



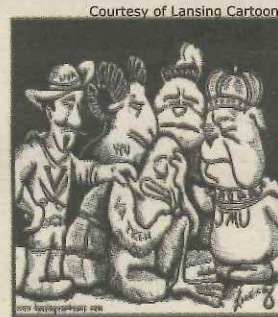
Tuesday, December 20, 2011

# Two high school students, Two Alumni, and One School

Emily Woods

Editor-in-Chief

On December 8th, the first shots were fired on the campus of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University since one tragic day in 2007. Deriek Crouse, a university police officer, was shot and killed when 22-year-old male Ross Truett Ashley, a student of nearby Radford University, opened fire during a traffic stop. After the shots were fired, Ashley fled on foot to another parking lot where his body was later found. The motive for the shooting is not yet clear at this time, but police have ruled the case a murder-suicide. An alert was issued to the university at 12:37 p.m., and the campus was placed on lock down at 1:01 p.m. The alert was lifted at 4:31 p.m. and final exams scheduled for the following day were postponed. A memorial fund for the fallen officer was created on the same day as the shootings. The fundraiser, "Hokies for Crouse" has raised over \$75,000 and will be donated to the memorial fund set up. Several students at Virginia colleges and universities extended support to their peers at Tech via social networking. Trending local topics on twitter included "DukesforHokies" and "HoosforHokies." "VirginiaTech" was also a top trending topic following the shooting.



## Rachelle Husband: Prospective student

The first thing senior Rachelle Husband did when she heard about the December 8th shootings was text her brother. At the time, Matthew Husband was a Tech student pursuing a degree in Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise. He graduated on December 16th. But when Radford student Ross Truett Ashley killed an Army veteran and father of five, Matthew Husband was still an undergraduate, and still on campus. Rachelle describes the moments waiting for her brother to respond as "nerve-wracking. I couldn't concentrate at all in class until I knew he was safe." Having a brother as a Tech alum is one of the many connections Rachelle has with the university that is home to over 30,000. She also spent four weeks on campus this past summer as part of the Governor's School for Agriculture. Throughout the duration of her stay, she noted the changes the school had secured after the 2007 Virginia Tech massacre in order to ensure student safety.



Courtesy of R. Husband

"They made a lot of updates to their communication system. In every classroom and hallway, there are black screens with words that ran across them in which important messages and alerts can easily be seen by the student and faculty." Rachelle goes on to explain how these changes were implemented as preliminary measures after the shooting four years ago. On December 8th, it was these very measures that allowed for a lockdown of the entire campus less than an hour after the first shots were fired.

The recent events shed light on the ways in which we receive and exchange information. Rachelle was informed of the situation at Tech just moments after it happened via Twitter. Although many consider this easy access to information to be excessive and even detrimental, Rachelle is among the supporters of online feedback. She explains, "It's good that there are avenues like Twitter and Facebook because it gives students who have siblings and friends there some peace of mind regarding their safety."

Rachelle may even join the Hokie team herself. She has applied to Virginia Tech, and as she awaits her admission decision, she chooses to focus on the university itself and not the external forces that have affected it. "Stuff like this can happen anywhere. This didn't happen because of Tech's security or their students. My decision will not be dissuaded at all by the fact that there have been shootings."

## An eyewitness tweeter

Peter Coffey, a West Potomac alum and sophomore at Tech, tells his story.

"The whole thing happened on reading day, basically the day before finals start and you do not have class. I was upstairs on the top floor of the dorm, Cochrane Hall. Cochrane is less than 200 feet away from where the shooting took place. I remember hearing a lot of sirens but I did not hear place. Because my dorm to the of speculation before we got the alert that and that the cam-We immediately suite and put a Because we were ing on my friends cided to stick our the window to try



Photo Courtesy of Peter Coffey

@pcoff69: Listening to the police scanner to figure out what is going on #virginiatech

ing. There was a building between us and the parking lot, where the shooting took place, but we could still see cops with assault rifles walking around. After a few minutes of

## Laurel Quinn: Prospective student

When Senior Laurel Quinn was informed of the December 8th incident her immediate reaction was, "Wait...another shooting?" Quinn's disbelief at the inexplicable odds of two campus shootings within such close proximity comes from a personal connection to Virginia Tech. "I consider Tech one of my top choices," Quinn states, "I could definitely see myself there." The 19-year-old cites several reasons why she wants to be a Hokie, mentioning the in-state tuition and large population as pluses. Her largest motivation, though, lies in the fact that it is only one of two schools in Virginia that has her intended major. "If I want to study Animal Science, it doesn't make sense to go anywhere other than Tech" says Quinn.

However, the recent chain of events may have Quinn second guessing these aspirations. She elaborates, "It does make me a tad bit scared, considering this is the second shooting at Tech in the past four years." Many consider Quinn's apprehension regarding whether or not to attend the school to be completely normal. Others argue that traumatic events on any other college campus in this high school senior uncertain complex than these opinions. that the tragedy four years ago; Quinn is 100 percent South Korean and stayed in her home country was adopted. Now, almost 19 articulates the grief and humili-2007, after Seung-Hui Cho coming incident by a single gunman in United States history. "People would make jokes about the shooter's ethnicity. It was hurtful, because it implied that all Koreans are like that. We're not."



Photo Courtesy of Sonia Garakayraghi

When Quinn found out that the gunman involved in the December 8th shooting was not of Korean descent, and allegedly had no connection to the school, she was relieved. She admits that although she remains a bit skeptical, the recent shootings will not have a significant impact on her final college decision later this spring. "There's no way to be certain things like this won't happen again. Who knows what could happen next year if I go there? It's just a chance you have to take."

@pcoff69: VT Alerts: Gun shots reported- Coliseum Parking lot. Stay inside. Secure doors. Emergency personal responding. Call 911.

@pcoff69: Shooting at #virginiatech. Staying inside.

watching what was going on we saw two cops run around the corner of a building with their guns drawn. They saw us and yelled to get away from window. That is we realized how then decided to lock the door. So with about ten news and listen-as checking to was going on via constantly get-and family mak-surreal experi-

serious the situation was. We all get into one room in the suite and for three hours, I was in a room guys. We were watching the ing to the police scanner as well see if other students knew what facebook and twitter. We were all ting calls and texts from friends ing sure we were okay. It was a ence and when it was all over, I really did not believe what had just happened. Never

once during the whole lock down did I feel unsafe, the police responded quickly and the school notified students quickly as well. As far as the Virginia Tech community is concerned, it only made us stronger. A lot of outsiders want to think or say that Virginia Tech is not a safe place. That is completely false, I feel extremely safe."



Photo Courtesy of Peter Coffey

@pcoff69: Scene of shooting. Still buzzing with police #virginiatech

## A VT alum

Britney Corbett, a VT alum and West Potomac teacher, witnessed the 2007 shooting

"On April 16th, 2007 I was a freshman at VT and I know many students who lost their lives, and I am still deeply affected. My heart goes out to those who had to experience the shooting on Thursday. I'll love VT forever! "



Photos Courtesy of Britney Corbett





## West Potomac is in favor of Mock Trial Club

Norris Brooks  
Editor-in-Chief

When it comes to new clubs, West Potomac does not object!

Ms. Shanna Daniel arrived at West Potomac in the Fall of 2011. She immediately fit in with the English department and received a warm welcome. As she settled into her role as an Advanced Placement (AP) Literature & Composition and 9th grade English teacher, she decided she wanted to bring more to West Potomac, so she started a new organization called the Mock Trial Club. When asked about her reasons for starting the club, Daniels explained, "I was an assistant coach for Mock Trial at the school where I used to teach, Overbrook High School in Philadelphia. That school has an outstanding Mock Trial team, and I was invited to help out by Overbrook's head coach. At West Potomac, I hope to start a new tradition of Mock Trial."

The club is off to a tremendous start with already 24 members enrolled, and Daniel firmly believes that number could grow as the year progresses. It is not only the large number of students involved that is making the club a success, but it is also the personalities of the participants. When asked about her students, Daniel brightly remarked, "The number of enthusiastic and talented members we have is awesome, so I'm feeling pretty confident at this point that we'll have a good showing at our trial day." Student member Alex Amico agreed. "We have so many interesting students that have really embraced Mock Trial. Other schools better watch out because we are going to be great!"

Nationally, the Mock Trial Club was created to give high school students the opportunity to experience what it is like in the courtroom. At West Potomac was initiated to teach students about the law, as well as to help them gain life skills. Ms. Daniel elaborated on its purpose when she explained, "It's also about mastering skills—for example, objections and responses to them, staying in character while you're being interrogated (as a witness), displaying confidence and verbal control over a witness on cross examination (as a lawyer)—and being able to display them in a particular moment." Daniel hopes the club will teach her students life skills and give them a sense of accomplishment. She continued, "And even deeper, it's about what teenagers can accomplish when they work hard and love something. My former students were always impressed and amazed at the end of their seasons to see just how far they'd come both in skills and in confidence."

Student response to Mock Trial has been overwhelmingly positive. Junior Joanna Morgan exclaimed, "I really enjoy Mock Trial and actually look forward to every meeting. It has taught me so many new things about speaking and law that I hope to use in the future." Amico echoed the same feelings. "Although we have not gone to any competitions, I enjoy the challenge of trying to find different ways to frame a part of the case to either defend or prosecute a defendant. Also, I like cross examination because it gives me the chance to be scathingly sarcastic."

While this is the first Mock Trial Club for West Potomac, it is not a completely original idea. The National High School Mock Trial Championship was started in 1984. The first competition consisted of five teams: Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, Wisconsin, and Iowa. Since the first competition, the organization has grown and is now an All-State tournament. The competition is held in a different state every year.

Thanks to Ms. Daniel's passion and excitement, the Mock Trial Club is taking off full blast. The enrollment is growing, and the club will compete in mid to late January, so be sure to come out and support West Potomac's newest organization!

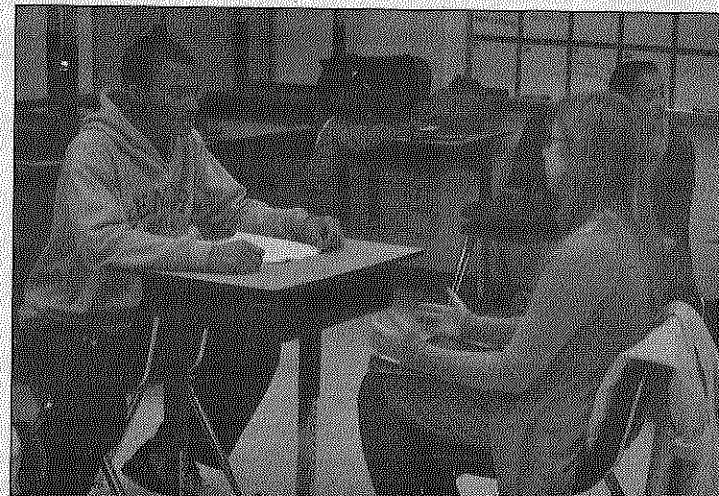


Photo Courtesy of Sonia Garakyaraghi

Senior Stephen Banks and Junior Campbell Parker practicing debating during a Mock Trial Club meeting.

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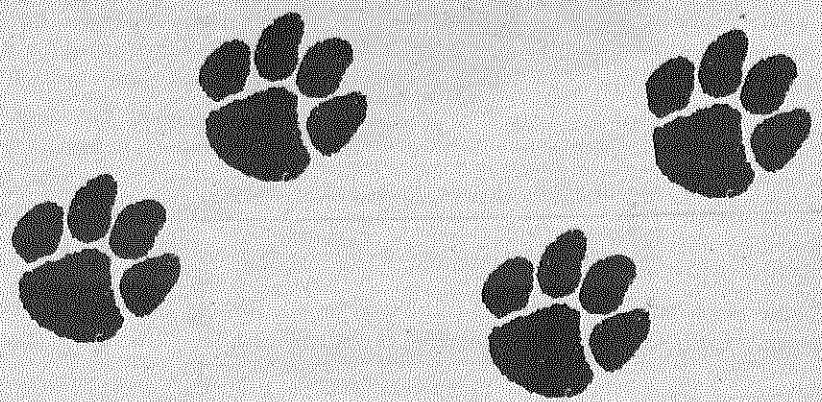
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## Wolverine Warriors: Brittany Alderman



This school year, senior Brittany Alderman and her LMVSC Patriots teammates defeated their previously unbeatable enemies, the Chantilly Burns at the Virginia State Cup Champions in New Jersey. Alderman recalls, "At the end of the 90 minutes, we were tied 1-1 and we had to break the tie so we went into overtime, playing two fifteen minute halves. At the end of the overtime, we were still tied so we went into penalty kicks. It all wound down to the golden goal, our 7<sup>th</sup> shot was an all or nothing shot. As soon as the whistle blew, the slamming of the ball into the back of the net broke the silence, declaring us champions."

Alderman started playing soccer when she was in second grade and hasn't stopped since then. She played Rec. soccer until 5<sup>th</sup> grade, where she joined her first club team, the Gunston Spins. After playing on this division three team for four years, Alderman was moved up to the division one team, the LMVSC Patriots. The team keeps Alderman "super busy with training during the week, playing soccer all year around." Practice consists of intense ball work, speed and endurance, and a "regular" practice where players get a chance to scrimmage, increasing their teamwork skills.

Her dedication to soccer has placed her one kick higher than many other athletes. Alderman plans on playing soccer for a college, but she is still "undecided as to where I will be going." She is awaiting her team's honorable acceptance to the Disney College Showcase where they will travel to Disney at the end of December to play in a prestigious tournament. Alderman is thrilled because this is the first time her team will play in one and she is looking forward to this new experience.

Besides being the next Mia Hamm, Alderman is an excellent swimmer and valuable part to West Potomac's field hockey team. Upon having soccer practice weekly, Alderman is additionally participating in her daily high school practices. However, her most memorable sports season in her high school career has been this past, 2011 field hockey season. She stated, "the team has come a long way from where we were the past few years and we worked so well as a team this year." Alderman contributed significantly to the various district wins, which were more wins than the field hockey team had in the past six years. The team had one goal at the start of the year and that was to, "make it past the 1<sup>st</sup> round of districts and we did," exclaimed Alderman. She will never forget beating WT Woodson, which advanced them to regionals. Even though they lost, Alderman will always have pride in her team. "Seeing how much the field hockey program has improved over the past years and how close the team has become is incredible," concluded Alderman.

One thing that Alderman will miss next year is all of her coaches. Her travel soccer coach, Linda Bauer has coached her for the past four years and has helped her, "fulfill my goal of playing college soccer." Alderman explained, "her patience and commitment for the past four years are greatly appreciated." More of her coaches include Mr. Hubbard "Hubbs" and Mrs. Hubbard "Lady Hubbs" who have both coached her in soccer and "Lady Hubbs" has also coached her in field hockey. Having them as coaches for her high school experience is "definitely going to be four years I will never forget." Her coaches will be sincerely missed next year at college, "but if it wasn't for all of their encouragement, support, and hard work, I wouldn't be where I am right now. They have all helped me to develop not only as a player, but as an individual and have made huge impacts on my life. I can't even begin to explain how thankful I am for all that they have done for me," said Alderman.

Alderman's athletic career has truly earned her the Wolverine Warrior title.



Photo courtesy of Brittany Alderman

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### *On the 12th day...*

"Why can't you be more like cousin Sally?" Every year, family gathers once again to ask the same antagonizing questions and bring up all the old dramas. The result? Bickering, tears, and slammed doors. Even when things are running smoothly, the holiday season has awkward questions and comments around every corner. Aunt Petunia will ask how "close" you are with the attractive classmate in your profile picture and your Grammy will once again congratulate you on finally growing out of that awkward stage. Gotta love family.

### *On the 10th day...*

Alright guys, let's take bets. How many gift cards will we get from iTunes? Starbucks? Target? Every year, one can predict exactly what is inside those generic shaped envelopes that come in the mail. Although we are grateful for the new music we can buy and the coffee we can drink, there is no excitement in opening yet another gift card. Despite our contempt upon receiving a gift card, we are still compelled to use them as a staple obligation gift. Creativity be damned.

### *On the 8th day...*

One of the many charms of the holidays is the beautiful sight of a tree covered in twinkling, blinking, and bright white lights. Unfortunately, that sight comes with a price. The hours it takes to do the decorating is precious and everyone stringing the strands believes that their efforts will be absolutely worth it. And when they wake up the next morning, expecting to be welcomed by the extravagant display, all they see is an unlit old tree. The lights are brand new, so they could not be dead. Leaving only one explanation: your bulb is unscrewed.

### *On the 6th day...*

Silver bells, silver bells, it's time to help local charities. Men stand outside the grocery store in familiar Santa costumes and ring their bell asking for donations. The wave of guilt that sweeps over you every time you awkwardly speed walk past is just the thing you want while saving up to buy presents. Unfortunately, you now feel like Ebenezer Scrooge and you are compelled to give them your change on your way out of the store... or find a different exit.

### *On the 4th day...*

Want to make some big holiday purchases? Try cough medicine, Kleenex, and a humidifier because the chill in the air almost guarantees winter colds. Despite always wanting to get out of class, taking a sick day is always better when you are not actually sick.

### *On the 2nd day...*

Another perfect reason to do more holiday shopping? You don't fit into your pants anymore! Attempting to do that awkward dance where you inch them on bit by bit won't work anymore. Finally you resort to pull the fat-day-pants out of the closet. Now that your baggy pants look like jeggings, you realize that sweat pants are your only option. That is, until you fulfill your New-Years resolution to go to the gym... haha who are you kidding?

# 12 Days

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# Chaos

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Holidays



## On the 11th day...

If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen...especially when holiday meals are at risk. Little children asking to lick the spoon and in-laws trying to convince you that their recipe would really make your dish better is just the start of chaos. Mountains of food at risk of falling at any second, tasting, basting, stirring, chopping, mincing all the ingredients to prepare feast, and the omnipresent risk that you might be the next fool to have a holiday house fire makes keeping everything under control that much more difficult. Maybe we could just try take out this year?

## On the 9th day...

Sometimes a person just needs to watch a horror movie. Or an action movie. Or an "anything but another holiday special" movie. There is never an unpredictable ending, or an interesting plot twist. Each film ends the same, with a witty line, a kiss and a smile. It fades into black and the viewer realizes that they have just wasted an hour and a half of their life on a movie called "Santa Baby". The constant whirr of the television serves as a depressing background soundtrack to your own personal, holiday specials.

## On the 7th day...

Over the median and through the oncoming traffic to grandmother's house we go. Without taking a handy detour like driving on the shoulder of the highway or investing in a police siren, minutes seem to turn to hours when trying to travel for the holidays. No amount of I Spy games or apps on your iPhone can distract you long enough to survive the excursion. And on top of it all, the reward once you get there is wearing a scratchy holiday sweater and stale fruit cake. Definitely worth it.

## On the 5th day...

"We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!" After hearing this jolly little tune for the millionth time, it doesn't feel quite so merry anymore. By the end of December, these delightful carols that have been stuck in your head since Thanksgiving and "all you want for Christmas is" a large pair of ear plugs to block it all out.

## On the 3rd day...

The colder months are a great time to plop into a big pile of snow... or to slip on black ice. Not only can you turn black and blue from falling in the icy streets, but by falling face first into someone's fist! Shoppers this year have turned to violence during major sales, breaking out the pepper spray, throwing back elbows, and clawing at other competitors in the race to get the best possible deals. Losing an arm and a leg to buy the cheapest new toaster oven or HD TV seems to be worth it during the holidays.

## On the 1st day...

Each family has one. A black sheep. An outcast. That guy. He's the one that just loves eggnog so much, and yet after about seven mugs, cannot really taste it. In fact, they can't really taste anything. Or walk in a straight line. Their eggnog becomes increasingly stronger, their cup becoming more rum than eggnog. Their jokes and laughter becomes louder and random and the hands wander more. As the children wake up on Christmas morning, they creep down to their special, lit up tree. And find the best present of all; family.





# Parent pride—or social suicide?

Margaret O' Meara  
Reporter

Does having your parents teach at your school ruin your swagger?

Look at your teacher. Are they your parent? Probably not; but for Molly Cabral, Noah Feinstein, Erika Larsen, Mackenzie Beeby, and Jon Henderson, they could be. These students all have one thing in common: they all go to school with their parents. That is, they all have a parent who is employed as a teacher at West Potomac.

Senior Noah Feinstein and Junior Jon Henderson have been going to school with their parents for some time now. For three new freshmen, Molly Cabral, Erika Larsen, and Mackenzie Beeby, this will be their first year attending the same school where their parents work.

Some incoming freshmen may not have known how things are run at school but for these students with parents employed at the school, they had the "inside scoop" before they even began their first day of high school. Few have the advantage of having a parent teach at their school. For the few with this advantage, they enjoy seeing a friendly, familiar face in the halls.

For freshman Erika Larsen, having her mother work at the school has been an advantage. Cheryl Larsen teaches Algebra 1 and Pre-Calculus. During her elementary school years, Erika Larsen rode the bus after school to West Potomac and had the opportunity to sit in on her mother's math classes. Going to West Potomac after school and having her mom there gave her insight into the culture of the school and information about future teachers.

Freshman McKenzie Beeby, who is in his father's world history honors class, does not mind having his dad at school anymore. "Yes, on the first day of school, I walked in feeling

completely awkward because I have never heard of someone being in their dad's class before. Also it's weird to know that my dad knows everything about my other teachers and my entire school life. Now it's been a few months and I don't even notice it that much."

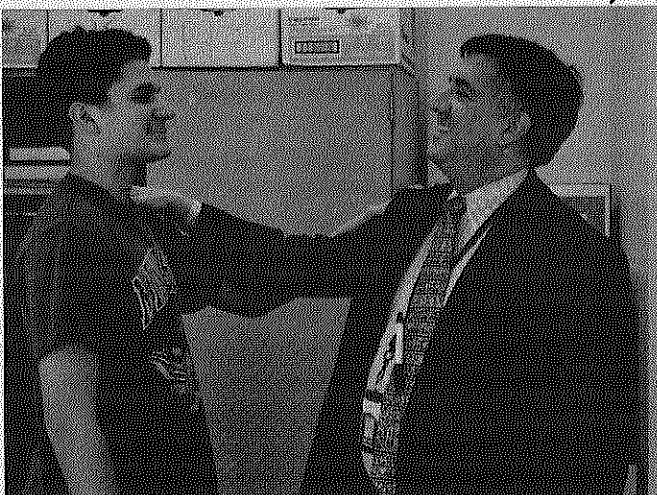


Photo by Sonia Garakharagi

History teacher Jeffrey Feinstein and son, Senior Noah Feinstein embrace in a father-son moment after school.

Having a parent at school might be embarrassing for some but for Junior Jon Henderson looks forward to seeing his father in the halls. Erik Henderson teaches Government and has been at West Potomac for eight years. "Whenever I see

my dad in the hallways, I always give him a high-five or even a hug. Sometimes I even have lunch with him. Teacher or not, he is still my dad," says Jon Henderson. Freshman Erika Larsen, on the other hand, does not see her mom very often because her mom teaches math in the trailers. So when Erika sees her mom in the hallways, it's a pleasant surprise.

Jeff Feinstein, who teaches Advanced Placement (AP) U.S. History and AP European History, has taught at West Potomac for thirteen years, says he feels secure knowing that his son Noah will receive a good education. "I am proud to send my son to West Potomac because I know the school and the good people in it."

For Cheryl Larsen, being a teacher and a mother has given her more insight into her daughter's education. "Now that I am a parent at West Potomac, I receive emails that I wouldn't have gotten if I was only a teacher here."

For teachers who have sons and daughters at West Potomac, they feel closer to their kids' school and social lives. "Being a teacher, I teach many of my son's friends and get to know who they are," Feinstein remarks. For these teachers, being in the same school as their child provides a common ground. Not only can they easily check up on each other but it is convenient to see each other at school.

Some might think that having a parent employed at school may be "social suicide," but these students all report they are happy to share a school with their parents. Seeing a familiar face in the halls and having occasional visits at lunch give these students and their parents something to look forward to throughout their school days.



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## The New Face of West Po

Laura Jacobs  
News Editor

Stepping out to Senior Night for football in a heat-inducing bodysuit, covered in head to toe in fur, flanked by multiple bodyguards, is exactly the grand entrance the new West Potomac mascot wanted to make. The old X-Men themed wolverine has been replaced by a hefty, furry beast in a West Potomac jersey. The mascot was presented with a warm welcome, even getting a special song from the band The mascot was purchased to hype the community, and get everyone excited for the upcoming school year. The Senior Night football game was the perfect event to showcase the beast.

Originally, the wolverine suit was supposed to be introduced at the fall pep rally, but due to minor setbacks, was delayed a couple of weeks. "At the time of the pep rally, we had the head of the wolverine, but not the body. SGA decided that having a mascot head running around the rally might be a little frightening," said an SGA representative. The quest for a costume has been a long process, starting with SGA advisor Salvatore Olivo researching custom wolverine costumes. Furthermore, the mascot was a splurge; costing the student government a lot of money, and even having the athletic director chip in for the cause. Now the full mascot, head and body, has arrived at West Potomac. With it, the specific care instructions. Not only must the costume be dry-cleaned regularly, but cannot get wet, and has a special garment bag for all the parts.

Now, who is the man, ahem, student behind the mask? Well, it depends on the day. There was a vote in the SGA class that decided on three anonymous people to share the mascot duty. There is one 'lunch mascot,' that only is the mascot during scheduled lunch before big games, a 'commercial mascot,' yet the commercial was never aired to the school, and a 'game mascot,' the mas-

cost that attends all of the main games. However, the 'game mascot' is the dominant mascot, attending six football games and multiple community events. "I had been begging Mr. Olivo to look into buying a mascot. When you get into the costume, it is like putting on an alter ego," said the 'game mascot.' "The best experience was when I went to a Fort Hunt little league football games, in the mascot costume of course, and the pure joy the kids got from seeing the wolverine support from them was priceless. The mascot continued.

Even so, SGA will soon be hosting try-outs to see which students want to partake in the mascot experience. However, the current mascots forewarn that any student trying out should be in very good shape since the mascot "can't sit down, they must stay active." This includes standing and cheering for the team for the whole game, like any good cheerleader. Furthermore, the mascot has the responsibility of representing West Potomac. SGA is going to conduct a contest soon on blackboard so students can name our new mascot. The name nominations for the wolverine are between Wally, Gunston, Quander, and Rincee.

The mascot is not just for the school but for the community. The wolverine plans to get involved with the community, and on being a leading role model for kids. You can look forward to seeing this nameless mascot at the next pep rally, and hopefully at basketball games as requested by Coach David Houston and Aaron Helmick. So go up to the furry beast at the next school event, I won't bite. "I have seen myself in probably 200-300 pictures, even the Chantilly football team wanted to take a picture with me; much to the annoyance of their coach," said the 'game mascot.' This new wolverine has been added to our mix of 2,000+ students and faculty but stand out among them.



# Everyday I'm tumblin' Dashboard WP Wire

The popular social site makes fanatics out of West Potomac students.



Clare Palo  
Style Editor

clare-palo:

36 notes reblog

What is the first website you type in when you log on to the computer? The majority of people reading this will mostly likely admit to some type of social networking site. Since the explosion of Facebook, Twitter, and now, Tumblr, social networking users have become desperate for clever twitter names, witty hash tags, and artsy Tumblr photos.

But, contrary to popular belief, Tumblr isn't only for the indie crowd; it is an auto-biographical micro-blogging site where users can easily express their feelings, post photos, and ask followers questions. Tumblr, founded by David Karp in 2007, was initially created to "fill the gap" between less visual social sites like Twitter and Facebook. It is used commonly as a cathartic oasis, and since it's easy to pick up users quickly become addicted. The site became more popular in around 2010, when the overall social networking life started to grow. As of 2009, Tumblr had an 85% retention rate, compared with 40% for

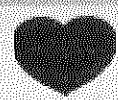
Twitter.

Tumblr homepage is a "dashboard" where it has a chronological timeline of recent posts that people follow. Users own personal page is open for the internet to see, followed by a URL name. A member can only search someone if they have their Tumblr name. It gives users a sense of security, even though their site is floating in cyberspace. The site closely resembles MySpace with different layouts that are "coded" into the website, which members can change as often as they change their mood.

A myriad of celebrities and important figureheads have jumped the bandwagon such as Dianna Agron, Lady Gaga, Hilary Duff, and even President Obama's administration, which joined last month. Organizations and businesses also utilize it as another website to promote their cause, and keep their "followers" connected. But you don't have to be a celebrity to have a Tumblr. All you need is a voice, and people will listen. So, post, reblog, and repeat.

Following 36 people

Add and Remove (+)



Liked 73 posts



Photo courtesy of WP Yearbook

wpwire reblogged allsoreadyunderhim:

22 notes reblog

"My friend had one and she encouraged me to get one because she used it to express herself, and that is basically what I use it for too. I mainly just keep a journal, I don't use it for pictures."

-Senior Owen Jones (allsoreadyunderhim)



Photo by Sonia Garakyaraghi



Anna Peck  
Entertainment Editor

anna-peck:

92 notes reblog

## New Twilight Movie Breaks Hearts

It's almost over. The Twilight book and movie series tells the story of Bella Swan (Kristen Stewart), a teenage girl who falls in love with a vampire named Edward Cullen (Robert Pattinson) and becomes best friends with werewolf Jacob Black (Taylor Lautner). It is a trend in pop culture that girls can not be friends with boys, so unsurprisingly, a love triangle forms. The story is filled with angst and overdramatic confessions of love, making it a fan-favorite of teenage girls everywhere.

On November 18th, the second to last film, Breaking Dawn-Part One hit theaters. The anticipated movie recalls the tale told in the bestselling novel. SPOILER ALERT! Bella (socially awkward as always) marries her true love, Edward. They go on a life-changing honeymoon, which results in Bella becoming pregnant with a vampire baby. Yikes. Naturally, the wolves swarm in and try to play hardball with the vampires. All the while, Bella's puppy dog, Jacob, continues to stalk her that is until he falls in love with her baby. Every girl's dream!

When we asked West Potomac's biggest Twi-Hards their opinion of the movie, which grossed \$139.5 million its opening weekend, the reviews were mixed.

Senior Brianna Boyd had a strong emotional response to the film and called it, "perfect", while freshman Elizabeth Riegelcruz judged it to be just "okay." Senior Abigail Welch, a diehard Team Jacob fan, had the most interesting reaction.

"When I first read the books, it changed my life. The movies, on the other hand, are a different story," explained Welch, on her love of the series. "I thought

the movie was hilarious. It was sad because you know it wasn't intended to be funny. The main thing I enjoyed was Taylor Lautner taking off his shirt within the first seven seconds." Many fans seem to agree.

Although it may not seem like it, the hype surrounding the Twilight saga has died down. "Seeing the movies is more like a onetime thing for me. After watching them once, I really don't want to see them again," said Riegelcruz. Welch has a more developed outlook on it. "In freshman year, I really enjoyed them, but I think it is because I have matured so much. I don't really see the big deal anymore," explained Welch. Not to mention, fans seem to change their minds faster than Lautner takes his shirt off. 'GLEEKs', 'Monsters' and 'Beliebers' are currently dominating the fan girl world. The Hunger Games, another book series turned movie franchise (the first will be released in March), is growing in popularity with a whole lot of action and another attractive, relatively unknown cast.

Next year, the final Twilight movie appears in theaters worldwide. Despite the declining popularity, the movie will surely break records and make millions. Twilight is not necessarily an Oscar winning franchise. The acting is mediocre at best and the writing is just exhausting. But fans still love it. Whether it is the heartbreaking love story or the young and sexy cast, the fandom is always screaming their support, very, very loudly.



Photos courtesy of Abigail Welch



Senior Abby Welch was disappointed with the film that accompanied her favorite Twilight book:

winter break	10 +
Richard III	25 +
college acceptance?	35 +
the mascot	5 +
happy holidays!	20 +
Explore More Tags	

"Tumblr is great because you can be sassy without anyone saying anything about it."

-Senior Mackenzie Cate (rad-tastic)



rad-tastic  
Tumblr Radar

Photo by Sonia Garakyaraghi



## Will the Nittany lions protect their young?

Connor Phillips  
Reporter

Four hundred and nine wins and two national championships in forty six years as head coach of Pennsylvania State University. Joe Paterno is famous because of these numbers, but he will be remembered for a different number; 2011. In November 2011, amid a child sex scandal involving a former coach, Paterno was fired by the Penn State Board of Trustees. In doing this they made him a scapegoat for an issue bigger than Paterno and the university itself.

On November 25th, 2011, Jerry Sandusky was arrested and charged with 40 counts of child molestation from 1994-2009. Sandusky was an assistant coach for Penn State football from 1969-1999, all under Joe Paterno. In his time there, he also set up a charity, The Second Mile, to help

out troubled boys. The two most publicized incidents occurred in 1998 and 2002. In 1998, the police were notified of an incident involving Sandusky showering with a young boy, however, they never charged Sandusky with a crime. In 2002, assistant coach Mike McQueary witnessed a similar incident and notified head coach Joe Paterno, who notified Athletic Director Tim Curley. The police were never notified.

There is no excuse for what happened at Penn State. Joe Paterno deserved to be fired and so did Graham Spanier. However, the victims themselves should be the focus of the story. Instead, Paterno has become the headline for this story. While Paterno does deserve his share of the blame, he did nothing illegal, rather, something immoral by not reporting the incident to the police. For

that, he had to be fired. Unfortunately, we should ask ourselves if that would have even done anything. In 1998 the police let Sandusky walk with no charges filed against him, just a promise to not ever shower with a young boy again. Would they have done anything in 2002?



photo courtesy of isportsweb.com

The firing of head coach, Joe Paterno led to many protests, especially at Penn State University.

had a hand in making this story into what it is.

When asked who they thought should be held accountable, besides Sandusky, for what happened at Penn State, JJ Perez, a junior at West Potomac said, "I feel that Coach Paterno and the administration should share most of the blame." However, some people have been able to see through the media's smokescreen. Senior Madison Reeves said, "I think we all have played a part in this situation by making college football the mogul it is today."

The more people that are able to realize this is everybody's fault, not just the people at Penn State, the sooner we can put this tragedy behind us and begin to make progress in improving our priorities as a society. The blame lies with us all for making football into something that is more important than the morals that we live by.

This should be an eye-opener for everybody in our society. In today's world, it seems to be money over everything. At a school like Penn State, football is king. It could probably fund the entire athletic department itself. A sport, though, shouldn't be the reason a horrific crime isn't reported.

An entire community failed to do anything about a middle-aged man sexually violating young boys. The president, the head coach, the witnesses, the police and the media all

## Overdiagnosis of ADHD spreads rapidly

Caitlin Schroeder  
Copy Editor

Today's society over diagnosis' psychiatric disorders to create excuses and explanations for unacceptable and inappropriate behaviors. If an individual is moody and down in the dumps for a few days, they are almost automatically labeled as having depression. If a person is anally neat and tidy, they suddenly have Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD.) If a student has trouble paying attention in class it's automatically chalked up being caused by Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD). These generalizations are creating a dangerous surge of over-diagnosed and over-medicated adolescents that are told they have serious psychiatric disorders, when in reality they have manageable symptoms that can be caused by many various and curable problems such as a lack of sleep or an excessive use of caffeine.

Drugging kids up on medication, especially when they do not require it is counterproductive and harmful to the child. Medicines used to treat ADHD such as Adderall, Ritalin and Vyvanse can alleviate many of the disrupting symptoms of ADHD, such as hyperactivity and trouble concentrating, but when prescribed to an individual without ADHD these medications can cause destructive behaviors such as moodiness, depression, anxiety, and possible suicidal thoughts.

The over diagnosis and use of ADHD medication is causing another serious phenomenon, a growing shortage of ADHD drugs, most notably Adderall. According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) there is currently a shortage of Adderall due to high demand and low supply of the psychostimulant drug. This shortage is expected to grow more severe over the coming years.

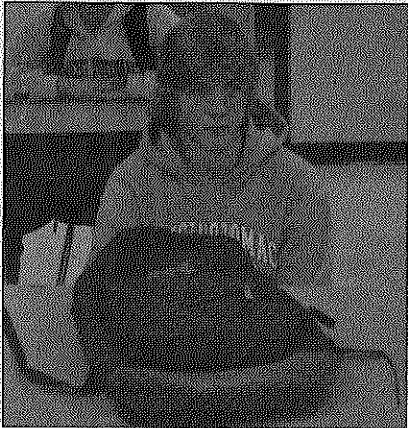


photo courtesy of Sonia Garakyaraghi

Senior, Jacob Alexander struggles with ADHD, making it harder for him to focus in class.

To avoid a complete wipeout in America's Adderall supply doctors and medical professionals need to be more judicious in diagnosing ADHD. It should take more than one 20 minute appointment to diagnose an individual with ADHD and send them off with a prescription. This will help the adderall crisis and keep patients safe.

As far as we know, these disorders do indeed exist. Men and women with Doctorates and fancy brain imaging technology have proven it. There are children, teens and adults that suffer from various mood, anxiety and personality disorders. There may be people that suffer from the disorder's symptoms, but not from the disorders themselves. The difference between the symptoms and the disorder is crucial in properly diagnosing patients. Just because a child has a lot of energy does not mean they need a prescription for Adderall.

## Asian Persuasion



### Privileged vs. Diversity

Anna Dreyfuss  
Opinions Editor

"If I was black I could get into Harvard," I recently heard a student say. The fact is minorities face huge obstacles because of discrimination, not only in college applications but in many other areas of life. It's unfair for white students to disparage minorities as being "lucky." Many white students say that affirmative action is unfair and that it's just an excuse for minorities to get ahead. As Americans, we should value diversity and a broader way of thinking. I think affirmative action not only benefits minorities, but it makes our nation stronger as a whole.

Affirmative action was introduced more than half a century ago and has spurred numerous battles in court over its legality. In 1996 a United States court struck down affirmative action in a case that involved the University of Texas. In 2003 the Supreme Court upheld affirmative action, letting colleges and universities decide whether or not they want to participate in affirmative action. However, the battle struck Michigan. Citizens there voted on a ballot initiative, which passed 58% to 42%, against affirmative action. They added the ban to the Michigan state constitution. That too was struck down by a court in July 2011. The issue of whether or not affirmative action is constitutional is headed to the Supreme Court again.

Many students take the topic personally. They think that if they're a better student a less capable person shouldn't get into school just because of their race. This is selfish, a completely human emotion, but people must look at the issue as a whole. Schools add race into account because minorities are economically and socially at a huge disadvantage, tracing back to even slavery. According to a study in 2008, African-American men that work full time, year round, have 72% of the average earnings of comparable white men.

Schools want diversity so students can meet people of different races, cultures and religions. Since West Potomac is such an extremely diverse school, it's hard to imagine that so many other kids around the country lead very segregated lives up until college. Affirmative action will make future generations more tolerant and open-minded, and it will hopefully help close the gap between social classes.

Affirmative action should not only apply to minorities, but should be expanded to poor white people. Lower income white families are also at a disadvantage and deserve to be able to have more opportunities than students in wealthier families. It is much harder for students to do well academically if their school doesn't have adequate supplies and good teachers.

Affirmative action should also go beyond schools. Although the country has become much more accepting, there is still racism and prejudice, especially in hiring for jobs. In 2008, studies showed that through good times and bad, the African-American unemployment rate is typically stuck at about double the white rate. The truth is if a white man and a black man who have the same credentials apply for the same job, chances are the white man will receive the job. Most people think this isn't true, but if you look at almost any high status job, white people grossly outnumber minorities. In 1995, no one Fortune 500 CEO was a minority. Today, only nineteen Fortune 500 companies are run by minorities, and only five of them are black.

Although many believe that affirmative action is prejudice, it is trying to overcome just that. Almost any student would agree that being able to interact with students of different cultures in school is a lesson that can't be taught, so why wouldn't we want that experience after high school?



# FEATURES

## West Potomac: Rock of Ages

Zainab Mujahid & Noor Javaid  
Reporters

A 45 ton 15 foot wide boulder is right outside our school, but has anyone stopped to wonder where it came from? The famous West Potomac "The Rock" has rather mysterious origins, only known to some of the faculty members that were here when "The Rock" arrived.

Albert Van Metre, a famous philanthropist and real estate developer donated "The Rock" to West Potomac, where one of his sons attended school, relocating it from one of his developments. He was famous for his many donations to different charities. He donated millions to Northern Virginia charities and founded Hospice Cup Regatta, which raised over 8 million dollars for nonprofit hospices in the region.

West Potomac's rock is famous; it was originally used as a student meeting point. But the uses of it have changed and expanded over time. "The Rock" is recognized not only for its size but for all the things people painted on top of it. Students here have not only painted it for their graduations but have used it to ask fellow students to Prom and other dances. One of the most memorable uses of "The Rock" was a farewell message from the seniors to Ms. Galeota.

Yes, the West Potomac rock has been used and talked about by all the students here. One person though, who deserves acknowledgement is Mr. Albert Van Metre, a generous person and an amazing contributor to the community.



Photo courtesy of James Mea  
West Potomac students used the rock as a tribute to their peer Annie McCann who died during her senior year in 2008.



Photo courtesy of Cat Royka



Photo courtesy of AnnMarie Cerutti

### Top Uses for the Rock:

1. Senior Night
2. Supporting Groups/Clubs
3. Special Events
4. Asking Someone to Prom
5. Dedications

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# SENIOR<sup>2</sup> SESSION

Trevor & Lara  
Jenne Giannelli



## #SENIORSWAGG

*Two musical seniors share their thoughts.*

What instruments do you play?

**Lara:** Guitar and piano. I also sing.

**Trevor:** Clarinet

Who is your favorite artist?

**Lara:** Third Eye Blind

**Trevor:** I don't really have one. I like all types of music.

What is your top choice for college?

**Lara:** Seattle University

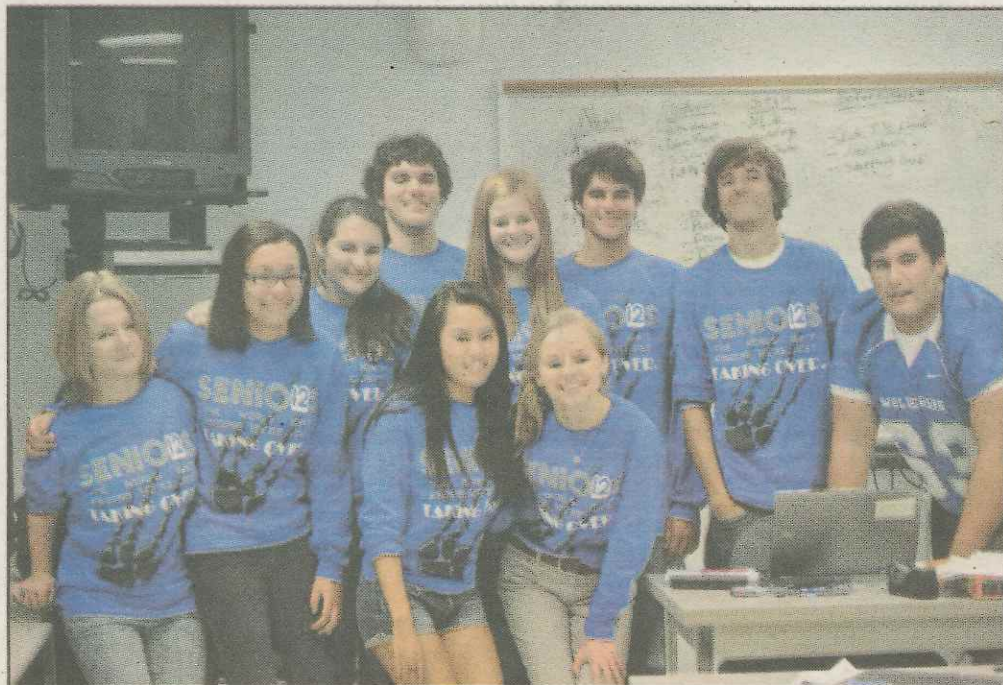
**Trevor:** Georgetown University

What advice would you give to the current freshman class?

**Lara:** Challenge yourself. It gets hard at times, but you just have to push through it.

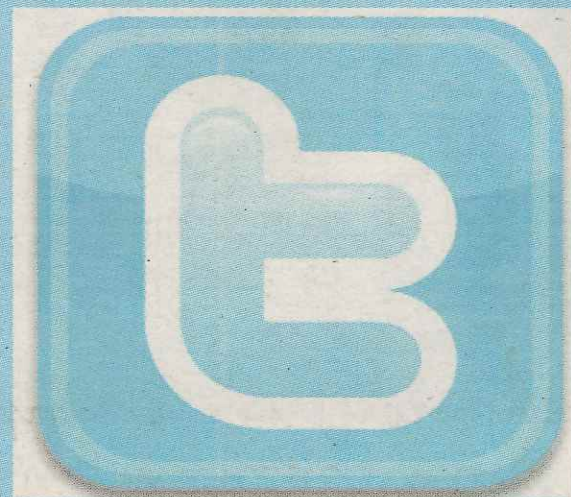
**Trevor:** It's really important to establish good relationships with your teachers. Go the extra mile and stay after for help.

**GOT A QUESTION  
FOR THE WIRE STAFF?**



**WRITE A LETTER TO THE  
EDITORS!**

**OR TWEET  
US!**



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