

Focus 345678910
Hooked on drugs: a growing trend

Thursday, January 20, 2011

Red Cross comes to West Potomac

Anna Peck
Reporter



Photo courtesy of Clare Palo
Junior and club president Juliet Narine helps wash dogs with Club Red members at a local rescue shelter.

Want some good karma? Join the club.

This year, West Potomac is welcoming a new community service club that is going to bring out the advocate in everyone, Club Red. "Club Red is a club that works side by side with the American Red Cross to help with service learning and provides age-appropriate and attainable activities with the school," explained junior Juliet Narine, club president and creator.

"I was impressed by the variety of activities

that the club could do. I also felt that the club would have strong support for the local Red Cross chapter and that this could help create more opportunities for students both in and outside of school," said history teacher, Emily Millians, the sponsor of Club Red. The first meeting of the club was Wednesday, January, 5, 2011. The plan is to have meetings every other Wednesday in Millian's room. Clara Barton founded the American Red Cross in 1881, and its primary purpose is to help people. The current president is Gail McGovern and its current location is in Washington D.C.

The American Red Cross holds multiple events throughout the year like canned food drives, bingo nights, coin drives, and blood drives. Volunteers also take time out to read to elementary school students. These are all activities students can be involved in at West Potomac. For more information on the club, you can follow the club on Twitter and friend it on Facebook. The club is still new and they are always open to new members. Current members are already enjoying the club activities and what the club can offer. "I was inspired by Juliet's passion. I'm looking forward to the opportunity to help people and save lives," commented senior, Julia Carney, a club member. Besides the fact that the club provides community service opportunities that students need to achieve during the year, it also has fun activities that people can do with their friends.

"It is usually hard to find stuff to do for community service and I always enjoy doing it with friends. This club seems like a good opportunity for people to get help with that," junior Jennifer Rodgers said.

Working with the American Red Cross also looks great on college applications, which would be helpful in the long run for the majority of the students at West Potomac. The American

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Fighting for freedom on the Internet

Norris Brooks & Tyler Arnold
News Editor & Reporter

"Give me Internet, or give me death!" This play on the famous words of Patrick Henry expresses how strongly the American people feel about the fight for Internet freedom: unlimited access and uncensored content. Two controversies have arisen in recent months that may threaten this freedom.

One is the vote taken in the final week of 2010 by the Federal Communications Commission [FCC] to enact new rules to regulate "net neutrality." Those in favor of the new regulations feel that they are a breakthrough for equal Internet access, because service providers may no longer discriminate against websites using their networks. In other words, companies that bring the Internet into American homes cannot block certain websites while favoring others. For example, Verizon Wireless is not allowed to block Vonage web content; Comcast is not permitted to interfere with Netflix video streaming.

It sounds good. However, many Republicans in Congress feel this is a power grab by the government to control the Internet.

Some Internet providers fear the rules will restrict investment. Others even think that Internet access is something outside of the government's jurisdiction and that the new regulations will be challenged in court.

FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski defended the new regulations saying they "would ensure that the Internet remains a powerful platform for innovation and job creation." Expressing the opposing view, Senator Kay Bailey



Photo Courtesy of minov8.com

Hutchison (R-TX) said, "The FCC is attempting to push excessive government regulation of the Internet through without congressional authority and these actions threaten the very future of the technology." The fight goes on.

A second controversy involves a website called WikiLeaks, which advertises itself as a "non-profit media organization dedicated to bringing important news and information to the public." Founded by Julian Assange, an anti-war activist, the site provides a secure way for sources around the world to leak information to the Internet. The documents published include secret and classified material, while the identities of the sources remain anonymous. The information that is posted can be seen not only by U.S. citizens, but by any person in the world as well. While the articles are informative, they provide details the American government may not want made public.

The two posts that have created the most controversy are the Iraq and Afghanistan war logs. In December, WikiLeaks published several of these classified documents provided by a military insider. The logs contained a full list of actions in detail with personal accounts of soldiers in these areas of war.

The reaction from the U.S. government was outrage. Wikileaks.org was shut down, and Senator Joe Lieberman (D-CT) introduced a bill entitled "Protecting Cyberspace as a National Asset Act." It aims to give the President broad authority to censor Internet content that is considered a threat to national security. The Senator has even pressured other websites to take down content they have gotten from WikiLeaks.

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UCM translators play Santa for the holidays

Lily Wiesblatt
Reporter

On Fordson Road, an unassuming building was Santa's workshop for three days.

Every year, the United Community Ministries [UCM] holds a Christmas "sale" for underprivileged families. Each family signs up for a time slot and those who attend walk away with enough presents for each of their children.

There were 6 long tables filling the main room at the UCM. The tables were chock-full of toys, organized by gender and age. They were divided between boys and girls, ages 0-12 months, 1-3, 4-9, and 10-15 years. The amount of presents a parent got for a child differed according to age. Infants and toddlers received two items each, and all older boys and girls received two stocking stuffers, a larger gift, and a smaller gift. All children got an age-appropriate book. There were dolls, jewelry, toy cars, and soccer balls filling every empty space in the large room. Also, each child aged 4-9 years got a stuffed animal, children under 4 got an arts and crafts project, and each family got a ball, a puzzle,

and a board game.

When parents came in to go shopping, some of them did not speak English. That is why many students from West Potomac were there as translators. There were students from Spanish 2 to Advance Placement Spanish, walking around the room with adults, talking with them and explaining what each child could have. These students were there as volunteers, receiving nothing but community service and a feeling of good will towards man. Sophomore Katie Garay became a translator because, "I like to volunteer because it makes you feel good about yourself, and you are helping your community. My sister told me that this was an eye-opening experience so I wanted to try it. I think I'm going to come back next year."

Reasons for volunteering ranged from receiving community service hours to accompanying parents while they volunteered. Some volunteers, like Garay and junior Monica Bell assisted because they wanted to spread the Christmas cheer. Bell said, "I am really fortunate to have had more of an enriched life where I have received gifts every Christmas, and so to give back to those who are not

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Photo courtesy of stupidcelebrity.net

He does it without his shoes on. Turn to page 2 to find out who he is.

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Photo courtesy of WP Athletics

Which star athlete will be selected as this month's Wolverine Warrior?

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Photo courtesy of clipart

Find out which foods can influence your mood and affect your attitude.

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Photo courtesy of zmemusic.com

Check out the review of Kanye West's "My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy."

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Photo courtesy of ClipArt

Can you solve this month's sudoku? See for yourself on the back page!

Literacy levels plunge, and television may be to blame

Anna Dreyfuss
Style Editor

Which would you rather: chat on Facebook or read a book? Well, that's a no-brainer. Unfortunately, most teenagers choose the wrong answer to this question. Since 1983, more than 10 million Americans reached the 12th grade without having learned to read at a basic level, according to the Literacy Company. In that same period, more than six million Americans dropped out of high school altogether. Reading levels of Americans have drastically dropped, especially among teenagers.

Many people believe the main reason for the nation's below average reading levels are caused by immigrants that are not sufficient in English. It is true that America is a popular destination for immigrants, but in 2009, the Census Bureau stated that only 12.5% of the nation's population is immigrants. There is an obvious problem when nearly half of America's adults are poor readers and cannot carry out simply tasks like balancing check books, reading drug labels or writing essays for a job, according to The Literacy Company.

West Potomac created classes for students who need to improve their reading skills. Developing Literacies is for ninth graders, Expanding Literacies 1 and 2 for tenth and eleventh graders and an English 12/SOL Focus class for twelfth graders, who did not pass the reading and/or writing SOL. When asked if there are certain trends found in students who are in the classes, English teacher Mary

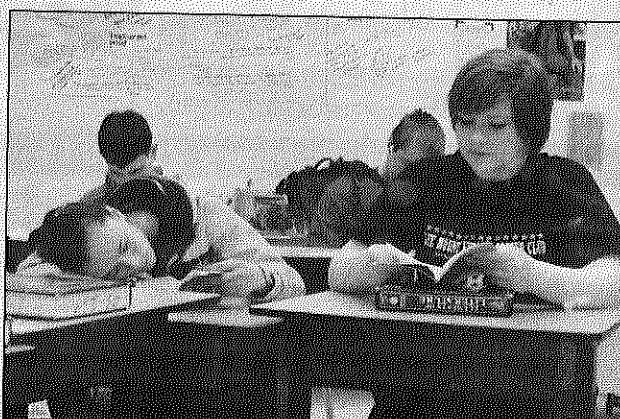


Photo Courtesy of Sonia Garakyaraghi

Sophomores Allison McNulla and Kathleen Poulin enjoy silent reading time in their English class.

Mathewson said, "The only consistent trend is that if a kid does not read anything often, not just a book, then they will struggle in school."

Why else would American's reading levels be so low? "I do blame TV and movies. When I was a kid and there was not that much TV, reading was considered entertainment. Now it is considered homework," said Mathewson. According to the New York Times, in an average US home the television is on for about seven hours. The Literacy Company states that 56% of young people say they read more than 10 books

a year, with middle school students reading the most. So 70% of middle school students read more than 10 books a year, compared with only 49% of high school students.

"America is ranked so low because we have more money and rather watch the internet or TV rather than read," said senior Bonnie Morgan. It is no surprise that the internet is growing every day. Now that social networking is up twice as much of people's online time than any other activity, reading is a distant memory. According to Nielsen, Facebook and Twitter now account for 22.7% of the time spent online. Schools are even investing in iPads for students that are claimed to have educational value, according to the New York Times.

Junior Noora Al-Saadawi said, "Most kids don't like to read because they are uninterested with the topics teachers assign." It is almost impossible for teachers to motivate a student who has no interest and desire to read, so what should they do? "Like in the movie *Freedom Writers*, teachers could pick books that really relate to us and it would be much more painless," said Al-Saadawi. Of course, children learn from their parents. "Parents stop reading for fun or to the kids much too early. If a family treats reading like a social and entertainment event, way past the second grade and into middle school, kids won't be reluctant to keep reading for fun. Kids won't assume reading is a punishment or an assignment," said Mathewson. No matter how students are motivated, America needs to find a way to lower the 40% of high school students who read at a fourth grade level.

Students play the brain game

Jade Toft
Business Manager

Most students would never consider putting the words "academic" and "fun" in the same sentence, but the West Potomac It's Academic team begs to differ.

The team meets every Monday after school in room 152 with its sponsor, Mr. Hyman. This year's team is composed of ten students, led by junior Eric Dove. "We are building this year and do not have many people in our 'club' so there is not quite the enthusiasm or breadth of knowledge we would like," stated science teacher Eli Hyman. The team is eager for new members and encourages all interested students to join. Sophomore Rebecca Schlicht West Potomac sharpen their skills and compete against local high schools in the new It's Academic!

In a typical meeting, students split up into teams and grab a drink and some snacks provided by the team administrators. One of the favorite ways to split the team among members is boys versus girls. To prepare for upcoming competitions, the team simulates parts of an actual competition, assigning each person a buzzer and splitting the time into different rounds.

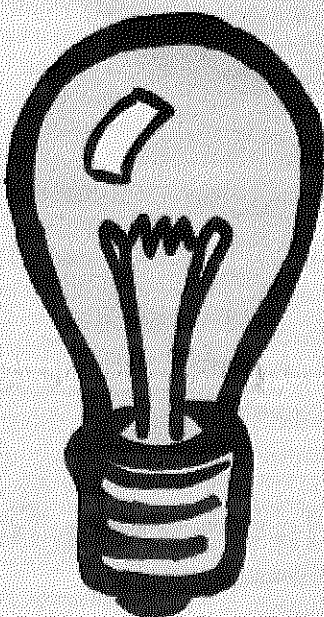


Photo Courtesy of blogspot.com

The team hopes to start off the New Year by doing well in their upcoming competition on January 22 at Edison High School.

The actual competition consists of five different rounds. Round one is a category round with eight questions related to a specific category such as "art" or "history." In round two, each team is asked a total of five direct questions each worth twenty points. Round three is a toss-up visual round in which eight questions are asked to each team about a specific displayed image. Ten points are awarded for a correct answer or deducted for an incorrect answer. Round four opens with three different packets, each consisting of eight questions. The team to the immediate left of the team that is supposed to answer chooses a packet for the answering team. Each question is worth twenty points with no penalties. Finally, round five is nicknamed "the grab bag" which consists of a random assortment of questions. For visual questions, thirty points are awarded for correct answers but deducted for incorrect ones. When the buzzer sounds, the competition is over and the winner is announced.

The West Potomac It's Academic team encourages students to come try out the team. They all agree that it's "more like hanging out and being forced to play trivia."

Caught Red-Footed

Noor Javadi
Reporter

"He said to me he intends to change his life," said Colton Harris-Moore's lawyer, Monique Gomez. Harris-Moore a.k.a. the Barefoot Bandit said those words to his lawyer while he was on trial. The 19-year-old is charged "with five counts that includes interstate transportation of a stolen aircraft and being a fugitive in possession of a firearm," according to ABC news.

Harris-Moore had been on the run from authorities for over two years, stealing items across the country. His signature was a chalk-drawn picture of a foot and he did all these crimes barefoot, hence the name "barefoot bandit." Newsweek stated that he had stolen an airplane from Idaho and crash landed it 300 miles ahead. Then he stole another airplane in Indiana and flew about 1,200 miles and ended up in the Bahamas. Newsweek also reported that he has no pilot license, is diagnosed with ADHD, and is not a high school graduate.

He was captured on the waters of the Bahamas while he

was trying to escape on a boat. The police shot at the boat and immobilized it. They had to coax him off because he put a gun to his head and said he'd kill himself, according to ABC. Harris-Moore pleaded guilty in the Bahamas court and he was deported to Washington State. He is being held for four of those five counts. Fox News said he was facing up to 10 years in jail. Meanwhile, fans were upset that he was caught and posted comments like "Sorry you got caught man," and "Wow, you're definitely a legend." His victim on the other hand were told to write their side of the story. Their house was burglarized. Harris-Moore didn't even have to be a house. Scott Lancaster's hardware store had been robbed and afterward when the police searched for clues and did not find anything, Lancaster installed an alarm system.

According to 48 Hours Mystery, Harris-Moore told his lawyer that he would not have acted the way he did, if his childhood was different. He grew up in poverty and his mother was an alcoholic. It is rumored she named him after the "Colt 45" malt liquor. He told everyone he will change his life but he may not have the chance.

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Tragedy in Tucson

Camille DiFolco
Editor-in-Chief

Shots rang out, shattering the buoyancy of a "meet and greet" public event held at a Safeway in Tucson, AZ on Saturday, January 8. The sharp report of a handgun marked the first assassination attempt on a sitting member of Congress in over two decades. With 20 injured, six dead, and Representative Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ) with a severe head wound, America is in shock. The death toll includes a federal judge and nine-year-old girl who was interested in politics and attended the event with a family friend. Giffords was shot in the left side of the head at point-blank range and remains hospitalized.

On Sunday, federal officials filed murder charges against 22-year-old Jared Loughner, according to *The Washington Post*. It is suspected that the gunman became obsessed with Giffords in the wake of declining mental health. Evidence has

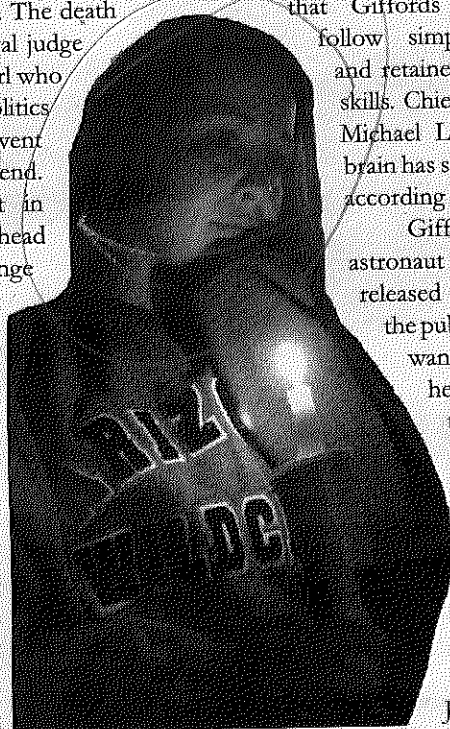


Photo courtesy of msn.com

Many community members attended a candlelight vigil in honor of those who were killed.

"He specifically targeted the congresswoman. We have eyewitness testimony and documents to prove that."

The shooting has spurred national outrage and concern over whether heated political debate helped incite the incident. Loughner has been charged with two counts of murder and three counts of attempted murder.

After undergoing surgery, Giffords is reportedly more responsive and in a stable condition. Doctors reported that Giffords was able to follow simple commands and retained simple motor skills. Chief neurosurgeon Michael Lemole said her brain has stopped swelling, according to *The Telegraph*.

Giffords' husband, astronaut Mike Kelly, released a statement to the public reading, "We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the people of Arizona and this great nation for their unbelievable outpouring of support."

On Monday, January 10,

President Obama led a minute of silence across the

USA for Giffords

and the other victims of the Tucson shooting. The Capitol flags were at half-mast and politicians assembled to honor the casualties. Well-wishers gathered outside the University Medical Center in Tucson to leave flowers and teddy bears at a makeshift shrine honoring Giffords.

Internet, cont.

Free speech advocates have protested, declaring that WikiLeaks breaks no laws and that the actions by the government represent unlawful censorship. Furthermore, it is unclear whether or not the U.S. government would even be successful in controlling Internet content. WikiLeaks has done a good job of securing their information by using hundreds of mirror sites that contain all of the documents. These mirror sites are websites with different URLs and different IP addresses than the original WikiLeaks.org, but they contain the same information. It is like a backup system for all documents posted on WikiLeaks. If one of these websites is shut down, two more mirror sites pop up in response.

High school and college students comprise one of the largest consumer groups of the Internet. Decisions made by the government to control the Internet will have far reaching implications for this user population. At West Potomac, the Internet plays a vital role in life. Junior Maggie Grady said, "I am on the Internet at least five hours a day. I use it for everything: homework, shopping, social networking, etc." While the administration at West Potomac controls Internet access during school hours to protect students from distractions and inappropriate websites, no such restrictions exist on the national level. Americans feel very strongly that the Internet must remain free.

Red Cross, cont.

Red Cross will be working with the club in all of its activities throughout the year.

The American Red Cross is the nation's number one emergency response organization and prides itself on aiding people who are victims of natural disasters. Besides disaster recovery, the American Red Cross helps with supporting military families, collection and distribution of lifesaving blood, teaching educational programs about safety and health, and of course community service opportunities. They help with local troubles as well as on a national and global scale. The American Red Cross has helped with Hurricane Katrina, raised awareness on flu vaccines during the H1N1 crisis, and helps out with local homeless shelters. The American Red Cross is not a government funded program, but relies on donations of money, blood, and time in order to operate.

The club can provide a lot of opportunities for people that will help them in the future. "I think that students could be surprised at all of the different kinds of things that the Red Cross does and the numerous different ways that it helps people. Students who want to be involved and give back will find something they can do through the Red Cross, and now it will be here in the building making it even easier for students to access," said Millians.

UCM, cont.

as fortunate is an amazing feeling." Although many volunteers were high school students, there were a handful of adults there as well. It was not a requirement for volunteers to work as translators. Many volunteers did not speak another language besides English, but still walked around with the parents to help pick out toys.

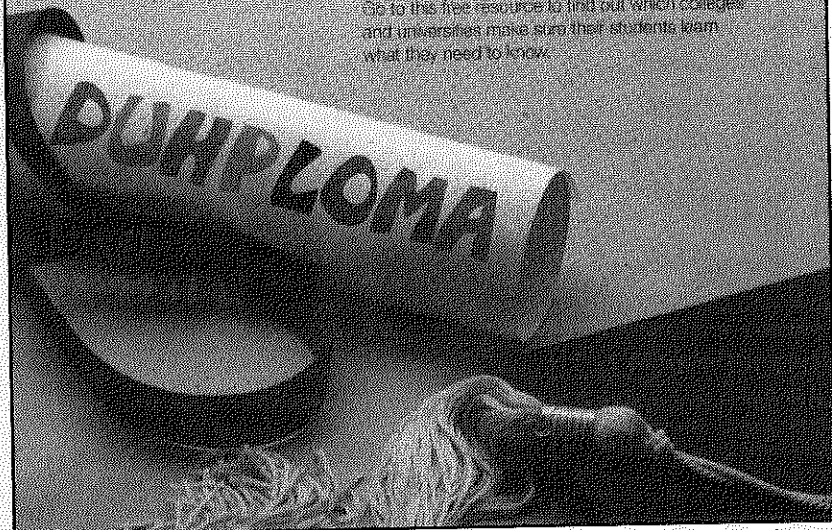
UCM's mission statement is they are a community based social service agency whose mission is to assist families and individuals to improve the quality of their lives. By providing presents for the families living in this area, they surely do just that. The students who worked at the Christmas sale did the school proud by helping parents to be Santa.

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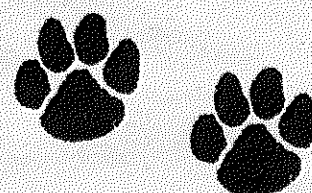
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WOLVERINE WARRIORS: Daryl "Scooter" Copeland

Tommy Friederich
Sports Editor

"Daryl Copeland is one of the best athletes that has walked the halls here at West Potomac. As far as two way athletes, I've seen a great football player be a good basketball player and vice versa. But Scooter is phenomenal in both sports, he can single-handedly take over a game in both basketball and football," commented head football coach Eric Henderson. Everyone knows about the success Daryl "Scooter" Copeland has had on the basketball court and the football field. Copeland was First Team All District and First Team All-State in the 2010 West Potomac Football season. In basketball, Scooter is a third year varsity player and also earned "First Team All District" as a junior. In his senior basketball season, the 5'8" 160IB speedster has scored double digits in every game along with 23 three-pointers.

Copeland has always had a knack for sports. As an eighth grader at Carl Sandburg Middle School, Copeland made the rising freshman team, which consists of players who have the best chance of making the freshman team the following year at West Potomac. For football, Copeland played in the young leagues when he was younger, and shined as an amazing athlete. In Copeland's first year at West Potomac, he played freshman football and junior varsity basketball. Since the time he got to West Potomac he has been a star. "I loved playing sports for West Potomac with all my friends, I love winning," commented Copeland. During his freshman year Copeland emerged as a star on the basketball court, he was quick and had an amazing three-point shot. During football his freshman year, he had raw athletic ability which led him to be one of the top players on the freshman team. During Copeland's sophomore year, he was a solid player for the varsity basketball team. "I was new to varsity sports, it's a lot quicker and pretty much better players. I have to make up for my height with speed and quickness to compete on the court," said Copeland. In Copeland's junior year as a football player he got an opportunity to take a starting position when 2010 senior Will Rosenkranz tore his ACL during a scrimmage. Scooter took full advantage of this opportunity, and became one of the Wolverines' most dangerous players. He was known for big plays at big times. "Scooter always came up with huge sparks of offense when we needed him to," commented head football coach Eric Henderson.

"I have played with Scooter both on the football field and the basketball court and he is a great teammate. He is Captain of our team because he knows how to run our offense and defense when we're on the floor," said JAM Marinelli. Copeland is hoping to attend college for one of the two sports and has already been offered a scholarship to play football next year. When asked about his choice between football and basketball in college, he said, "I would rather play basketball because it is the first sport I played as a kid. I want to go to college somewhere that has a little distance from home." Copeland will hold a great legacy here at West Potomac as a great athlete, student, and person.

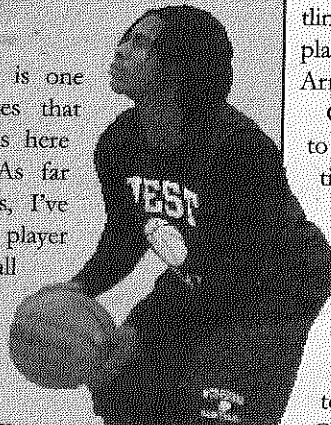


Photo by Sonia Garakvaraghi

Wrestling team gets new coat of Armou

Jacob Alexander
Opinions Editor

Sometimes people have to decide what is most important in their lives. This is the case with long time wrestling coach Casey Grubbs. Grubbs is stepping down from his coaching position on the wrestling team this year, and taking his place is the new coach Matthew Armour.

Grubbs no longer has the time to take on his usual coaching position. "My little girls are growing up, and I felt like I needed to spend more time with family.

Plus, my wife returned back to work full-time. [I] had to make a choice and the family won this battle. You have got to have priorities in life!" said Grubbs. Grubbs had to make a choice between coaching and his family, two things he loves, and he chose family.

Grubbs also explained he plans to return to coaching in the future, and believes he will probably return to full-time coaching when his daughters are in school and have their own activities. He also commented, "I will make a couple of cameo appearances in the wrestling room from time to time to workout with the guys, but I just cannot commit to the daily activities."

Grubbs said of the new coach, "Coach Armour will do a fine job this year. Transition is always hard, but he appears to have a solid grasp of what is needed to continue the program's successes and build for the future." Armour has been stressing the

The wrestling team this year has talented and experienced returning players. It has a great shot at doing well. It is possible that many wrestlers will have the opportunity to compete in the state tournament at the end of the year.

Grubbs predicts that "This team will make some good makings for a district championship in the next 2 years as long as they don't all end up in the same weight classes."

Grubbs will definitely be missed by the returning wrestlers. "Grubbs always had a great relationship with everybody on the team. We were a family," said junior Zach Hagan. Although most of the wrestlers were very used to Grubbs and his techniques, Armour and the rest of the staff are stepping in very well. "Mr. Grubbs was a good coach, and Armour is a good replacement. He's never been here before, so it takes some time to get used to. He's very dedicated to the team," said sophomore Zach Prinz. "We've also got a great team of JV and second

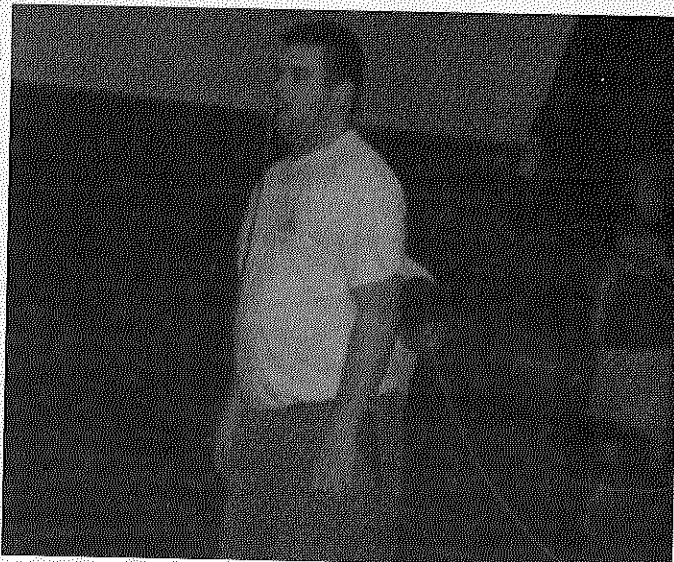


Photo by Clare Palo

Coach Armour hopes to lead the wrestling team down the right path this season.

fundamentals of the sport in his practices, which, as Grubbs knows well, are very important in any sport. "Grubbs was a really good coach and we miss him, but Armour is doing a good job of getting the job done," commented junior Louis Litchford.

coaches," added Prinz. Grubbs loves wrestling and coaching. He has a great team at our school, and he will definitely miss being the full-time head coach, but it was just a sacrifice he had to make so he could be with his family.

John Wall saves Washington

Josh Belanger
Entertainment Editor

Each city has its own conqueror. Tom Brady in New England, Alex Rodriguez in New York, and Kobe Bryant in Los Angeles. They all have their cities where they conquer their sport. However, who do we call our hometown hero? Washington D.C. is the nation's capital, where the most powerful men in the world work, and yet who is its conqueror?

Ryan Zimmerman has been a star in baseball since his debut in 2005, but with multiple injuries in his career and not one

winning season, he falls short on the list. Alex Ovechkin surely must be a hero, right? The Great 8 is a two-time MVP winner and has brought the Caps to be the most successful sports team in Washington in his short six year career. No doubt Ovechkin dominates his sport, but hockey is not a

mainstream sport and with everything else that happens in the winter, the NHL and the Great 8 just don't get mentioned that often. Also, Ovechkin has been struggling this season, scoring just 14 goals half way through the season, when he usually has around 25-30 goals. Gilbert Arenas was on the way to the top. He was clutch, spectacular, and had a sweet nickname. But injuries and poor choices led to him getting traded. Donovan McNabb was supposed to be the guy who would bring the Skins back to their winning ways. It took him 13

weeks to win 5 games and now he is taking a back seat to Rex Grossman. "The Washington sports area in my mind has a bunch of above average to average athletes and that really needs a change. The city needs a sports figure they can get behind," said sophomore Elliot Adams.

So, who is Washington's hero? I believe it is John Wall. The Washington Wizards' number one draft pick and the talent they chose to build their franchise around. Wall played college ball at Kentucky where he took his Wildcats to the Elite Eight, averaging sixteen points a game along with six



Photo courtesy of susanshan.com

John Wall holds up his Wizards jersey after they took him with the number one pick in the NBA draft.

and putting him in charge as the franchise player. "I watch a lot of Wizards games and honestly I think John Wall can turn the Wizards around," said junior Nick Cordone. "He has a lot of potential and he is exciting to watch. You never fall asleep watching the Wizards now." I believe in a few years, Wall will accomplish some great things and become our conqueror. Our hometown hero whom we can tell our kids that we saw play in his prime, and a player that we as Washington fans can call "ours" for years to come.

BY THE
NUMBERS

9 The number of games won by the boys' varsity basketball team so far this season.

167 The number of points scored by the girls' swim team in their win over Lake Braddock.

5 Number of matches won by the varsity wrestling team this season.

33 Total number of points scored by the girls' JV basketball team in their win over Annandale.

Ice hockey is heating up

Leigh Orleans
Reporter

"It's my life," explained sophomore Alex Holm. "I grew up playing ice hockey and wanting to play for my high school. When I got to West Potomac, I decided it was about time we got one."

When deciding what sports to sign up for in high school, some of the first teams that come to mind are athletics such as football, lacrosse, soccer, basketball, and the other generic school sports teams found all over the country. Ice hockey, on the other hand, is not typically on the roster. Holm decided to change that. Last year, he talked to the student activities director, Aaron Helmick, found a sponsor, and got enough signatures from his peers to arrange an interest meeting.

West Potomac was on the verge of starting its very first hockey team. However, there were not enough people willing to play. That's where Briar Woods, another local high school, came into play. The members combined to make a team large enough to compete against other schools. Currently there are eight members on the team from each school.

A big struggle the boys had to overcome in the process of assimilating the team was their lack of funding. Due to the limited number of ice rinks in the Northern Virginia area, the price for ice time is very high. The cost for insurance is also very pricey and there is a high risk of injury when playing ice hockey. Because of this, funding remains the sole responsibility of the student athletes. This meant that the boys had to pay \$740 dues to play on the team.

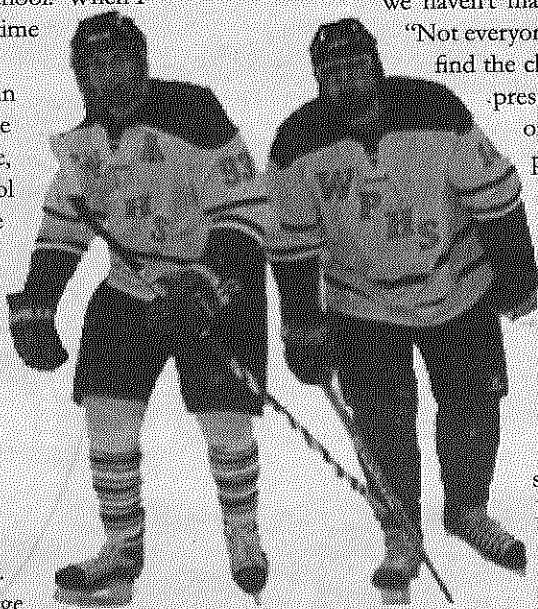


Photo by Bobby Soule

Because this is the first year there has been an ice hockey team at West Potomac, there were no upper classmen to prepare the members for what it is like being on the team, to pass down traditions, or to pump up the team. "Sometimes it's hard because we haven't mastered being a team yet," stated Holm.

"Not everyone knows each other yet so it is difficult to find the chemistry within our team." This can put pressures on teammates for fears of judgment or criticism; however the boys learned to push through that. Team Captain, junior Micah Dabao, said that in the end "it's just another hockey game. You just gotta go out there, have fun, and play your best."

On the ice, Holm is an "enforcer," or in other words, the player who responds to violence from the other team by fighting or checking their offense. Dabao is a fantastic player and scores most of the points for their team. He has been actively playing ice hockey since he was four years old and wants to continue playing throughout college. His major role on and off the ice is to assist in instructing and leading the team.

Sophomore Chad Collins is co-captain. He is an important defenseman and is constantly keeping opposing players away from West Potomac's goalie. He also is a strong leader and plays a major role in getting the team pumped up for their games.

"Getting to a game can take anywhere from 15 minutes to 2 hours... but no matter what, it's always worth it." His teammates agree that the distance traveled is worth getting to play hockey and going for the "W."

Lights! Cameron! Action!

Jack King
Sports Editor

Yes we Cam. When you watch Cam Newton play football, it almost looks scripted. The 6'6", 250 pound Auburn quarterback has proved to be the most electrifying player in college football. Last December, Newton won the coveted Heisman Trophy award in a landslide vote, beating out exceptional candidates like Stanford's quarterback Andrew Luck by over 1,000 points. Some people such as former Georgia Head Coach Vince Dooley have described Newton as "the best college player I've ever seen." However, for what seems to be a Hollywood scripted season for Newton, has now been shadowed by the off the field events. Despite being one of the greatest college football players ever, it seems that his legacy may be permanently tarnished.

Newton's journey was not quick and easy. When Newton was a freshman, he had signed with the University of Florida and played as the backup quarterback to former college football legend Tim Tebow. While at Florida, Newton ran into legal problems. Newton stole a laptop from the university which authorities later found in his dorm room. Newton was initially arrested, however, the charges were later dropped. After Tim Tebow announced that he would return for his senior season at Florida, Newton decided to transfer to Blinn Junior College in Texas to get playing time, and in an effort to start over. While at Blinn College, Newton won a junior college national championship. After his year at Blinn College, Newton started to be recruited by major Division 1 schools like Auburn University and Mississippi State. After much debate, Newton signed with Auburn to start what would eventually be his road to becoming the best college football player in the nation.

Unfortunately, it was not the picture perfect journey that Newton or the nation had expected. In the week prior to Auburn playing the University of Georgia in a big rivalry game, allegations came up involving Newton asking for money from Mississippi State prior to committing to Auburn. More allegations arose of Newton cheating academically while at Florida including putting his name on another student's paper. However, those allegations quickly dissipated.

What has been of most controversy throughout the "Scam" Newton saga has been the NCAA ruling Newton eligible to play. After the NCAA in association with the FBI under went an investigation, they came out with evidence which involved Newton's father, Ciecel Newton, asking for money from Mississippi State for his son to go play there, even though there was never any actual exchange of money. However, neither the NCAA, nor the FBI found any sufficient evidence that Cam knew anything about the possible exchange of money or was involved in any negotiations of money with his father and Mississippi State.

Although Newton has not been proven of any wrongdoing, and is yet to be punished for anything, the scrutiny of Newton remains high and critical. "I find it very hard to believe that Newton knew

nothing about his dad's talks with Mississippi State," said junior Joey Hemingway. Many fans around the nation find it difficult to believe that Newton would not know anything about a possible exchange of money between his father and Mississippi State.

Newton's previous run-ins with the law only aid the argument that he was involved in the negotiations of money. However some do not agree that Newton should be punished for his father's wrongdoing. "He shouldn't be punished for something that his dad did. His father's actions shouldn't affect him when it comes to something this big," said junior Noah Feinstein. Others also believe that because Newton himself hasn't been proven of any crimes, he should not be punished on the field. "Why are you going to try to ruin someone like Cam Newton's name and reputation when he hasn't even done anything wrong on the field or anything that's been proven off the field?" said junior Todd Ferri.

It seems like the debate over Newton will never end. There is very little that he can now do on or off the field to really change the nation's mind. Regardless, no one can argue that Newton is a once-in-a-lifetime phenomenon on the field, but it seems his off the field critics will never truly believe that he didn't know. Junior Niko Knoblauch put it perfectly when he stated, "I mean, you are innocent until proven guilty."

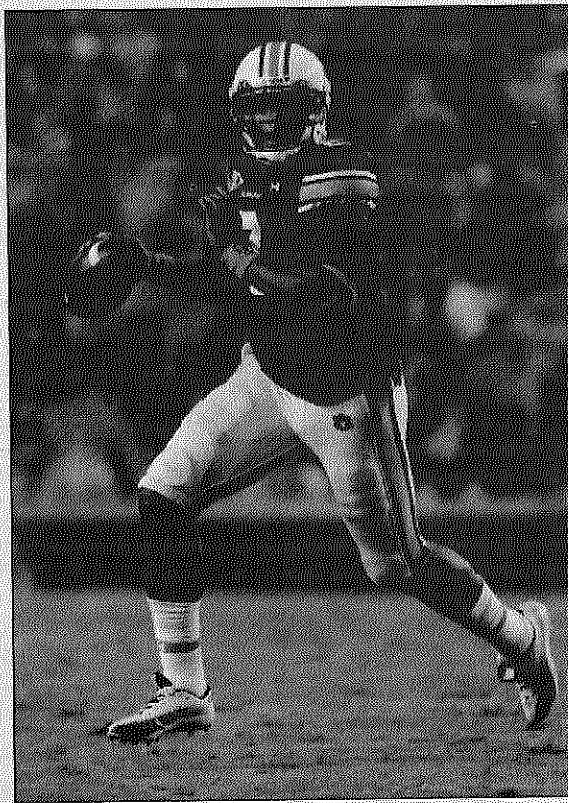


Photo courtesy of Collegefootballperformance.com

Heisman Trophy winner Cameron Newton shows that is one of the most mobile quarterbacks college football has seen in a while.

THE SIDELINE

Boy's Basketball

West Potomac V.

Lake Braddock: 75-71

West Potomac V.

Theodore Roosevelt:

77-73

West Potomac V. Glenelg

Country School: 70-64

West Potomac V.

Stonewall Jackson: 55-44

West Potomac V.

Robinson: 75-73

West Potomac V.

Annandale: 55-80

Girls' Basketball

West Potomac V.

Centerville: 42-64

West Potomac V. Lake

Braddock: 19-41

West Potomac V.

Robinson: 37-55

Swim and Dive

West Potomac V. Lake

Braddock: 128-186

West Potomac V.

Annadale: 113-201

Wrestling

Lions Invitational: 4th Place

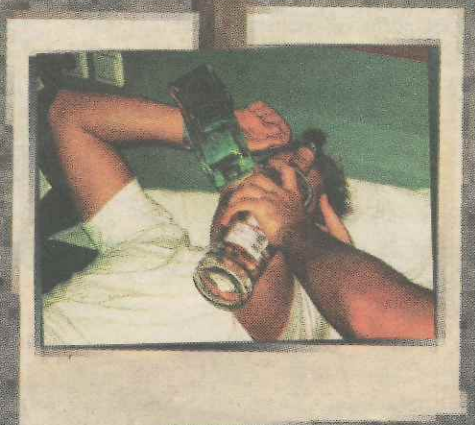
West Potomac V.

Wakefield: 60-18

HOOKE

Emily Woods
Focus Editor

"The basic thing nobody sort? Why do we have th



Startling Student Statistics

Out of a representative sample of 200 WP students:

83% know somebody who owns a fake ID.

71% confessed to having tried illegal drugs or alcohol at least once.

67% know somebody who has been hospitalized for drug or alcohol abuse.

52% have lied to their parents about their use or drugs or alcohol.

25% are presented with the opportunity to do drugs or alcohol on a DAILY basis.

Photos courtesy of MontanaMeth.Org, goosidest.com, MAD.org, thedailydaily.com, breakingthecycles.com, hollywoodgrind.com, nydailynews.com, thepatriotnews.com, sayd.org, walpam.org, siph.com.au, ironthegirl.me, rsepsensale.com.au, parentingteens.com, time.com, Larry Clark, David Lauffman



So what

4 in 10 people who begin drinking before eventually become alcoholics. Cocaine on first time you use it. Young people who weekly have double the risk of depression. These facts are a just a few of many illnesses drugs and alcohol take on teenagers. Beginning drugs and alcohol at this point in one's life is an addiction in adult years. Teenagers' brains are not fully developed at this point, and will hinder this process of growth. Alcohol are directly correlated with failure in school, interest in hobbies. But above all, drugs and alcohol double their chances of being involved in accidents, violence, unplanned sex, and suicide. Listen to the facts and stop becoming one of them.

15-year-old male non-drinker



15-year-old male heavy drinker



The lack of pink and red coloring in the picture of the heavy male drinker's brain indicates poor brain activity during a memory task.



...sks is why do people take drugs of any
 ...accessories to normal living to live?"
 -John Lennon



...k. Pot.
 ...Dope.
 ...mber all
 ...but you
 ...er the one
 ...ost: "No."
 ...want your
 ...to be your
 ...s?
 ...gain.

IN THE NEWS

Prevention

Numerous drug prevention programs specifically target teenagers. Organizations such as D.A.R.E. and AboveTheInfluence strive to educate young adults about the dangers of abusing drugs and alcohol. One of the most effective prevention programs, Montana Meth Project, has resulted in a 63% decrease in Teen Meth Use in the state.

Busts

In December 2010, five Columbia University students were busted in the undercover drug case, "Operation Ivy League." The students were arrested for sale of LSD, Cocaine, and Ecstasy and face serious charges. Cases like this occur frequently with high school and college students and put severe limitations on their future.

Celebrities

Celebrities in the news for their drug use are a growing problem because they encourage their fans to emulate their abusive behaviors. Some of the most famous incidents include rapper Lil Wayne's addiction to cough syrup and his arrest for cocaine, marijuana, and Ecstasy, as well as Riley Cyrus' bong video where he is allegedly smoking salvia.

REAL STUDENTS. REAL STORIES.

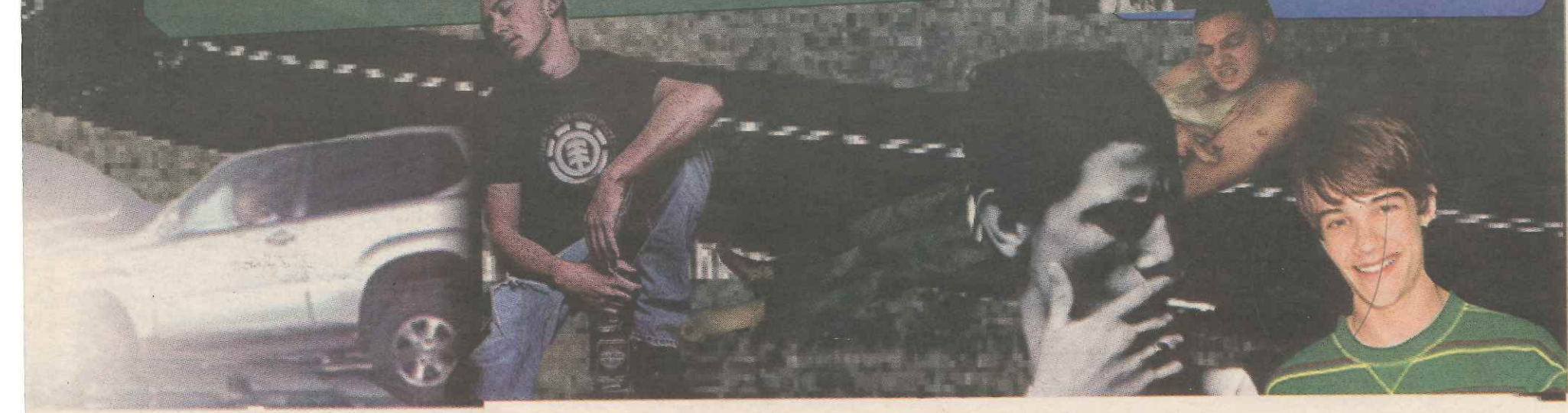


"My sister went to a party one night at her college with a boy who was visiting her. They got trashed and on the way back to her dorm the police spotted them and started to approach. The boy tried to get away, and so the police chased them and tackled them to the ground. They spent the night in jail. **My sister was charged with three criminal offenses.** She may even be asked to leave her school. It gave her a reality check."

"I was addicted to painkillers. I got them at first from a friend who took them for his back pain. He let me try a few and I loved what they did to me. I stole them from him and then bought them from other people. I even lied to get my doctor to prescribe some to me. I couldn't go through a single day without them. I was unable to sleep and threw up all the time. I was also a jerk to everyone. I didn't care about anything in my life other than painkillers. It was probably the worst few months of my life."

"During my brother's senior year, he became involved with marijuana. It caused serious distress in my family. He would smoke constantly, and it made him extremely irritable. At one point, he punched a hole in the wall. **It was almost impossible to have a real conversation with him.** Weed impacted the decisions he made. He started skipping class, and at one point ran off to the mountains for a couple of days without letting anyone in the family know. No one knew if he was coming back. It was one of the most traumatic experiences I have ever been through. I knew that it was not my brother making these choices, but the drugs he had become involved with. I was so relieved when he sought help."

5
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Mood of your food

Jade Toft
Business Manager

Everyone has a comfort food that they go to when they are feeling down, but did you know that most comfort foods can actually make you feel worse?

"Bodies are like chemistry sets," stated dietician and clinical nutritionist Samantha Heller. "Everything you put in your body has a chemical effect, which is why food can affect your mood. It gets broken down into elements that can raise your blood sugar or drop it rapidly."

One of the most relied-upon sources of energy is caffeine. In moderate amounts, caffeine can enhance both physical and mental performance. However, most dietary specialists suggest staying away from caffeine and getting energy from other foods instead. Protein foods such as fish, chicken, and eggs contain an amino acid called tyrosine which increases the production of dopamine, norepinephrine, and epinephrine. These three neurotransmitters are known to increase alertness and energy levels.

In contrast, specialists suggest milk and carbohydrates like pasta to help one fall asleep at night. The tryptophan in milk is known to make people sleepy as well as the exorphins, a type of sedative, found in most carbohydrates. Tryptophan is also found in meat sources, the most being in turkey. In addition to sleepiness, tryptophan is known to calm one down. Studies show that dairy products such as milk which contain whey proteins can also help reduce physical responses to stress, improve mood, and enhance memory.

Interestingly, foods and drinks which are high in sugar are not good to consume when trying to remember something.

Junior Julia Warren explained, "When I eat sugary foods or don't eat at all it makes me feel angry. I turn to healthier foods to concentrate at school and perform my best." Nutritionists suggest foods which contain vitamins C and B, which are known to improve memory and concentration.

Foods that contain soluble fiber such as strawberries help to slow down the digestion process. By slowing down digestion, soluble fibers keep blood sugar levels stable which helps people feel even-tempered and less irritable. In addition, most fruits contain antioxidants which are

critical for a healthy working brain.

Similar to soluble fibers, sources of protein such as yogurt, lean meats, eggs, and tofu help sustain one's mood by slowing down the rate of absorption of carbohydrates in the bloodstream.

Clinical studies show that a deficiency of folic acid leads to increased levels of depression because they lower the amount of serotonin, or mood

stabilizers, in the brain. Foods that are rich with folic acid include spinach, sunflower seeds, oatmeal, and green vegetables.

In order to balance blood sugar levels and one's mood, it is important to consume complex carbohydrates such as sweet potatoes. Complex carbohydrates are more nutritional than the sugars from cookies, soda, and candy, and they stay in one's blood stream longer. This means that one will feel better for a longer amount of time.

Everyone has comfort foods that they like to eat when they are feeling down but before pulling out the potato chips and chocolate, try eating some lean meat or drinking some milk. Nutritionists are confident they will make a difference.

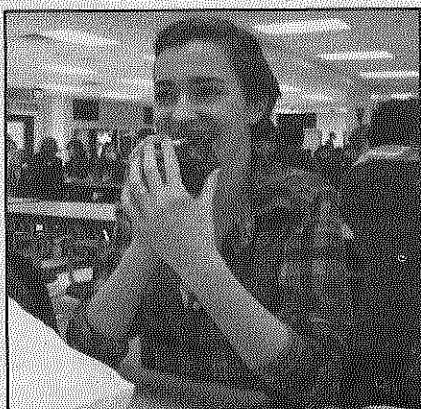


Photo courtesy of Sonia Garakyraraghi

Junior Laura-Paige Mertins enjoys an apple. High in fiber, naturally sweet, and with the added cosmetic benefit of naturally whitening your teeth, apples will always put you in a good mood.

Fair Trade fights for rights

Camille DiFolco
Editor-in-Chief

"Greed is good."

This immortal phrase was coined by the ruthless Wall Street investor, Gordon Gekko, played by Michael Douglas, in the 1987 blockbuster, *Wall Street*. However, it seems to apply to today's global economy even more aptly. In a world where profits rule, small-scale producers are often exploited or undercut. Advocates of fair trade are fighting this trend.

Fair trade is a social movement that strives

to help producers in developing countries by actively promoting sustainable production methods and better trade conditions. Focusing on exports from developing countries into developed countries, the movement allows for the trade of products

such as coffee, cocoa, sugar, tea, bananas, honey, cotton, wine, fresh fruit, chocolate, flower, gold and handicrafts. Non-profit organizations, such as Fair Trade USA, promote fair prices and fair labor conditions. According to their website, "democratically organized farmers receive a guaranteed minimum floor price and an additional premium for certified organic products," while Fair Trade USA farm workers "enjoy freedom of association, safe working conditions, and living wages."

They also combat child labor. TransFair USA attaches the "Fair Trade Certified" label to reputable organizations in compliance with fair trade principles, including that all workers receive fair wages, are free from abusive or exploitative labor practices, and use environmentally-sustainable methods of production. By shopping at fair trade stores and markets whenever possible, one can help the citizens of developing countries from home.

Ten Thousand Villages is a local fair trade

store. A founding member of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), the company establishes sustainable markets for handmade products of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East to be sold in North America. Product sales help fund education, food, healthcare, and housing for artisans in these regions. Products include jewelry, home décor, art, textiles, and dinnerware. There is a shop located at 914 King Street in Old Town-Alexandria.

Senior Margaret Corum admitted, "I love fair trade. Being able to support small-scale producers is important, and the fact that

it's environmentally-beneficial is a plus."

Caffeine addicts may want to rethink their coffee providers.

Instead of supporting a large corporation, consider visiting a local fair trade coffee shop. The Big Bear Café, located at 1700 1st Street, NW in Washington D.C.,

sells exclusively

fair trade products.

With coffee grown

in Africa, Asia, and

The Americas and

roasted locally, even the most particular coffee drinkers will find something to their taste. Another local shop is the Java Shack at 2507 North Franklin Road in Arlington. Having earned the 2008 Stewardship Award for being "Green," the Java Shack uses

100% biodegradable cups, only sells locally roasted organic fair trade coffee, uses CFL light bulbs, and saves all coffee and espresso grounds for high-energy fire log production.

Combine this with the fact that Java Shack was dubbed the "Cheers Coffeeshop" by the Arlington Courier newspaper, a testament to its strong community feel, and it is a must for coffee fanatics.

As fair trade stores grow in popularity and availability, the fate of producers in developing countries can only brighten. Shopping at fair trade stores is an easy step towards a better and fairer global economy.



Photo courtesy of coffeedreamhouse.com

Fair Trade helps producers in developing countries by supporting environmentally-sustainable production methods and safe working conditions.

Double the distance, double the trouble

Karley Zdebski
Reporter

Attention: For couples experiencing difficult decisions concerning long-distance relationships, your relationship is not doomed. In many situations, couples see the impossibilities of keeping a relationship when one partner is still in high school and one has graduated from high school. These relation-

ships often come with troubles and hardships because of the long distance. However, there are solutions and strategies to avoid broken hearts and mend difficulties that drag along with the desirable, picture perfect relationship.

Space:

Even with relationships at home, partners like to 'always' know where and what their partner is doing. Couples tend to request time apart from each other where they can enjoy time apart. This is an important part to maintain a high school-college relationship. Taking the time to find space can eliminate many unwanted arguments, trust issues, etc. Never ending text messages, calls, tweets and skype sessions can be very tedious. Working the spacing issue out can alleviate a lot of issues, but remember, space does not mean forgotten communication. A junior at West Potomac said, "Having a relationship with someone in college has its benefits and downsides. One thing that is nice about it is that you are away from the person more often, so it limits the amount of fights and arguments."



Photo by Sonia Garakyraraghi

Establishing Trust:

Trust is an important relationship factor in any situation. It is more crucial in a long-distance relationship because one partner often fears that the other will cheat on them and simply lie about it. It is a better chance that partners who build trust before traveling miles apart will be happier and last longer. Being prompt and keeping in touch (still leaving space) can lead to a healthier understanding and interpretation of one's actions. Junior, Jackie Rhoads remarked, "It is important to communicate with your boyfriend or girlfriend to make sure that you are talking about everything that people might say and to just work through your problems instead of holding things back."

After 40 years, The Beatles join iTunes

The Beatles become electronic after settling dispute with Apple Inc.

Sada Khan
Reporter

For nine years, the major online music distributor iTunes was missing something crucial: music from the famous rock 'n' roll band, The Beatles. On November 16, 2010 The Beatles finally made their music digital and allowed iTunes to sell their songs.

Now in a world full of technology and digital music players, such as the iPod and MP3 players, The Beatles are still selling records and albums in stores. Many fans were curious as to why the band's music was unavailable online. Some speculated that The Beatles wanted to make more money by selling their records rather than allowing people to buy individual songs. Junior Elizabeth Yemane said, "I was really mad when they did not have any Beatles songs on iTunes. I mean they pretty much shaped the modern music we listen to and are the creators of the most classic songs out there."

This band was created in Liverpool, England in the 1960s. It consisted of four group members John Lennon (rhythm guitar and vocals), Paul McCartney (bass guitar and vocals), George Harrison (lead guitar and vocals), and Ringo Starr (drums and vocals). Out of the four famous rock stars only two are still alive today. John Lennon was shot outside his home in December of 1980 and George Harrison suffered from cancer and died in 2001. Still after two deceased members, the albums have sold consistently and remain to be popular with each generation, according to Diffen.com. John Lennon, individually, has sold more than 14 million albums in the United States alone.

As it turned out, The Beatles' music was unavailable due to a dispute between Apple Corporation [Corps] and Apple Incorporation [Inc], lasting from 1978 through 2006. The

two companies should not to be confused, as they are separate entities. Apple Corps is a widely known multimedia company owned by The Beatles that was founded in January 1968. Apple Inc is a company that designs and markets computer electronics, computer software and personal computers. The two companies had legal conflicts over trademarks rights. The case was later decided in the High Court of Justice on May 8, 2006 which ruled in favor of Apple Inc.

The day before the widely known band was added onto

iTunes, Apple placed a banner on their site quoting, "Tomorrow is just another day that you'll never forget." Fans suspected that their favorite singers were about to go digital and later that day, Billboard and Wall Street Journal confirmed it was finally about to happen. Junior Cady Davis said, "Now that they are on iTunes, people will have an opportunity to experience the Fab Four all over again, and remember what a super band they are." Their individual songs on iTunes are selling for \$1.29 each while the massive Beatles box is selling for \$150.00.

Yemane continued, "I have not bought any albums since they have been on iTunes. But if I do I would probably buy the Yellow Submarine album, and probably a vast majority of their songs. Compared to artists today, I would probably have their songs dominantly in my iTunes." According to Guardian.co.uk, The Beatles sold two million singles in the first week their album was put on iTunes.

All around the world, The Beatles have consistently had devoted fans, who looked forward to this day for years. Now that The Beatles are on iTunes their fans can legally enjoy them online and digitally.



Photo by guitarmasterclass.net

From left to right: John, Ringo, Paul and George wrote over a thousand songs in during their reign on the music world.

Will eBooks be the end of bookstores as we know it?

Camille DiFolco
Editor-in-Chief

The cassette and CD stores declined first, with video rental shops closing not long after. Will bookstores be next?

As the number of available online audio and video files continues to grow, it is no surprise that online literary files (also known as eBooks) have increased, too. There are numerous ways to download and read such files, with the Apple iPad and the Amazon Kindle top contenders.

As convenient as some readers have found these new devices, there are still many wrinkles to be ironed out before eBooks challenge public libraries. Many online publishers have found it difficult to create literary files whose formats are compatible with all or most "eReaders," according to the CMSWire, an online magazine. It is also difficult for publishers to predict the return on investment (ROI) provided by a given eBooks, despite growth within the market. CMSWire reported that of the 64% of publishers producing eBooks only 14% report a better ROI on digital books than print.

"I think they're a great invention," said junior Colleen O'Hara, "because I read a lot, so I would be able to carry multiple books with me and choose whatever I want to read when I want to."

Perhaps a more pressing issue is the potential effect that eBooks could have on the value of actual books. One fear is that with books converted to electronic files, increased piracy could occur. Amazon recently introduced a limited "lending" feature allowing Kindle users to borrow books rather than buy them, while Facebook "lending clubs" have formed to

connect more readers in a single forum. There is speculation that this new Kindle capability could lead to a decline in book sales, both in electronic and solid form. However, as blogger Mike Masnick points out on the TechDirt website, "libraries did not kill book sales," and file-sharing on Kindles probably will not either.

"I have an iPad," said senior Marissa Moody, "and I read books on it sometimes, but it gets kind of exhausting for my eyes... But it's definitely a lot more convenient than going to the library or a bookstore all the time."

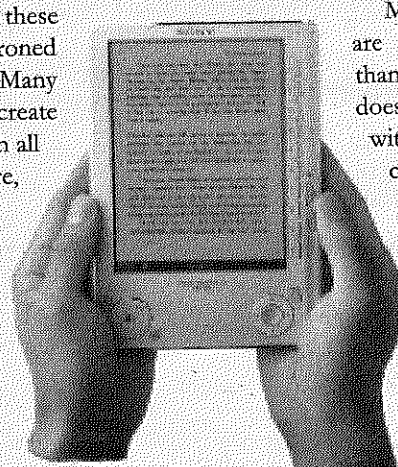


Photo courtesy of masternewmedia.org

Many eReaders have found that eBooks are more portable and more convenient than traditional books. The Amazon Kindle does not require Wi-Fi in order to connect with the online bookstore, and eReaders can download new books directly to the device in just a few minutes. Despite the many advantages to eBooks, there are a few drawbacks. The fact remains that purchasing books, whether online or at a bookstore, is more expensive than borrowing books from a public library. Online "lending clubs" do not ensure that eReaders can borrow any and every book on their lists, and many must still purchase novels they wish to read. Another issue is that depending

on the source, some eBooks are difficult to read. Especially when obtained from websites offering free eBooks, the pages may have been poorly scanned into the computer, resulting in missing pages or cut off lines.

The fact remains that despite a growing amount of eBooks users, actual books remain more popular. It is unlikely that they will be undermined by the new trend.

Kanye West is back with a new *Fantasy*

Tommy Friederich
Sports Editor

"Taylor, Taylor! I'm happy for you and I am gonna let you finish, but Beyonce has the best video of the year!" That was the last thing we heard from Kanye West, when he rudely interrupted Taylor Swift at the 2009 Video Music Awards [VMA]. After that moment, the Internet exploded, every Facebook status in the world had something to do with how much they hate West and how much they love Swift. It is safe to say that with West's fifth studio album, he resurrected himself as a loved music figure again. *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy* is hands down the best album of any genre in this decade. The album puts West among the top MCs of all time.

West took a long hiatus from the media and recorded the album in Ohau, Hawaii after the 2009 VMAs. The album features many of West's artists who signed to the record label G.O.O.D. Music. Among these artists is the loved KiD CuDi who was featured in the song "Gorgeous" where he sings a soft hook which is a good compliment to West's unique flow. Along with CuDi, newly signed rapper Pusha T makes an appearance in "Runaway" which was played at the 2010 VMA's. "Runaway" was a single released from the album and is partnered with an intriguing music video which is 30 minutes long. Other singles include a heart pumping song in titled "Power" where West used his odd but good singing ability and less rapping.



Photo by collegedj.net

Do not think West has lost his majestic flow, on the song "Dark Fantasy" he tells the story of himself growing up in Chicago. He uses clever rhymes in the song which will be caught in the listeners head for days. The album also features many mainstream artists as well such as Nicki Minaj, Jay-Z and Rick Ross on the track "Monster" with a scary staccato string beat. West has challenged all music listeners to want more. He went past of the rules of hip-hop in this album and even created some new ones. This album receives a perfect 10/10 for the mastery that West captured in every song. Because he produced the new music fans have been craving.

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OPINIONS

Is skipping school for lunch worth the risk?

Laraib Ilyas
Reporter

"Let's skip school lunch and go to some restaurant," is what goes through the minds of many high school students when it is lunch time at school. Well, are they really going to go to a restaurant? Or are they just planning to do something else?

Off campus lunch has been an issue for many high schools and across the country. It has been banned from West Potomac since the 1990's and banned from all Fairfax County Public Schools once and for all soon after. This is because the school faculty is afraid that students going out to eat will result in the student not coming back to school at all. At West Potomac, if a student is caught leaving school at any of the lunch times, they will face several consequences.

"What could happen if you are caught is that you could get searched by security, lose your parking permit for two weeks up until a month, and can get Saturday school," said history teacher Aaron Engly.

Is school lunch that bad that one has to go out to eat? There are only twenty five minutes for lunch. The time to go out somewhere, wait in line, actually enjoy the lunch in peace, and then go back to school would take way more than one lunch period. If the restaurant was a block away from the school then it would make sense to eat out, but there are not really any restaurants a block away from West Potomac.

Besides, eating lunch at school is better than eating with a bunch of strangers at McDonalds. After all, the people at school are fellow schoolmates.

Being on school grounds ensures a safe environment for students. Numerous safety issues can arise when students are going out to eat during school lunches.

Some students believe that lunch at school guarantees them to get to class on time. On the other hand, off campus lunch always has the possibility of making students tardy. For example, they could get stuck in traffic jams and long lines at a restaurant.

"School lunches are not as horrible as some people might think. There are many positive sides concerning on campus lunch than off campus lunch," said freshman Masha Dubograeva.

It all comes down to education at the end. As some instances in the past, students have been tardy to classes because of this issue. Once off school grounds, students think they have the right to do whatever and go wherever they want. This leads to many other off campus activities while school is still in session. What is the need to pay for fast food when it is half the price at school?

Overall, off campus lunches lead to many dilemmas and should be banned from all schools across the United States.

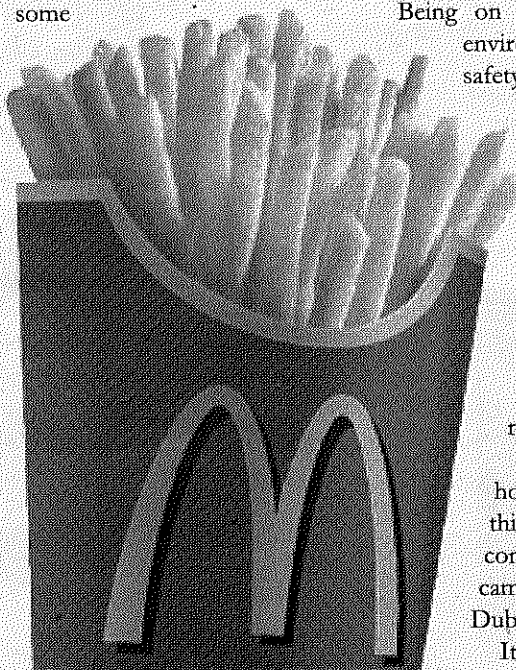
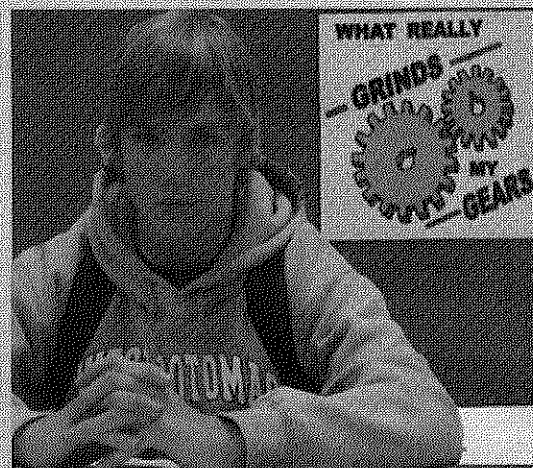


Photo courtesy of coolspotters.com

Students often skip school to get fast food for lunch. However, it is usually not worth all the trouble just for a quick meal.

You know what really grinds my gears?



Jacob Alexander
Opinions Editor

Whenever interims come out, many students are trying to think of ways to hide them from their parents. At that point in the quarter, there is still a lot of work to get done in many classes, and the current grades of many of the students are not the quality that most parents expect. However, interim grades are not final quarter grades. The question is then asked, "How much do interim grades really reflect what quarter grades will be?"

Many parents seem to believe that interims are a direct reflection of students' academic ability and achievement for the quarter. However, this is untrue. When interims come out, many students have made up work that they still have to complete. Since the interim just shows a letter grade, parents are likely to freak out because it tends to show a bad grade. What they do not know is that their child is perfectly capable of bringing that grade up as soon as they have the chance to complete all missing work, and that punishment at this point will accomplish nothing.

Interims do not reflect what quarter grades will be, and they do not reflect student's academic achievements. Quarter grades do. Interims let students know how they are doing in the class and how much work they have to get done in order to do well that quarter. In the second half of the quarter, students are able to finish most of their work, and their grades are much better than they were when interims came out. However, at this point many students have already gone through punishment for having bad grades when interims came out. Even though they proved that it is not that difficult to raise their grades before the end of the quarter, parents still often make a big deal about interims.

It is more helpful to parents to actually see a grade report that shows all of the assignments for the quarter. With these students can explain that all of those missing assignments that are affecting their letter grade can be turned in for full credit before the end of the quarter, and the quarter grade will be much higher. Many teachers do this already and it does help parents see exactly why students have the grade they have and how they will be able to raise it. Then the parent can fairly determine whether or not punishment is necessary. With interims, parents just see the letter grade, and even though many teachers do send out progress reports, parents think that interims mean the grade will be difficult to improve.

Overall, interims tend to simply cause problems because they do not tell parents what they need to know. When students try to explain things, the parent usually thinks they are just making it up to get out of trouble. Parents have the right to know how their child is doing in school, just like students should be able to show their parent that grades at interim time are not what they will be when report cards come out.

PROJECT SAFE

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P.S.

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RANTS and Raves

A *Rave* for the Capitals winning the Winter Classic.

A *RANT* for the Redskins having another bad season.

A *Rave* for the upcoming 4 day weekend.

A *RANT* for lack of snow.

A *Rave* for all the seniors who got early acceptance.

A *RANT* for waiting until April for regular decision notification.

A *Rave* for New Year's Resolutions.

A *RANT* for end of the quarter scrambling.

Ask Laura and Leigh...

Dear L and L,

I never expected to start liking my friend "Jaime" a year after I've broken up with my ex. Ever since what happened between my ex and I, I wasn't sure if I was ready to move on. Then, "Jaime" stepped into the picture. In him I see honesty, loyalty, and he makes me feel whole again. However, there's a problem - he's in a relationship and there's an age difference between the both of us. I wasn't planning on telling him that I like him until I thought that it was the right time, and I'm afraid that he might run away like my ex did. What should I do?

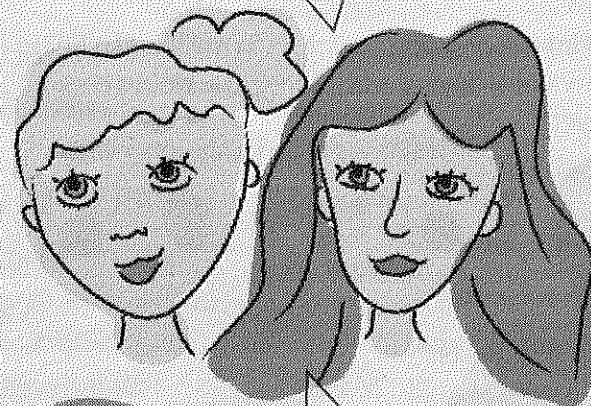
-Crushing in Fear



Dear Crushing in Fear,

The male gender should not be stereotyped by the actions of a single boy. "Jaime" is not the same guy your ex was and the way they react will be different. If you wait until the best time (after he and his girlfriend break up) you and "Jaime" may end up together. However, if "Jaime" does not feel the same way, and he really is an honest and loyal friend, he will still treat you with respect.

- Laura and Leigh



Dear L and L,

My life is going haywire. My family and I had to move to take care of my grandmother, my dad had surgery recently, and my older sibling wants to leave to be with who she claims to be her "One True Love" - leaving me and my family behind. And to top it off, my grandfather is getting sick. This is my last year of high school, and everything that means so much to me is fading away. I was hoping that my senior year would be different. After everything that's happening, all of my plans for senior year have suddenly changed. It's hard for me to tell my friends, because they wouldn't understand how painful this time is for me. People say that I think that the world is out to get me, when in reality, I'm losing myself to my family, loved ones and friends that are around me. How should I cope?

-Lonely Lady

Dear Lonely Lady,

No matter what, not losing who you are in the chaos is the most important thing. There are a lot of things going on in your life and you should try your best to stay collected and find hobbies to take your mind off of the stressful things. If you approach your friends the right way, I'm sure they would be happy to listen. Having someone to talk to is always important and even though they may not be able to relate to your current situation, they can still show compassion. As for your family, changes are always difficult. However, if you remain focused and optimistic, things will get easier. In return, you will be able to look back at your senior year proud of your accomplishments and less concerned about the hard parts.

-Laura and Leigh

Student Shoutouts

Everyone please
donate socks
and shoes
to the N.H.S.
Socks in a Box
drive!

Happy 17th Birthday
Anna D!
Love Anna J. "the
cooler one"

Welcome back Ms. Livelli!
Hope you continue to have a
speedy recovery!

Ramsha- 10
more weeks
until you hit
the roads!

Av yo Callie. I like
the way you move.
Happy birthday!
Loving you -JJ

Good luck to the Dance Team on
their upcoming competitions!
Love, your biggest fan

Anyone want to see their shout
out in the newspaper? Submit to
room 418. All shoutouts cost \$1.

Here's to my "fake"
sista!
You are "hotter than
room temperature
always!"

Need Advice? Email
LLlistening@gmail.com

Flying into the future in 2011

Zainab Mujahid
Reporter

"Look up in the sky! Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it is a flying car!" This is one of the many ingenious inventions coming our way. Every year, businesses and corporations introduce new gizmos and gadgets to the public. Some are improvements on an older version, like the iPhone 4, while other inventions include what people never thought was possible.

Just last month, students from the Department of Aeronautics and Astronautics successfully flight tested the prototype of a winged car. People can purchase this "mini airplane" for a mere 194,000 dollars. This 430 pound "mini airplane" flew for a total 37 seconds. Even though airplanes have been invented, to most consumers flying cars still seemed out of our reach. Freshman Zanasha Findely was shocked beyond words and said, "That is like, wow, just wow." On the other hand, freshman Vivian Owusu, who seemed indifferent, explained, "[I do not care] as long as [the car] is eco-friendly." Students have conflicting points of view about what they think of this invention. One point that cannot be argued is how this invention will revolutionize travel.

Robots have deemed qualities that should only exist in science fiction movies, like Star Wars. They have been described to have artificial skin

and a child-like form. Nowadays, engineers have been striving to make a full bodied robot, with human-like characteristics. Students have mixed feelings about this robot. Freshman Sin-nah Bangura said, "[the robot] sounds creepy, but it seems helpful." Despite their rather frightening description, the robots are designed to help people. Specifically, the robots are created to help autistic children. The intent for the robots is to help kids with autism better interact and socialize with their peers. The childlike form of the robot is designed to assist children with interacting with kids their age, thus improving their social skills.

The last great invention is recyclable houses. These houses are on the list for 2011's most innovative invention. Students at the University of Maryland have been designing houses that run on wind, rain, and sun instead of electrical power. The houses will be composed of garbage and other biodegradable materials. West Potomac students thought these 'recyclable' houses were "Trashy! You could not pay me to live in it!" exclaimed junior Alphe Peabody. While Bangura thought, "that is cool, I would totally live in it." The houses are supposed to be comfortable and affordable and will be revealed at the National Mall in D.C.

These are just a few of many great inventions coming our way. If these are our inventions of the near future, what is going to come next?

Angela Robinson and Connor Chilton

QUESTIONS:

What has been your greatest achievement?

What advice would you give to freshmen?

What designer are you most inspired by?

What gives you the creeps?

What is your dream school?

If you could work with any famous singer, who would it be?

If you were deserted on an island, what five items would you bring?

What is a goal you hope to achieve?

What do you do on the weekend?

ANSWERS:

I have had a lot of interesting opportunities in my life, like being a barrel racer, going to 18th century balls, having a fashion show, doing costumes for theatre, but I still can't rank it yet.

Ladybugs and daddy-long-legs.

1. Teepee 2. Hammock 3. Horse 4. My library 5. Art supplies

Be aware of all the choices you make, will make, and have made. In one way or another you are accountable for everything that you do. But also, be happy, enjoy the education you have the chance to get, the friends you will make, and the fun you can have. And always smile, because eventually you will make it to senior year!

My dream school is Brigham Young University because I can pursue Theatrical Costuming, German, and Ballroom Dance.

I'm inspired by Marie Antoinette. I love art, pre 19th century, and history. But emotion, people, and obscurities always find a way into my designs.

On Friday, I visit the thrift store. Go to dinner with some friends, then watch a film, focus on my art, or work on a project (refinishing furniture, quilts, knitting, wool stockings, etc.). On Saturday I love to get up early and watch the sunrise over the Potomac. Sometimes I go canoeing or pick up trash on the shoreline. Then volunteer at Mount Vernon for a few hours, and hang out with friends in the evening. Or attend a ball, at Gadsby's Tavern (I am an English Country Dancer).

Probably when my band and I played at the 9:30 club last year. It was a lot of fun, and it was great to play at a venue like that.

Heights. They scare me like nobody's business.

I would bring a guitar, a tent, a surfboard, a pocketknife, and a radio to call for help.

Just be quiet. Chances are, you are wrong.

Probably James Madison University. The campus is chill and their food is amazing.

I hope to become a professional musician or actor, just so I will be able to entertain people for a job.

I would work with either Bruce Springsteen or John Mayer, since they are my musical idols

Cannot say that I am into any one designer. If I think it looks good, I will wear it.



Photo courtesy of Clare Palo



Photo courtesy of Clare Palo

Just for Fun!

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		4			7	3	
7	3			2			6
	6	5			4		

Facts courtesy of sudoku.com

New Years Resolutions:

- Get a six pack- of anything
- Catch up on *Gossip Girl*
- Understand *Inception*
- Get highest score on *Angry Birds*
- GTL

Did you know—

- Hippo milk is pink
- Your head is 1/8 of your height
- Fortune cookies were invented in America
- A portion of the water you drink has already been drunk by someone else
- The majority of suicides occur on a Monday
- Women have a better sense of smell than men
- When you take a step, you are using up to 200 muscles



Photo courtesy of Clipart

Facts courtesy of fun-facts.com