



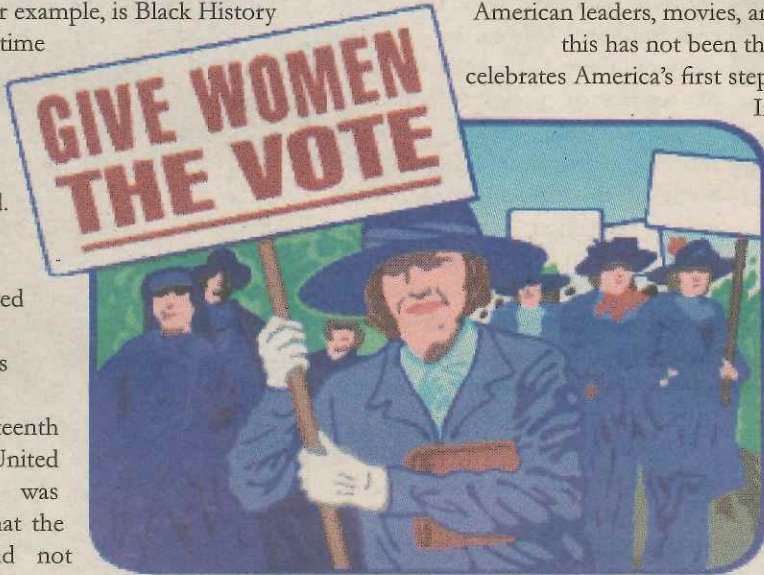
Wednesday, March 16, 2011

Shedding light on women's rights

Norris Brooks
News Editor

Every year, the federal government dedicates specific months to commemorate great moments in American history. February, for example, is Black History Month. During this time the achievements of successful African Americans, such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., are honored. March is also a significant month because it is designated as Women's History Month and celebrates women's rights.

In 1920, the nineteenth amendment of the United States Constitution was ratified. It stated that the United States could not deny a person the right to vote based on gender. This was perhaps the most influential moment in the history of women's rights. Leaders like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton pushed for equal rights for men and women, and their actions eventually led to the ratification of this amendment. Just as Black History Month celebrates the actions of influential African Americans, Women's History Month acknowledges the actions of inspiring women's rights leaders.



There is a big difference, however, between Black History Month and Women's History Month. Women's History Month is largely unpublicized. Take West Potomac as an example. During February, the school hallways were lined with collages of well-known African American leaders, movies, and events. Unfortunately, this has not been the case for the month that celebrates America's first step towards gender equality.

In recent years, the month has passed relatively unnoticed. Junior Lara Chilton remarked, "I really wish the school would embrace Women's History Month more, because the actions of people like Susan B. Anthony are extremely inspiring." Going unpublicized is not the only problem affecting Women's History Month.

Many of the rights that the vanguards of the women's movement fought so hard to achieve are taken for granted by younger generations of girls. They do not remember a time before Title IX, when they could not participate in sports at school. It is inconceivable to them that there was a time when women were not allowed to vote. The idea that a woman's place was in the home and not the workplace

Photo courtesy of thinkstockphotos.com

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Anti-energy drinks relax the population

Tyler Arnold
Reporter

Red Bull, Jolt, and even the controversial Four Lokos all have something in common that draws the public into stores all across America. These drinks promise an energy boost that many consumers use to get them through the day. After a long day at work or a stressful moment people usually turn toward something to make them feel better. "Everyone is looking for some effect somewhere," said Dr. Matthew Seamon, assistant professor in the College of Pharmacy at Nova Southeastern University, but this feeling can have its consequences. This leaves many people wondering how they can unwind at the end of their day and the solution comes in the form of a caffeinated drink that actually relaxes the user.

Energy drinks have been directly linked to alcohol abuse, and Four Lokos even contains alcohol already mixed with an energy drink. In the November issue of *The Wire*, Editor-in-Chief Camille DiFolco brought this deadly combination to light in her article, "Caffeine and alcohol: a deadly duo," and wrote about high school students being hospitalized after overconsumption of Four Lokos. These relaxation drinks are sold under names like Mary Jane's, Malava Novocaine, Drank, and Unwind, and are marketed as drinks that help people unwind and even offer a safer alternative to drinking alcohol. Matt Moody, founder of Mary Jane's Relaxing Soda stated, "You cannot walk around smelling like vodka all day. I wanted to try to make something you can have to mellow you out. It is not going to make you stumble, fall down and slur your speech. It is a quick fix to slow things down when things get hectic."

While some may find that these drinks are helpful when trying to get through a chaotic day, other skeptics of relaxation drinks say that they can lead to hazardous drug use. "The modeling of this drug is worse than candy cigarettes," Ronald Peters, associate professor at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston said of the widely available anti-energy drinks. People such as Peters believe these drinks influence kids to try other illegal drugs and more specifically a mixing drink of codeine cough syrup with Sprite or candies such as Jolly Ranchers. They call this drug drink "purple drank," which even sounds similar to the relaxation drink "Drank."

Some also fear that these drinks influence the use of

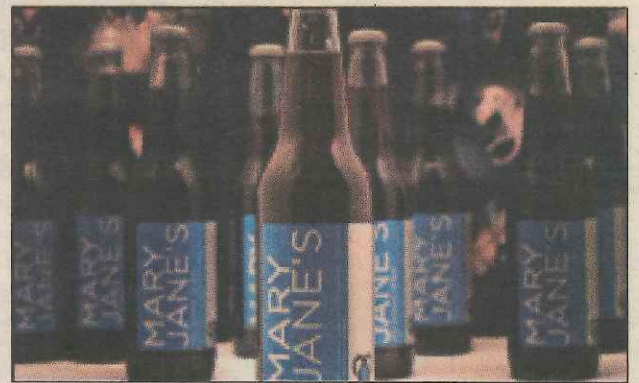


Photo courtesy of Mary Jane Soda

Teen suicide rates increase drastically

Emily Griffin
Editor-in-Chief

By the end of this article a total of four teenagers in the United States will have attempted suicide, according to socyberly.com. The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry [AACAP] reported, "suicide is the third leading cause of death for 15 to 24 year olds, and the sixth leading cause of death for 5 to 14 year olds." There are many factors to make someone think suicide is the only answer, the main factor is depression.

Depression is very common among adults and teenagers, specifically during their high school years. During a discussion with the investigative journalist, Laura Ling, many teenagers felt that depression is not talked about enough in school. It is often treated as a "taboo" topic among the young adult and adult population. There are many people to talk to about depression, such as therapists or a medical doctor. At West Potomac these people are counselors, teachers and administrators. Students should

also talk with their parents or guardians if they are feeling any signs of depression. Other adolescents mentioned the fear of being judged if they admitted they were depressed. One female teen admitted to never telling anyone she was depressed. She was afraid her peers would judge her. Cathy Strunk, a registered nurse and suicide prevention specialist, told Ling that many teenagers assume that stress and depression are common among their young adult lives, and it is a phase they will either grow out of or accustomed to. This means "they [the teens] will decide to be perfect or they will decide to be nobodies," said Strunk.

Suicide has been increasingly covered by the media. Within the United States, there are approximately 30,000 suicides each year for all age groups. However, the number of attempted suicides is about 10 times that amount, meaning there are an estimated 300,000 attempted suicides each year in the United States. According to sciencedaily.com, 75% of those attempted suicides are those of men. Even though the number of suicides is lower among the female population, it has

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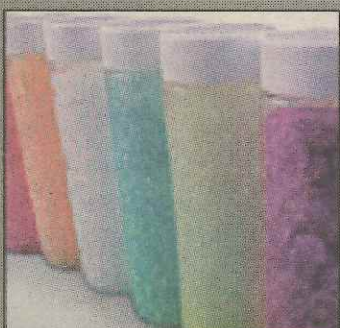


Photo courtesy of dailyplanetdispatch

Find out which household item is being abused as a hallucinogenic drug...

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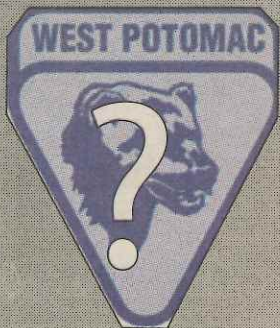


Photo courtesy of WP Athletics

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

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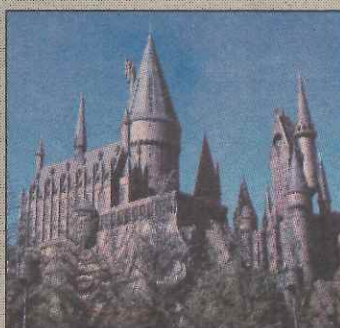


Photo courtesy of Jason in Hollywood

Something wicked this way comes. Universal Studios' latest attraction is bewitched.

Entertainment

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Photo courtesy of forthunt.patch.com

Check out the community band that has recently increased in popularity.

Just for Fun

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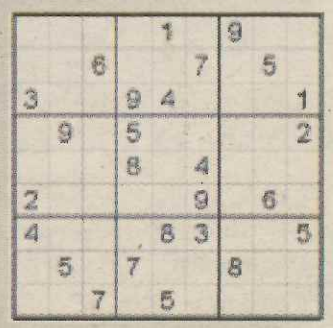


Photo courtesy of Clare Palo

Can you complete the sudoku puzzle on the back page of this issue?

Bath salts: harmful if swallowed

Leigh Orleans
Student Life Editor

For years, drug makers have sought loopholes around laws prohibiting the use of various substances, and they have found another one.

For decades, people seeking to get high have developed newer and more creative ways to achieve their goal. Household items such as pills, whipped cream, spray cans, ADD medications, nutmeg, cleaning supplies, gasoline, cough drops, over the counter medicines, and hairspray have been used for this purpose, and different methods are constantly being innovated. Drug makers continue concocting different types of 'designer drugs' that they can sell legally. Designer drugs are created specifically to dodge drug laws by slightly altering the chemical makeup of the illegal substances. The police

can only ban the drug once they find out it exists, so for the time span in which it is under the radar, there is nothing that can be done to stop the dispensing of these legal, harmful drugs.

Recently, a drug that has caused more than 650 calls nationwide to the poison control centers since 2009, are being sold as 'bath salts'. This product is not the typical Epsom salts you would pour into your bathtub, but is being legally sold under this name. Some of the names these products are being sold under are Cloud Nine, Ivory Wave, Blue Silk, Bolivian Bath, and many more.



Photo courtesy of addictionworld.blogspot.com

Poison control centers across the nation grappled with the dangers of drugs disguised as bath salts, a new way for drug dealers to peddle hallucinogenic drugs covertly.

"If you take the worst characteristics of LSD, PCP, Ecstasy, cocaine and methamphetamine and put all those together, you've got one big bad thing," said Mark Ryan, the director of the Poison Control Center in Louisiana. These 'bath salts' have effects similar to that of many hard drugs because of its addictive

and hallucinogenic characteristics. People have been reported to die after less than two weeks of abusing this drug, making it a huge threat to users and a big concern to those trying to prevent such activities.

The packets contain small amounts of white crystalline powder, and they're labeled with warnings like "novelty only" and "not for human consumption." Despite these obvious cautions, there have been hundreds of reports of people experiencing dangerous side effects smoking, snorting, eating, or injecting the salts. Some of these possible side effects include increased heart rate, chest pain, agitation, twitching, paranoia, dizziness, loss of vision, vomiting, seizures, profuse sweating.

Thoughts of suicide are also very common while on this drug. Addict Neil Brown was reported to use this drug, then took his skinning knife and used it to repeatedly slit his face and stomach. Other people have slit their wrists and some have even gone as far as to shoot themselves while experiencing severe side effects from bath salts. Also, there have been reports of people attacking their friends and loved ones while on these drugs. Poison control and information centers are trying to get the word out about the dangers of this drug.

Key Club members hold senior citizens' prom

Clare Palo
Photographer

Need some extracurricular activities for those college applications? Hypothetically, the activities a person puts down on their college applications could make or break getting into their dream college. Why take that chance? Join a club, make a difference, and boost your chance for that acceptance letter.

The student-run Key Club at West Potomac is a community service-based organization that strives to connect students to the local community. Their mission statement is to "pass on the philosophy of giving back to the next generation," explained English teacher Suzette Henry, Key Club sponsor. Henry believes in this day and age, because of technology and other distractions, students' social skills are deteriorating, and organizations like Key Club help recover social skills. "The Key Club does hands-on activities, whether it is writing letters to military troops, or collecting goods; it encourages them to give back and reminds them why they are here," she explained. The activities and fundraisers Key Club manages highlight the important parts of the community, and help students take action to help certain causes.

In addition, students organize clothing and toy drives for kids whose families cannot provide these necessities. The club also does annual events such as the senior citizens prom dance, to help bring together lonely senior citizens who are cooped up inside their homes or nursing homes all day. The prom is

held at the Hollin Hall Senior Center, which is located directly behind the Hollin Hall shopping center. The club recently held the Senior Citizen's Valentine's Day dance at A Child's Place, which is also in the Hollin Hall shopping center. Seniors participated in cake walks, pin the tail, and other Valentine's Day activities. They boogied down all day to stay active and have healthy fun. "Key Club's a great way to meet new people, whether they are elderly, or young. It's a good opportunity to reach out to your community and give to those who need help," added senior Julie Labelle, Key Club president.

West Potomac's Key Club is approximately seventy percent female and thirty percent male, unlike its parent organization Kiwanis International. Kiwanis was a once male-only community service organization "of volunteers dedicated to changing the world, one child and one community at a time." The Key Club makes a difference internationally and is a part of schools all over the country. There are roughly one hundred and twenty members registered in West Potomac's Key Club, and thirty five consistent dedicated members such as junior Abigail Jacobs. "I genuinely enjoy helping to plan all these activities for the community. I love knowing that a group of high-schoolers can actually make a difference and help out the other people around us," explained Jacobs. Henry and all members are encouraging students to join Key Club in an effort to not only become aware of the community's needs, but to attempt to make a difference and discover why they are here on this earth.

Planned Parenthood hit with budget cuts

Camille DiFolco
Editor-in-Chief

"Lots and lots of STDs"

Senior Sasha Spriggs predicted that this would be the fate of thousands nationwide if Planned Parenthood, a prominent family planning facility, loses its federal funding.

It was only a matter of time before the Republican-dominated House came into direct conflict with the Obama Administration. The tussle over the federal budget has been a news staple for weeks, with cuts proposed that would impact multiple facets of the government and its agencies. It is Congress that ultimately decides which cuts go into effect for the coming fiscal year, and Planned Parenthood is one organization that is under attack.

The new House proposed cutting Title X, a \$317 million aid program founded in the 1970s and reserved for family planning and reproductive health. If passed, the proposal will be incorporated into a 2011 spending bill that also calls for barring any and all federal funding to Planned Parenthood. Women's health advocates are livid.

Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) has been around since the 1940s. Today it encompasses over 820 clinics in the US, has a budget of approximately \$1 billion, and provides services to over 3 million customers. In 2008, PPFA reported that contraception made up 35% of services, STD/STI testing and treatment made up 34%, cancer screenings accounted for 17%, and women's health procedures constituted 13%. The remaining 2-3% of visits involve abortions, according to the report.

Representative Mike Pence (R-IN) proposed the amendment that would cut Title X, and it has summarily been dubbed the "Pence Amendment." The measure would also bar Planned Parenthood from receiving funding from programs like Medicaid and Maternal and Child Health Block Grants.

Pence, a strong opponent of abortion, defended the proposal in a floor debate on February 17, explaining, "As the father of two teenage daughters, there are not words strong enough to portray my contempt of this pattern of apparent fraud and abuse by Planned Parenthood."

Representative Stephen Mass (D-MA) called the Pence Amendment "counterproductive," claiming that it would only lead to an increase in the number of abortions in the country. "I'm pro-life," Lynch clarified, but added that he supports the family planning aspect of the Planned Parenthood organization.

PPFA supporters across the nation have launched protests against the repeal of Title X, but only time will tell whether funding will be cut or not.

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SAT vs. ACT

Sada Kahn
Reporter

From the first day students step into class, teachers start preparing them for the most stressful test known to high school students: the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). But now high school juniors have the option to take a similar assessment, the American College Testing (ACT) Exam. The test students choose to take is up to their discretion; but how do know which one is the best to take?

When students start high school they already begin worrying about the next step, college. Juniors and sophomores get hammered with information about colleges and the high requirements they need to meet to get into a prestigious college or university. The first thing colleges see when they open applications is SAT and ACT scores.

The SATs used to be the most common test that students took to send into their dream college, but now many colleges over the nation have started to accept both test scores. Junior Angela Longo said, "I am taking both [tests] because some of the schools I am applying to require both." Colleges in the Midwest had trends of students taking the ACTs while the East Coast only took the SATs. According to *The New York Times* in the last five years the number of ACT-takers on the East Coast has grown 66% and 46% on the West Coast. Both tests are designed very differently; SATs deal with reasoning and problem solving while the ACTs are more curriculum-based.

The SATs are split into three major sections; critical reading, mathematics and writing, which are divided into ten sub-sections. The whole test usually lasts for 3 hours and 45 minutes. Longo continued, "I think students do better on the SAT because SAT prep is pounded into our brains at school."

The second option students have is to take the ACTs. The ACT consists of four different subjects, English, mathematics, reading and science, with an optional writing section. The ACT is 2 hours and 55 minutes. Junior Barbara Mfum said, "I think students do better on the ACT because they do not put a lot of pressure on themselves over it."

To prepare for these tests, students can do number of things. College and Career Center Advisor Elena Johnson said, "It depends on the student, how much time they should spend studying for the test. After students take the SATs once, they will know what to prepare for the next time." Many get private tutors and get one-on-one help on the test, while others buy the test prep books and study themselves.

Private teachers can be very expensive and costly for many students but West Potomac offers a free SAT prep program. They allow students to come in on Saturdays and take mock SATs to help practice for the real one in spring. Other than these sessions, students can always go on the CollegeBoard website and sign up for question of the day taken from real SATs. Counselor Madelyn Turner said, "Reading more and practicing your vocabulary can also help students prepare for the tests."

Many students struggle with not knowing what month is best for them to test. Some student study over the summer and take it at the beginning of their senior year, while many take it before junior year ends. Johnson continued, "The appropriate time for students to take both of the tests would be the second semester of their junior year."

The decision-making process consists of knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the students. Many people take both tests to see what they do better on and then send in the higher score with their application. Turner said, "Both tests are designed differently and test different things, [and] deciding what test to take depends on what type of learner the student is." Before students take either test they need to make sure they have their pencil sharpened and get a good night's sleep.

Facts to consider before choosing which test to take, provided by actsats-prep.com.

- The ACT includes a science reasoning test; the SAT does not.
- The ACT math section includes trigonometry; the SAT does not.
- The SAT tests vocabulary much more than the ACT.
- The SAT is not entirely multiple choice answers; the ACT is.
- The SAT has a guessing penalty; the ACT does not.
- The SAT has an experimental section; the ACT does not have any.



Photo courtesy of chector.com

Because the tests have different structures, they cater to different types of learners. It is to one's advantage to take both tests.

Women cont.

seems surreal. And they cannot imagine the time before *Roe v. Wade*, which gave women a right to privacy and the right to choose.

When rights are taken for granted, they can slip away. During this Women's History Month, instead of women and their accomplishments being celebrated, they are being targeted by the U.S. House of Representatives. In the past few weeks, Congressmen have proposed cuts to food and other aid to low-income pregnant women and mothers. Along with this cut was the suggestion to decrease funding for the Head Start program by \$1 billion. This would mean that over 200,000 kids could lose their spots in preschool, and women would be without options for childcare. Bills have been proposed that would allow hospitals to refuse to perform an abortion for a woman, even if it is necessary to save her life. Congress voted on ending federal funding for Planned Parenthood health centers, which are the largest providers of women's healthcare in the country.

Women's History Month is a time when the accomplishments of great women are to be recognized, and honored. As the month of March begins, students at West Potomac will see if their school embraces the spirit of celebrating women's rights.

Suicide, cont.

been reported that women succeed the men in suicide attempts by a two to one ratio.

Men are more likely to commit suicide, specifically white men. In 2005, socyberly.com reported 23,478 of the suicides were by white males. This makes up approximately 78% of the suicides in the United States, while women take up 19%. The next ethnicity which is likely to commit suicide are Native Americans, however there are many factors to why this is true. First of all, the percentage for the number of suicides by Native Americans is so high because there is not as much of them as other ethnicities, such as whites, blacks, and Hispanics. According to socyberly.com about 392 Native Americans committed suicide in 2005, however due to the low amounts of Native Americans, their percentage was very high. The ethnicities that are least likely to commit suicides are the African Americans and the blacks. It has been reported that the suicides of the African American and the black population only contributed 1% in the suicides of recent years.

Professor of psychiatry at Washington University School of Medicine, George Murphy, said at least 200,000 women are involved in suicide attempts annually. The main reason women are less prone to commit suicide is because of their openness about their feelings, stated Murphy. "Women process their experiences with friends. They discuss their feelings, seek feedback and take advice," Murphy explained. "They are much more likely to tell a physician how they feel and cooperate in the prescribed treatment. As a result, women get better treatment for their depression."

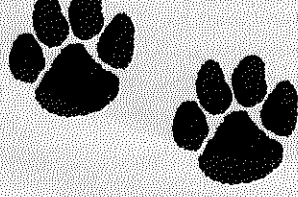
Another reason women are less likely to commit suicide is because women are more prone to think about others' feelings. "She will consider not just her feelings but also the feelings of others -- her family, the children, even acquaintances, and how those people will be affected by a decision like suicide," Murphy said. "A man is much less likely to take those things into account. He makes his decision, and it's about him, so he doesn't feel the need to share it with anyone else."

Anti-energy, cont.

marijuana mixed drinks, which are being used in California. While people believe that relaxation drinks could provide a gateway to drug use there are also many positives that help support the drinks. Anything used now-a-days can potentially be linked to drug use ranging from shows on TV to certain types of foods

but does that mean that we should immediately dispute anything we do not like? In today's society, it can pay to play things safe and keep drugs out of the lives of the youth. Relaxation drinks send the message to slow things down and take time to relax and unwind, which may be the perfect message to help stop drug abuse.

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WOLVERINE WARRIORS Brady Corum

Tommy Friederich
Sports Editor

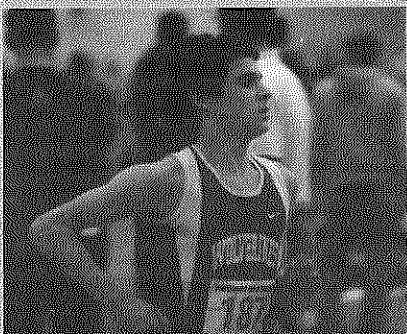


Photo courtesy of westpotomacsports.

5'5", 102 pounds is not the stereotypical stature that many think of when talking about an amazing runner. That is something junior Brady Corum has had to overcome since he began running competitively in the summer of his freshman year. To be honest, if you look at Corum's cross country and track times, you would think he was the size of a young Usain Bolt. Corum was one of the key members of the 2009 West Potomac boys' cross country team who qualified for states, and was one of the Wolverines' most consistent runners in both indoor and outdoor track. Corum brought that momentum into this year's cross country season in the first race by setting a personal best of 10:23 in the 2-mile race at Kick-Off Relays in September. Only a week and a half later, Corum stormed the Monroe Parker Invitational with a 16:12 in the 3 mile race. Corum brought his great cross country season into his indoor track season. At the PRR Holiday Invite in December, Corum ran a 4:37.32a in the 1600 meter and ten days later he posted a 10:23.68a at the F.I.T. Invitational.

Corum decided to start running competitively after his 8th grade year. He was one of the fastest runners in his class. "When we ran the mile in middle school Brady was always first, and he was known as one of the fastest kids in the school. All the gym teachers thought he was awesome," said junior Todd Ferri. From the statistics you can see that Corum's height and weight haven't slowed him down. Corum believes that being smaller in the sport of running is actually an advantage. "There are lots of advantages to being small in racing. In cross country, being lighter really helps on hilly tough courses. It also helps being able to work my way through a tight pack," commented Corum. Although he believes being smaller is better, some of his teammates had their doubts at first. "When I saw Brady as a freshman, I thought there was no way this scrawny little kid could have an impact on the running program at West Potomac, but boy was I wrong. Brady is one of the toughest and most competitive runners or even athletes at West Potomac. He is a hard worker and also a team player," said senior Mark Hanak. The crazy thing is that Corum still has his senior year to impact the history of West Potomac running. Corum will only get faster and stronger as he moves on in life.

Tradition murdered but Auburn spirit lives on

Jack King
Sports Editor

Every true college football fan knows and loves their favorite team's most important traditions. Whether it is Penn State fans camping out in "PaternoVille" or the running of Ralphie the Buffalo at the University of Colorado, all college football traditions are priceless. But what if someone had taken your oldest and most loved tradition and literally killed it? Unfortunately, for Auburn University that is exactly what has occurred. A pair of 130-year-old oak trees at the historic Toomers Corner near the entrance to the university have been poisoned and are expected to die within the next two years. The poisoning of the trees has been tragic for the university and many are still wondering if it is at all possible to save these trees, which have been such an important part of Auburn tradition for generations.

For years now at the intersection of Magnolia and College Streets, fans have participated in the school's favorite and most memorable tradition at what is known as Toomers Corner. After every Auburn football victory, the fans go to Toomers Corner and roll the majestic oak trees at the corner, draping them in toilet paper to celebrate an Auburn victory. Toomers Corner is named after a drug store located directly across the street from the corner called "Toomers Drugs." The tradition of rolling the corner is rooted deep within Auburn alumni and the Auburn family.

On February 16 2010, Auburn University announced that the two historic oaks at Toomers Corner had in fact been poisoned. Harvey Updyke Junior, a 62-year-old University of Alabama fan was the man accused of poisoning the trees. The police were able to track down Updyke after he called into a local radio station where he said he poisoned the trees shortly after Auburn beat Alabama in the Iron bowl last fall. Updyke used a powerful herbicide called Spike 80DF to poison the trees by spraying the poison in the soil

around the trees. He reportedly sprayed the trees with over 60 times the lethal amount of Spike 80DF. Because of the excessive amount of poison sprayed on the trees and in the soil, some specialists suggest that while unlikely, it is possible that the poison may spread and actually enter the water system at Auburn University turning the terrible act of hatred into what could become an act of terrorism.

The Auburn and Alabama football rivalry is what fueled Updyke to perform the action of poisoning the trees. But despite the heated rivalry between the two schools, Auburn as well as Alabama fans have come together during this tragedy. Auburn students and alumni have honored the trees at Toomers by throwing toilet paper into the trees with the words "Get Well Soon" on them and also

organizing a "Toomers Tree Hug" for members of the community to come and show respect for the beloved oaks.

Alabama fans have also rallied to help the trees as well. A Facebook group called "Tide for Toomers" was formed to help raise money to try to find a way to save the trees at Toomers from dying. In addition, an Alabama student, Sean Phillips, made headlines at Auburn for showing his support for the trees. Phillips was wearing the jersey of former Alabama running back Mark Ingram, but he covered the name "Ingram" on the back of the jersey and wrote "Save Toomers. We're the Eagle!" where the name would go. Phillips has received an unbelievable amount



Photo courtesy of Auburn.family.edu

Auburn fans participate in their favorite tradition of rolling the oak trees at Toomers Corner in Auburn, Alabama.

thanks from the Auburn community. "The man who did it is not even from Alabama and he doesn't know what it is like or what the rivalry is like," commented Phillips. "It isn't a war. It's football."

What has been done to the Toomers Corner trees has truly been devastating to Auburn University. However, despite the actions of this rouge fan, the tradition and celebrations at Toomers Corner will still continue. After all, one day every tree must fall down but the pride, the spirit, and the heart of Auburn will never change.

Figure skaters glide on blades of glory

Emily Griffin
Editor-in-Chief

Many students participate in various activities outside of school. One of these popular activities includes figure skating. Figure skating is a sport in which ice skaters perform challenging moves, such as jumps, spins and complex footwork, to outshine the other competitors. Some of the students who participate in this activity include seniors Natalie Motley and Elizabeth Wolfrey, and junior Anna-Elyse Schwabacher. These girls spend a minimum of seven hours a week practicing for competitions, which are usually held over the weekends. Sometimes, Motley practices for approximately 18 hours a week by "getting up at five in the morning, practicing until seven and then returning to the ice immediately after school."

Motley, who started skating when she was nine years old, said her motivation for continuing to competitively ice skate is because, "I went to group skating classes, and it was so much fun, I decided to continue it." Wolfrey has been skating for six years and took some time off this year from the competitions to focus on school. Schwabacher started skating seven years ago, and has been competing ever since. She also competed in a competition on February 17, and placed second.

Even though skating takes up a lot of their time, the girls manage to balance skating and school. Schwabacher stated that the amount of time needed to practice for competitions "does make it hard to stay after to make up

work or get extra help because school can cut into my skating time which is no fun! And it takes a lot of time away from extra studying; I do not really study because I just do not have time once I get home from the rink." Wolfrey decided she needed to hang up her skates for the competitions for a while. Wolfrey explained, "I hardly ever compete anymore because school became a bigger priority, so I am considered a 'testing skater' but I intend on competing a few times between now and the summer. My last competition was the Chesapeake Open in July 2010. I competed at the juvenile level and placed third."

Both Schwabacher and Wolfrey agree that it would be a good idea for West Potomac to consider making figure skating a school sport. However, Schwabacher has some hesitations about that. She explained, "I think it would be fun to have skating as a sport at West Potomac. The only downfall is that it takes a long time to learn to figure skate. This means the jumps and spins, which are needed for competition, but if there were students who have already taken the basic classes then they could do well with the team."

On the other hand, Wolfrey thinks, "It would be beneficial because I know a lot of people who wished they could skate but are scared to try it. And every year there are more and more people that skate in the freshman classes, I think that it'd give people that do other sports outside of school more recognition."

All in all, these girls have managed to balance both the demands of school and the rink through the year.

Motley is considering becoming a part time figure skating coach as a side job in the future, and will continue to go to the rink during college. As for Wolfrey, she said "I depends on what I go to school for. Penn State has a rink on campus so ultimately if I end up there I would to continue. A lot of campuses do not have rinks anywhere near them so it really all depends on location." While Schwabacher is currently looking at colleges that have rinks. "I really want to go to the University of Delaware because they have one of the top training facilities in the country, they have an intercollegiate team that competes against other colleges," she explained.



Photo by Clare Palo

Junior Anna-Elyse Schwabacher effortlessly skates across the ice at Mt. Vernon Recenter. Skaters must spend countless hours each week to improve.

THE
WIRE
10:23a

The ranking of the girls' swim 200 freestyle relay team of junior Keanna Donah, sophomores Madeline Bolger and Hellen Moffit, and freshman Sarah Bertram, at the state championship.

2ND

7

The number of runs scored by the boys baseball team in their scrimmage with Bishop Ireton.

Spring Wolverines look for wins

Tommy Friederich
Sports Editor

Softball

The softball team has high hopes with 11 returning players from last year's amazing team. All-district players and juniors Danielle McHugh and Morgan Maniglia hope to pave the way to a district championship this season for the Lady Wolverines. "The combination of young talent and older veterans should help our team succeed this year. We just have to play up to our potential in order to make a run for the District Championship this year," commented junior first baseman Sammy Clifford. The team's biggest test will come in their two district games against the powerhouse South County. Last year the Lady Wolverines lost by one run to them, but they are confident they can turn the tables this year. They have the talent to make that run.

Boys' Soccer

The highlight of the boys' soccer season last year was their win over West Springfield to go to regionals. This year the team hopes to have similar success and with many talented returning players, it looks like they could do just that. "We are trying to bring home a district title for the first time this year," commented junior Grayson Pinney. On the defensive side of the ball the team looks strong; however offensive improvements will be key for the soccer team's success this season.

Tennis

An under the radar team at West Potomac is the tennis team. Both the boys' and girls' teams are coming off fair seasons and are hopeful that they will be competitive this season. Senior Alex Cheng will be the leader for the boy's team this year, and senior Laura Reynolds will be a leader for the girl's team this spring. While tennis may not be the most watched sport at West Potomac, both the girls' and boys' tennis teams hope to draw in larger crowds this season.

Track and Field

As usual both the Girls and Boys track teams are looking very strong this season. The Wolverines feature very talented runners who will help lead the team to yet another Patriot District title. Junior Brady Goram will be one of those leaders for the boys' team. "This year we have a lot of experience and talent so we think that we can do very well," said Goram. Junior Sarah Jane Underwood will lead the way for the girls in the spring. The girls' team is looking strong coming off a first place victory at States in the 4 by 800 relay. As always the track team looks like they will be a top contender for the district championship this season.

Photos by Sonia Garakyaraghi and Clare Palo

Girls' Lacrosse

Seniors Alexa Botha, Adrienne Hampton, and Kelsey Donovan are leading the 2011 girls' lacrosse team into an exciting year. With a mediocre 2010 season, the Lady Wolverines believe they have the talent and team chemistry to be competitive among the Patriot District. "The team is built around the leadership of our senior class which will hopefully lead us to a great season. Our coach has prepared us and now all we have to do is going out there and play up to our potential," said Botha. Along with the seniors come lots of talent from the junior and sophomore class such as Emily Hauptle and defenseman Jessie Dartoozoz.

Baseball

After a rough and disappointing season, the varsity baseball team is out for one thing this season: Redemption. After only winning 4 games last season, the baseball program is back with a fresh attitude and newfound confidence developed in the offseason. Junior and shortstop Sean Trenchard will help lead the way for the team throughout the spring. "The whole team is really excited to get out on the field this year," said Trenchard. Although the team only features a few seniors, they believe that they can still be a major force in the Patriot District with a very strong junior class. "We believe we can be really competitive in the district," Trenchard commented.

Boys' Lacrosse

After an offseason of hard work, the boys' lacrosse team is hoping to break away from past years and turn themselves into a winning program. Many players on the team have been working hard all offseason to better themselves and the team. Senior and midfielder Brooks Lee will be crucial to the success of the team on the offense. On defense, junior Drew Garden will lead the way for the Wolverines. After only winning one game last year the boy's lacrosse team is ready and eager to forget their past seasons and turn lacrosse into a winning program at West Potomac.

Girls' Soccer

The sibling duo of science teachers Garrett Hubbard and Dana Hubbard will be replacing long time coach Jean Coder to lead the Lady Wolverines into the 2011 Girls' soccer season. The team lost a lot of senior leadership last year such as graduates Michelle Gilmore and Alex Butler, but the team will replace the missing pieces with up and coming talent they had for the last year or so. "With myself at goalie and players like Nicole Sigda and Natalie Walters, I think our team will be strong this year and very competitive," said junior Caroline Kelly. The team has done a lot of off-season conditioning and hard work that will hopefully pay off. Many Saturdays before the season the team had conditioning work to get ready for the season. Junior Natalie Walters commented, "We will do our best to make West Potomac proud."

**Ocean City
Maryland**



**High School
Senior
Beach Week**

Buckingham Hotel

14th and Balitmore Ave 1/2 Block from
beach and
boardwalk,

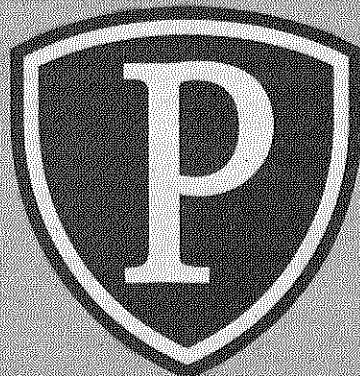
Rooms Efficiencies and
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Madison Beach Motel

At 1st street Outdoor Pool, 2 and 4
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Spotlight

**Congratulations
to the girls' track
3200m relay of So-
phia Passacantando,
Sami Miller, Dale
Lescher, and Sarah
Jane Underwood for
becoming the Virgin-
ia State champions
and setting a new
school record!**

MADNESS

Welcome to March. A month of tradition. A month of crazed fans and Cinderella stories. A month of brackets and bets. A month of college basketball at its finest.

Are you ready for the madness?



Remember that game? ---Upsets throughout the years---

Texas Western became the first team with an all-black starting five to win the championship. It achieved this triumph by pulling an upset over the Kentucky Wildcats, a country favorite. The Westerns came out on top, winning 72-65.

NC State was a #6 seed while Houston was a #1 seed. The championship was supposed to be a blowout, with Houston dominating. But quite the opposite became the reality. As it came down to seconds left on the clock, the victory dunk was made by NC player Lorenzo Charles, a move that spurred chaos and confusion among NC and Houston fans alike.



Villanova and Georgetown were in the championship together. Georgetown was the defending champion and the heavy favorite. But Villanova somehow found a way to win, upsetting Georgetown masses.

Richmond was the first 15-seed to defeat a two-seed when it shocked Syracuse in 1991. This has only happened four times in the history of March Madness.



George Mason reaffirmed their status as underdogs when they, a No. 11 seed, knocked off a No. 1 seed to reach the Final Four.

The unknown school, Davidson, led by star shooter Stephen Curry, made it all the way to the Elite Eight, beating outstanding teams like Gonzaga and Wisconsin on the way.



The number of upsets occurring in year's tournament is astonishing. Let's forget the moment when #14 Ohio beat #3 Georgetown in the first round. Or when Northern Iowa, led by Ali Farokhmanesh, beat #1 Kansas in the second round. Or when Butler, led by Gordon Heyward, made it the way to the championship game and almost beat Duke.

SAVE THE DATES:
 March 13: Selection Sunday
 March 15-16: First Four
 March 17-18: Second Round
 March 19-20: Third Round
 March 24-25: Fourth Round
 March 26-27: Fifth Round

Hall of Fame:
 HARDCORE
 NCAA BASKETBALL
 FANS



THE UNDERDOG

Duke was the 3rd best team in the nation..... until St. Johns, lead by 6' 2" guard Dwight Hardy, beat them 93-78 in The Garden. It was then that the underdogs emerged. With a plethora of wins against ranked teams, including #4 Pittsburgh in which Hardy had the game-winning lay-up, St. Johns is one team to watch this March. And it's all thanks to Hardy. He is averaging 17.9 points per game and is making a strong campaign for Big East Player of the Year. And who knows? He might just pick up a Final Four along the way.



On July 27, 2007, James T. Fredette signed a contract written by his brother promising to reach his ultimate goal of being a star basketball player. So far, it looks like he is going to keep his promise. The breakout star Fredette is averaging 27.9 points per game, which is leading the nation, and guiding BYU to its first Final Four in team history. He is definitely one to watch during the next few weeks.



The Showstopper



The Twins

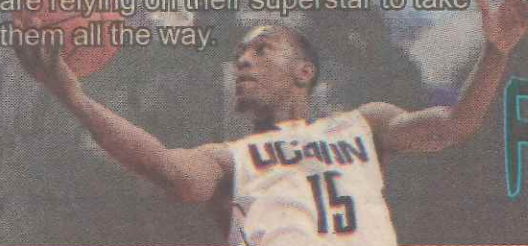
They have identical faces, haircuts, and tattoos. They both play for the Kansas Jayhawks. Not to mention, they are related. The Morris twins are the best brother duo on a team since Blake and Taylor Griffin played at Oklahoma. They are the top two scorers and rebounders on the Jayhawks, with Marcus averaging 17.3 points per game and 7 rebounds per game and Markieff averaging 13.5 points per game and 8.3 rebounds per game. The boys have plenty of experience under their belts, and are looking to help lead Kansas to a #1 seed and a Final Four.

When center suffered from would make him son, Purdue fans But then JaJuan in and led the to a 25-6 regular and has proven play with any nation. With 20.5 8.1 rebounds per game and 2.4 blocks per game, the 6' 10" senior has a big chance to be Big Ten Player of the Year and lead his team to a Final Four.



Robbie Hummel a knee injury that out for the season were worried. Johnson came Boilermakers season record that Purdue can team in the nation.

Following his career high in November, when he scored 42 points against University of Vermont, Walker became recognized as one of the league's star players. With many game winners, including one versus powerhouse Villanova, fans are expecting Walker to make a big impact in the tournament. In 2010, his team, UConn, failed to make the Big Dance and this year they are relying on their superstar to take them all the way.



The Clutch

The Freshman

His favorite song is Party in the USA. His favorite singer is Miley Cyrus. And he's also a 6' 9", 270 lb. power forward for Ohio State. The freshman is averaging 17.3 points per game, 9.7 rebounds per game, and has 14 double-doubles on the season. Thanks to his impressive skills and effort, the Buckeyes, led by "Sully," have become one of the most dangerous teams in the NCAA and are a legitimate contender to be national champions.



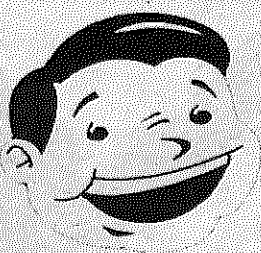
The Giant

Deciphering body language...

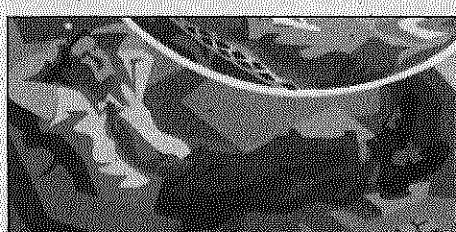
Jade Toft
Business Manager



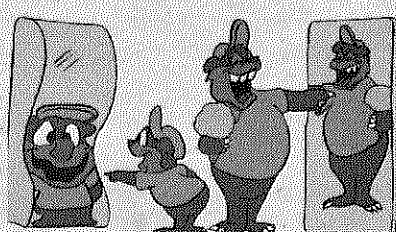
Leaning Forward— When people move closer it can indicate attraction; they are testing whether the other person would like to move closer too.



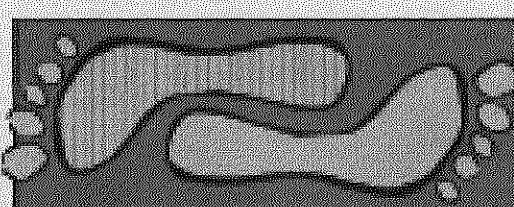
Smile— People do not always smile because they are happy. Smiles can also indicate nervousness, fear, or contempt.



Hands Behind the Head— Constantly putting hands behind the head during a conversation is often a sign of arrogance and cockiness.



Mirroring— Mirroring the actions of another person is typically a sign of attraction, especially during a conversation with the object of said attraction.



Foot Pointing— A person's foot will typically point to the source of attraction. For example, if someone's foot is pointed to the left, then they are most likely attracted to the person to their left.



Touching Neck— If a person is constantly touching their neck, it can be a sign of nervousness or anxiety.

Welcome to Hogwarts

Jacob Alexander
Opinions Editor

Harry Potter fans around the world can now experience the excitement they imagined when they first read or watched Harry Potter. Opening on June 18, the Wizarding World of Harry Potter in Universal Studios, Florida, now offers fans the experience of a lifetime.

The new Harry Potter world offers three amusement park rides, three shows, five shops, and two restaurants. Another great part to this Wizarding World is the famous Butterbeer, a drink often consumed and ordered by the characters in the books at the Three Broomsticks, the name of one of the restaurants in the Wizarding World. The Butterbeer has been one of the most talked about beverages of 2010 and was recently celebrated for having one million sold.

The three rides at this new addition are called the Dragon Challenge, the Flight of the Hippogriff, and the Forbidden Journey. The Forbidden Journey is basically a video ride taking the passengers through Hogwarts. Sophomore Sophie Spriggs said the ride's "special effects were really well done." The Dragon Challenge is the most intense ride. It is a rollercoaster featuring two different parts that people can choose from; a red dragon or a blue one. In each one the rider's feet are hanging and they are taken through a series of fast loops and barrel rolls. One of the shows that have really proved successful so far is the Ollivander's Wand Shop. At the Ollivander's Wand Shop, one customer is chosen to try out various wands until they find the one that chooses them. If they are not chosen to try out wands at Ollivander's, customers can go next door to the Owl Shop and buy one. The Wizarding World of Harry Potter has proven very popular amongst the many people that have visited, including a number of celebrities. In reference to the entire place in general Spriggs added, "What I thought was the most amazing was the attention to detail. In the windows of every store were the magical knick-knacks that we have all read about. From remembralls to fizzing whizzies they were selling it all!"

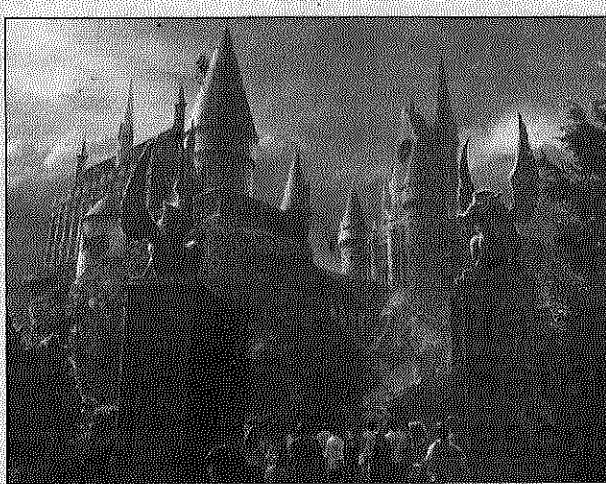


Photo courtesy of Collider.com

The magical land of Hogwarts was recreated at Universal Studios for fans of the books.

Jumpstart to a successful career

Rafa Abdelaziz
Reporter

Ever wonder what the back building behind Gunston is? The building houses the West Potomac Academy. According to fcps.edu, Academies are centers within an existing high school that offer advanced technical and specialized courses that successfully integrate career and academic preparation. Within Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), there are six academies, including West Potomac's own academy. Other Academies are Fairfax, Falls

sixth of this year. "The Film festival is great, I really enjoy going there every year, and it is cool to see what the students worked hard to produce," exclaimed junior Mariah Johnson. The Dental Career and Pharmacy Technology classes always contribute to the community. In late November, the Pharmacy Technology class held a blood drive for the school and the community. "It was great to see the number of students that came and donated blood to the Red Cross," said senior Enez Douglas, who takes the class. The Dental Career students make custom mouth guards for FCPS athletes, which help them raise money for their class.

Criminal Justice is also one of the widely known classes from the Academy.

The class focuses on education about police, courts and corrections. The students' favorite things about the class are probably the field trips they take, "I like the field trips we go to, we went to a shooting range last month," said Marisol Juandique, a senior from South County. Students from Criminal Justice classes take field trips to prisons, police stations, the 911 dispatch station and courts. The class also welcomes guest

Church, and Marshall. The West Potomac Academy gives students from West Potomac and surrounding high schools an opportunity to take specialized classes in Health and Human Services or the Arts. Our West Potomac Academy provides Criminal Justice classes, dance, Dental Careers,

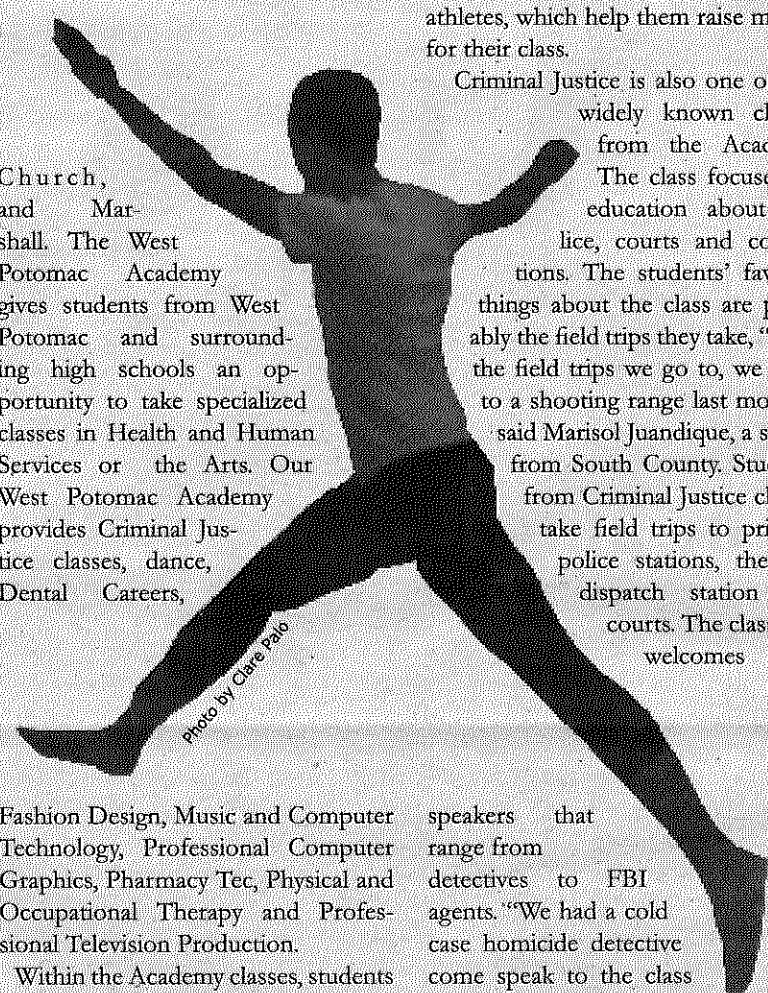


Photo by Carye Pato

Fashion Design, Music and Computer Technology, Professional Computer Graphics, Pharmacy Tec, Physical and Occupational Therapy and Professional Television Production.

Within the Academy classes, students experience many opportunities to further their interest in their chosen field. They often take trips, welcome guest speakers, host community functions and much more. "My favorite thing about my Academy class is that we invite guest speakers to talk to us," said senior Jermima Osei who takes Professional Computer Graphics. In late December, students from the Music and Computer Technology class created and donated a holiday compilation CD to Capital Hospice of Alexandria, who is a business partner to the West Potomac Academy.

The Professional Television (TV) Production class is among one of the favorites of the Academy, it allows students great opportunities to work with top of the line editing equipment. "I took the class, because I heard so many positive things about it, plus we have industry equipment, professional cameras, and even our own studio," explained senior Coline Hay, from Hayfield High School. "The benefits of this class are far-reaching. It promotes teamwork, encourages creativity, inspires resourcefulness and guides students in life lessons such as critical thinking/time management," added Nancy Mantelli the class instructor.

This year the Professional TV Production class is teaming up with the dance classes for their annual film festival which is held on May fifth and

speakers that range from detectives to FBI agents. "We had a cold case homicide detective come speak to the class that the students found really interesting," explained instructor Rodney Gohn.

From the health services classes is the Physical/Occupational Therapy class, this is a two level course that focuses on the body mechanics, the learning of the muscular, skeletal systems and much more. Students receive the opportunity to conduct clinical observations, participate in Health Occupation Students of America Club and more. "The class gives students the unique opportunity to learn and practice professional skills that will help them succeed in the next level," said teacher Mary Conklu.

Every year, West Potomac students anticipate the yearly fashion show put on by the Fashion Design students in the spring. The show displays the student designs and productions. And most of the models are West Potomac students. "My favorite thing about the fashion show is the models," explained junior Marie Kamara. The class also gives students many opportunities to work with top of the line industry equipment.

Whether learning about the human body, computer software or fashion the West Potomac Academy student can qualify that they leave these classes with good experience, new interest and much more.

Take it off: MTV's *Skins* has sparked excessive controversies

Anna Dreyfuss
Style Editor

It is the epitome of a parent's worst nightmare. Three million viewers tune into the MTV show *Skins*, the title of which is derived from a slang phrase for cigarette rolling papers. The show caused a huge commotion for America's parents, and is now a pop culture controversy. *Skins* depicts teenagers' experiences with drugs, sex, alcohol, and everything else parents would want their child to avoid.

The hook of the show is its cast of young actors and a array of sexually explicit scenes. The Justice Department was asked by the Parents Television Council to investigate whether it violates child pornography laws. During the controversy, sponsors Taco Bell, Foot Locker, and Subway pulled their advertising.

MTV is in no way tricking audiences of the subject matter. The networks gave it a TV-MA rating, which means it is not suitable for viewers under 17 and asserts that the show is "specifically designed to be viewed by adults."

The show started out with 3.3 million viewers, 1.2 million of them being under the age of 18. The racy show dropped 51% of the audience and lost six sponsors. Although *Skins* displays the troubling choices teens have to make these days, the show contains some of the poorest acting on television. The original British show, also called *Skins*,

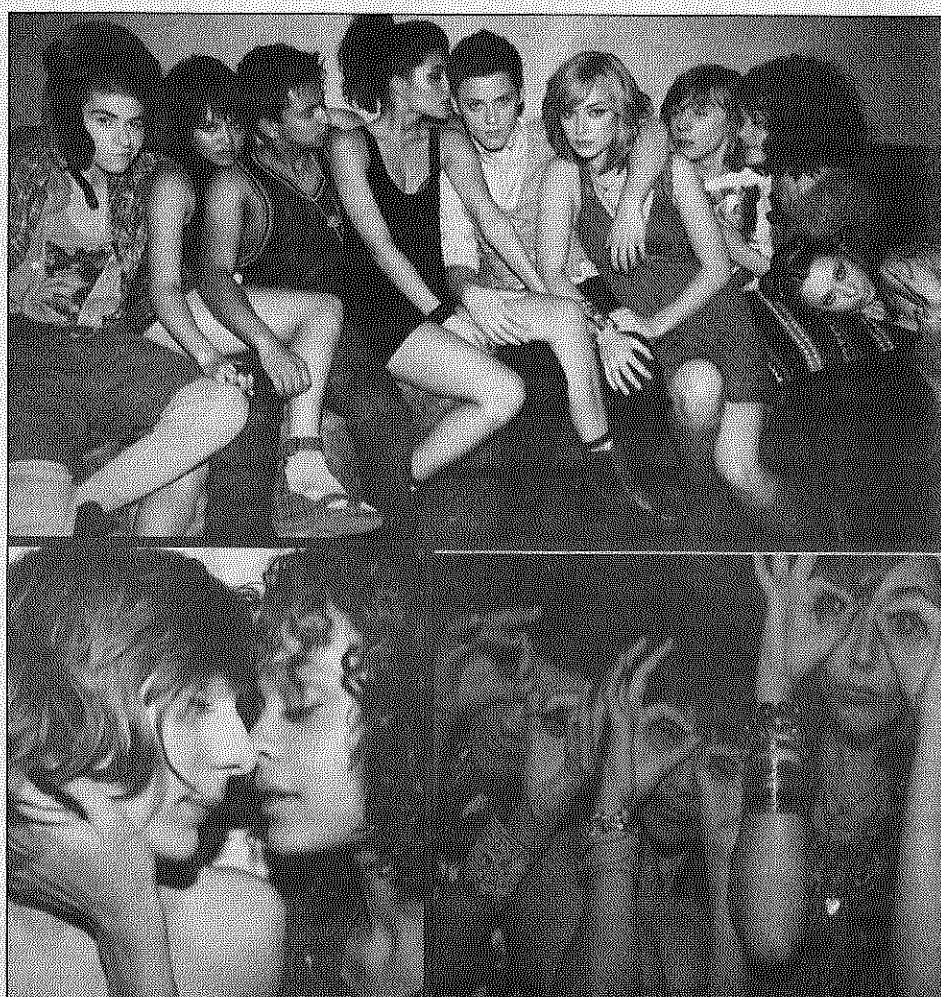
was aired in 2007. The show reached six seasons and is an Emmy-winning television series. The original shows are always better than the remakes and in this case there is no exception. The original drama is much better. It is humorous, but still serious and it does not conflict with the heavy topics.

"I like how it talks about important issues and not just drugs and alcohol, but how teens' relationships with parents affect them and difficulties of discovering your own sexuality. I also like how it is serious, but sometimes funny," said junior Jared Walters. The show is supposed to be more on the dramatic side with a hint of comedy, but it just does not work. Scenes which are supposed to be funny leave viewers embarrassed for even watching this show. The main problem with this humor is when the show portrays drugs, sex and alcohol as a good thing.

The worst part of the show would be the lack of talent. MTV is not known for making award-winning shows, but audiences would feel like they were watching an amateur production rather than a nationally televised show. The show talks about real topics, but some of the characters seem so absurd that they are not at all relatable or would not exist.

"It gives a real reality of teen life and does not candycoat it," said Walters.

Skins shows the troubles of kids who do various things and the consequences, which will ease parents' minds a little more.



MTV's controversial show, *Skins*, adapted from the British program with the same name, is known for its depictions of teen drug abuse and promiscuity.

The auto-tune revolution

Emily Woods
Focus Editor

At the 83th annual Academy Awards on February 27 2011, the night's hosts, James Franco and Anne Hathaway, had a surprise for the audience: a montage of popular films from the previous year. Here's the catch: the clips were transformed into a humorous musical medley. Scenes from *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1*, *Toy Story 3*, *The Social Network* and *The Twilight Saga: Eclipse* now became power ballads, harmonious tunes, and dance floor jams. Several viewers chuckled at the parody, but many others scratched their heads and wondered who had remixed their favorite flicks. The answer to their question is simple: Anatares Auto-tune and The Gregory Brothers.

Auto-tune first gained public attention when Cher used it to perfect the pitch in her hit song, "Believe" in 1998. Since then, the plug-in has been used on everything from country smash hits to underground hip hop tracks. Auto-tune has the ability to correct any vocal into the right pitch. It was invented by Andy Hildebrand and was intended for use on songs' "trouble spots." But since then, artists have adapted the program as dominant aspects of their songs.

Several singers who use auto-tune in their recordings have been criticized for "selling out" and not staying true to their own voice. This litany of auto-tune users includes pop sensations Lady Gaga, Akon and T-Pain. However, despite criticisms and those in favor of the software, recently Auto-tune has done something bigger. The software is now being used to "songify" everything from mundane news reports to riveting political campaign speeches. The masterminds behind this concept are the family band and YouTube stars, The Gregory Brothers.

The band has recently gained national acclaim for their viral videos, especially

the "Auto-tune the News" series, in which current events are tweaked using auto-tune to form a melody. The Gregory Brothers then interject harmonies and entertaining back-up vocals. Most notable of their videos is "The Bed Intruder Song," the catchy tune in which Antoine Dodson speaks (or sings) passionately about an attempted rape on his sister. The song peaked at number 25 on iTunes top 100 singles list and was viewed over seven million times during its first month on the web. Junior Ryan Walker said of the video, "The Bed Intruder Song" is so funny. I think it is great how The Gregory Brothers are exposing people to the news while still making them laugh."

Other YouTube videos posted by The Gregory Brothers include well-known figures such as politician John McCain, news anchor Katie Couric and Congressman

Steve Buyer. The songs range in subject matter, but all aim to inform the public of what is currently happening in the news. Some of the events and controversies covered by the band include legalization of marijuana, health care reform debate and text messaging while driving. Band member Andrew Rose Gregory told CBS, "People are frustrated with pop music because it is all the same over and over again, in terms of being love songs or a song about someone going away. These are songs that are not about anything you have ever heard a song about."

What is next for Anatares Auto-tune? The software has recently moved from recording studios to homes. All it takes is about \$250 for anybody to tweak his or her own voice, transforming it into a sugary, pitch-corrected tone. With frequent usage of auto-tune on the rise, nobody can be certain of the future of this plug-in. One thing can be certain, however. Whether it is used for musical purposes or to "songify" the news, auto-tune is one novelty trend that will be sticking around for a while.



Photo by demianrepucci.com

The Gregory Brothers are just one example of the many people who use auto-tuning in their shows on Youtube.

Local dad band 'BMT' rocks

Anna Peck
Reporter

There is a new moon rising in the AVA. The band, Black Moon Tonic, formed because of their mutual love of music and it slowly turned into the band that has been rockin' out for the past seven years.

Black Moon Tonic consists of six members with their own special nicknames. Jim "Stixx" Woods is the drummer of the band. Paul "Chief" Murphy plays French horn, trumpet, bongos and percussion, sings back-up vocals, and is the "chief" organizer of the band. Craig "Cap" Fenely plays the bass, and coined his nickname because he flies 777's internationally for United Airlines. Charlie "Z" Zdebski sings and plays lead guitar, rhythm guitar, and harmonica. Mark "Fuzz" O'Connell plays lead guitar, rhythm guitar and keyboards and provides vocals. Adam "Reverend" Fazackerley, because he actually became a certificated Reverend to marry two friends, sings and plays rhythm guitar. The band also has a unique name. Fazackerley said, "Those three words were chosen for the way they sounded together and the fact that they were a direct reflection of the music we were playing, the late night practices and the multiple meanings of the word 'tonic,' all of which seemed to fit us."

The band plays many genres of music. They play their own originals, classic and current rock and roll, R&B, Soul and Country Rock. The band has several influences, including the Beatles, Bob Marley, and the Rolling Stones, but also current bands like, Kings of Leon, the Zac Brown Band, and Matchbox

Twenty.

Black Moon Tonic has played all over the area. They have performed at club gigs in venues like O'Shaughnessy's, the Birchmere, and Southside 815 in Old Town (and regularly at the Village Wharf in Hollin Hall shopping center until it closed). They also perform at weddings, graduations, and anniversary parties. Overall, they have played 108 shows and counting.

Besides playing music, the men have other things that keep them satisfied. In total, they have 21 kids with tons of sports and family activities. The bandmates agree about the keys to a successful band. "There are some tangible requirements like hard work, organization, consistent effort and at least a little musical ability. Maybe more important though, are the intangible ones; the commitment to keep trying and keep working with each other through many ups and downs, the willingness to treat each other like 'family' because you really have to be one and everyone needs to be free and secure," said Zdebski.

Black Moon Tonic is a big family that is connected by something they all truly love. Rather than big music stars who are all about making money and "the glitz and glam" these artists know what really matters. "At the end of a good night, we know that each individual band member, that Black Moon Tonic as a band and that all of the fans that participated, danced and enjoyed the music, just created a common experience that brought us three or four hours of shared enjoyment," said Zdebski.



Photo by forthunt.patch.com

From left to right: Mark O'Connell, Charlie Zdebski, Craig Feneley, Adam Fazackerley, Paul Murphy, and Jim Woods.

When does “joking” become offensive?

Anna Dreyfuss
Style Editor

“Ching chong, I am Chinese!” The classroom giggles and snickers at the target. The student looks down, slightly smirking and tells himself it is just a joke. But is this really joking? Is making fun of someone’s race or ethnicity really a joke or is it flat out racism?

West Potomac represents fifty countries, thirty-seven languages and countless religions. Out of a school of 2,204 students, there is bound to be some “joking” going on.

Students hide behind clowning to say things that would not be socially acceptable in this time period. Nobody would angrily accuse a Middle Eastern student of being a member of al-Qaida, but “Don’t go all terrorist on me” is tossed around the hallways. This generation was brought up knowing that being openly racist is wrong, so only rarely do students hear aggressive verbal abuse. Instead, subtle jokes are more acceptable. “Prejudice only exists because people are not the same. We are not all carbon copies of each other and some people are afraid of our differences,” said senior Elizabeth Wolfrey.

Students who utter prejudicial comments in a light-hearted way may believe it will not hurt someone’s feelings as much, but it is not so. It is hard to respond firmly about this because it changes the mood and the victim becomes the “bad” guy or the “goody two shoes.” Not being able to respond as aggressively as the victim would to a harsh comment leaves the target frustrated and bitter.

“You see it everywhere; it does not matter

where you are. Most of the time it is indirect,” said junior Katie Amaya. Students learned about the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920’s and the Jim Crow laws in the 1960’s, but many dismiss the largely present issue of racism in America today.

Racism takes many forms. It is not only negative comments to people, but also positive. Many believe Asian students excel in mathematics. When generalized, kids feel that students see themselves as a label and not an individual person.

Students also feel bad when they cannot meet their label’s expectations.

How many Caucasians have been asked “Where are you really from?”

Not many, but Asians and Hispanics are asked that question repetitively. “I do not think that asking where someone is from is

as prejudice; it is like asking what hobbies a person has. Asking someone where they

are from is showing an interest in their life,” said junior Anna Schwabacher. Although the question may come off as just showing an interest, singling out a certain race of people and assuming they are not from this country is prejudice. Most students would not ask a Caucasian student if they are from Germany or Switzerland, so how is this any different? It is more subtle, but is nonetheless stereotyping because the person simply looks different.

Where does it come from? “Outside influences are definitely a cause of prejudice and kids reflect their surroundings at home,” said faculty member Erin Whittaker. It also results from students dehumanizing others to feel better about themselves. “It comes down to kids’ insecurities,” concluded Whittaker.



Photo courtesy of originalwavelength.blogspot.com

Even though it is often thought of as just a simple joke, making fun of someone’s race is still hurtful and wrong.

Does high school really prepare students for college?

Jade Toft
Reporter

High school teachers are held responsible for giving every student an education, but not everyone is taught the same curriculum. So is everyone equally prepared for college?

West Potomac High School currently uses three levels of education, Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, and General Education in hopes of creating a learning environment for all students. While most AP and Honors students tend to be prepared for college by taking on the extra workload, a majority of regular-level students are left only understanding the bare minimum so they can pass tests at the end of the year and move on.

AP classes allow students to take college-level courses in preparation for the exams in May. Many colleges will accept higher scores on the exams and give the students college credit for completing these courses. These students learn early on the expectations of college after being bombarded with tests and essays that a college student would be expected to complete. Some of the classes offer no extra credit and assign little homework, leaving it up to the student to read the textbook and prepare for the test.

Taking these classes will almost always ensure success, because it is the students’ responsibility to complete the expected work and come to as many classes as possible. The teachers are there to work, not to parent.

Former West Potomac student Cara Yaworske commented, “College is all learning on your own. It sucks. Teachers are not there to feed you the information. You have to read everything on your own and then you have lectures on it. Teachers never know your names and you sometimes have classes with over

100 students, so there are no personal relationships. Everything is your responsibility!”

Unfortunately, the majority of high school classes are designed to prepare for Standards of Learning [SOL], Scholastic Aptitude Test [SAT], and American College Testing [ACT] tests, which are the bare minimum. There are opportunities for overachievers to take harder classes, but all other classes are expected to cater to the average student. The teachers of regular classes are often more lenient when it comes to late work and missed days. In college, there is no homework, and all students are expected to comprehend the material on their own. There is no penalty for not going to class in college because truthfully all they need is your money.

Even though most teachers offer after-school opportunities, there are almost always more AP students that stay after than regular students, especially after missing a day of school. Many kids that are in regular classes have the opportunity of going over the missed information in class because these classes usually spend more time on each topic. AP classes have to cover all material in preparation for the AP exam a full month before the end of school. There is less time to go over the information and each class period is essential for teaching new material. There is no time to go over things unless a student comes after school.

Even though high school attempts to prepare students for college, there is no way to prepare a student for being on their own. In college, students have only themselves to rely on. It is up to the student to create a schedule that works for them, balancing out personal needs, education, and extracurricular activities. Overall, what level a student is at in high school will most likely determine how prepared they are for college.

You can learn to do well or learn to do good.

Why not both?

*At Siena, success is measured not only by personal achievement,
but the positive impact you have on others.*



SIENAcollge www.siena.edu

Ask Laura and Leigh...

Dear L&L

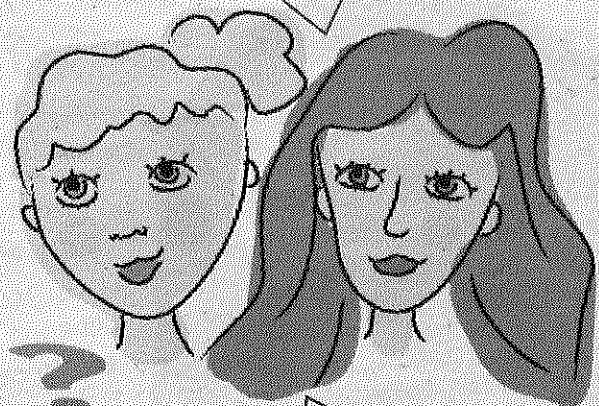
I have a dilemma. I like this guy, and I have liked him for a few months now. [We] text and talk constantly about everything. We also flirt a lot. He seems to like me back because he always starts the flirty conversations. But he has a girlfriend. I have told him how I felt because I do not want to keep it a secret from him, but he did not respond. What should I do? I really like him and I think we would be really good together.

—High School Home Wrecker

HSBW,

In a situation like this one, we would say the best thing to do is try to stay away from that guy. If he is talking to you behind his girlfriend's back, there is a possibility that he is talking to other girls too. Also, if you guys decided to date, how would you know whether he was flirting with other girls behind your back? A guy like this is not the type of person you should be looking for. You deserve better.

—L&L



Laura and Leigh,

My mom has a Facebook so that she can 'keep tabs' on what I am up to. So, I try to keep from having anything that could get me in trouble with her posted online. However, that does not keep her from seeing things that my friends are doing. If she sees a bad picture or a crude post, she assumes, because these are my friends, I am behaving the same way. I am losing her trust because of something I did not do. What should I say to her?

—FBI (FaceBook Investigators)

FBI,

The best thing to do would be to sit down with your mom and talk about it. She is just concerned about you and making sure you are safe. Tell her Facebook is a place for people to express themselves, but that the pictures and posts that people put up do not entirely reflect their personality and behavior as a whole. Also, tell her the people you are friends with do not act the same way you do. Good Luck!

—L&L

Student Shoutouts

Shoutout to West Potomac Winter Sports!

Congrats to the rifle team for placing 6th at the Regional Rifle Tournament!

Congrats to the girls' swim team for placing 5th at the states championship!

Congrats to the gymnastics team for coming in third at districts and sending a gymnast to states!

Grace Bessel-
It's over

—Delaney McPherson

Submit to the SYZGY!
Any artists, writers, or photographers: if you would like to see your work published in the literary magazine, see Mr. Russell in room 324

Congrats to Ms. Rodriguez on your new bling!
Best Wishes,
xoxoxo

A special thanks to The History of a Nation Committee for putting together all of the Black History Month events!

April 15th is the Day of Silence
Show Your Support!
Ask Mrs. Nelson for Details

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

WOULD YOU RATHER...?

Lily Weisblatt & Emily Griffin
Reporter & Editor-in-Chief

Have mom and dad chaperon your date?

Date someone who always forgets your birthday?

Have a roommate that does not shut up?

Only be able to wear the color black for the rest of your life?

Have a freakishly huge smile?

Be naked in Antarctica?

Live in a world without color?

Have your younger siblings there?

Date someone who never texts you back?

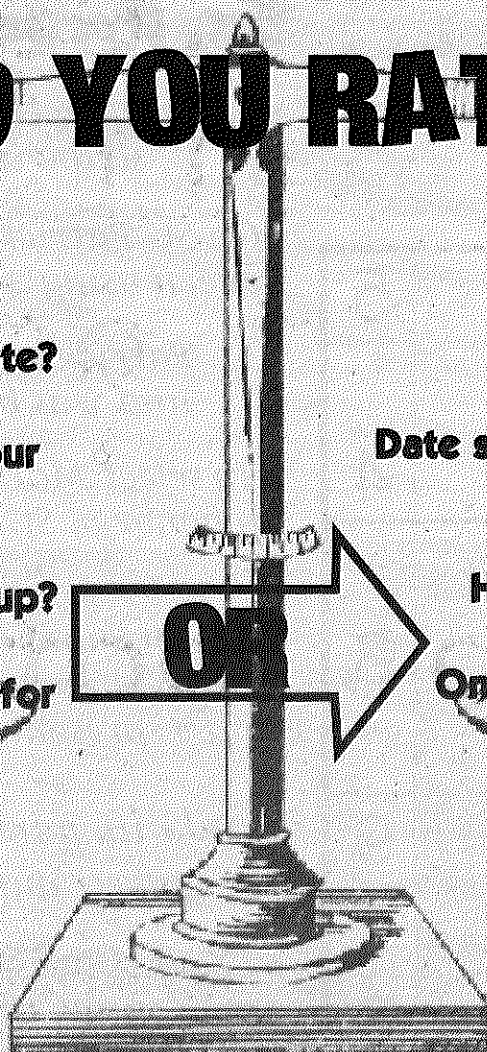
Have a roommate that never speaks?

Only be able to wear one pair of jeans for the rest of your life?

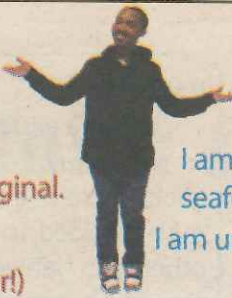
A freakishly small nose?

Wear a snowsuit in the Sahara?

Live in a world without electricity?



Antonio Powell



I am outspoken, dependable, confident, distracted and original.

I am a prankster, I am an only child, I hate salad, I still love cartoons, and I have not taken a bath in a year (I still shower!)

My greatest achievement has been doing numerous hours of community service!

I plan on going to Virginia State.

I play the saxophone.

I wish I could be a panther.

My favorite food is Cheez-Its.

I wish I could take Rihanna on a car trip, because she is beautiful and talented.

My favorite word is "ratchet."

My funniest memory at West Potomac is falling out of the back of a truck on Homecoming night.

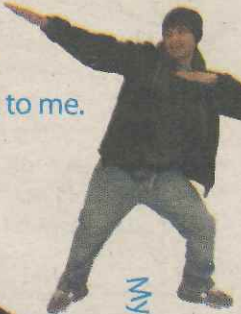
My favorite hobby is working out at the gym.

My favorite quote is, "I can accept failure, everyone fails at something, but I cannot accept not trying."

Follow me @ Rated Te



Danny Rivera



I am addicted to betting, I am a diehard Redskins fan, I hate seafood, I love orange juice, and I want to be a psychologist.

I am unique, because I can talk to anyone, and anyone can talk to me.

My favorite hero is Batman, because he does not have any fake powers.

I plan on going to NOVA for 2 years, then transferring to another college.

I am funny, outgoing, fair, forgetful, and athletic.

I won my school's spelling bee in 3rd grade.

I wish I could be an eagle.

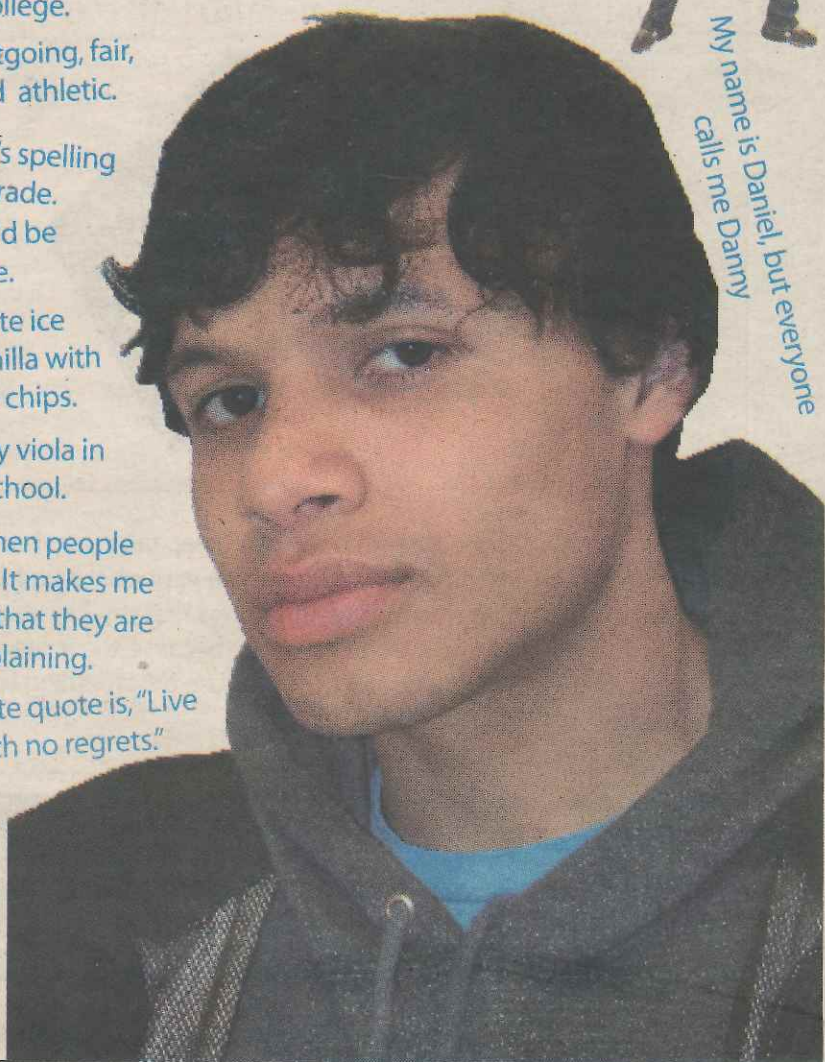
My favorite ice cream is vanilla with chocolate chips.

I used to play viola in middle school.

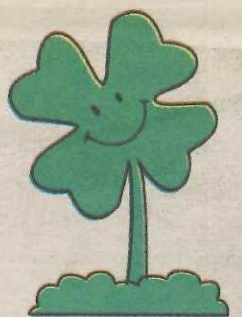
I hate when people complain. It makes me complain that they are complaining.

My favorite quote is, "Live life with no regrets."

My name is Daniel, but everyone calls me Danny



Just for Fun!



Photos courtesy of Clipart

8								5
		5		1		2		
1			5		6			4
		2		8		6		
6				2				3
		4		7		9		
5			1		7			9
		1		3		7		
4								8

Game courtesy of Sudoku.com

ST. PATRICK'S DAY FUN FACTS

- In Seattle, there is a ceremony where a green stripe is painted down the roads.
- On St. Patrick's Day, the Chicago River is dyed green using 40 pounds of green vegetable dye.
- St. Patrick was not Irish, but was actually Scottish and was born in either Scotland or Wales.
- In select McDonald's, Shamrock Shakes are served in honor of St. Patrick's Day. The shakes are green in color and taste like mint.
- The original color related to St. Patrick's Day was not green, but blue. Green was considered "unlucky," and represented a time in Irish history when Ireland was not free.
- According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the highest number of leaves found on a clover is 14!
- Legend says that each leaf of the clover means something: the first is for hope, the second for faith, the third for love and the fourth for luck.

Facts courtesy of holidays.kaboose.com and toptenz.net