages. They should try one of the new election techniques the world has perfected over the last five years. Potential popes could audition in front of a panel of hyper-critical judges, who would give them very bleak assessments of their applications, and then the public could text-message their votes to 1-800-VATICAN. Perhaps the Church would consent to let the voters in California choose their new pontiff. Possibilities include Sylvester Stallone, Jean-Claude Van Damme, and Ron Jeremy.

As the Church is a highly traditional institution, and the Pope must truly prove his mettle against all evils, I suggest a rigorous series of tests. The first of these should be a quest, on which all prospective Popes must embark, across the Himalayas with no food but wine and communion wafers. Those who survive this shall then be armed with spoons and vials of holy water and forced to fight to the death, gladiator style. After a vicious battle, the survivor of which must certainly have proven his virtue and versatility, the last man standing must face his final challenge. He must overthrow a world leader of his choice, and claim the land as the property of the Church. (Note: the governments of Monaco, Lichtenstein, Fiji, etc. do not constitute legitimate targets. The overthrow of superpowers such as the United States or China will earn irrefutable favor.) Should he fail in this mission, he shall be branded as a heretic and thrown to the Swiss Guard's vicious attack-eels as a plaything. However, if he succeeds, the Vatican and all Catholicism must bow to him and obey his every whim.

Some of you who read this may regard it as crude, vile, blasphemous heresy. You would argue that Conclave is a tried-and-true method that has produced a long legacy of great popes. Yes, the holy fathers of the past have accomplished things, but think what amazing things could be assured if the Pope were truly proven worthy. He may return the Church to a position of prominence in a modern era. However, until my genius is realized, we must rely on monkeys with Pez dispensers.

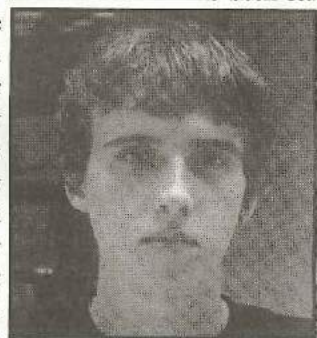


Photo illustration by Houston Murphy

A-List

Newcomb names her number ones.


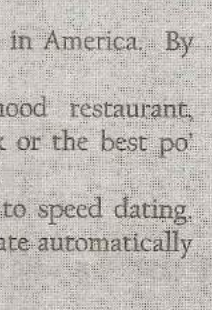
Book: *She's Come Undone*, by Wally Lamb, is one of those books you can't put down. Written in first person narrative, the book has you looking into how a teenage girl, Dolores, deals with her troubles. Now, if I tell you what problems, I'd be giving it away.


CD: Thanks to a couple of awesome friends, I have been introduced to the wonderful world of Jack Johnson. His CD, "In Between Dreams," is a great night-out starter with songs like, "Banana Pancakes" and "Sitting, Waiting, Wishing."

Movie: *In America* is compelling true story about Irish immigrants and their struggles in America. By the end of the movie, you're sure to need a tissue.

Restaurant: Southside, located in Old Town, is a family-friendly neighborhood restaurant, where you can enjoy southern favorites such as their chicken fried steak or the best po' boys in town!

Show: MTV's, "Next," a new dating show that gives a new meaning to speed dating. To me there is nothing funnier than showing up for a date and your date automatically desperate at all!



Day in the Life of a Studious Survivor

Lakeisha Langley

Wire Reporter

Imagine your life is going great. School is going well, and leisure time is passed with family and friends. Although there are always minor things to worry about through the week, staying alive is not one of them. Until the doctor calls one day with some news. Out of the many things to do in life, having brain surgery should something high school student should worry about.

Sophomore Kathryn Kosanovich wasn't expecting this to happen to her at all. Kosanovich is a sweet, intelligent student who happens to be on top of her game in school. Even after her surgery, she is still very focused on making up her school work and staying on track. Her English teacher, Robert Boyd said, "Kathryn is a very smart student who just needs to take time out for herself after something like this."

One day Kosanovich started to have persistent, awful headaches. Sometimes, they would last for weeks. Her last headache lasted eleven weeks before she was checked. She received three MRI's and one MRA. That's when she was told she had a benign brain tumor. "It sort of feels like I'm

not as innocent anymore, like I lost part of my opportunity to be a kid," said Kosanovich. "The neurosurgeon said it could take up to six months until I feel normal, but it will probably always feel like the tumor ended part of my childhood, if that makes any sense."

Kosanovich has had to work especially hard to resume her old life. "It's sort of hard trying to get back into the swing of things, like coming to school and seeing all of my friends was hard," said Kosanovich. Although she missed a lot of school, she knows that her grades are very important and puts in extra effort. "I missed so much school, I'm still doing catch up work now! I generally wake up around 5:30am and leave by 6:30am to catch my bus. I get home around

2:30pm and I spend pretty much the rest of the afternoon and evening doing home work," said Kosanovich.

Through this experience, Kosanovich learned to take each day as it comes and to live your life to the fullest. "You always hear about people having brain tumors but you never think you could have one, too. It's like we think were invisible until something really happens," said Kosanovich. "I think that people should enjoy life. Just relax and have fun, because sooner or later, you won't be able to run around or do whatever you like. I definitely appreciate life more, and I think part of that is realizing how much I want my goals in life. I'm looking forward to the future but taking time for myself."

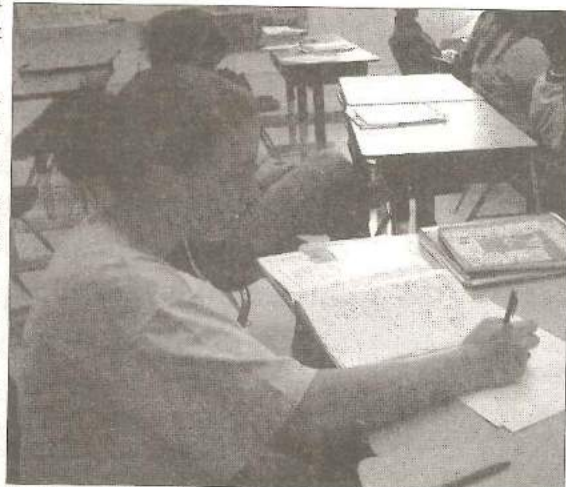


Photo by Laura Lofgren

Sophomore Kathryn Kosanovich now has no problems with staying focused in class.

Orange You Glad You Wore Clothes?

Marissa D'Orazio

Focus Editor

On Tuesday, April 19, 2005, I decided to do a little experiment. I deliberately disobeyed the dress code to see just how "competent" this new "system" really was.

Armed in my "Carona" halter top, and cut-off shorts over fishnets, it came as little surprise when Mrs. Bryant followed me out of Gunston and chased me down. It was as if she were playing "Where's Waldo?". "We have our first dress code violator!" she said excitedly into her walkie-talkie. It was as if she had finally achieved her goal.

I will admit, it wasn't that bad. There was no call home, no referral, no major consequences. That is, except the ridiculous thing covering my body. After school, I was to return it (no souvenir!) in order to get my shirt back.

Throughout the day, a few people laughed and said things along the lines of, "Marissa's nasty!" But most of the people who saw me sporting the Orange had one thing in mind: "How can I get one of those?!"

The dress code is intended to keep revealing, distracting clothing out of the school environment. But what is more distracting than an enormous, electric-orange shirt, displaying a quote from our principal? Not to mention that, since it covered the entirety of my shorts, it now appeared that I had shown up for school in a shirt with fishnets, and no pants at all. And the phrase (and yes, it is in quotes on the T-shirt) "I will dress for success!" reminds me of a second-grader in the 1950's writing "I will not talk out of turn" in cursive, 100 times at detention.

Why the sudden changes in dress code policy, hall passes, etc? It is because our school is participating in a program called PBIS- Positive Intervention Behavior Support. It is a nationwide program intended to convince students to respect themselves and ultimately reduce out-of-school suspensions.

There are roughly 100 shirts, and don't worry, they are washed after each use. As the weather gets warmer, one would assume

that we would see more people being forced to wear these shirts, but vice-principal Mrs. Bryant, one of the chief enforcers of the dress code, is hoping we won't have to.



Photo by Houston Murphy

Wearing the obnoxious orange t-shirt causes senior Marissa D'Orazio to face constant humiliation.

"I hope we won't have to use these shirts because people will become more aware of what they're putting on in the morning, so we won't have to scrutinize them," said Bryant.

It could be much, much

worse. Westfield High, another Fairfax County School, gives their dress code violators an enormous white shirt with a picture of the principal's smiling face on the front. The back of the shirt reads, "I Love My Principal!"

"Personally, I don't think it's that big of a deal. So what if we have to wear nerdy shirts every now and again?" said senior Alison Arberg. "The orange color is actually pretty swell for summertime. With the way some people dress, they really ought to take a few fashion tips from administration."

Freshman Matt Persekian also did not see the orange shirts as an obnoxious punishment. "Those shirts are tight! I wouldn't mind wearing one during the day," he said.

Although administrators are a bit overly enthusiastic about it, the new dress code policy was created to make sure we *won't* break the rule, not so that we all must face the world like Hester Prynne with the infamous Scarlet Letter on her breast. As Bryant said, "The purpose is to see what is appropriate and what isn't in school, and the goal is for everyone to understand and dress appropriately in the end."

WePo Crowns a New King

Ansley LaBarre

Editor-in-Chief

The auditorium was bursting with testosterone, Saturday, April 15, as fifteen of the school's most eligible bachelors competed for the title of "Mr. West Potomac". The show was hosted by the student government in order to in an effort to raise money for the junior class.

Fifteen juniors and seniors competed in the first round, relying on stunning looks in tuxedos and a small informative speech to receive the votes to advance to the second round. The audience selected their favorite candidates to perform talents.

Only ten competitors advanced to the talent round, then struggling to impress the judges. Junior Vincent Genuario astounded the audience by performing



Photo by Houston Murphy

This year's Mr. West Potomac, Patrick Ross, in all his glory.

a G-rated striptease and break dancing, while juniors AJ Fabrizio and Chris Kelly captured their hearts while producing a remake of Enrique's "Hero".

Although ten broke a sweat through solid

routines on stage, just five could be selected for the swim suit round. Genuario, Fabrizio, Kelly, and juniors Taylor Mertins and Patrick Ross strutted in their most flattering apparel, preparing themselves to answer strenuous interview questions along the lines of "what would you do if you were president?"

From their responses, judges had to select one for the position of "Mr. West Potomac". Mertins won second runner-up, Genuario first runner-up, and the crowned king, Ross.

State

Skid Row
House of Rock
White Marsh, M
April 30

Kelly Clarkson
Dar Constitution Hall
Washington, D.C.
May 1

Great White
House of Rock
White Marsh, MD
May 11

WMZQ-Fest
Nissan Pavilion
Bristow, VA
May 7

of

Snoop Dogg
Patriot Center
Fairfax, VA
May 8

Quiet Riot
The Recher Theatre
Towson, MD
May 1

DC Chili Cook-off
Independence & 12th
Washington, DC
May 14

Alicia Keys
Patriot Center
Fairfax, VA
May 3

the

HFStival
M&T Bank Stadium
Baltimore, MD
May 14

All Mighty Senators
Funk Box
Baltimore, MD
May 21

Bruce Springsteen
Patriot Center
Fairfax, VA
May 14



Arts

You've Been Funked

Joy Yoo

Wire Reporter

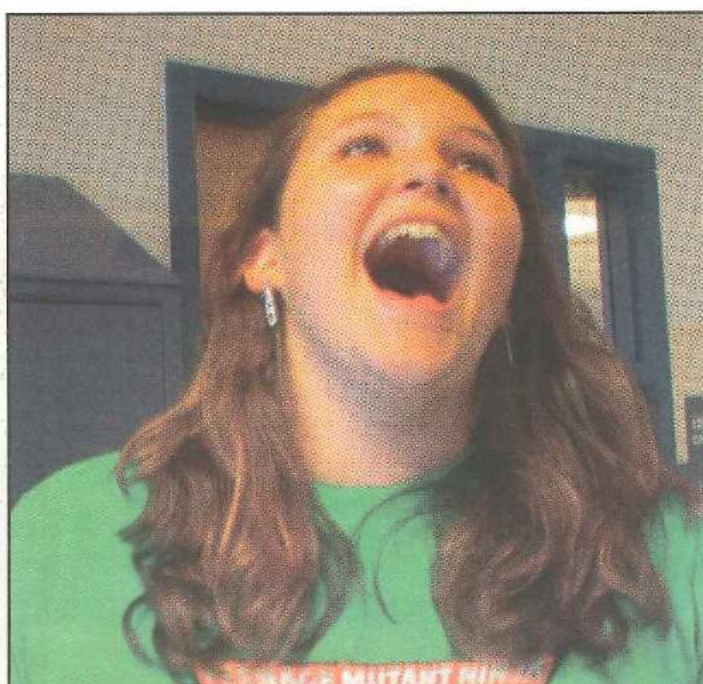
This senior is known for her hearty, high-pitched laugh that can be heard throughout the hallways and in the classroom; senior Jessi Funk was voted "Best Laugh" by the entire senior class. In addition to being known for her hilarious laugh, Funk is also a two-year varsity lacrosse player facing a demanding schedule. Moving from Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida (just out of Jacksonville), Funk began her education here at this school as a junior.



Funk often takes breaks to show her outgoing side.

serves as the head coach of the girls' varsity team. Funk said, "Lacrosse definitely brings the family together and it's something that we all love and can do together." Funk is the varsity girls' captain, along with seniors Patricia Clay and Natalie Titerence. Clay states, "As a captain, Jessie has really stepped up to her leadership role on the lacrosse team. It takes a lot to do that, especially for the girls who haven't been with the team for all four years. Anyone can count on her to always have a positive attitude and give a 110% at games, practice, and everything else."

This year, Funk is taking Anatomy, Film Study, Band, Teacher Cadet, AP Calculus BC, AP Literature, and Government. Even with these tough classes, Funk has been an active member for the past two years in the National Honor Society, which many know requires a minimum 3.5 GPA. Through the society, Funk becomes involved in the community and group service projects. Obviously balancing a challenging course load, Funk is also involved with the Teacher Cadet program and absolutely loves to work with kids. The elective offers the cadets to work with kids at a certain elementary school for two quarters; this year, Funk and her fellow classmates helped out at nearby Hollin Meadows Elementary School. They were able to assist the teachers and work with the kids firsthand; some were even allowed to lead and teach classes. Many of



Senior Jessi Funk is known as having one of the funniest laughs in school.

the cadets agree that Funk is a natural with the kids: wonderful and playful. Mixing her love for lacrosse and kids, Funk also coaches 1st-4th graders Fort Hunt Youth Girls' Lacrosse.

This fall, Funk is planning on attending the University of Florida. Funk is returning to her home state to study elementary education at this prestigious university. With her experience in the Teacher Cadet program, Funk said, "I want to study elementary education because I love little kids. I love to sing silly songs, do silly dances, color and make puppets. I just can't see myself doing anything else." Surely, Funk will find her niche in the environment of building the future of this country.

Photo by Laura Lofgren

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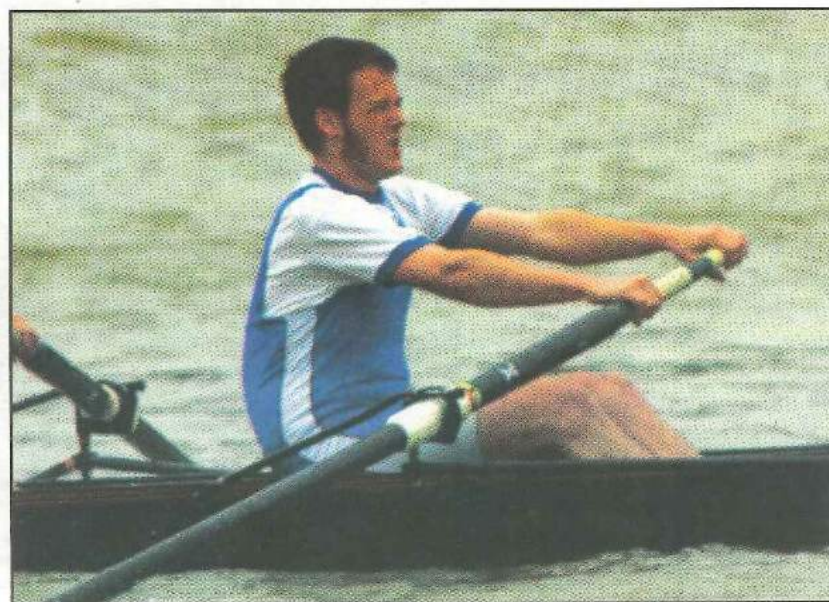
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Luke Urbanization

Rob Jones

Wire Reporter

It is high time the students of this school took a break from their routine, day-to-day existences, and paid tribute



Senior Luke Urban greatly contributes to his team by racing on the Varsity 4 boat.

Photo courtesy of Yearbook

to an athletic, academic, and quite literal giant. Luke Urban, the six-foot three-inch, 192 pound member of the varsity crew team, excels not only physically, but mentally. Ranked in the top five percent of the senior class, he has been accepted at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Wisconsin, James Madison University, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and is planning to attend MIT next year. His academic schedule is intimidating, including Human Anatomy and Physiology, AP Calculus BC, AP

English Literature and AP Computer Science. He scored a combined 1410 (math and verbal) on his SAT, and has earned a cumulative grade-point average of 3.85.

Outside of class, Urban has participated in Robotics Club, the All-Male Drill team, and he is a captain of the varsity crew team. He rows on the men's four-person boat, along with juniors Steven Aramony, Kenny Roden and Colin Jones. Urban, in the stroke position, sets the rhythm for the entire boat, ensuring a smooth race without weaving in the water. In practice, he rows his 2 kilometer erg sprint in six minutes, thirty-seven seconds, the fastest time on the team. Last year, he rowed on the winning four-boat at the National

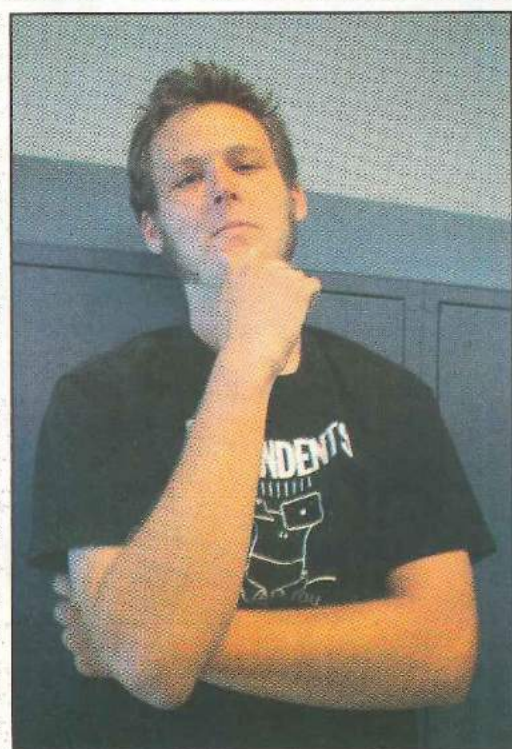
Championship meet, bringing the West Potomac sports program its first win beyond the state level. "Luke never ceases to amaze me," says senior Juan Fonseca. "I don't see how he has time to take the classes he does and still put in twenty-five hours a week in crew."

In his free time, Urban enjoys reading science fiction and philosophy. This hobby has affected his overall view of life. "I like to read because it relaxes me, and gives me a whole array of new perspectives on the world," says Urban. Senior Moira Holt, fellow rower and Urban's girlfriend of two years, says, "Reading has given Luke a sick sense of humor. He once gave me a book about hidden dangers in everyday life when I was dealing with some anxiety issues."

Many of Urban's teachers have noticed the breadth of his exposure to literature. "Luke has a very analytical mind," remarks sophomore English teacher Robert Boyd. "He is an extremely talented writer, and it was apparent to me that he was very well read, even as a sophomore." Boyd also remarked that Urban is a very independent thinker. "There were some times when Luke and I did not see things eye to eye. He has always had a knack for pushing against the wind, even when it seemed he didn't know which way the

wind was blowing. However, I am very proud of how he has matured."

Needless to say, Urban's high school record is very impressive. After four years of amazing his teachers and fellow students with his academic and athletic prowess, he is headed to the foremost technology school in the country. However, Urban himself is modest about his success in school. When asked to comment on his attitude



Urban ponders pensively on a perplexing problem.

towards high school, he simply replied, "I don't know. It's just something I have to do."

Photo by Laura Lofgren