

Senior
Abdul Kamara
Competed in the
Virginia State
Wrestling Tour-
nament Febru-
ary 25 and 26th.



(from left to right) Micah Kaufman, Laura Cooney, Jenny Harkin, Ashley Paton, Lisa Keller, Carrie Weaver, Ms. Tricia Wenzel, Laura Zagby, Eric Mueller, and Caitlin Stangel all attended DECA State Competition on March 4 and 5th. See story on page 3.

Honor Court Idle No Cases Heard Yet

Dan Schaffner
Copy Editor

So far this year, no students accused of honor violations have opted to have their cases heard before the new Student Honor Court. The Court was established at West Potomac last year, as a model for the county. Three students were elected to serve as judges on the court and a list of rules and procedures were drafted; however, to this day, no West Potomac student has ever had his or her case before the court.

"My personal guess is that students who lie, cheat, or steal, which are violations of the Honor Code, do not want to suffer the possible humiliation of having peers know about their alleged transgressions, no matter the outcome," said Assistant Principal Ms. Doris Evens.

"I was never given the option of going in front of the honor court. I wouldn't have wanted to go in front of the court anyway. It was easier to take the punishment quietly," said a student who was recently accused of plagiarism.

The Honor Court would not have the ability to hand out punishments or to absolve students; it would simply have the power to make recommendations to the administration.

"I think that the administration is timid on using students to influence other students' fates," said senior John Robella.

Robella is one of the three judges who were elected last year, in a school wide vote. Elizabeth Clement and Mike Wilson are the other elected judges.

Students are given the option to have their case heard in front of the court when they violate the school honor code. Every student in the school is required to sign the school honor code in the beginning of the year.

When a West Potomac student signs the honor code, they pledge that they will not cheat, lie, steal, or tolerate those who do. According to the administration, many students are violating the honor code and are being caught. The honor Court is not being used though.

"I feel that the Honor Court is important to enhancing the personal honor of students at West Potomac," said Ms. Joan Reynolds, who worked alongside the students who proposed and created the court.

Inside

The Academy
Awards are Sunday.
We've chosen our
winners. Have you?



Girls Track Finishes Third at States

Rebecca Griffith
Wire Reporter

The girls winter track team has been very successful. Coaches Inez Bryant, Corey Bowerman, Mike Smalley, and Don Beeby led the girls to a victory in both the District and Northern Region Championships, as well as a 3rd place finish at the state meet on March 6.

After months of training, the girls were finally ready to face their opponents at the District Championship. The meet was held Saturday, February 13, at Episcopal High School. Top scorers included Yolanda Thompson, who won both the long and triple jumps, as well as the 300 meter dash. Thompson also placed second in the high jump and second in the 500 meter dash. Aundrea Gunn placed second in the long jump, third in the triple jump and sixth in the 55 meter dash. Kelia Williams won the 55 meter dash, placed third in the 300 meter dash and fourth in the 500 meter dash. Lisa Keller placed sixth in the high jump.

Shot-putters Jessica Bolton and Mary Butler placed second and fourth respectively. Meghan Hoffman placed fourth in the mile and third in the 2-mile. Rebecca Griffith placed fourth in the 2-mile. The girls 4X200 meter relay took third place and the 4X400 meter relay placed second.

Other participants were Laura Cooney, Emily Dickert, Leah Frederickson, Latoya Johnson, Kim Leiby, Kelly Luhning, Claire McGurk, Dee-Dee Rich-

ard, Vicki Robella, and Natalie Weygandt.

The girls team pulled together and stole the District title with 118 points, beating long-time rival Lake Braddock, which scored 107 points.

Regionals were held two weeks later at George Mason University. Although it was a very exciting meet, it was extremely dicey. Most of the athletes performed below their seating, and victory was determined in the last race of the day. A baton drop by Hayfield allowed West Potomac to grab the Regional title.

The State meet was held at George Mason University on March 6. The members of the state team were co-captains Yolanda Thompson and Rebecca Griffith, senior Kelia Williams, senior Aundrea Gunn, junior Jessica Bolton, sophomore Latoya Johnson, sophomore Natalie Weygandt, and freshmen Dee-Dee Richard and Meghan Hoffman. Thompson had an outstanding performance in the long jump and matched a state record mark of 19 feet and 8 inches. Kelia Williams placed fourth in the 500, the 4*400 meter relay (Aundrea Gunn, Kelia Williams, Natalie Weygandt, and Yolanda Thompson) finished fourth, and the 4*200 meter relay (Latoya Johnson, Natalie Weygandt, Kelia Williams, and Yolanda Thompson) placed eighth. Jessica Bolton placed 10th in the shot put, Meghan Hoffman placed fourth in the 2-mile, and Rebecca Griffith placed ninth in the 2-mile. The girls took a third place finish in the AAA State Championships.

Coach Corey Bowerman said of the girls track team, "I think this season was extremely successful. Everyone gave it all they had at the end."

Acts of Immaturity Give West Potomac a Bad Name

Six months ago a group of seniors were caught after having written obscene messages on the junior parking lot blacktop. The messages, directed towards the junior class did not constitute a hate crime. It was decided the students were expressing class rivalry. They were required to pay for the damage, and do community service.

It was not that simple for the Principal Carma Norman though, she was informed of this work of her students by a parent who was driving through the parking lot in the morning. The disturbed

parent notified teachers in the building, who then notified the principal. Norman then had to call the Fairfax County contractors to have them come and cover up the grotesque work of her students.

Two recent cases at West Potomac have been brought to the local public's attention. When substitute, and former PTSA President, Lynn Egge was struck in the face by a student, the story was reported in the Metro section of *The Washington Post*. The story was again reported in the *Mount Vernon Gazette*, and no doubt, has been widely

discussed among West Potomac parents and neighbors.

In the wake of this, school security arrived on Sunday March 7 to find that someone had trespassed on school grounds on Saturday and, according to Norman, written "mean spirited things" on the brick walls of Quander and Springbank.

County maintenance and custodians were once again requested to come to the school and paint over the graffiti. Along with the county workers though, came the news reporters. Subsequently, t.v reported that students

had vandalized the school and written hate messages. Fortunately, the news reporters misidentified the school as Potomac rather than West Potomac.

Administrative Intern Mr. Jesse Watson said, "Everyone is being blamed when it's obvious it's not all of us." These students are a small minority of the school and yet they damage our reputation.

When it is reported on the news that West Potomac students are writing hate messages and getting in fights with teachers, parents and the community tend to worry

about the future of the school. Property values go down when a school gets a bad name, so business's lose out.

According to Norman it makes teachers not want to come to West Potomac to look for jobs, which makes it difficult to hire excellent teachers.

Weekly, Norman has meetings with people around the county and at other schools. In these meetings she frequently discusses how good of a school West Potomac is.

How, if a small group of students keep causing heads to be turned, can Norman continue to brag about our school?

Do You Feel Recent Events Have Given the School a Bad Name?



Graffiti is okay and everything, as long as it is not racially implicated.

Sophomore Emily Allen



"Yes, I really think that that act of ignorance and hate brings W.P. a bad name. It's sad that one of the most recognized schools for it's racial diversities, athletic and academic excellence has to deal with such vulgarity."

Junior Mel Bailey



"Yes, I think it does give W.P. a bad name, because W.P. is looked at for it's great sports and academics, and now it will be looked at for its racial diversities, all because of ignorant people."

Junior Jerry Harris



Makes us kinda look like we're juveniles.

Sophomore Eddie Pickering



We come to school to be educated and when people do ignorant things like this, it makes us look bad.

Sophomore Danielle Thomas



"For one, I think it is very ignorant. These people must have no life, if their fun is spray painting a wall. They really need to grow up."

Senior Lakeisha Batista

You've Got Good Grades...

So What's The Matter With Missing A Couple Days of School?



Nicole Gibson
Sports Editor

Hmm...well let's see. I have a test in AP biology tomorrow so I have to be there first period, but we're not doing anything in second block and I think we

might have a sub during fifth, so I could go home after the test and sleep. Oh, but I absolutely have to be back last period for calculus, we have an extra-credit assignment. The ultimate dream, to be able to check-in and out as we please and only attend the classes that we feel we have to go to on that day...but is it a

dream?

The other day during my AP biology class, our teacher commented on how much her students check in and out of school. Although she is correct, the reasons we felt were valid for checking out, were not valid in her opinion.

There are two ways to look at

the situation. It first calls for a little background. Many of you may be wondering how students pull this off when, of course, you can't leave school without a note from your parents stating you are sick with a "cold" or you have a strange pain behind your ear and must go to the doctor immediately. In every system there is a way to get around it, and being the intelligent students that we are, we have found one, lie. Yup, it's not original, but it works.

So you're not really sick, but you had to stay up really late last night doing a pointless project, and it took away your precious sleep time, so you beg mom or dad to write a nice little note saying you will be going to the doctor, and then you go home and take the rest of the day off, because after all, you're not doing anything in the rest of your classes today.

In every situation there are two sides. The side that is believed by the administrators

and faculty at West Potomac would be that you need to be in school at all times—no questions asked. We are not in college yet, and it is not our decision whether or not we need to be in school each day.

This belief is not only at odds with the...let's call them, "selective attenders" but it also does not help the students who—God forbid—are checked out for a legitimate reason. The students with legitimate reasons will be forced to take a harder test when they come back, or will suffer when they decide to come in coughing and sneezing with mucus pouring out of their nostrils, infecting the entire class, so

that they can take the regular test.

The student population thinks that not every activity and individual class period is vital to their future success in life.

Let me restate that, we know it is not. I mean, let's face it, if you miss the honor roll assembly or the "Lucy video" (You know, the one about the fossilized three million year old human), it will not decide whether you go to college or not. The attendance system may be heavily abused, but there are just some days when the time you spend in class could be more productively used somewhere else.

Students Join School Organizations To Fill College Applications

Micah Schwartz
Wire Reporter

Ever wonder why student government never gets anything done? Or why the newspaper always has so many mistakes and seems like it could be done so much better? Or why that student organization you joined three years ago still hasn't accomplished anything? There's a simple answer to all these questions: students just don't care about the activities in which they participate. With the exception of those limited individuals who really care about the activities they join, most students only partake in these endeavors so they can pack their resumes full with interesting, supposedly time-consuming, activities.

The emphasis placed on getting into college—especially those few "well-regarded" institutions—has increased tremendously in the past ten years. Somewhere along the line, students got the impression that the more activities you have on your resume, the better your chances of getting into those schools.

This assumption causes students to join as many school

organizations as possible. They think, "Great, all I have to do is show up for the first meeting, put my name down on the roster, and now I have a new activity to put down on my application."

It's true that colleges want their applicants to be involved in extracurricular activities at their high school. It ensures them that those attending their school are well-rounded. However, having too many activities can actually hurt you.

Admissions officers would

When students do work for an organization only because they see it as their obligation, instead of their desire, they end up producing lower quality work.

much rather you be intensely involved in just a few activities, as opposed to being not active in twenty organizations.

Admissions officers are not stupid. When you send them an exhaustive activities list,

they see right through it.

The mentality of many West Potomac students is, "I'll join this organization, so that I can put it on my application."

Those individuals with a heavy conscience might follow up this statement with, "I guess I said I would help, so maybe I should."

However, the correct mentality for helping out in students organization should be the desire to actively participate in and help out that organization.

When students do work for an organization only because they see it as their obligation, instead of their desire, they end up producing lower quality work.

Many students say, "I guess I should at least go to the meeting, but I'm not going to do a darn thing when I get there."

This is the main explanation for the lack of accomplishments by the student government association, and the weak work done by the school newspaper and other organizations. Many students are interested in joining an activity; few could care less about the accomplishments of that organization.

So students, unless you genuinely want to help out, don't join an activity. You'd be doing us all a favor.

The Wire

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The Wire is a student forum at West Potomac High School, established to disseminate news, ideas and other matters of interest to West Potomac students.

The Wire will publish no material that is libelous, obscene or which will likely create a substantial disruption of the school routine.

The Wire encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be signed, but names may be withheld by request. The Wire reserves the right to edit such letters for grammar, punctuation and length.

Editorial opinions expressed in The Wire are not necessarily those of the faculty adviser, the administration of West Potomac High School, or the Fairfax County Public Schools.

Five Days Not Worth Bringing Alcohol To School; Or Is It?

Ally Medina
Photo Editor

It is one thing to be underage and drink outside of school, but to bring the alcohol onto school grounds is even more absurd. Why people need alcohol to enjoy themselves in the first place is questionable. I would say that even at the pit of my boredom, a quick game of solitaire would be better than getting senselessly drunk.

Alcohol has become an increasing problem for many teenagers, and the many precautions that have been taken do not seem to be helping.

According to the U.S. Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, alcohol is the most frequently used drug by 12-17 year olds, and it is also the drug with the most negative consequences. That is why there are strict laws against underage drinking.

If laws cannot keep teens away from their booze, what makes schools think they can? Perhaps because they have written contracts with students. Contracts are signed by students every year, and every year there seem to be a few black sheep who cannot keep their word.

A few consequences are set for those who cannot obey the rules, including suspensions and recommendations for expulsion, but do students really pay that much attention to these consequences? If they do not

seem to care about being caught by the cops and getting hours of community service, what's a few days out of school, right? Wrong.

If the students are caught on school grounds, they are automatically suspended for at least 5 days. In order to get these days out excused, they must attend a special camp, or better said, rehab.

So, if you decide not to go to the rehab meetings you would have enough unexcused absences to get an F for every class you missed.

A few consequences are set for those who can not obey the rules such as suspension and recommendation for expulsion, but do students really pay that much attention to them?

While being suspended from school you are also suspended from school activities, which means no more football, basketball, lacrosse or soccer games. Along with these privileges being taken away, you also put yourself at risk of not being able to graduate.

Just this year there have been more than a couple West Potomac students caught on school grounds

while intoxicated, and probably many more were not caught.

While there is no evidence of it, some have expressed concern that students might sneak alcohol into school, through their lunch. They might simply add the alcohol to whatever drink they have for the day. In this case, it might be a teacher's responsibility to pick out people who are drunk.

Well, some teachers might catch on to a student's peculiar behavior, but others might pass it off, simply thinking the student is having a bad day, or that the student is a little hyper from something they ate at lunch.

One West Potomac teacher still recalls her experience with drunk students, "I had a student come in and he could not walk straight, so I had an administrator come up and remove him", she said, "At that point, the administration dealt with it".

Some parents may blame the schools for student alcohol problems, but these are problems students bring to school.

Should teachers go around smelling every student's soda? Teachers have no way of knowing who is prone to drink. It is up to the student body to be honest enough to at least keep up with their side of the bargain, and to keep alcohol off school grounds. Considering the hours we spend in health learning about the dangers of these drugs, it is amazing we still have some people roaming the halls just as clueless as ever.

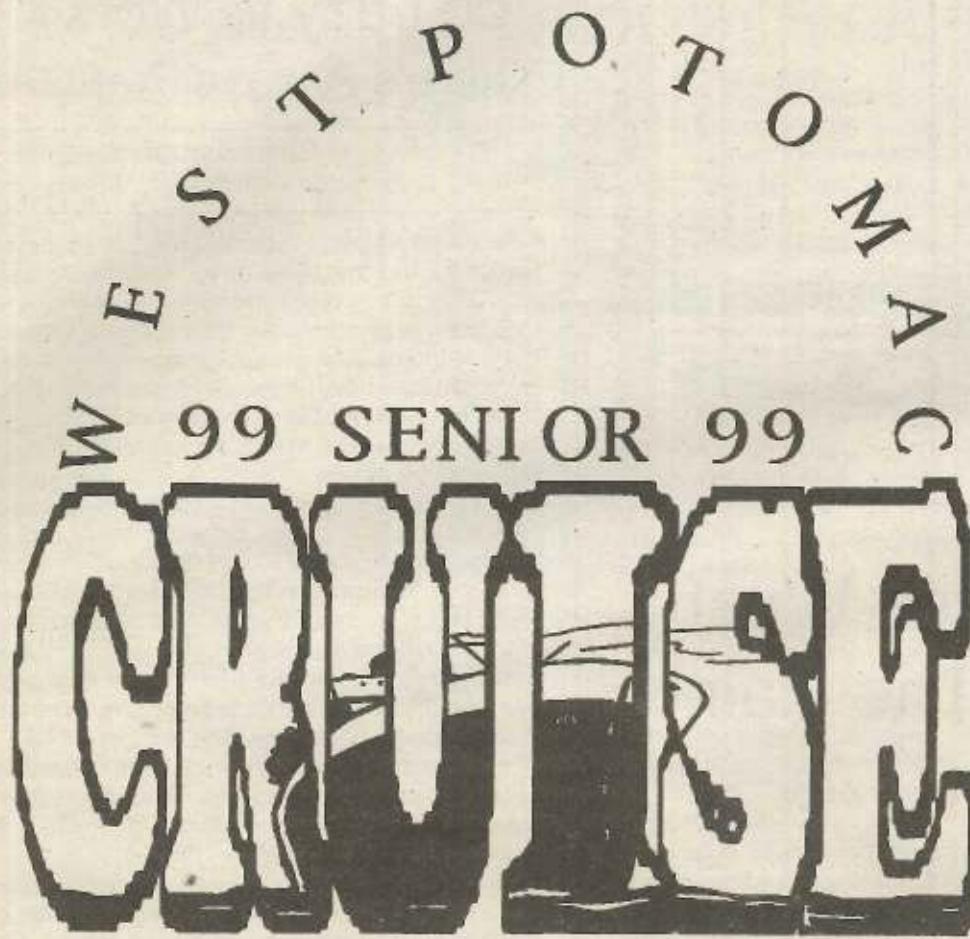


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Seniors Cruise Toward Graduation

Carrie Weaver
Focus Editor

It's that time of year again. Each year the senior class leaves their mark on the school through senior quotes, senior patron ads, and senior pictures. But a more striking and memorable, the unifying symbol of each senior class is the cruise logo.

Every year students are offered the opportunity to design the logo for the senior class' all-night graduation celebration.

This year, however, the logo was designed by junior Sam

Oakley. His design was chosen out of twenty to twenty-five submissions, only a few of which were rendered by seniors.

The steering committee of about ten parents met at one of their monthly meetings to select a design for the cruise logo. They spread the designs on a table and discussed the pros and cons of each drawing. The illustrations remained anonymous to prevent even the appearance of favoritism.

Color and appropriate content were the major criteria for selecting the winning entry. But having a variation from

previous years was also considered important.

Office Secretary, Ms. Patty Jones, has chaired the cruise committee for the past three years. One year students suggested that seniors be able to choose the logo. It turned out that the drawing chosen by the seniors was the same the committee would have chosen.

"It was just too hard to let the seniors pick," said Jones.

Thus, the parents on the senior cruise committee choose the logo.

Although all agree the logo is excellent, some seniors have questioned the parents' decision to use a logo designed by a junior.

Senior Melanie Yunker commented, "I think that only seniors should be allowed to design the cruise logo, because [the artist] is representing their own class."

Due to renovations beginning in the senior cafeteria, this year's logo will be painted on a drop cloth to be placed in the new cafeteria.

Ms. Julia Martin, department chairman of the art department, will paint the logo in time for graduation.

T-shirts sporting the cruise logos will be available in late March, according to Jones. These sales will be concurrent with ticket sales for the graduation night cruise.

News Briefs

Ap European History Available To Sophomores

AP European History will continue to be offered to 10th graders at West Potomac, as a substitute for World Studies 2. Miscommunication on the district level led West Potomac administrators to believe a decision had been made, and that AP European history could not be substituted for World Studies 2. When Principal Carma Norman called to complain, she was told that there had made a mistake.

Renovation Update

Throughout the past year, the West Potomac Faculty has been steadily preparing for the renovations that are to occur over the next several years. The trailers arrived in February, and during the weekend of March 20, it is expected that Left Quander will be shut down. All classes in upstairs Left Quander will be transferred to the trailers, and the cafeteria will be closed as well.

In June, the JROTC classroom will be shut down as well as the Gunston hallway, which includes rooms 120-127.

Although it may seem like the school may never be totally renovated, Mr Dale Eaton is confident that come September 1999, the only way to describe West Potomac will be, "Wow."

Science Fair Winners

More than 600 Fairfax County Public School students, who were winners in their local school science fairs competed, in the Fairfax County Regional High School Science and Engineering Fair March 12 and 13 at Robinson Secondary School field house.

Due to this past Sunday's inclement weather, the third day of the fair, March 14, was rescheduled for this weekend.

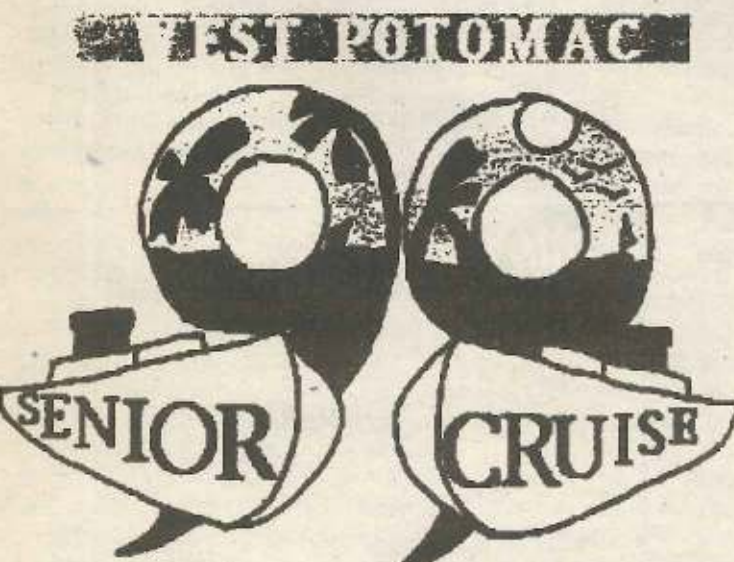
There were 13 exhibit categories, including biochemistry, engineering, Earth and space science, physics, and computer science. More than 400 judges from business, government, industry, education, and professional organizations will select 14 grand prize winning-projects -- All of which will be entered into the fiftieth anniversary International Science Fair in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on May 2-8.

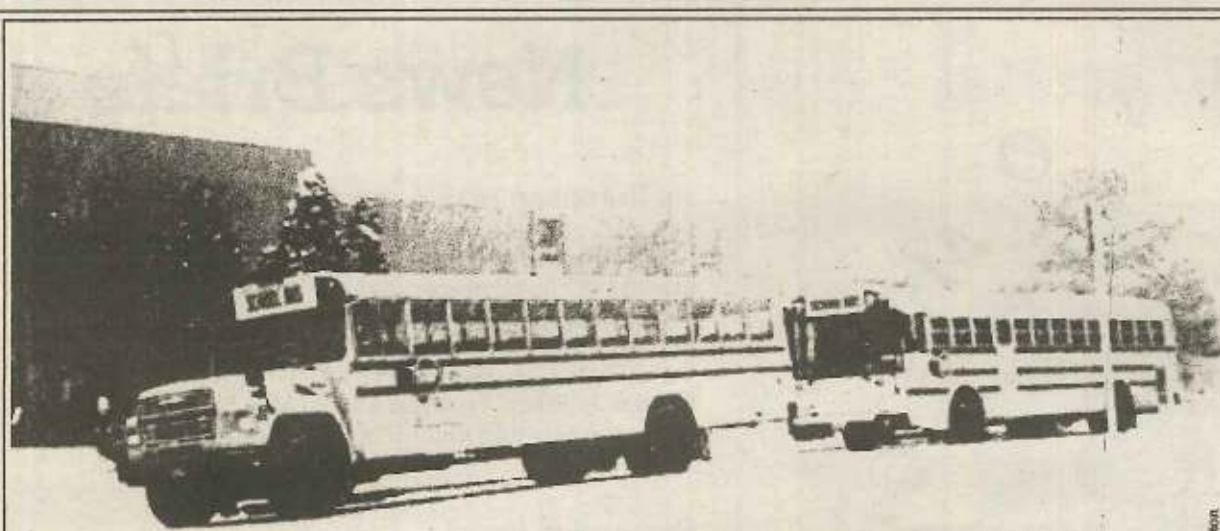
Harkin to Speak at Graduation

Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa has been chosen to speak at this year's senior graduation. Senator Harkin, who has been a two-time presidential candidate, is also the father of valedictorian, Jenny Harkin.

Student Evaluations of Teachers Approved

According to Marietta Squire, the chairperson of the county SAC Student Feedback Committee, the Fairfax County School board has passed the SAC proposal of mandatory annual student assessment of teachers by students. According to the proposal, students would answer a survey at the end of each semester, for semester classes, and at the end of the year for annual classes. Information from these surveys will be only for the benefit of the individual teachers. This program will begin for the 1999-2000 school year.





Bus Driver Shortage Leaves West Potomac Athletes Out in The Rain

Sasha Cannon
Sports Editor

This year, Fairfax County is suffering a shortage of school buses and bus drivers. Bus drivers, who have not been hard to come by in the past, are now very difficult to find.

In the County, it is now routine

for drivers to leave a good amount of time between their morning and afternoon runs, and again before the late afternoon run. This means that games played immediately after school may not be served by transportation next year. Games may have to be rescheduled or cancelled. There may

also be a reduction in the number of field trips.

There may also be problems finding drivers to transport students to other school to fulfill their elective class choices. However, these are long term effects. The major problem right now is the cancellation of some spring sports events.

Sarah Ashton

Too Lazy to Work? There's Always Plagiarism

Chris Twomey
Wire Reporter

Pornography isn't the only thing raising eyebrows across the Internet these days. Certain websites offer a collection of reports ready for desperate students to print out and turn in. Viewed as a Godsend by some students, and a sea of corruption by some teachers, such sites have increased in number on the World Wide Web. Every day new sites join Slackers Online, one of the leaders in the underground industry of Internet Plagiarism.

According to English teacher, Mr. A.J. Morgan, "Any assignment that could possibly be found on the Internet is being found by our students." Morgan went on to say, "Temptation to plagiarize is great and students lack understanding of what plagiarism is."

In the course of a school year, teachers learn the writing style of their students. After reading previous work by students, teachers recognize the tone and voice students present in their writing.

English teacher, Ms. Erin Brick, said, "I learn to identify my students writing voice and when they hand me something that doesn't match their usual voice, I can pick it out immediately."

As fast as a student can point, clicked and printed out a paper that fits an assignment, a teacher can do the same. While internet sites may or may not have led to increases in student plagiarism, they have led to more students being caught. It is easy for teachers to confirm the charges of plagiarism.

If a teacher is not familiar with the internet, they head to the library, where librarians are ready and willing to ensure that justice is served.

Plagiarism doesn't just occur in English. According to librarian Ms. Zina Facimere, cases of plagiarism have shown up in math, science, foreign language and even health.

Math teacher, Mr. William Dobson, experienced plagiarism in his class. Dobson said, "What I received was way above the student in terms of ability. Most teachers are well read enough where they can tell the difference between professional and student quality."

English teacher, Mr. Joe Rose had one thing to say about plagiarism, "They would throw you out of college for it." He pulled out a book, *Where Credit is Due*, which explains exactly what plagiarism is, and how to properly give credit.

Plagiarism sites continue to get high numbers of visitor hits. Despite the warnings about plagiarism from teachers, some students remain keen on it.

One student said, "Yeah, I plagiarize. I have done it before, and I will do it again. Lets see them try and catch me."

Many teachers are becoming ambitious about catching students who plagiarize, and these teachers are succeeding.

In the end, even a clever student has a good chance of getting caught, and the consequences are serious. Plagiarism is cheating.

Five Students Qualify at DECA States For Nationals

Erica Davies
Photo Editor

From March 5th to March 7th, West Potomac DECA members competed in the Virginia DECA State Leadership Conference. Only 10 students competed in the conference, which admitted district champions from the previous meet held at Fair Oaks mall on February

This highly selective competition was the largest leadership conference held in Virginia this year.

The DECA association, which consists of students who are currently enrolled in fashion and marketing classes, competed in the conference to determine which students would be privileged enough to attend nationals.

Of the 10 DECA members, Micah Kaufmann, Laura Zagby, Caitlin Stangel, Laura Cooney and Megan Butasek will advance to Orlando, Florida to compete in nationals.

All 10 contestants were required to compete in three

areas of the overall conference, which included a 100-question multiple choice test and two role plays. For the role plays, the contestants were given 10 minutes to prepare for his or her given topic, and then had to defend the situation by supplying the judges with obtained information.

Although the candidates took the conference seriously, they managed to have a relaxed and amusing time while staying at the McLean Hilton Hotel.

Because the DECA members roomed with approximately 40 other high schools, the Hilton staff kept the students well-entertained by having a hypnotist appear Friday night.

Saturday evening, a local university near McLean sponsored a fashion show, and afterwards all tension was released at a dance that allowed the competitors to mingle.

Senior Laura Zagby said, "I had a blast at DECA. It was a great way to meet a lot of really cool people and I made life-lasting friends."

The five seniors will continue to compete in nationals at Orlando, Florida from April 23rd to the 28th.

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English teacher Ms. Erin Brick is the sponsor of the new Writing Center. The Writing Center was designed to provide peer helping with writing. Some of the participants are junior Christine Burns, and sophomores Ally Medina, Elissa Milanowski and Sarah Beiging.

Writing Center 'Beneficial' for Students

Nathan Burgess
Wire Reporter

Are you upset with the grades you are receiving on written papers? The new West Potomac Writing Center may be able to help you improve any kind of writing, no matter what the curriculum. The Writing Center is a new project, a part of the School Renewal Plan, modeled on the George Mason University and Northern Virginia Community College writing centers. It involves students, not teachers, helping fellow students with their writing. The tutors at the writing center will be students from AP English, *The Wire*, the National Honor Society, and various honors classes. Tutors do not revise or edit papers; they merely help students recognize their writing weaknesses and give them

helpful advice on what they could do better.

The Writing Center is sponsored by English teacher Ms. Erin Brick, and it is located in her room, 429 Quander. It is held Mondays and Wednesdays after school, and Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment.

"I'm optimistic that with support and incentives from the entire staff, students will use this lab regularly. It should prove to be an asset to all students for all kinds of writing," commented Ms. Brick.

So far sixteen student tutors have signed up to help. "It will be very beneficial to all students who need aid in their writing," said senior Courtney Schmidt, one of the tutors.

Teachers are encouraged to give extra credit for participation. Students who are interested in helping out may receive community service credit.

Bible Crew Brings Religious Study to West Potomac

Jon Temple
Wire Reporter

Last year a group of students approached then Assistant Principal Dr. Maxine Cooper because they felt they needed a place to express their feelings and pray together. Dr. Cooper started a new club, the Bible Crew, but then she moved on to another school.

The current sponsors of the club are Business teacher Ms. Marilyn Moore, Social Studies teacher, Ms. Z. Lee Harris.

The Bible Crew helps tutor students, and gives them opportunities to express their feelings and build character based on the word of God, according to Moore.

The Bible Crew is open to all students, regardless of religion. Students who attend meetings may build strong friendships and feel a fellowship among their peers.

Today the Bible Crew has about twenty-five members with Senior David Jackson as president and Sophomore Lavaughn Breland as vice president.

"The ultimate goal of the organization is to win souls over to Christ," said Moore.

Bible Crew must abide by many rules and regulations. The sponsors are not allowed to pray with the students. However, the students can pray together. The sponsors cannot force any

religious view on students.

The Bible Crew plans to show the community how big their heart is by donating their time at homeless shelters and nursery homes around the area. In March, the group plans on having speakers talk to members of the club.

The Bible crew meets the 2nd and 4th Mondays in room 212.

Like other Christian oriented programs, the Bible Crew walks a fine line. At other schools, students and teachers gathered at the flagpole to pray in No-

The West Potomac Bible Crew is open to all students regardless of religion. Students who attend meetings build strong friendships and feel a fellowship among their peers.

member, throughout the area.

Social Studies teacher Mr. Joseph Skovira said, "Two adult visitors and several students whom I knew were gathered at the pole. The students assured me that this activity was approved by school authorities."

Some schools have the Fellowship for Christian Athletes. West Potomac have has only the Bible Crew.

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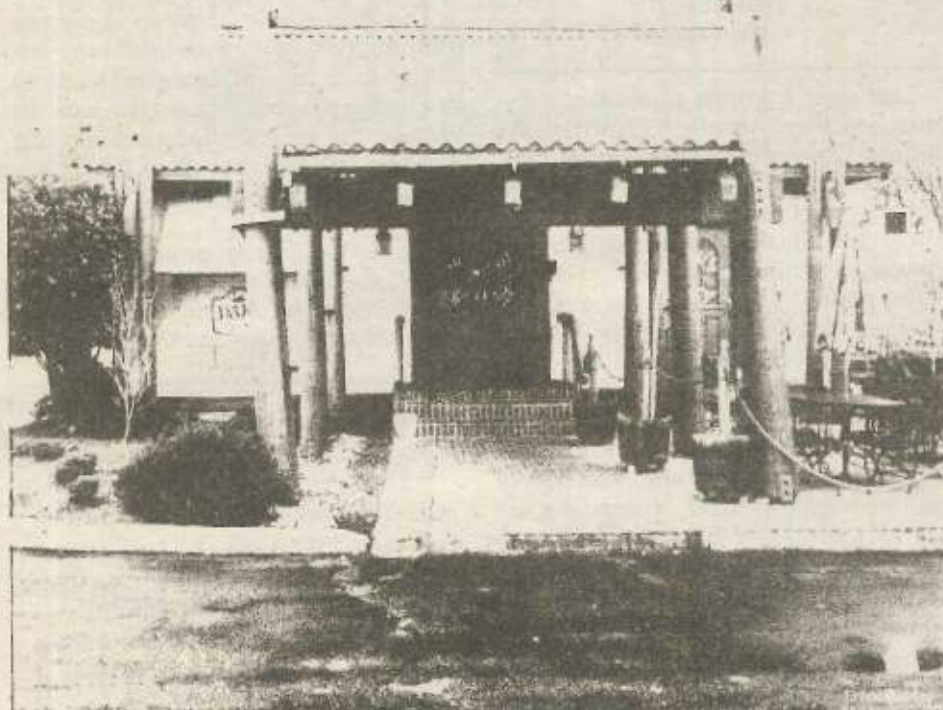
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Cozy Restaurant Provides Home To WP Students



Daks, found on Rte.1 next to Dunkin Donuts, is employed by many West Potomac Students

Strolling casually into the dim setting of the cozy family restaurant, one is greeted by a friendly smile and led to an oversized wooden booth, where the enjoyment begins.

From appetizers through desserts, there are many options. Entrees range from \$6.00 to \$14.00 and include steak, ribs, pasta, chicken, vegetarian meals, salads, and fish.

On our visit we split two entrees: Dirty Chicken and Marinated Chicken. Our entrees included a house salad, with an assortment of dressings; along with a choice of baked potato, marinated french fries, DAKS potato, or wild rice.

The Dirty Chicken consists of seasoned chicken over linguini drenched in cajun sauce. The Marinated Chicken is lathered in a mixture of Italian dressing and a splash of red wine. It is then grilled to perfection and smothered in sauteed onions, mushrooms, and green peppers, and topped with provolone cheese.

Our side orders included fresh green beans, marinated french fries, and the DAKS potato. These were all delicious.

DAKS is known around West Potomac for its relaxed and friendly atmosphere. AP Psychology teacher Mr. Jim Poythress enjoys being able to "watch

highlights from the other high school games around the county." He also likes the fact that Daks is "open late and is conveniently located near his neighborhood."

Senior Alexa Jones said she likes DAKS because, "the food is good and the people that work there are fun to be with."

Senior Barry Dufek enjoys working at DAKS because, "the people are laid back and the atmosphere is pleasant."

At the end of our meal, our waiter left us a kind note that sums up the experience at DAKS. "Hope you guys come again soon."

by Laura Cooney and Crystal McMillan



The glowing resurtant sign can be seen off of Route 1, where the restaurant lies.

Poythress' Unusual Style Psyches Students Out

Micah Schwartz
Wire Reporter

If you've attended West Potomac for at least a week, than you've surely heard of AP Psychology, and more specifically, its eccentric teacher, Mr. Jim Poythress. AP Psychology has become one of West Potomac's most popular classes, no doubt because of Poythress and his growing reputation.

Poythress is known for his odd personality and his constant cracking on students. Senior Sean Hoffman said, "I'm not really all that interested in the subject matter. But listening to Poythress make fun of people all day is reason enough to take the class."

Poythress also recently re-implemented a "hack" system for grading down students who misbehave in class. Along with the usual grade deductions for "no notebook" and "sleeping during class" are more unusual hacks for "no shoes" and "fungal breath."

There is a method to his madness though. Poythress has a knack for making a class—which might otherwise be boring—interesting and entertaining.

"I'm not a bad guy," said



Erica Davies

Poythress. "I'm just trying to keep students attention and keep them interested in the material. Plus, I'm toughening them up."

"Poythress is kind of a legend at West Potomac," said senior Sasha Anderson. "He has his own following of students at this school, all of whom wish they could be him."

Junior Liz Hovanec agrees, saying, "Everyone tries to imitate him, but there's only one Mr. Poythress."

Poythress has taught at West Potomac for five years. Before teaching here, he taught two years at Manassas High School, and three years at Osborne High School. He currently teaches three AP Psychology

classes, one regular Psychology course, and one Sociology class.

Poythress also acts as Assistant Director of Student Activities at West Potomac and is Defensive Coordinator of the varsity football team.

"Poythress tells a lot of stories," said senior Pat Corcoran. "The one story he can't tell though is the one about the high school football team he coached to the state championships, because he hasn't done that yet."

Poythress started playing football when he was in elementary school, for the Fort Hunt Youth League. He continued playing into high school, and was recruited to play at the Naval Academy, in Annapolis,

Maryland. After only one year at the school, however, Poythress injured his neck during a practice.

No longer able to play football, Poythress transferred to James Madison University, where he received his BS degree in Psychology and History.

Although no longer able to play, football remains Poythress' true love in life. Some describe Poythress' affinity for the game as an obsession, and Hovanec says that "he's enftuated with Dick Butkus."

Poythress grew up in the area and attended Fort Hunt High School, one of the two high schools that merged to create West Potomac. While in elementary school, he became friends with John Howerton and Mike Ginn. Howerton currently teaches Weight Training and Conditioning at West Potomac, and he is one of the school's football coaches. Ginn teaches a Basic Skills class, and he is the Wolverine baseball coach.

For Poythress, teaching on this campus with his past classmates is like going through high school a second time. "Come to think of it, they probably shouldn't have let me out the first time," said Poythress.

Poythress currently lives

with his wife, Kara, in Riverside Gardens. His new house is just down the street from his old home, where his parents still live. "I liked the area, so I didn't see any reason to leave," said Poythress.

Poythress created the AP Psychology program at West Potomac three years ago. "At first not too many people were interested in taking this class," said Poythress. "But now I gotta keep them out with a stick."

The increase in AP Psychology enrollment is no doubt due to Poythress' growing popularity.

"Everybody's heard of Mr. Poythress' psychology class. I can't wait to take it," said freshman Berin Brick.

However, not everyone is pleased with Poythress' unique teaching style. "I don't completely approve of his teaching tactics," said junior Trevor Rathbone.

To this comment, Poythress is very defensive, saying, "I've never had any complaints from parents or faculty, and my AP scores are always high."

Until someone makes him stop, Poythress will continue to teach his courses with the unusual style that has made his class a hit, and that makes students very happy.



As Spring Arrives... The Tidal Basin Blooms

Brooke Lombardi
Business Manager

Each year people come from all over the country and the world to see the cherry blossoms in Washington, right across the river from West Potomac. This would be a good year for West Potomac students to see the blossoms. The National Park Service is estimating that the height of the bloom will be between March 26 and April 2, during spring break.

The cherry blossom trees were a gift from the Japanese people to the people of the United States, and each year there is a festival to celebrate the blossoms and the good relationship between the United States and Japan. The high point of the festival is a parade which features Japanese performances. The parade takes place when the cherry blossoms are ripest, which is traditionally the first week in April. At the parade, a queen is chosen from one of the fifty states.



The cherry blossoms are predicted to bloom this year at the end of March.

Senior Phola Chay commented, "I was born in Thailand, and when my family moved here, I constantly heard about the cherry blossom trees. From this point on I became anxious to go to D.C. to enjoy their presence."

As the blossoms begin to appear, the tidal basin area becomes crowded with tourists. An excellent way to enjoy the blossoms, is to rent a paddle boat and cruise along the Potomac.

Paddle boats can be rented at what looks like a gazebo, directly across the river from the Jefferson Memorial. There are two-seater paddle boats and four-seater paddle boats. The boats are constructed of different colored, hollow pieces of plastic.

Along with the rented boat comes a life jacket. Jackets must be worn at all times.

Renting is the easy part, and after that, the fun begins. Chose a boat and you're off! Paddle, paddle, and keep paddling. Anytime you want, stop and take a rest, but a rest is not all you will get. As you and your friends are stopped in the middle of the Potomac River, the gentle breeze, the beaming sun and the sweet aroma of cherry blossoms will take you away.... at least until a giant noise from up above is heard. It is a plane coming from the Reagan National Airport, so just hold tight. In a few minutes the rumbling and roaring will end.



The woody woodpecker float was seen in the last cherry blossom festival parade.

Ratpackers Hold Worthless Possessions in High Regard

Meghan Deaver
Feature Editor

Have you ever noticed how many people have extra, pointless stuff in their bulging wallets? A "rat-packer" is a person who hangs onto material trash, and who carries around pointless cards and other miscellaneous items.

It is amazing what can be found in a rat-packer's wallet. Most of us have business cards and membership cards to the gym, the video store, or the pool, but most of us discard them when they have expired.

Ratpackers collect all cards that can be used as money, calling cards, credit cards, gas cards and vending cards for printing copies at the library or kinkos, or for buying food at school.

Concerts ticket stubs are kept for their sentimental value, and after all, some have useful advertisements printed on the back, ideas for places to dine, free buffets. On movie ticket stubs there are discounts on buying soda. "Good for this day only," most of them say.

Who can let go of the memory of riding the metro? That's right, even old, used-up metro cards are sometimes classified as "keep-sakes." Why would someone hold onto such a "keep-sake?"

Sophomore Sean Dudley said, "They're fun to look at when you're bored. Everything I keep in my wallet, I keep as a collection."

Discount cards from the Gap to Rite Aid are sometimes kept, although the ratpacker never goes to those places, and the cards expired a year ago.

To add bulk to a wallet, cards with a sense of humor may be purchased at stores like Claire's, Afterthoughts, and Spencer's Gifts. One of these is the "Kissing Card," which tells you how well you kiss.

Licenses can be purchased, such as a license to be in a "Bad Mood". Licenses that give you the right to do something dumb and pointless are good for an occasional laugh.

A waste of money? Maybe, but then again, a few dollars spent on a good day can actually improve your day when you're bummed. "They're funny, the cute messages make you smile and brighten up your day," said Freshman Juanita Gavan, who owns a few such cards herself.

The more one ponders these cards, the more one wonders if these ratpackers might be onto something.

Some cards are useful. Some students may not realize, the Student ID can be used to check out books from the library. It also can be used to get discounts at certain movie theaters.

Another school related card, the "Wolverine Gold Card" provides discounts at local fast food and family restaurants. This card must be purchased, but the price of the card is quickly returned by the discounts.

Some people probably hold onto old cards because they feel connected to them. But one should stop to think, is a wallet the safest place to keep valuable possessions? The most dreaded fear of many people is losing their wallet. With that in mind, many of us decide not to carry everything. There are people out there who disagree with these rat packers.

One of these "anti-rat packers", social studies teacher, Mr. Joseph Skovira, explained that he believes it is not in the best interest of people to

On movie ticket stubs there are discounts on buying soda. "Good for this day only," most of them say.

have a crammed wallet. Skovira himself, "carries the absolute minimum, because if you lose that wallet, there is a burden of replacing and invalidating all critical cards."

This debate of course will go on forever. Many people can relate to Madonna's "Material Girl" and "Express Yourself," while other think Fugazi puts it best, "You are not what you own."





In Japan, students in grade school can pass a test and earn a spot in a college.

Along with others in Tokyo, Cassie Porter's mother wears traditional clothing during a New Year's festival, in 1976

Beyond the SOLs; Teaching for the Test in Japan

Cassie Porter
Visiting Writer

Every year, I go to Japan to see relatives on my mother's side of the family. While there, I usually visit Japanese friends of my own age. This year though, when I went back, my friends had no time to visit. They were studying for *kyuiku*, the test which determines which college a Japanese student may attend.

A student has only one chance to take this test. Unlike our SATs, which may be made-up or repeated within a year, specific *kyukens* are offered only once a year. Even if a student is sick, there are no make-ups. The test is offered on only one day.

To prepare, everyone goes to *kyuku*, a school after regular school. *Kyuku* starts sometime after school and ends late at night. After students get home, they do their homework for both schools. Generally, homework ends at around five or six a.m. Regular school starts at around eight, and many students have to ride the train for at least a half-hour to get there. This means they get only a couple hours of sleep a night. Moreover, in Japan, there is usually school on Saturdays. For these students, six days a week, would not complain as we might, "I only got 4 hours of sleep last night!" Instead, they might say, "I got four hours of sleep last night!"

Many people go to *kyuku* over several years, but for most, this life of endless, serious studying consumes them during the last year of high school. In

Japan, grade inflation is no issue. Colleges look only at test scores. GPA's don't matter.

Why go to *kyuku*? Regular schools don't teach enough to cover the everything on the tests for college. The tests cover material not in the school textbooks. If a student wants to be considered by colleges, they have to go to

kyuku.

Regular school teachers are said to have an attitude. "We're doing our job by teaching what is in the curriculum; if you want to learn more than that, do it on your own." As a result, students have come to care less and less about regular school. Obviously, one hour of sleep every night isn't enough, so some students sleep in until about eleven, and arrive at regular school in time for lunch. For advice on completing applications, students go to their teachers at *kyuku*. Basically, *kyuku* because the main school, and regular school just takes up time. At least, that is the impression I got from my friends.

First Person

Some *kyukens* can be taken by younger students. In junior high, elementary school or even kindergarten, student can take a test that will eventually get them into a good college. But this involves intense studying at an early age. At the kindergarten *kyukus*, students must learn good manners and how to be polite.

My friends, who took *kyuken* in junior high to get into an extremely competitive high school, told me that it was hard to have close friends. They were all trying to get into the same school. As bad as it sounds, if one of their friends was sick on the day of the test, that meant more space for them at the school. *Kyukun* makes kids grow up a lot faster.

All this studying is for one test on one day, or for six tests on six days for people who are applying to six different schools. Those who fail all of their tests cannot go to college right away. They have to start all over again. They will go through another year of studying, and take *kyuken* again the next year.

Choosing which college tests to take is much like deciding to which colleges to apply. Students choose some schools that they really want to go to, but also choose a back-up school, so that if worse comes to worst, at least they will go somewhere.

Once in college, life is a lot easier. School itself is less stressful than getting into school. It is the one year of intense study, cramming for a test, that determines future success.

Working for the Man

For some West Potomacians, Real Life Starts a Little Earlier

Rebecca Griffith
Wire Reporter

Arriving to school early, staying late in the afternoon, tests every week, games every weekend, projects every month—too much stress? Try adding a job to this busy schedule.

Many students at West Potomac have jobs on the weekends or during the week. To some, this may sound impossible to manage, but to others such as senior Kari Lucas, it is just part of their daily routine.

Lucas juggles working at Outback Steak House, Kathy's Corner, and babysitting on top of her school work by leaving early every day at 12:30. Lucas comments, "Getting out of school early everyday allows time for me to do my homework before I go to my job."

For others it is not as easy to balance a job and school. Senior Sasha Anderson says, "I have to babysit everyday after school from 3:15 to 6:15. Sometimes it is hard to stay after school because I have to get to my job as soon as I get home."

While some students find time for two and three jobs a day, still others work only a few days a week such as senior Elaine Gleason. Gleason comments, "I purposely only work a couple days a week to make sure that I have time to do my homework."

A majority of athletes at our school would find a job during the school year nearly impossible. Junior Amanda Williams, member of the cross country and track teams says, "I would like to work during the school year, but because of sports I would have no time to relax." Junior Jessica Bolton, also an athlete at West Potomac says, "It would be difficult to balance school and a job for me because I do track and that takes up most of my afternoons."

Sports and schoolwork are not the only things keeping some students from getting a job. Parents seem to play a big role in time management. Some parents will not allow students to hold jobs due to time constraints.

Junior Ellie Parker comments, "My mom wouldn't let me take on a job because she wants me to keep my grades up and with my extra curricular activities it would be too much." Other students have the same problem such as senior Kelly Luhring. Luhring says "My parents would only allow me to get a job if I were to keep up my grades."

Most people with extra curricular activities find it harder to balance a job and schoolwork. Those who are fortunate enough to have the time for a job also have the luxury of the extra cash.



Senior James Crane works the register at the Variety Store. Crane is one of many students who is in search of the almighty dollar.



Cassie Porter

Axelle Soubercazes Juggles Life Between Two Cultures

and modern dance.

Changing countries, Soubercazes didn't change her busy lifestyle. She stays busy now by babysitting the kids she resides with, going out with friends and learning a fifth language.

"My boyfriend speaks Spanish, and it's almost like French. Besides knowing French and Spanish, I also know Italian and while in my senior year here, I'm learning to speak Chinese," said Soubercazes. This is all in addition to her speaking, comprehending and reading English.

Speaking five languages will assist Soubercazes in her future career aspirations. She plans to get into international business or become a translator.

Although she likes it here in America, Soubercazes plans to go back to France so that she can further her education.

"I plan on attending a university in Paris for two years and get into the international program. Then I will spend the other two years here in America," said Soubercazes.

Of Soubercazes, senior Danielle Mundy said, "She is a very nice person, easy to get along with and a hard worker."

Junior Tatiana Gutierrez, also

a foreign exchange student, has become Soubercazes friend through a different circumstance. Gutierrez described Soubercazes as, "a great girl...sweet and trustworthy. We both come from different places in the world, but we are very much alike, even with our differences. One of the things

"I always wanted to come to America because I love it... In France everyone dreams about here, and here I am—a dream come true!"

that made us become friends, is that we are both sincere to each other, we accept our differences and respect each other... We were both alone, and we both had cultural shocks. We understood each other and will continue to be friends."

Through observation of her host family, the Gross's, Soubercazes has learned a lot of things. "I learned that American people never have lunch or dinner together, sitting [at] a table, talking about everyone's day," said Soubercazes, a tra-

dition Soubercazes is accustomed to in France. There meals are a very important part of the day.

"During the weekends, in America, my [host] family doesn't cook lunch. It's very unusual for me because in France, the weekend is the time where we meet the whole family, and we all meet around the table for lunch," explained Soubercazes. She continued, "I think we have a lot more communication between the family members in France, than families have here."

With the responsibility of baby-sitting two children in her host family, Soubercazes has learned a great deal about taking care of others.

"I was not used to having such little children living with me. I do have a sister, but she is 15, so she is dependent. I don't need to feed her or help her [take] her bath, as I do here. Moreover, my parents have been divorced for 5 years now, and I live with my mother at home. But here, I am in a full family. I have a mom and a dad here, and that was really hard for me to get used to again."

Soubercazes has managed well in new surroundings with different customs and has learned quickly to live in two cultures.



In moving to the U.S. Soubercazes has managed to learn the Spanish, Chinese and English languages.

Thomasina Moon
Focus Editor

With a grace and charm acquired from her hometown of Bordeaux, France, this bright red-haired and well-dressed senior, Axelle Soubercazes, has brought a touch of class to West Potomac's halls. An exchange student, Soubercazes is spending her senior year here at West Potomac.

"I have to pass my IBac (International Baccalaureate test in French and English), and I always wanted to come to America because I love it. I'm so attracted to it. In France everyone dreams about here, and

here I am—a dream come true!"

While here, Soubercazes has observed a few differences from her home in France. "The cars here are big...the houses are big... and school here is fun—it's less learning but it's more fun," joked Soubercazes.

This 17 year-old has a few pet peeves. "I hate it when [girls] put makeup on during class and sleep—everyone sleeps in class," exclaimed Soubercazes.

Soubercazes describes Bordeaux, France, as a town known for its red wine, and a place to have fun. While in France, she kept herself busy, playing the violin and piano and participating in swim team

Sashay, Shantay... Do You Want to Be a Super Model?

Thomasina Moon
Focus Editor

You have the face, the walk, the talk, but do you have what it takes to be a model?

Model ads make it seem easy to become a "Super Model," but it takes a lot to succeed at such a career.

Many young people interested in modeling place their hopes in a modeling school. Although some schools are good places to learn the basics of how to walk and talk like a model, they are not the key to getting what an aspiring model mostly needs, an agent.

An agent is a model's direct link to clients—people like Calvin Klein and Donna Karan.

A legitimate agent is not interested in how much money you spend. He is interested in putting you on the market. When you work, he gets paid.

Chad Jordan, the Creative Director for The Artist Agency (T.H.E.), located in Washington, D.C., said, "An agent develops a model's look and books

them jobs. They act as a liaison between the client and the model."

Modeling centers sometimes play as middle men. They try to match a model's "look," to what an agent might want. The center sets up an interview with the agent, who then places the model with a client. The model ends up paying the agent and the modeling center for their job, and for travel expenses. In the end, the model has very little to call their own. It is best to cut out the middle man and go directly to the agent.

Senior Vanessa Spaine got her career started in a different way. She began with beauty pageants. She won first place title as Miss Junior Teen Baltimore.

"The only thing that's difficult is finding an agency. To me, competing in pageants is exciting and fun. I've done one and I won, and now in May I will be competing in another one, so this is a pretty easy way to get started from a different angle," commented Spaine.

A similar way to get an agent is to sign with Model Search America. They ask for a small fee to pay for the travel

expenses of over twenty agents who come from all over the United States. An aspiring model gets the experience of walking down a "Super Model" runway in front of thousands of spectators and the chance of finding an agent. This all happens in one weekend.

A model needs to build a portfolio, a book of pictures. A portfolio cannot be compiled over night or by one photographer. It is a scrap book of an entire career.

For new models, agents will arrange for pictures to be taken and placed on the model's first composition cards (COMP cards). COMP cards are a type of business card left with a client, 5 x 7 cards composed of five pictures, the models name and their measurements. On the front of the card there is one really good head shot, and on the back there are four pictures that show the model's personality.

There are several types of models, including television, movie, runway and print models. Not everyone is fit to be a runway model like Naomi Campbell, nor is everybody fit to be a

print model like Tyra Banks.

According to the Model 1, a modeling center in Virginia, the physical requirements for a fashion model are a height of at least 5'9" to 5'11" and a dress size of 4 to 6. Models taller or bigger than that, are usually pushed into print or television. Print and television models need a beautiful face with strong, defined features. Size rarely matters, but the height requirement is 5'3" to 5'10". These types of models also have to be able to take direction well.

According to Industry Standard Rates of 1998, print models get up to \$125 per hour and runway models get up to \$105 per hour plus an additional \$45 per hour for fittings or rehearsals.

Full-time model work out, meet new people constantly, and are on the go. Modeling is a career, not a hobby, and to succeed takes hard work, sacrifice, and dedication.

"I like the modeling industry because it lets me be creative and help influence today's consumer fashion," commented Jordan.

Duke (32-1)



The thought was too much to handle, the potential endless, when four amazing freshmen joined the already dominant Duke Blue Devils for the start of the 1997-98 season. With this overflow of talent added to an experience Duke team, sportscasters and writers around the country thought Duke was headed for shaky times. They predicted egos and player conflicts would cause players to leave, but this did not happen.

The Blue Devils finished out their 97-98 season with a 32-4 record, losing to Kentucky in the regional final 86-84, but no one had left, and now the Duke Blue Devils, led by veteran coach Mike Krzyzewski are back for the kill.

Duke completed its 1998-99 regular season with a 32-1 record, losing to Cincinnati in November by two points (77-75). The Blue Devils compiled a perfect record in the Atlantic Coast Conference, going 16-0 and being the first team to accomplish this since the expansion. They captured the ACC tournament title by crushing the University of North Carolina 96-73. Freshmen Corey Maggette was added to the roster, creating a team that goes nine men deep. Duke led its opponents in all areas including, scoring, rebounds, shooting percentage, and free throws, but those are just statistics.

Perhaps more interesting is the way the Blue Devils have come together. They returned this season with experience, composure, and the ideal chemistry for winning a national title. As the saying goes, "there is no I in TEAM," and Duke has been a perfect example of this. The classic showboating, self-centered image that comes with successful teams was left behind and a team that utilizes each player's strengths emerged.

The team has been lead by senior Trajan Langdon who was selected as a 1998-99 All-American, along with sophomore Elton Brand. Sophomore William Avery was received an honorable mention. The entire starting line up was named all-ACC, Langdon and Brand being named to the first team, sophomore William Avery to the second team, and sophomore Shane Battier and junior Chris Carrawell to the third team.

Selection Sunday placed the Blue Devils in the number one seed of the Eastern Region. They are focused, they are ready, let the march to Tampa begin.

Michigan St. (29-4)

A 15 game conference winning streak, champions of their conference, the number 1 seed in their region, and surprisingly this team is not the Duke Blue Devils. That is right, the NCAA Tournament does not revolve around the Duke Blue Devils. The Michigan St. Spartans are Champions of the Big Ten.

These Spartans are the top seed in the Midwest, a region being labeled as one of the toughest in the tournament. To get to the Final Four, the Spartans will most likely have to go through Arizona and then Kansas, Utah or the defending National Champion, the Kentucky Wildcats.

Led by junior point guard Mateen Cleaves, the Spartans turned around a shaky early season that saw them start out 4-3 losing to Duke, Connecticut and Temple.

Michigan State tore through the Big Ten this season, losing only one game. Following a loss to Wisconsin in their Big Ten opener, the Spartans recovered to win the final 15 conference games. The Big Ten was ranked the nations toughest conference in the RPI and seven of its teams have been ranked in the Top 25 this season.

Cleaves, an All American and Big Ten Player of the Year is the center of the Spartans team. When Cleaves is hot, the team is hot. In the three losses to Duke, UConn and Temple, Cleaves averaged just ten points, committing ten turnovers in the loss to Temple.

Combining a strong transition game with muscle on the boards, the Spartans get a lot of easy layups. In addition, the Spartans play tough defense that has resulted in opponents shooting just 43 percent from the field.

The crowning moment for Michigan State was in 1979 when they won the National Championship. That year, the Spartans defeated the Indiana Hoosiers. The game which featured a matchup between Magic Johnson and Larry Bird is still the highest rated college game ever.

For the Spartans to win this year, they must maintain the level of consistency that they have shown this season. Assuming that the Spartans get to the Final Four, they probably will have to go through college basketball's number one bandwagon team, Duke. Being that Duke was one of only four teams to beat the Spartans all year, they must keep this fresh in their mind.

Michigan State starts their run through the Midwest Region against sixteenth seeded Mount St. Marys Mountaineers. The Mountaineers are consistently at the bottom of the tournament brackets and offering a viable challenge but eventually bowing out to the stronger and higher rated opponent. Once the Spartans get to the "Sweet 16" the true strength of their team must be shown in order to advance.



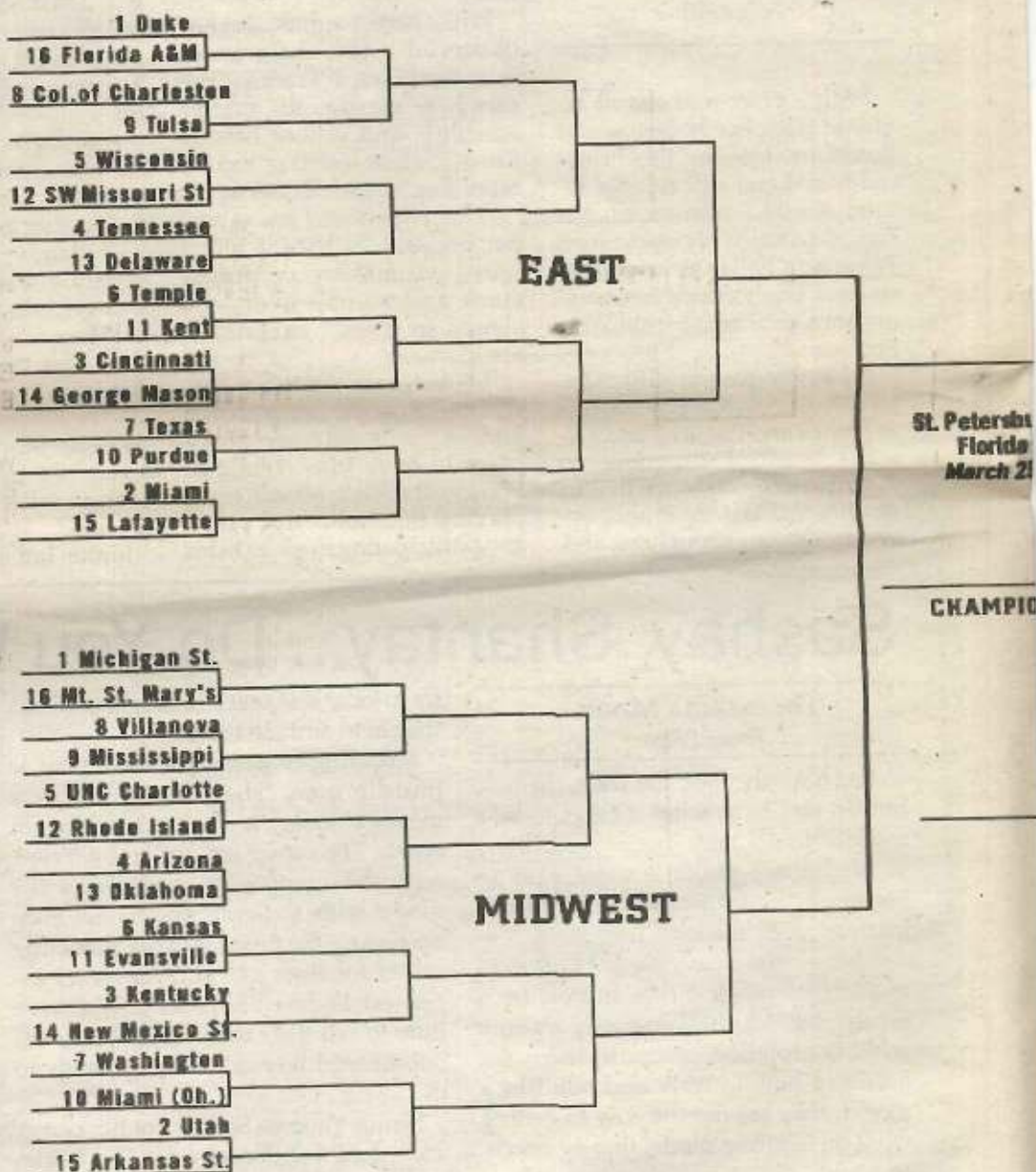
The NCAA basketball tournament is one of the year's most anticipated sports events. The tournament has an interesting history. It was first held in 1939 and was a contest between eight teams. The idea of a national basketball tournament was the brainchild of the National Association of Basketball Coaches. The first final was attended by 15,025 spectators and lost \$2,531. Oregon won in the final, 46-33 over Ohio State.

The startup of the very young national tournament was hampered by World War Two, as many players left college to serve their country overseas. On one team, all eleven men on the squad served in the armed services during the war. Over forty colleges failed to field teams during 1941-1945.

The Fifties brought the first entrance of African-Americans onto the collegiate basketball court. Two of the most famous and talented were Kansas' Wilt Chamberlain and San Francisco's Bill Russell, some of the best all around athletes of their time, Chamberlain was a nationally ranked high jumper as well. In the early fifties, another lack of players, now due to the Korean war, led to the first instance of freshmen being permitted to play varsity basketball.

March Madness

First Round Thursday, March 11 Second Round Saturday, March 13 Regionals March 18 & 20 Semifinals March 27 National Champions



The Lowest Seed Ever

When making their choices for "March Madness," picksters must always consider the 1985 Villanova squad. As the lowest seed ever to win the annual NCAA basketball tournament, Villanova continues to haunt annual gamblers, who fear the one cinderella team that could screw up their whole bracket.

As the number 8 seed in the Southeast Region of the 1985 tournament, Villanova defeated Georgetown 66-64. Georgetown was the top-ranked team in the nation and the defending national champion. Led by center Patrick Ewing, currently of the New York Knicks, Georgetown was heavily favored to defend their title.

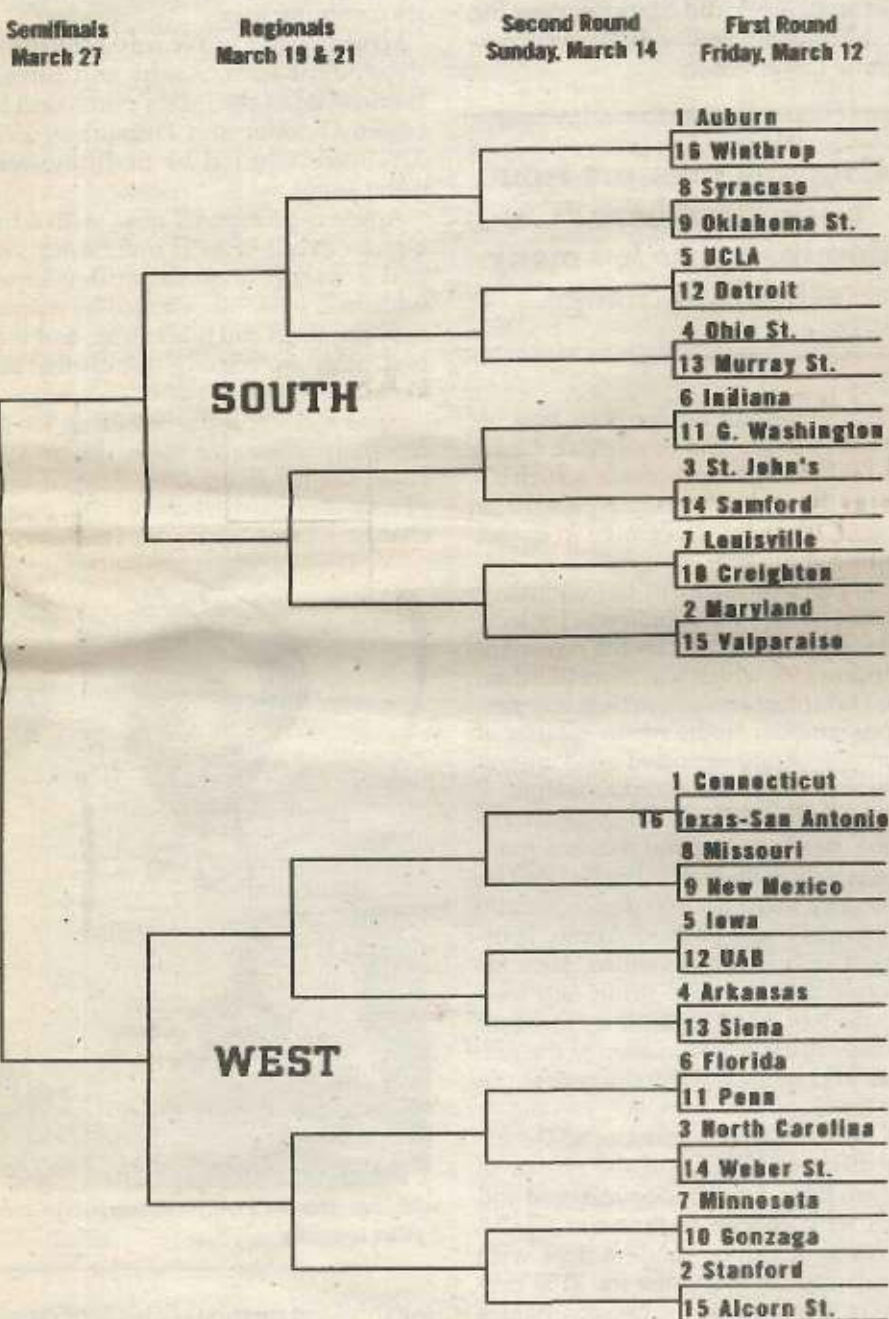
Villanova (25-10) defeated four number 1 and number 2 seeds (Michigan, North Carolina, Memphis State, and Georgetown) on their way to the championship, which was held in

ties were dominated by the UCLA Bruins, who won twelve national titles in a twelve year period. In '67, '68, and '69, UCLA won 88 of 90 games and the sixties were, "their decade."

In the 1970's, players started leaving college early to enter the NBA, while they were still eligible to play on the collegiate level. Players also started to choose colleges based on the quality of their basketball programs, and not just on the academic merits of the college. Dominating the tournament during this decade was UCLA and Marquette, who fielded excellent teams.

They finished in the top ten each year of the decade.

The eighties saw the expansion of the tournament to 64 teams and the participation of players including Patrick Ewing and Alonzo Mourning. The eighties institution of the shot clock and the advent of three point shots. The Big Ten became more of a powerhouse, while the Big Ten lost its prestige. The eighties saw the rise of southern colleges as dominant in the NCAA tournament and many conferences were rearranged to accommodate newcomers and which had increased in size.



to Win it All

on, Kentucky. The Wildcats were led by senior center Ed Pinckney, who scored 28 and grabbed 15 rebounds in the Final Four. Pinckney was named Tournament Most Player.

am finished the regular season third in the Big East Conference and was lucky to b a number 8 seed. Villanova, coached by Rollie Massimino, shot a championship cord 78.6% from the floor.

va was the little engine that could of college basketball. Their victory is significant because they were the lowest seed ever to win the tournament, but also because at the all powerful, Ewing-led Hoyas, considered to be one of the best college all squads of all time.

Auburn (27-3)

The words "Auburn Basketball" and "#1 seed" don't often collide in the same sentence. In fact, before this year they never did. Now things have changed, and the Tigers are an impressive 27-3 and #1 seed in the southern region of the "Big Dance." The last time an Auburn men's basketball team made it to the NCAA tournament was in 1988, when they lost to top-seeded Oklahoma in the second round. The deepest that an Auburn team has ever gone in the NCAA tournament was to the Elite Eight in 1986.

This year's team accomplished many great things, more than anyone expected them to. Most people, including the press and coach, Cliff Ellis, the SEC coach of the year and a lock for national coach of the year, believed that they would finish 3rd or 4th in the SEC and would be low seed in the NCAA tournament. No one expected them to finish the season as SEC champs and be a #1 seed in the tournament.

The team also broke the school record for wins in a season, formerly 22, and equaled the highest ranking in the polls, #2, in school history. The Tigers are a quick, explosive team with a stifling defense. They were second in the nation in margin of victory, winning by an average 21 points per game. They were also first in the SEC in scoring, rebounds, opponent's turnovers, and fewest points allowed.

The Tigers are led by senior forward Bryant Smith, and the junior forward Chris Porter. Smith, the only senior on the starting five, averages 10.9 points per game and is the team leader on and off the court.

Porter, in his first year at Auburn after spending two years in junior college, is the explosive element of the team, averaging 16.5 points per game and 8.6 rebounds. Every time he steps on the court he lights it up with high flying acrobatic dunks, reminiscent of great dunkers like Dr. J., and unbelievable. NBA-caliber moves. During a regular season game against LSU, Porter made what many people call the dunk of the decade. Porter caught a missed shot in mid air somewhere down by his ankles and slammed the ball home in a one-handed tomahawk motion. It was on highlight films for weeks, and broadcasters for ESPN commented on the possibility of it winning an ESPY award. Coach Cliff Ellis said it was the best dunk that he had ever seen.

Porter was named SEC player of the year and SEC newcomer of the year. He was also named first team All-SEC along with junior guard Doc Robinson. Porter and Robinson were also named first team All-American. Bryant Smith was named second team All-SEC and junior center Momadou N'Diaye was named to the third team.

The Tigers look to go deep in the tournament if they can overcome a lack of experience in post season play. They have a relatively tough road to the final four, having to contend with the likes of Maryland, St. Johns, and Ohio State. They could face a tough Syracuse team in the second round as well. They play Winthrop in the first round on March 11 in Indianapolis, IN.

Connecticut (28-2)

To sum it up, 1998/99 has been a year of triumph for the University of Connecticut Huskies. The Huskies were ranked #1 for ten straight weeks in the AP College Basketball poll.

Led by Junior Richard Hamilton (Big East Player of the Year) and sophomore Khalid El-Amin, the Huskies have undoubtedly exceeded numerous expectations placed upon them. But a 19-0 start and a 28-2 record promises no automatic acceptance to the Final Four.

In fact, the last year has been a time of devastation for the team. They took no National Championships and were in no Final Fours. However, in the last ten years, the Huskies have advanced to six Sweet Sixteens, which led in turn to three Elite Eight bids.

Over the years, the Huskies have dealt with several post season woes, but these near losses do not diminish the team in the slightest. University of Connecticut coach Jim Calhoun said, "We've got one of the best programs in the country. I don't need the final four to legitimize myself as a coach. I'd love it to happen for me, for the kids, the program, the state, but there are no guarantees."

There are no guarantees, but one thing that is certain. One of the most underrated teams in the country will definitely play a major role in this year's NCAA Tournament.



As Renovated Schools Welcome New PC's, Jobs And Apple Still Get Their Acts Together

Mark Androsko
Wire Reporter

As renovation begins, West Potomac will be saying farewell to our old Apple and Macintosh computers. For the past many years, most computers used in public schools have been Apple. School support has kept the innovative company afloat. However, growing pressure from business, where PC's dominate, has led many schools to change. This will not necessarily kill the company that has driven the computer revolution.

With Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple Computers, Inc., back at the reins it appears as if the company that started the personal computer revolution is back on its feet. After the success of the iMac and five consecutive, profitable fiscal quarters, Apple seems to be on the rise again. There is, however, very little chance that Apple will be able to retake the dominate position that it held be-



Steve Jobs is the co-founder of Apple.

puters overseas. Unfortunately, in 1981, Wozniak was injured in a plane crash and soon left. Jobs became chairman that year, but soon IBM released its first PC.

In 1983, Jobs brought in John Sculley, then president of Pepsi-Cola. During this period, Jobs was working on the Macintosh computer. The Mac did well initially, but soon consumers became dissatisfied with the small amount of RAM and lack of hard drive connectivity.

Jobs relationship with Sculley was rocky and in 1985, after a heated debate Apple's board of directors sided with Sculley; Jobs resigned and Sculley became the head of Apple Computers.

Shortly thereafter, Microsoft released Windows 1.0 and the argument over the rights to the Mac OS (Operating System) began. Apple was hurt by a signed agreement which basically said that Microsoft would not use Mac technology in Windows 1.0, but did not say anything about future versions, a fact Bill Gates was careful to note and utilize.

Apple did see another profitable period with the release of LaserWriter, the first affordable laser printer for the Mac, and PageMaker, the first desktop publishing program.

Microsoft Windows 3.0 debuted in May, 1990. In response, Apple planned to license the Mac OS, but new CEO, Michael Spindler, said it was "too late to license." The problem with licensing was that while it could increase the number of people using Macs and therefore encourage software developers to produce more software for the Mac, it would also reduce Apple's market share by pulling away customers. Not until 1995, did Spindler sign the first licensing deal with Power Computing Corporation.

Growing pressure from business, where PC's dominate, has led many schools to change.

The successful Power Book was released in 1991. The PowerMac, based on the PowerPC processor which allowed the computers to surpass many of Intel's newest processors in speed, appeared in 1994.

In 1995, disaster hit the company. Unable to fill over \$1 billion in back orders, Apple was hurt by the release of Windows 95, which was more like than the Mac interface system than any previous version. In the winter quarter of that year, Apple reported a \$68 million loss. Spindler was asked to resign.

Gil Amelio, the new CEO, labored to bring Apple out of the red and managed fairly well despite the fact that he was only there for 500 days. Amelio completely reorganized Apple, splitting it into seven divisions, each responsible for its own profit and loss. Apple lost \$740 million in the first quarter of 1996, \$33 million in the second, and made a \$30 million profit in the third.

Late 1996, Apple announced the acquisition of NeXT and the return of Steven Jobs. Amelio soon resigned and Jobs took charge as "interim CEO." Surprisingly, Jobs made a deal with Microsoft. In exchange for \$150 million in Apple stock, the two companies agreed to a five year patent cross-license, and the interface system debate was finally settled. To dispel the charges that it had stolen from Apple when designing Windows, Microsoft paid an undisclosed sum of money. Microsoft also announced that Office '98 would be available for Macs by the end of the year.

With its sudden new life, Apple began selling computers directly over the

phone and internet successfully. In January, 1998, Apple had its first profitable quarter in over a year, bringing in \$44 million profit.

New computers were released: the PowerMac G3 and the Power Book G3. A new design, with a small price tag and decent computing power, was released as well: the iMac. In July, Apple announced its third profitable quarter in a row (\$101 million).

While it is no longer the best-selling computer, the iMac is doing exceptionally well. This easy-to-assemble, easy-to-use, and easy-internet-access computer is especially popular among novice computer users.

According to a buyer survey by the independent firm, Audit and Survey Worldwide of the iMacs purchased between October and December, 1998, 32% were selected by first-time computer users.

Apple is doing well now, with a first quarter profit of \$152 million for 1999 and a swarm of software developers who, said Jobs, "are excited by Apple's new products and marketing, and their best titles are coming out on the Mac again."

Some wonder if the optimism for the company comes too soon. In his 1998 book, *On the Firing Line*, Amelio said, "Times change, markets change, people change... and Apple can't survive us-



Jobs has returned to Apple to help out the computer company

ing innocent methods of leadership and management." In addition, Amelio said that the problems Apple was having were not due to poor products, but were a result of "how comfortable [consumers] are with the state of the company."

Amelio also gave Apple, "until the beginning of 1999 to get its act together" if it was going to survive. It has done so and, judging by recent sales and profits, Apple should be doing all right for some time.

Tidbytes

fore Microsoft entered the picture. Some wonder if this recent boost in sales will not be followed by another drop, especially in light of its history of ups and downs.

Apple was started in 1977, when Steven Jobs and Steven Wozniak teamed up to sell the Apple I, which Wozniak had designed a year earlier. The Apple I was not very successful, but together, Jobs and Wozniak designed and sold the Apple II; the first computer to come in a plastic case and include color graphics. The Apple II was a big success.

By 1980, Apple had several thousand employees and had started selling com-

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JACKET TO PUT IT ON!



71st Academy Awards

Who Is West Potomac Picking to Win?

ORIGINAL SONG

ARMAGEDDON—"I Don't Want to Miss a Thing"
Music and Lyric by Diane Warren
QUEST FOR CAMELOT—"The Prayer" Music by
Carole Bayer Sager; Lyric by Carole Bayer Sager
THE HORSE WHISPERER—"A Soft Place to Fall"
Music and Lyric by Allison Moorer and Gwil Owen
BABE: PIG IN THE CITY—"That'll Do" Randy
Newman
THE PRINCE OF EGYPT—"When You Believe"
Music and Lyric by Stephen Schwartz

SCREENPLAY—ORIGINAL

BULWORTH Screenplay by Warren Beatty
LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL Screenplay by Roberto Benigni
SAVING PRIVATE RYAN Written by Robert Rodat
SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE Written by Marc Norman
THE TRUMAN SHOW Written by Andrew Niccol

SCREENPLAY—ADAPTATION

GODS AND MONSTERS Written by Bill Condon
OUT OF SIGHT Screenplay by Scott Frank
PRIMARY COLORS Screenplay by Elaine May
A SIMPLE PLAN Screenplay by Scott B. Smith
THE THIN RED LINE by Terrence Malick

SOUND EFFECTS EDITING

ARMAGEDDON George Watters II
THE MASK OF ZORRO David McMoyler
SAVING PRIVATE RYAN Gary Rydstrom

VISUAL EFFECTS

ARMAGEDDON Richard R. Hoover
MIGHTY JOE YOUNG Rick Baker
WHAT DREAMS MAY COME Joel Hynek

ART DIRECTION

ELIZABETH Peter Howitt
PLEASANTVILLE Jay Hart
SAVING PRIVATE RYAN Lisa Dean Kavanaugh
SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE Jill Quertier
WHAT DREAMS MAY COME Cindy Carr

BEST PICTURE

3% ELIZABETH Alison Owen Tim Bevan
12% LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL Elda Ferri
57% SAVING PRIVATE RYAN Steven Spielberg
22% SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE David Parfitt
6% THE THIN RED LINE Robert Michael Geisler

BEST ACTOR

14% Roberto Benigni LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL
72% Tom Hanks SAVING PRIVATE RYAN
2% Ian McKellen GODS AND MONSTERS
5% Nick Nolte AFFLICTION
7% Edward Norton AMERICAN HISTORY X

SUPPORTING ACTOR

3% James Coburn AFFLICTION
20% Robert Duvall A CIVIL ACTION
39% Ed Harris THE TRUMAN SHOW
26% Geoffrey Rush SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE
14% Billy Bob Thornton A SIMPLE PLAN

BEST ACTRESS

13% Cate Blanchett ELIZABETH
3% Fernanda Montenegro CENTRAL STATION
71% Gwyneth Paltrow SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE
11% Meryl Streep ONE TRUE THING
2% Emily Watson HILARY AND JACKIE

SUPPORTING ACTRESS

47% Kathy Bates PRIMARY COLORS
4% Brenda Blethyn LITTLE VOICE
38% Judi Dench SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE
4% Rachel Griffiths HILARY AND JACKIE
7% Lynn Redgrave GODS AND MONSTERS

BEST DIRECTOR

13% LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL Roberto Benigni
54% SAVING PRIVATE RYAN Steven Spielberg
12% SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE John Madden
4% THE THIN RED LINE Terrence Malick
17% THE TRUMAN SHOW Peter Weir

*This poll was a random survey of 227 West Potomac students.

CINEMATOGRAPHY

A CIVIL ACTION Conrad L. Hall
ELIZABETH Remi Adefarasin
SAVING PRIVATE RYAN Janusz Kaminski
SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE Richard Greatrex
THE THIN RED LINE John Toll

COSTUME DESIGN

BELOVED Colleen Atwood
ELIZABETH Alexandra Byrne
PLEASANTVILLE Judianna Makovsky
SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE Sandy Powell
VELVET GOLDMINE Sandy Powell

FILM EDITING

LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL Simona Paggi
OUT OF SIGHT Anne V. Coates
SAVING PRIVATE RYAN Michael Kahn
SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE David Gamble
THE THIN RED LINE Billy Weber

MAKEUP

ELIZABETH Jenny Shircore
SAVING PRIVATE RYAN Lois Burwell
SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE Lisa Westcott

ORIGINAL MUSICAL OR COMEDY SCORE

A BUG'S LIFE Randy Newman
MULAN Music by Matthew Wilder; Lyrics by David Zippel; Orchestral Score by Jerry Goldsmith
PATCH ADAMS Marc Shaiman
THE PRINCE OF EGYPT Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz; Orchestral Score by Hans Zimmer
SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE Stephen Warbeck

ORIGINAL DRAMATIC SCORE

ELIZABETH David Hirschfelder
LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL Nicola Piovani
PLEASANTVILLE Randy Newman
SAVING PRIVATE RYAN John Williams
THE THIN RED LINE Hans Zimmer

Hip-hop Finds Roots in a World Where *Things Fall Apart*



The Roots new album, *Things Fall Apart*, can be found in five different collectible covers: the baby, the ace, the church, the girl, and the riot.

MCA

Jameson Penn
Managing Editor

Next time you peruse the local record store's collection of hip-hop, don't get too discouraged. February 23, 1999 brought a sigh of relief to those frustrated fans out there. Sick of recycled beats and ego-trippable lyrics? The Roots, no less than expected, pave hip-hop's road to Wellsville with *Things Fall Apart*.

Critics of hip-hop complain of unoriginality and shallow, negatively charged lyrics. While such arguments may have some truth, The Roots are not so. Black Thought, one of the more powerful lyricists out

there, rhymes with such unpredictable punch that you're not sure what's next.

"You Got Me," the album's debut track featuring Erykah Badu, details a bitter-sweet love story: "This Ethiopian queen from Philly... she said she loved my show in Paris / At Elysee Montmartre / And that I stepped off the stage / And took a piece of her heart."

Unfortunately, romance falls flat. As we already have or soon will learn: "...sometimes relationships get ill and things fall apart."

Disappointing is Erykah Badu. Her refrain, "Bay-bay... don't worry... you know that... you got me..." goes overboard. Shooting for

melancholy, she falls short — more sleepy than anything. I expected more energy out of her.

In 1987, The Roots couldn't sign a record, let alone get a gig in the U.S. They exported their talent to Germany where they toured and cut their first album, *Organix*.

If The Roots have been touring and playing for enthusiastic crowds since 1987 in Germany, how come this Philadelphia band is not well known?

Simply, there are six members: Black Thought, 9th Wonder, Hub, Kamal, Rahzel, Malik B., and Scratch, none of which want to overshadow another (i.e. no celebrity on

board).

As you listen to the acidly organic jazz/hip-hop, you may think they employ a DJ or a sampler. You are mistaken. Not bowing down to the mainstream demand for stolen rhythms, the closest they come is letting Rahzel do his thing.

Rahzel a.k.a. "the Godfather of Noyze," is The Roots' human drummer. 'Nuf said. On "Adrenaline," Rahzel provides a sneak peek of his vocal ooh's and ahh's that will stand alone on his May 1999 solo debut, "Make the Music with Your Mouth 2000."

The album's title, "Things Fall Apart," is a tribute to African writer Chinua Achebe and his similarly named novel

of a Nigerian Ibo clan's struggles with morality and cultural change.

Achebe borrowed the story's name from William Butler Yeats' poem, "The Second Coming." "Turning and turning in the widening gyre / The falcon cannot hear the falconer / Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold..."

Things Fall Apart can be purchased in five different collector covers: the baby, the ace, the church, the girl, and the riot.

Ignoring trends of recently successful albums, The Roots' *Things Fall Apart* can be taken as reassurance that there still is some life in that old hip-hop hooptie.

Evictions at Melrose Place: Aaron Spelling Moves On



Melrose Place, where it started seven years ago.

Sarah Beiging
Copy Editor

Moving boxes are needed at Melrose Place. That's right, your favorite, or not so favorite, nighttime soap opera is going off the air. Even Heather

Lochlear's micro-mini skirt couldn't save her job now. After a seven-season run, the show is being canceled.

Aaron Spelling launched the series on July 8, 1992. Originally, critics called it "dull and boring."

Heather Lochlear (Amanda) moved to

Melrose Place in November of 1992. Amanda's job was to shake things up, and she did. Episodes became weekly sagas of murder, sex, and abuse. This worked for Spelling through the 96-97 season, when the show enjoyed its highest ratings ever.

Since 1997, the show has seen a vast number of character changes. The seven apartments at Melrose Place have seen over twenty tenants in the past seven seasons.

Thomas Calabro (Michael) is the only original cast member left. Some Melrose names that you might recognize are Alyssa Milano (Jennifer), Andrew Shue (Billy), and Courtney Thorne-Smith (Allison), who moved out of Melrose in 1997 to join the new series, *Ally McBeal*.

Complicated cast changes and weak plots caused Melrose ratings to decline. The show's ratings dropping from an 8 to a 4.8 in a short period of time.

When Fox announced the cancellation of the show, Spell-

ing stated, "Melrose Place is one of my all-time favorite shows, and I will miss it and everyone involved very much."

Fox quickly followed that the show will, "remain a pop culture icon of the 90s."

90210 is another Spelling shows on Fox. For the past seven seasons we have watched the 90210 characters grow from sophomores in high school to college graduates.

This show was originally weekly stories about teen problems with school, family, and love. Jason Priestly, one of the few original cast members left, and an executive producer of the show said, "They have all graduated from college, and

are moving into an arena of life where most young people in their 20s move into after college."

The two hour season premiere introduced two new characters, played by Vincent Young and Hilary Swank. These actors may not get what they expect. Its rumored that next year will be the shows last season.

Six original cast members are left: Jason Priestly (Brandon), Jennie Garth (Kelly), Brian Austin Green, Joe Tata (Nat), Tori Spelling (Donna), and Ian Ziering (Steve). With the leaving of Shannon Doherty and Luke Perry in 1994, the show slumped. Some say that 90210 will not be able to "survive the rigors of a post-grad job search." We'll find out in September.

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For Filmmaker Roberto Benigni, "Life is Beautiful"

Charlie Quiroz
Entertainment Editor

It took a couple tries, but Roberto Benigni has finally found success in the U.S.. His 1991 film, "Johnny Stecchino," was heavily promoted but never achieved the acclaim or ticket sales of his most recent film, "Life is Beautiful." Other failed attempts at fame in the U.S. included a roles in the pathetic, "Son of the Pink Panther" and cult favorite, "Down by Law."

Italian audiences have been huge fans of Benigni for decades. He is their version of Woody Allen: a comedian who writes, directs, and stars in his films, without the bitterness of Allen.

Benigni transmits energy and joy in the Chaplin-esque physical humor of his most recent film.

In "Life is Beautiful," Benigni manages biting humor, walking a thin line to not mock the Holocaust.

The film was a huge career risk. If it hadn't worked, he might have offended and lost his legion of fans.

In the film, he plays Guido, an Italian Jew, who along with his wife and angelic five-year old son, is deported to a concentration camp. Guido's wife, Dora, is played by Benigni's actual wife, Nicoletta Braschi, who stars opposite him in all his films.

To protect his son, he tells him that the concentration camp is an elaborate game in which they must behave to get a thousand points and win a tank as a prize.

Throughout the film, the viewer is manipulated wonderfully, torn between laughter and tears.

The film has done well worldwide, collecting

numerous awards from over fifty organizations, winning the coveted Grand Jury Prize from the Cannes Film Festival. When he won, he kissed every member of the jury to thank them for the "kiss" they bestowed on him.

"Life is Beautiful" has most recently been nominated for seven Oscars, including Best Picture. This marks the first time a foreign film has been nominated for that award.

Chaplin's, 1940 film, "The Great Dictator," is now recognized as a comedic masterpiece. But, Jerry Lewis also tried in 1971.

Lewis' "The Day the Clown Cried" involved a clown who was recruited by the Nazis to entertain children as they were being sent to the gas chamber. Apparently, the film was so bad that it was never released, and the sole copy sits in a vault in Lewis' house.

"Life is Beautiful" resonates personally with Benigni, whose family's life mirrors the events of the film.

Benigni's father, Luigi, was sent to a German labor camp. What stories Luigi told Robert are much like the ones Guido tells his son onscreen.

Luigi told the New York Times, "We were forbidden to talk to women. There were Czechs, Poles, and Russians in there with us, but the sign over the door that said 'Those who attempt to speak to women will be severely punished' was written only in Italian. The Germans knew how much Italians like to [expletive]."

There are other similarities between Guido and Benigni. Benigni is good friends with the novelist, Umberto Eco, and they often exchange riddles with each other much like Guido does with the doctor in

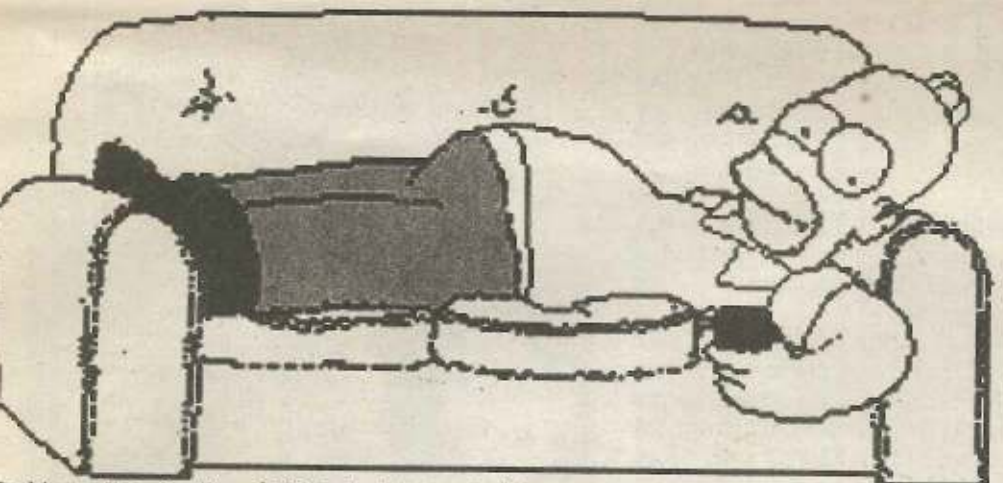


Three of Robert Benigni's many faces. Miramax Pictures

the movie.

Both, Benigni and Eco are leftist, politically. They were both vocal critics of the conservative government that once ruled Italy. In fact, when Benigni was a stand-up comic he was fined and barred from performing because of his strong condemnation of the pope.

That was a long time ago. Benigni was recently invited to the Vatican to watch the film with the pope. It was only the third film the pope ever saw in his life.



Is this an all too familiar sight? Lack of decent television programming has led to droolmania

20th Century Fox

T.V. Wasteland Wastes Viewer's Time

Ally Medina
Photo Editor

TV takes a large part of our everyday lives, and yet what useful information do we get from it? Not much. All that seems to be on the tube nowadays are copy-cat shows, "NYPD Blue" begets "New York Undercover," and "Pacific Blue"; talk shows go from bad to worse, from "Sally," and "Dicki" to "Jerry"; and soap operas never end, "The Bold

and the Beautiful," "As the World Turns," and "Guiding Light". The only purposeful programming is the 10 o'clock news and some nifty commercials.

Most TV shows are pure entertainment, and are amusing on the first two or three runs, but once you notice the pattern, they get boring. The guy and girl finally go out. The guy and girl break-up, or some guy shoots another guy, and Walker comes in and kicks the killer's butt. How much of this can we

take?

Obviously lots since we have the show return after their first season. Not only is their comeback proof enough that there are utterly bored people in this world that have nothing better to do than to watch these things, but they have tons of award shows for these programs too.

The award shows, first of all, have lousy hosts that can't tell jokes—just annoy—then they have pointless categories such as, "Actress with the best hair"

or "Best show you're not watching".

Since when did the award show people become fashion critics? Sophomore Devlin Dibiletto said, "I love watching the awards show, but mostly to see if anyone I like was going to sing or to see what they're wearing".

I would say that once a show is over, it's over. Don't get me wrong, "Saved by the Bell" was great, but "Saved by the Bell the New Class"? Please.

Okay, so as if sequels aren't bad enough, they have the nerve to put the TV shows on the silver screen like the X-Files. Oh the TV show madness doesn't stop there, the networks sell the episodes on tape such as South Park, X-Files, Beavis and Butt-head and Jerry Springer—which they like to call a documentary!

On occasion there will be a brilliant show that even non-TV people will sit down and watch. What happens you ask? It only comes on once per week which will make it really tough to know what happens if you miss a week. You would also think that if it does come on once per week that every show will be great, think again, the dull patterns continue.

Summer rolls around and

you actually feel like wasting time and watch TV. What's wrong with that you ask? RE-RUNS! They not only plan to bore us during the long school year, but during the summer too. Somehow staying indoors and relaxing with the tube just doesn't cut it anymore.

"I hardly watch TV, I have better things to do. I have a life", stated Sophomore Brian Kaminsky. I would have to say that the only summer pro-

Next time you sit in front of the TV, think about all the fun things you could be doing off your rump.

grams worth watching are those morning cartoons that we watched in elementary school.

Next time you sit in front of the TV and start your channel surfing, think about all the active, fun things you could be doing off your rump. Don't waste your time with "World's Most Shocking Medical Videos" and go do some "shocking" stuff of your own.

BMG ENTERTAINMENT
**COLUMBIA
HOUSE**
EVERYCD

The Truth About Twelve CD's For One Cent

Bess Anna Carter
Wire Reporter
Tiffany Gregory
Wire Reporter

A man walks down the street looking at the ground, spots a penny, picks it up and says to himself, "Oh good, now I can get those 12 CD's I've been wanting." Little does he know, that penny he found will not even buy him the cover of a CD from BMG, Columbia House, or everycd.com.

Have you seen the ads for bargain CD companies and ever wondered if they're real? Here are some facts behind these so called bargain CD companies.

Columbia House Music Company offers 12 CD's for free. Sounds too good to be true? Well it is, because you end up paying shipping and handling. The ad says all you need to do is buy as few as six selections at regular club prices within the next two years, prices which range from \$12.98-\$16.98, but again, this does not include shipping and handling. Also, you cannot cancel your membership until you have bought the required six selections.

Senior Danielle Lund said, "I joined Columbia House in 1995, and they won't let me cancel my membership until 2001."

An online CD company called everycd.com offers those joining their club a voucher, "worth one hundred dollars off the lowest published fare of most major airlines." Everycd.com claims that they have the biggest selection and the most extensive catalog with 300,000 titles. They also claim that they have the best prices. The terms of membership are that you have a free 30 day trial period, a \$39.95 annual fee, and a CD catalog that is sent to you for \$5.95. At the end of your trial period you will be automatically billed \$39.95 for the membership fee, which will be billed to the credit card account that you provided to everycd.com when you joined the club.

To join the club online you must be a credit card holder. If you don't have a credit card or choose not to use one, you must pay the membership fee up front, by check or money order.

The CD companies also send you their CD of the month, every month. If the package is opened or not returned within the required number of days, you are billed an additional charge for each CD.

Spanish teacher Mr. David Abella was involved with a CD company that he believes, "was a rip-off, because they sent me their top selection each month, and when I didn't send it back, I got charged the full price of the CD, which was about 18 bucks!"

CD web sites sometimes do not even give prices of CD's. Weird, huh? When bills are not paid by the companies guidelines, they send notices and threats of having your name sent to a bill collection agency. In the end, you can be in debt hundreds of dollars for what you thought would be just a penny.

Blondie: Back on the Scene After 15 Years

Bess Anna Carter
Wire Reporter

The new-wave, underground punk band "Blondie," formed in the early 70's, has reunited for the release of their new album, *No Exit*. Similar to earlier Blondie albums, it has various styles and sound effects. It has already produced one hit single, "Maria." The album includes three bonus tracks, recorded live in London.

Blondie formed in 1974 in New York City and influenced many performers, across styles as varied



as rock, punk, reggae and rap.

Blondie's success can be contributed to not only their new-wave styles, but also to glamorous front woman, Deborah Harry, who, along with Chris Stein, brought Blondie together in 1974. The other members included Clem Burke (drummer), Gary Valentine (bassist) and James Destri (keyboard player). The band went through many transitions of band members.

In 1977, Valentine was replaced by Frank Infante. Blondie then expanded to a six member band with the addition of Nigel Harrison (bassist). This moved Infante to lead guitar.

The band experimented with many different band names. They contrived their band name in '75 from an everyday phrase that was said to lead singer Deborah Harry. When Harry would walk down the city streets, truck drivers would yell out, "Hey Blondie," because of her blonde hair. Harry then decided that Blondie would be a great name for the band.

Blondie recorded their first single in '75, called "X Offender," originally titled "Sex Offender." They

changed the name to avoid controversy. Soon after that, the band recorded their debut, self-titled album, and landed a national tour with Iggy Pop.

In '77 they followed the self-titled album with *Plastic Letters*. Blondie's next album, *Parallel Lines*, was on the list of the Top Ten albums for '78.

Parallel Lines went platinum. The album produced hits such as, "The Disco Song," "Once I Had a Love," "Heart of Glass," and "One Way or Another."

In '79, *Eat to the Beat* yielded the hit "Dreaming."

The next album, released in '80, was titled *Autoamerican*. This album had two hits that sat at the top of the charts for weeks, "Rapture" and "The Tide is High."

Blondie broke up for a while after the release of *Autoamerican*, and soon after that, reunited to record *The Hunter*, in '82. This album was a commercial disappointment, with only one successful single, "Island of Lost Souls."

Unfortunately, guitarist Chris Stein became ill with a genetic disease called pemphigus, which led to Blondie's break up in October of '82. Deborah Harry then launched her solo career in dance music, all while nursing her bandmate and lover back to health.

None of the members' individual careers reached the level of success the group had had together. Stein and Harry continued to be an artistic and romantic team throughout the 80's.

Blondie has been touring much of Europe and soon will be touring the U.S. The band, surprisingly, has reunited with all the original band members.



Blondie in their early days



Catherine L. Parker

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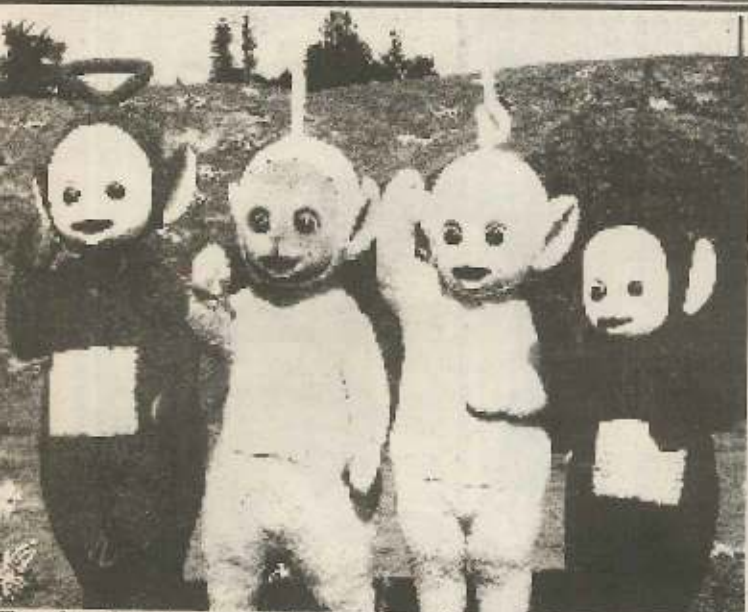


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These four characters seem to be filling the void between Sesame Street and Barney on PBS.

Teletubbies Come to U.S Via Public Television

Diane Alford
Business Manager
Derrick Kirksey
Wire Reporter

There are four Teletubbies. One is red and has a circle on its head. Laalaa is yellow with a swirl on its head. Tinky-Winky is purple with a triangle on its head, and Dipsy is green with a straight line on its head. These characters have come to the United States after achieving success in Europe.

The Teletubbies are known for entertaining preschool children and a fair few silent adult admirers.

These characters communicate in a sing-song nonsense and keep television in their stomachs. These characters have been criticized as uneducational and inane.

These brightly colored space alien characters live in a fan-

tasy world of flowers and green rolling hills. They resemble human infants. They babble, laugh, and coo with rabbits, a talking periscope, and a baby-faced sun.

Adult viewers must realize the creativity and energy of the producers and writers of this

**Children who are
able to make a clear,
declarative state-
ment will find the
teletubbies a waste
of time.**

show are not much used. Children able to make a clear, declarative statement will find the Teletubbies a waste of time, although around West Potomac there are a few students running around with Teletubbie backpacks and stuffed animals.

According to assistant Scooter

Sound FX man, Simon Liszt said that the show was originally aired for adults and then changed to a children's show due to television scheduling trouble in Britain.

Unfortunately, like most well-known public figures, the Teletubbies have had their share of controversy. Creators have explained that the creatures are neither male nor female, but two obviously have deeper voices than the other two, who have high pitched voices.

Some viewers may see Tinky-Winky and Dipsy as boys, an Laalaa and Po as girls.

Christian leader Reverend Jerry Falwell stated that Tinky Winky is role modeling that gay life-style is alright and he believes that this is damaging to children.

Tinky-Winky is a controversial character, often seen running around in a tutu and carrying his red handbag. "He" is also purple, a gay pride color, and has a triangle protruding from "his" head, a gay pride symbol. He has been known to indulge in flower arranging.

It has been said that because of this, Tinky-Winky promotes "gayness."

What these critics don't seem to realize is: one, the show is designed for kids who don't even know (or care to know) about sex; two, these children more than likely don't know the name of their reproductive organs; and three, the children certainly aren't looking for guidance in life from these entertaining characters, but rather use the Teletubbies as a way to fill the void between Sesame Street and Barney.

State Of The Arts March-April

WP EVENTS

March 25, 7:30pm
Band "March Madness" Concert

April 28- May 1, 7:30pm,
Bye, Bye Birdie

Concerts & Events

Richmond Coliseum

April 1

World Championship Wrestling

June 18

World Wrestling Federation

9:30 Club

-March 25 The Roots

-March 27 Stabbing Westward

-April 2 Fuel

Patriot Center

-April 3 Marilyn Manson & Hole

-April 28 98 Degrees

MCI Center

-March 19 N SYNC

March 29- April 2
SPRING BREAK!!

Rolling Stones Bring No Security To MCI Center

Sasha Cannon
Sports Editor

Well known as the definition of rock music itself, the Rolling Stones have outdone themselves again. In the history of rock music, the Stones are the longest running band that still exists today. Playing for over 30 years, the Stones have made their career into a legend that will be remembered a long time.

Mick Jagger and Keith Richards, the two Stones who have been part of the band since the beginning, met in a small city in Kent. Taking the band name from a Muddy

Waters Song, "Rollin' Stones Blues", these two, joined by talented pianist Ian Stewart and guitarist Brian Jones, began the small group, the pacesetter of rock, The Rolling Stones.

The group which is used to outdoor tours in stadiums, have downsized and have recently been on their *No Security* tour and are now performing at indoor arenas. The tour was just here at the MCI arena, and it was a bit hit.

Although the Stones are getting older, they haven't lost their spunk. Mick Jagger, with his jumps and leaps across the stage, and Keith Richards, with his whimsical dancing, have proven

that age can't get the best of them, and they may still be counted in as a popular band next year. Hopefully they will continue on.

The Stones, with their long record of performances and their outstanding history, went from punk rockers who surprised everyone with their attitude, to a more toned down, respectable group. With a first album that caused much controversy because it was titleless and had no writing on the front, the Stones immediately went to number one. The song that is probably most associated with the Stones, "(I Can't Get No) Sat-

isfaction" amazed everyone when it was released in August of 1965, and with this song, everyone knew the Stones were serious, and we'd be seeing them for a long time.

Performing some of their most well-known songs, the Stones got much response from the crowd. The biggest hits of the evening were probably "Brown Sugar" and "Honky Tonk Women", which are both very popular and have been around for years. The Stones get a great their crowds involved, and everyone was warped into a hard rock dance fest.

Overall, the *No Security* tour



Jagger prances across the stage proving you can never be too old for rock.

performance at the MCI arena, was a huge success. If you went however, it may be the last time you see them at a tour and up close. Hopefully the Stones will continue, but it has been rumored they plan to quit next year.

Bye Bye Birdie, Hello Broadway Ambitions

Christine Burns
Assistant Copy Editor

The Synopsis

Newspapers everywhere are spreading the news that pop-sensation Conrad Birdie has been drafted. Teenage girls around the world share each others pain. Their hero, their idol, their love is going to war.

Meanwhile, struggling songwriter Albert Peterson, who is also Conrad's manager, is ending his business. Now that Conrad has been drafted, Albert's only successful song is no more. It was supposed to be the theme song to Birdie's up and coming film, that is, until he was drafted.

Albert's secretary Rosie, who is also his girlfriend, thinks of an ingenious plan for Albert to make real money to pay Conrad his gaurentee of \$50,000 and to go back to school.

Rosie's plan includes the young Kim McAfee of Sweet Apple, an unknown town in Ohio. The idea is to bring Conrad to this little town to kiss Kim on the Ed Sullivan Show and sing Albert's yet to be written song entitled, "One Last Kiss."

The idea is a hit, and they head off for Sweet Apple, Ohio. When they arrive, they are greeted by dozens of screaming girls who recite the Conrad Birdie fancub pledge for all to hear. Meanwhile, the boys of the town, including Kim's boyfriend, Hugo, are jealous of Conrad.

As the time passes problems arise between Albert and Rosie's relationship as well as Kim and Hugo's. When they reach the Ed Sullivan show Conrad sings his song, but does Kim get her kiss? I guess you will have to attend the show to find out.

Other Players

Janie McAfee: Kim's little sister is freshman Ashley Mott. Mott participated in "A Midsummer Nights Dream" and "A Night of One Acts" here at West Potomac.

Alice: A friend of Kim, is portrayed by freshman Lourdes San Pedro. This is San Pedro's first West Potomac production, but has had roles in many M.V.C.C.T and A.C.C.T plays.



Conrad Birdie, the famous pop-sensation, with popularity as big as Elvis, is played by Johannes Keseberg and Scott Cambell. Keseberg, a German exchange student, has been in several short plays at his school in Germany. Campbell has been in "Heavy Metal MacBeth," "Fiddler on the Roof," "The Man Who Came to Dinner," "Don't Drink the Water," "Bury the Dead," "Midsummer Nights Dream," and "The Music Man."



Kim McAfee, young, pretty teenage girl, portrayed by junior Katie Fox-Kirsch. Other school productions Katie has participated in include, "Oklahoma," and "The Music Man." Fox-Kirsch is also affiliated with numerous M.V.C.C.T and A.C.C.T. productions.



Mrs. McAfee, Kim and Janie's mother, is junior Sarah Powell. Powell has been in two school productions, "Oklahoma," and "The Music Man." She has also been in a number of Little Theater productions.

Hugo, Kim's boyfriend, is played by Rick Dugan, to the left. Being a freshman, Dugan has only been in one WP production, "Tuckers Ridge." In addition to this, Dugan has been in a number of M.V.C.C.T. productions.



Albert Peterson, president of the Almaelou Music Cooperation, is portrayed by Mike Wilson and Rodrigo Vega. Wilson has been in the following WP productions: "Bury the Dead," "The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail," "Music Man," and "Enemy of the People." Vega has been in, "Charlie Chan," "The Music Man," "Bury the Dead," and "The Most Important Thing".

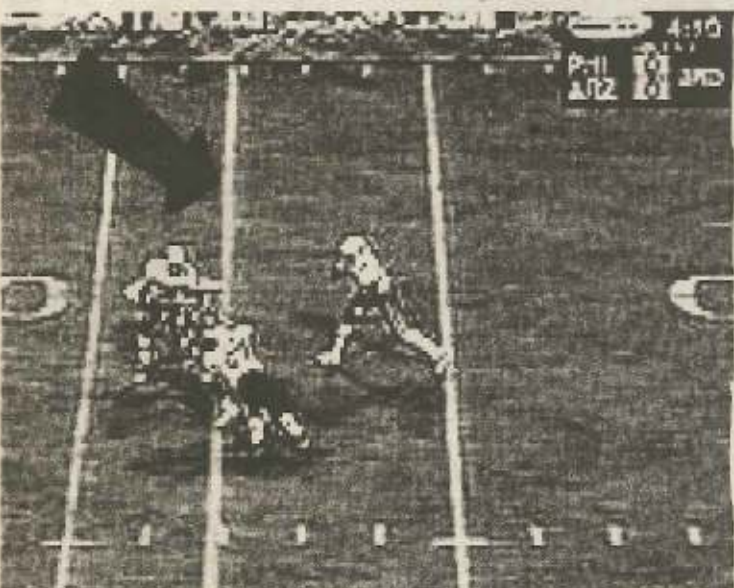


Rosie Alvarez, Albert's secretary, is played by sophomore Jenny Charlton. Charlton has a great deal of previous acting experience, including the West Potomac productions, "Oliver," "Enemy of the People," "The Music Man," and "Bury the Dead." She has also been involved in productions by Aldersgate Community Childrens Theater and Mount Vernon Community Childrens Theater.



Mr. McAfee, Kim and Janie's father, is played by Matt Klein. This is Klein's first West Potomac play. He has previously been in, "Harvey," "Twelfth Night," and "Trial by Jury." He also spent three years at the Institute for the Arts

Enhancing Your Entertainment



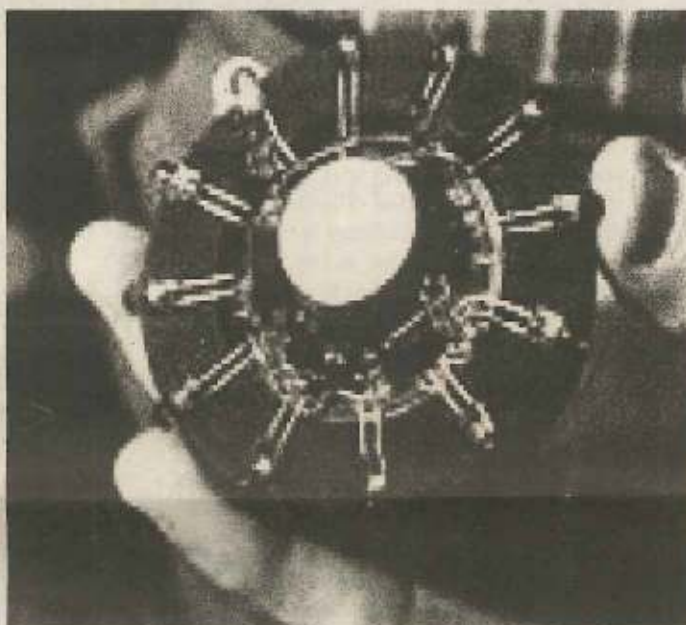
Two of the recent additions to televised sports entertainment are a virtual line (left) that will show to the viewers at home the first down markers, and a puck that glows when hit during NHL games. When the puck reaches speeds of over 70 mph, the puck glows red and a comet tail flashes the direction of the puck.

Nicole Gibson
Sports Editors

It seems today that more and more products can be enhanced. Senior portrait companies delete unwanted tan lines, Forrest Gump appears to be talking to Richard Nixon, and digital sound provides a better sound quality. And it is all to enhance the product to make it better liked or more entertaining.

We look out sports fans, sports enhancement is coming to your home.

Sports enhancement is the name, and giving the viewer a new insight is the game. By using advanced computer technology, companies such as SporTVision, are providing the viewer with accurate, never



of the puck.

This year SporTVision along with ESPN, took their technology to another level, and sport. The new system, called 1st and Ten, was introduced into football games airing on ESPN this season, according to the SporTVision website.

The system creates a computer generated line that is then pasted into the television screen and provides the viewer with a visual display of the first down line.

The line is accurate within six feet of the chains, which is what viewers used to have to search for on the screen to see if the offense had reached the first down marker.

Here's the catch, the line can be stood on or crossed by players. It is as though it is really there.

For now Fox Trax and 1st and Ten are the only sports enhancement systems being used.

AIR f/x is a new system developed for the basketball world. The new system mea-

sures the leap of the each player as they take jump shots, rebound, and dunk. The information is displayed immediately and nothing is placed on the court or player.

For soccer, Smartball will enhance the world's most popular sport.

Electronics will be placed in the ball and will calculate location, velocity, and spin among other things. The electronics will not change the dynamics of the ball in any way. Smartball will also be useful for coaches and players in their training.

Finally, this year's ESPN X-Games taking place June 19-28 in San Diego will use sports enhancement in events such as in-line skating, biking, and skateboarding.

The 1st and Ten system has not caused any uproar and most agree that it is a wonderful addition to the game. However, many hockey fans strongly oppose the Fox Trax system or "glow puck," as it is more commonly called.

Winter Sports Awards

Scholar Athlete

Girls- Shelia Coleman

Boys- Sam Blacker

Girls Varsity Basketball

MVP- Shelia Coleman

V Coaches- Beth Hansen

JV Coaches- Caroline Denton

F Coaches- Casey Self

Boys Basketball

MVP- Cedric Robinson

V Coaches- Marcus tyler

JV Coaches- Cornelius Smith

F Coaches- Kazi Hossain

Swim and Dive

MVP- Courtney Heffernan

Greg Landrum

Coaches- Anne Ditmeyer

Nicole Gibson

Cheerleading

MVP- Sierra Sellman

V Coaches- Tchonda Bishop

JV Coaches- Gillian Price

F Coaches- Mariita Campos

Rifle Team

MVP- Marliese Kimmons

Coaches- Gary Latta

Gymnastics

MVP- Sierra Selman

Coaches- Lillian Scovazzo

Wrestling

MVP- Patrick Cronin

V Coaches- Ryan Autry

JV Coaches- Frank Turner

Boys Winter Track

MVP- Casey Reardon

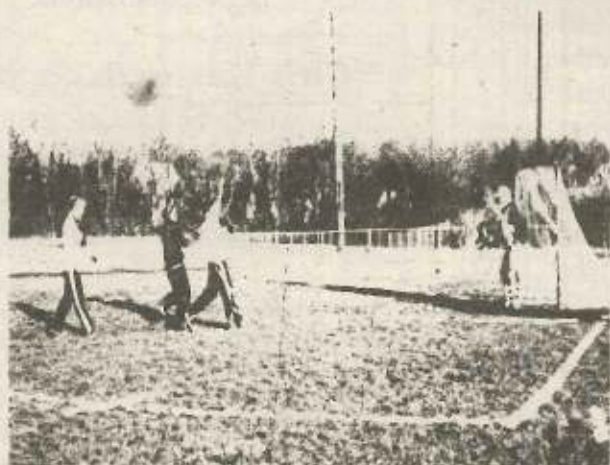
Coaches- Asim Tomlin

**Congratulations to all the
Winter Athletes
Good Luck Spring Athletes**

Spring Preview

Girls Lacrosse

The girls Lacrosse team can look forward to a good year, although this year's team is young, with only four seniors returning. Despite that, there are four freshmen and numerous sophomores and juniors to build on in the future. In additions to that, they have more offensive power. This should help them to score more goals per game than last year. They also have more speed on defense, which will help them keep the amount of goals scored on them low. Their first game was on March 15, 1999 against Centerville and their next opponent is Edison on March 19, 1999.



The Varsity girls lacrosse team works on shooting skills against goalie Emily Dickert.

Boys Lacrosse

The West Potomac girl's lacrosse team can look forward to a good year. Although this year's team is young, with only four seniors returning, they are Carrie Weaver, Joanne Sheen, Courtney Schmidt, and Kirsten Hurme. This years captains are Joanne Sheen, Courtney Schmidt, and Kirsten Hurme. Despite that, there are four freshmen and numerous sophomores and juniors to build on in the future. In additions to that, they have more offensive power. This should help them to score more goals per game than last year. They also have more speed on defense, which will help them keep the number of goals scored on them low. Their first game was on March 15, 1999 against Centerville and their next opponent is Edison on March 19, 1999.



Senior Patrick Corcoran is this years Varsity goalie for the boys lacrosse team.

Boys Soccer

The boys varsity soccer team is once again looking forward to improving their season this year. For the past two years, the team has been struggling to finish with a winning season. With eleven returning varsity players, the boys have a positive outlook on their performance and the strength of the team. Coaches Erich Gunderman and Don Allen have put together a new formation called WM. With this formation, they hope to control the mid field, which should lead to better offense and more scoring. Last year with only two wins, the team is hoping to take their young talent and turn the team into a winning one. Their first game was last night at home verses Stuart, and their next home game is scheduled for March 25th verses W&L.



(right) Sophomores Nick Miles and Eddie Ernst practice defensive skills with junior Eric Moreno.

Crew

As the weather gets warmer and more of the spring sports move outside the West Potomac Crew team takes to the water. The crew team practices at Fort Belvoir Marina every weekday afternoon and Saturday mornings. The team consists three men's eights and five women's eights. During this season the mens' team will be competing at with either a lightweight and heavy-weight eights or a JV and Varsity boat. The mens' team plans on a good season, and looks to see if they will split into fours. "Eights are the prescription for disaster, fours are the antidote," says mens' captain Ted Bennet. The women's team will be competing at the varsity and JV levels. With Sasha Anderson and Ted Bennet as the men's and womens' team captains, the team looks forward to a very competitive season.



(above) Lillian Scavazzo prepares her boat in the water before heading out.

Baseball

They boys baseball team will be returning nine varsity players from last year. Assets that were added to the team this year include sophomore Matt Sommerville.

This season will be a challenge to the Wolverines, who will have to face last years state champions, West Springfield, who were rated number one in the post, and also Hayfield, which was rated number ten.

The Wolverines are stronger on the defensive side but offseason practice should boost their offensive performance.

Senior Jeremiah Malmberg, when asked how he thought West Potomac team would fair, said, "We'll be the Cinderella team of the Patriot District."

Girls Soccer

This year the West Potomac Girls Varsity soccer team will be led by returning coach Ms. Joanie Murphy. Ms. Jean Coder has replaced Kim Lyons and will be coaching the Junior Varsity team.

The girls played their first game on Thursday March 11 verses Oakton at Oakton. All varsity games will be played at 7:00, and all JV games will be at 5:30. The Varsity team consists of many experienced players, and hopefully both teams will have successful seasons.

With one senior, Kelly Hesaltine, the team is very young.

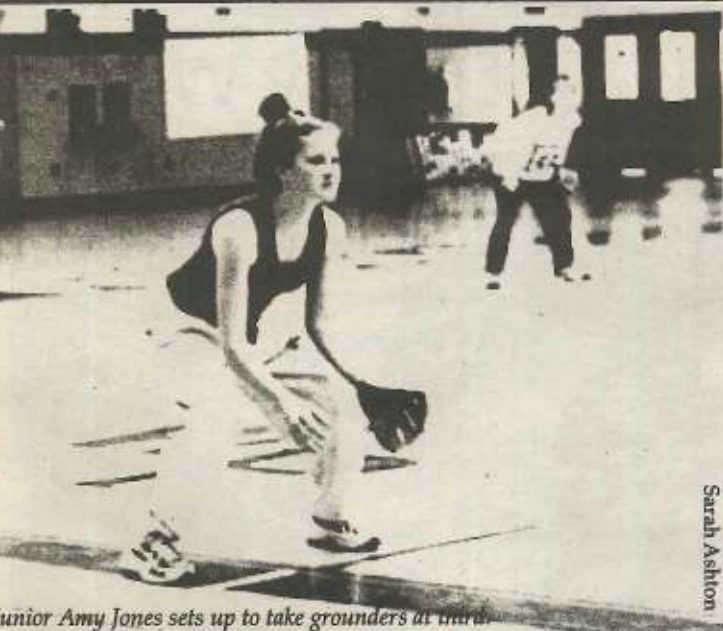
This year, each week, the team must pass a series of athletic tests to be able to play. Hopefully this will prove successful for the lady Wolverines, who are in one of the toughest soccer districts in the state.

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Junior Amy Jones sets up to take grounders at third.

Horton Positive About New Softball Season

Faye Rausch
Entertainment Editor

If you have walked into the main gym after hours lately you will have noticed a fine team of young women pumpin' up for a softball season.

This year's team is promising, with excellent technique and strong determination.

Head coach, Carol Horton, has her eye out for upcoming Varsity players, as does Assistant coaches Dennis Day and Mary Anne Szwed.

With seven returning varsity players, Horton has set high standards for her athletes. Horton has 19 years of coaching under her belt, and she would like to see the girls not only improve, but most of all have fun.

Each year the sporting record changes just a little bit, with each new freshman class rolling in, and each senior class heading out. Horton has had her ups and downs as well, but she has faith.

Due to the weather this year, however, and team injuries, Hortons outlook is a little

foggy, but is slowly improving with each new sign of good news. No positions have been set for the team, although several promising athletes are coming out of their shell. Junior Erin Sixsmith is working hard this season, and very well may be an star. With her determination, skill, and a great sports attitude, she has the opportunity to be an excellent player.

Another rising star to look out for is freshman Casey Self. Self, who has worked on her technique and skill at softball for many years, is an excellent player to keep our eyes on for the next four years.

Many sports at West Potomac support each other, and one good example is the baseball and softball teams. Both teams watch each others games and give support and encouragement during the season. This "togetherness," gives a chance for team unity and may help the softball team to excel.

Horton said, "You have to have strong teamwork in order to have excellent team unity."

The record in the past has been shaky, but that does not discourage Horton one bit. Every year the team looks forward to a Tournament away from home. This year however, West Potomac can't go, due to the SOL's. Disappointing, yes, but there is always next year.

This year the players are ready to play, Horton is ready to coach, the fans are ready to cheer, and West Potomac is ready to have a great record.

When asked about her hopes for this year's record compared to others, Horton said, "Don't remember, don't care, it's a new year."



Practicing run downs Sara Jones is tagged out at third by catcher Christine Hofman.

Engels Comes Back To Baseball

Diane Alford
Business Manager

Other than in the United States, baseball is played on a large scale all over the world. But it is in the United States that it thrives most, both as a participant and spectator sport. The popularity in the United States accounts for the money that is earned by the major-league players.

Almost every American boy plays the game at one time or another.

The new varsity assistant coach for West Potomac, Mr. Bill Engels, is no exception. As a child, Engels played baseball along with basketball. He excelled in both sports at the high school and college levels, at Marshall High School and Virginia Wesleyan College. Engels led his baseball team, in both eleventh and twelfth grades, to the state finals.

Many students interact with Engels, both in the classroom and on the court. They are used to his strongly disciplined, yet good-natured personality.

Dennis Condon, senior Varsity baseball player, said, "I think that Coach Engels will be

a good addition to the baseball teams coaching staff. We need the intensity and discipline that he will provide."

Engels is used to the demand of being there for students and athletes at all hours of the day. He has been thinking about coming back to baseball for

"Coach Engels will be a good addition to the baseball team's coaching staff."

many years. Engels decided that this was the year to return to coaching baseball.

He left in 1993, due to the management of back-to-back seasons. The individual that was the head coach needed someone who was available during the off-season as well as during the actual season.

Engels said, "There were no hard feelings."

Besides Engel's first lifetime dream, which was to become a doctor, next on his list was to become a coach. This came

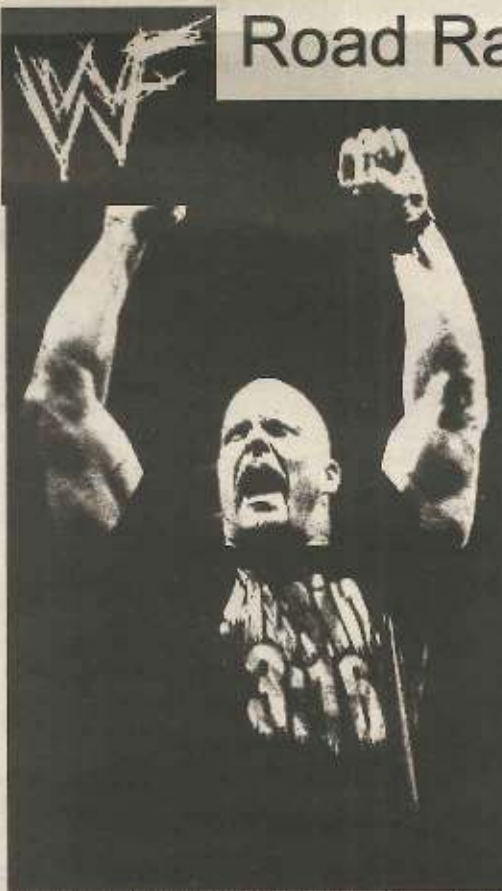
about in his senior year of high school. His inspiration was his high school baseball coach. This coach was also a teacher at Marshall High School. During his senior year, his head baseball coach developed cancer. He didn't attend school during the day, but was always there during practice.

"Seeing his joy made me want to give a lot to people, as a coach and a teacher," Engels said.

Jeremiah Malmberg, senior varsity baseball player, said, "Last year we had a problem in our work ethic, and I think Coach Engel's intensity will make all of us work hard."

Coach Engels decided to coach baseball again because he plainly enjoys it. Engels enjoys coaching and teaching equally, but in different ways. A big part of him becoming a coach was due to Engels both growing up and being involved in athletics.

"I enjoy coaching mainly for the work ethic involved and seeing the effects. You get the benefit from two different worlds as a coach and a teacher. I get to watch both my students and my athletes become successful people," Engels stated.



Stone Cold Steve Austin riles the crowd.

WWF

Road Rage Hits MCI Center

event is a happening to behold and savor. It occurs far too infrequently to be considered a regular event. When the *Wrestlemania Road Rage Tour* came Friday, February 26, to the MCI center, the fans came expecting the best, and were not disappointed.

Before the main event, which was a tag-team match between The Rock and Cain, and Stone Cold Steve Austin and Mankind, were a half dozen or more electrifying matches, which included a match between The Big Boss Man and

The Undertaker, and a tag-team guitar match, in which one wrestler must climb up a pole and fetch a guitar and use it on another wrestler. The only down-side to these matches was the dual appearance of the

very annoying Blue Meanie. This wrestler, a haggard looking man, annoyed the fans in his first appearance, and at his second appearance, to wrestle for Goldust, the fans went insane with rage.

After the preliminary matches came the main event, which was a long, drawn out match. Before the action, each wrestler came out and gave a speech. The main event started with three competitors beating The Rock, but quickly returned to a two on two when Cain joined The Rock's side against Mankind and Stone Cold Steve Austin.

Those fans expecting each wrestler's signature move were not disappointed, especially when Stone Cold used the Stone Cold Stunner and The Rock used the Corporate Elbow to great effect. The evening wrapped up with a beer drinking contest between The Rock and Stone Cold Steve Austin.

The entertainment value provided by an evening at the WWF is very high. While not the most wholesome of entertainment, it is the most electrifying, and by far an extremely high quality way to spend a Friday night.

Kurt Gron
Circulation Manager

Professional wrestling is a fake sport, but very high quality entertainment. Going to a World Wrestling Federation

In the Numbers

2
number of MVP awards Sierra Selmann recieved at the Winter Sports Banquet

45
distance in feet from home plate to the pitching rubber in softball

60'9"
distance in feet from home plate to the pitchers mound in baseball

10
number of boats West Potomac Crew has

1
number of seniors on girls varsity soccer team

13
number of players on boys j.v lacrosse team

10
number of players on a lacrosse field

36
number of hexagons on a soccer ball

5.5
average number of miles run by each member of the track team per day

Beal Takes Soccer Skills To Disney World

Sarah Beiging
Copy Editor

When sophomore Katie Beal started playing soccer nine years ago, she never thought it would take her this far. Beal was selected to join the Olympic Development Program (ODP). This group selects young athletes from all over the country for olympic-style training. During the program, she plays on a national soccer team with other girls from the United States. Before being selected for ODP at the national level, players must be selected through their districts, states, and regions first. This is the first international youth tournament of its kind.

ODP meets four times a year in various places like, Houston, Seattle, and Orlando. The girls are there for ten days, playing soccer and taking trips to places like Disney World. The team plays against groups from Japan, Sweden, China, and Germany. The girls range in age from fifteen to nineteen. Beal played on the 16 and under team, youngest group at the tournament. Her team's combined efforts and skills won them the bronze medal last month in Florida.

This is Beal's second year playing varsity soccer for West

Potomac. She also plays varsity field hockey and varsity basketball, but soccer seems to be her first choice. "I like soccer the most out of all the sports I play," Beal said. "I suppose that's because I'm better at it." "I am very proud of Katie. This is a very good opportunity for her," says Beal's coach Joanie Murphy. "She is a very versatile player, and can play any position. I am proud of the time, commitment, and dedication she has put into soccer thus far."

As many can imagine, soccer takes up a large portion of Beal's schedule, but this isn't a problem for her so far. "Playing sports keeps me busy," she says, "It fills my life with many different challenges."



Bolton's Shot Putting Ability Allows Her to Shine

Erica Davies
Photo Editor

17-year-old Jessica Bolton has been an exciting addition to the student body at West Potomac. After transferring to West Potomac from upstate New York, her amusing personality has had a positive influence not only on other students, but on West Potomac's track team as well.

During her eighth grade year, Bolton discovered that she had the talent to be a successful shot-putter while competing in the track and field events at Carl Sandburg Middle School. Bolton was also influenced by the gift that her father possessed as a track star from elementary school to college.

Since her eighth grade year, when Bolton moved to Watertown, New York, Bolton has had remarkable achievements as a female shot-putter. In Bolton's first year shot-putting in high school, she was named the MVP for Indian River High School's outdoor

track and field team. During her sophomore year, Bolton had the honor of being the MVP twice, for both indoor and outdoor track and field. Bolton currently holds the title as the first girl at Indian River High to compete as a shot-putter in



States.

Bolton has had a victorious season at West Potomac, and she recently placed second at districts. Although Bolton was satisfied with her performance

at districts, she anticipated winning first place, due to the fact that she was ranked first in her event. According to Bolton, the downside to her shot-putting is the fact that she is not consistent.

While being a New York resident, Bolton received letters of interest from both Syracuse University and Albany State concerning her unique talent in shot-putting. In response to these letters, Bolton said, "I intend to shot-put in college, but it is not a main priority for me." Bolton hopes to attend UCLA, where she will carry through with her shot-putting.

However, Bolton is already thinking past her college years, as she is currently interested in becoming an orthopedic surgeon. Bolton's father is a physician in the military, which has indirectly influenced her choice of career.

"Being an athlete really does not influence my choice of career, but by being an orthopedic surgeon, I will be able to help other athletes," Bolton commented.

Bolton, who is equally known

for her outrageous personality, has lived in many different parts of the country, including California, Hawaii, Kansas, Texas, Virginia, and New York. Through her traveling, the young athlete learned early on to adjust to her surroundings quickly, which has resulted in her being such an incredibly outgoing person.

However, Bolton's true passion rests in the entertainment world. *The X-Files* and *Saturday Night Live* remain her all-time favorite television shows.

Bolton is often spotted doing comic impersonations of celebrities and characters from movies and television, including SNL's Mary Catherine Gallagher. According to Amanda Williams, "Jessica is one of my closest friends. I can tell her anything and she can always make me laugh- she is probably the funniest person I know. One of her dreams is to be on SNL."

Through the years, Bolton has learned to make the most out of life. "I only have one [life].... I just do not take myself too seriously," said Bolton.