



Focus
Post Secret

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Thursday, May 19, 2011

Public Enemy No. 1 dead

Save the
date
PROM



Photo courtesy of 4and20blackbirds.com



Photo courtesy of thephysiocs.com
President Barack Obama addressed the issue Osama Bin Laden's death on May 1, 2011 late Sunday night.

Caitlin Schroeder
Reporter

On Sunday, May 1, 2011, a team of American Navy Seals infiltrated a compound deep inside Pakistan and the killed the number one United States enemy, Osama bin Laden, the mastermind behind the horrific September 11 attacks and founder of the Al-Qaeda militant terrorist group. Bin Laden was in hiding for over two decades prompting the most massive, expensive manhunt ever conducted in America's history.

The official announcement of bin Laden's death came when President Barack Obama spoke to an anxious nation late Sunday night after major news networks including CNN and Fox News announced the president himself would be making an impromptu announcement regarding national security. At approximately 11:35 p.m. Obama made his way into the East Room of the White house and announced the news. "Good evening", he began, "Tonight, I can report to the American people and to the world that the United States has conducted an operation that killed bin Laden, the leader of Al-Qaeda, and a terrorist who's responsible for the murder of thousands of innocent men, women, and children." This news was greeted with uproar from the mass of red, white, and blue crowds, gathered outside of the White House in celebration, belting out the national anthem and chanting encouragements such as "USA, USA!"

Just hours previously to this monomental announcement to America, Obama along with Vice

President Joe Biden, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and other top advisors gathered in the White House's Situation Room monitoring the operation whose aim was to bring bin Laden in the hands of the Navy Seals, dead or alive. As the director of the Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] relayed the events to the room via video the room tensed. He announced the words to everyone was hoping for and silence ensued until the president spoke up, "we got him."

Bin Laden became a household name after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks which he claimed to have organized. Born in Saudi Arabia in 1957 to a wealthy family, his prominent reign of terror began in 1992 when he claimed responsibility for a bombing attempt of United States [US] soldiers in Yemen and an attack on US troops in Somalia. The demise of bin Laden is expected to seriously affect the Al-Qaida terrorist organization, but whether it will weaken its hold on worldwide terror or prompt a violent need for revenge we cannot yet know. Herbert Daniel, West Potomac High School history teacher, believes this new development in America's war on terror is akin to "cutting the head of a snake." While his colleague, history teacher Emily Millians, described how she believes this will affect our nation. "Domestically, people will think our war on terrorism is over, which it may or may not be," she explained. "Bin Laden's death gives us a chance to start a new period of relations in the Middle East in which we can abandon a military based relationship and focus on a more traditional policy of supporting democracy."

Norris Brooks
News Editor

So much to do, so little time! This axiom has never proved truer than this year for West Potomac. When the 2011 prom date was revealed as June 3, the announcement immediately sparked dismay from students and parents alike. Apparently, the date conflicted with numerous school activities, the most prominent including a State Track Meet, the annual Chorus Spring Show, and, perhaps most problematic for juniors, the Scholastic Aptitude Test [SAT] test.

The questions foremost in everyone's mind are "How could this happen? How was the date chosen?" Picking a date for prom is more complicated than one might think. There are multiple specifications that the administration considers. For one, the date must be within three to four weeks of graduation. The reason: to prevent drinking or other activities at the dance that might jeopardize a student's ability to graduate. Also, it is important to avoid conflicts with the Advanced Placement [AP] and Standards of Learning [SOL] testing dates. Other factors to consider are location suitability, availability, and cost.

A year before the event, Junior Class Sponsor Sheri Been-Kirkland, set forth to find a venue and set a date with the above constraints in mind. Given the popularity and affordability of the Hilton Mark Center—where last year's prom was held—Been-Kirkland presented various available dates at this location to the administration. The date of June 3, 2011 was agreed upon in April of 2010, over a year before the event.

The conflicts with other significant school activities were discovered early in the school year. Scheduling prom the day before the SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests set off a firestorm. Students are reminded often that the goal of high school is to prepare them for the future, and that one of the keys to being accepted by a top-notch college is a solid SAT score. Staying out late the night before the big test can effect a person's ability to do well. This fear has been the deciding factor for many juniors

When do student-teacher relationships cross the line?

Emily Griffin & Caitlin Schroeder
Editor-in-Chief & Reporter

Healthy working bonds between students and teachers have been a cornerstone of education for decades, but the line between professional and personal behavior is becoming increasingly blurred. With the rising popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, students and teachers have access to a more personal connection outside the classroom environment. Some believe this threatens the school wide balance of authority.

West Potomac principal Cliff Hardison, encourages strong working relationships between students and their teachers. Senior Jemima Osie-Hwedie does not think that students and teachers at West Potomac have an issue with overstepping boundaries. "I know there are some students who have a harmless crush on some of their teachers, but the students would never act on their crush. It is harmless," explained Osie-Hwedie.

An advocate of Blackboard communication, Hardison believes that the FCPS 24-7 resources are more than adequate substitutes for less defined, unprofessional communication

through Facebook messages or texting. "It is more than appropriate that students and teachers communicate but [these] connections end when the student or member of staff becomes uncomfortable," explained Hardison. When a participant feels uncomfortable, students should visit their counselor to address the potential issue, and teachers should communicate with the student and their counselor to identify and suppress the unsuitable behavior.

According to eiaonline.com, approximately 10 teachers out of 12,000 are fired every two years due to misconduct either inside or outside the classroom. Osie-Hwedie said, "Teachers should only be able to contact their parents. Nothing involving a personal relationship should be allowed. The statistics are the fault of the teachers for the most part. This is because the teachers are the adults so they should be the ones who are responsible for their own actions."

The Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) system currently lacks specific regulations outlining what behavior is constituted as inappropriate and unprofessional by either the teacher or the student. Senior Alaina Miller stated, "There should be definite boundaries for relationships involving students and teachers. For example, teachers should keep students out

of their personal life and vice versa." Obviously students and teachers are forbidden to engage in inappropriate romantic relationships or solicit improper behavior with each other while the student is underage and still under the authority of the specific teacher and/or school, however, beyond high school the regulations are unclear.

Fairfax County School Board Policy 4410.5, III General Duties clearly states: "All educational employees shall be responsible for leading children and youth to desirable patterns of general conduct and behavior. The practice of exemplary conduct in all personal, social, and professional affairs shall be expected of all employees." Victoria Woellner-Fields, the Executive Administrative Assistant to Members of the Fairfax County School Board said, "The conduct of our employees and their relationship with our students is very important. Generally speaking, teachers should not give rides to students without parental consent." However, there are scenarios that can occur in which teachers are given permission to help students outside of school. Woellner-Fields explained, "There are emergency situations that can present themselves where a teacher would give a student a ride, but these would be exception based." Miller, who believes it is fine that students and

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No place like NOVA

Sada Khan
Reporter

"They accept everyone; it is nothing special," said junior Jemar Edwards. It may not send out acceptance letters or find you bubbly new roommates, but it saves students a bundle. "You will end up going to Northern Virginia Community College [NOVA]" has been the infamous line that students use to joke about each other's low intellectual level. NOVA has become a stigma among students in high schools because it gets stereotyped as a college for less intelligent students. However, this is simply not the case.

NOVA is one of the biggest community colleges in the nation. It currently operates six campuses in the Northern Virginia region and enrolls more than 40,000 students every year. NOVA offers 150 associate degrees and certificate programs in the fields of nursing, business administration, marketing and much more. One of the biggest perks that it offers is the affordable tuition prices. On average, the tuition per semester for a student is \$2,294 dollars compared to a four year college like the University of Virginia whose tuition per semester is \$5,318 dollars.

NOVA Community College gives students the opportunity to get an associate (two-year) degree there, and then transfer to any four-year university in the state of Virginia. When the student receives their bachelor's (four-year) degree, it will be identical to those of students that have attended the state university all four years. This program helps students go to a college, save money and also gives students a flexible schedule seven days a week.

College and career specialist Elena Johnson said, "I think the two-year transfer program is a great option because it eases the transition from high school to college. It is also really helpful to students that did not perform well in high school to get better grades."

Since NOVA is so close to home students can stay at home and live with families for another two years. Junior Abby Welch said, "You can get a good degree, save money and live to close to family. It is a great choice." Although many students love to stay at home, others reject NOVA for that very reason. Junior Sarah Loughridge said, "NOVA is a bad option because you have to live at home for two more years."

Community colleges are not the only good option a graduating student has after high school. According to chronicle.com, the number of students enrolled in online classes has increased 17% from 2008. NOVA also offers online classes for almost all the courses at the college. The program is called the Extended Learning Institute which allows students to learn and submit assignments online through the NOVA Blackboard system. Edwards continued, "Online classes are good because you get to stay at home and go to school in your PJs." Online classes allow working students to work full-time and stay on track with their education at the same time. Johnson said, "Online classes are a great option for students that are working and for people who have financial and personal situations." Top notch universities may be a dream for many graduating teenagers, but they are not the only option available. Pursuing education after high school is now more convenient and inexpensive for everyone.

Another day, another apocalypse

Jade Toft
Business Manager

"Noah knew [so] we can know"

A large group of Christian followers believe that May 21, 2011 will mark the beginning of an inevitable end. Rather than being afraid, many have taken it upon themselves to spread the word about Judgment Day and embrace what is to come. Followers paint their cars, pass out pamphlets, and pay for billboards to get the word across that Jesus will return to Earth this May. One Christian, Mary Exley, is participating in a movement to travel to as many cities as possible in RVs to help carry the message. "I don't really have plans to come back," stated Exley. "Time is short."

According to the calculations of Harold Camping, the 89 year old leader of Family Radio Worldwide, the end of the world will begin on May 21 and will officially be over by October 21 of this year. Camping has been studying the Bible for over 70 years in hopes of calculating this important event. However, this is not the first attempt by Camping to predict such a date. Originally, Camping had people believing that the end of the world would come on September 6, 1994 according to news-feed.time.com. Even after such an embarrassing miscalculation, Camping refused to give up his life's work. He is

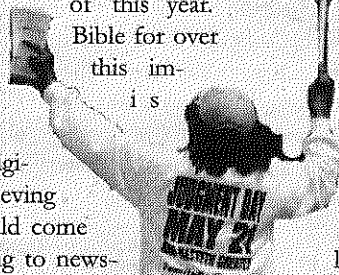


Photo Courtesy of web-fun.info

Followers of Harold Camping are working to spread the message about the impending apocalypse on May 21, 2011.

certain, along with his Christian followers, that this time the world will definitely come to an end. How can they be certain? Chris McCann, a worker with eBible Fellowship claimed, "It would be like telling the Wright Brothers that every other attempt to fly has failed, so you shouldn't even try."

What should we expect on May 21? During the second coming of Christ, all Christians will allegedly go straight to heaven while the rest of the Earth will be left to suffer the torment and horror that will come within the next five months of Jesus' reign. Some people are claiming that the earthquakes in Japan, the wildfires in Texas, and the tornadoes spotted across the world are just hints of what the end of the world will bring.

While various Christian followers spend their last few days on Earth spreading the word of their calculations from the Bible, the rest of the world continues to live their lives normally. Exley commented, "A lot of people might think, 'The end's coming, let's go party, let's drink and have multiple sex partners.' But we are commanded by God to warn people. I wish I could just be like everybody else, but it's so much better to know that when the end comes, you will be safe."

Many people fight with this loosely organized group of Christians, arguing that there are many parts of the Bible that clearly state no one will know when the end will come. Depending on your interpretation of the Bible and what you believe will determine how you react to the proposed apocalypse.

In the meantime, Exley warned, "If you want to say you are crazy, go ahead, but when you are dead on May 21 (or soon after), you will know we were right. And you will thank us."

Engineering club gears up for next year

Anna Peck
Reporter

"Let's convert our potential energy to kinetic energy."

This is a funny joke, if you are corny, nerdy, or in engineering club. The West Potomac Engineering Club, advised by technology education teacher Joseph Franco, makes math and science fun. The club allows individuals to expand their knowledge of technology and become aware of the many sections of engineering and design.

The club is led by senior President Jennifer Long, junior Vice President Jackie Beckwith, and junior Secretary Aminta Guzman. It meets Mondays and Wednesdays in room 163. During meetings, students work on any project of their choosing or if they are involved with the Technology Student Association (TSA), they can participate in state competitions with categories like flight endurance, biotechnology, and architectural modeling.

Although engineering seems like a tough subject, many students enjoy working on different projects and the social aspects. Franco said, "Students enjoy the challenge of creating something new, using their critical thinking skills and being able to work on projects that they could not in any other class. The engineering club is open to anything that the students want to work on, Go-Carts, RC vehicles, video games."

Math and science are tough subjects, but engineering also involves types of art and creative activity. Some creations made include robotics, electronics, and rockets. If students are not occupied with competitions, they can still learn things about technology. It provides an outlet to enhance students'

creative thinking through the projects and competition.

In addition to the engineering club, Franco also teaches engineering courses. "The primary engineering course is 'Introduction to Engineering.' If interested in going into engineering, this is the course you need to take. It will run your through civil, mechanical, electrical, and aerospace engineering. The course is geared for juniors and seniors," explained Franco. There is also the Research and Development Engineering course, which provides an opportunity to design, build and race a full size boat. West Potomac offers seven other classes in technology education. Engineering club can be helpful for a possible future in the field. Beckwith said, "Before taking Franco's classes, I had never really considered engineering as a future career, even though it was a logical choice since I like math and science. Although now, after doing some really cool projects and learning more about the engineering field, it is definitely an option, and one that I could really enjoy." A great part of being in engineering club is that it looks awesome on college applications and it gives you the opportunity to be a member of the National Technology Honors Society, which also looks stellar on applications. There are tons of internship and opportunities available to students that are a part of the technology department. Engineering club can lead to several career fields such as forensic, ocean, and software engineering. The engineering club and courses help students understand how math, physics, and science concepts can be utilized in real life. This can also help with school-related math and sciences courses. For people considering engineering as a possible career, the club can provide many opportunities that can lead to success.

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2012 election draws a crowd

Jacob Alexander
Opinions Editor

"You are fired," is the saying that many people know successful businessman Donald Trump from after hearing it multiple times on his show. However, Trump is now thinking about doing something much bigger than simply saying these words; he is considering running for President in the 2012 presidential election.

Trump believes that the country is headed for disaster according to 2012.presidential-candidates.org, and is thinking about running as a Republican candidate. Trump supports the death penalty in more cases than Obama would approve of it, such as in the Arizona shooting case.

"I would be in favor of the death penalty for this type of senseless and violent act (as well as others like espionage, treason, acts of terrorism) committed against innocent citizens. The trial should be expeditious and not drag on for years, as so many of these trials do," Trump commented, according to an article on thedailybeast.com. Trump also thinks that Chinese products should be taxed because China is making hundreds of billions of dollars per year that could potentially be US profit.

Trump is well known as a celebrity and a wealthy businessman, earning himself the nickname "the Trump." However, he is not known at all for politics. In fact, he does not have much political experience. Many people believe this to be a reason that makes him an unqualified candidate. "I do not think he has the political experience it takes to be President," commented junior Paul Crowley. Although he has developed opinions on many issues it is possible that Trump is not experienced enough for the job.

The democratic candidate is obvious: current President Barack Obama. Since he is only coming to the end of his first term he can still hold another term as long as he seeks reelection, which he announced that he will do in early April 2011. His platform will be similar to what it was in the 2008 election, focusing on the key issues including universal health care, removing US troops from Iraq, a pro-choice abortion policy, and higher income tax for the rich.

Another experienced candidate considering running for the Republican spot in the election is, former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich. Gingrich was speculated as a potential candidate in 2008 and supports the Tea Party Movement. The Tea Party Movement endorses reduced government spending, equal taxation among everyone, reduction of the national debt and federal budget deficit, and supports a strict interpretation of the original meaning United States Constitution rather than imposing new interpretations that were not originally intended.

In addition, Ron Paul, the US Representative of Texas, is another possible candidate for 2012, adopting the slogan "Restore America Now." Paul won the Conservative Political Action Conference [CPAC] Straw Poll in 2010 and 2011, which essentially evaluates conservative candidates for president. Paul also supports a similar ideology to the Tea Party Movement, which is about using the US Constitution as a guide for political action.

The final potential Republican candidate is former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, who won the CPAC Straw Poll in 2007, 2008, and 2009. He also won the Southern Republican Leadership Conference Straw Poll in 2010 and the New Hampshire Straw Poll in 2011. He ran for the Republican Presidential candidate in 2008 but lost to John McCain. Soon after he began paving the way for a run in the 2012 election.



Photos courtesy of wordpress.com, forbes.com, cbsnews.com, politico.com, chicagotribune.

Prom date, cont.

of whether or not to attend the dance. Junior Samantha Clifford said, "I was really looking forward to my first prom, but college is more important to me, so I am going to stay home that night." Many other juniors have echoed this feeling. Scheduling issues with sporting events is common, but the Friday night prom date also conflicted with the annual Spring Show produced by the Choral Department. Every year, this show is extremely profitable and an event much anticipated by chorus members and the school community. The Friday night performance was canceled and replaced with a Sunday matinee. Junior Ryan Walker expressed her thoughts when she remarked, "It's really disappointing that one of the shows is canceled. I just wish the prom date had been on a weekend."

The administration was unaware of the complications when the date was set. As soon as the problems arose, Been-Kirkland tried to remedy the situation. The only affordable alternative was a date in March, which was too soon before graduation.

To avoid this confusion in the future, Aaron Helmick, Director of Student Activities, has been instructed to develop a master activities calendar for next year that includes input from all interested parties, such as Student Government, freshman to senior classes, music programs, sports teams, and others.

Principal Cliff Hardison expressed the concerns of the entire school community when he said, "We all have to work better to communicate in the future and on an ongoing basis."

Relationships, cont.

teachers have a friendly relationship, stated, "There is too much media attention on sexual relationships between students and teachers." Woellner-Fields continued, "As for students asking about a teacher's personal life, it is important to maintain appropriate boundaries. To ask a teacher about general interests such as his or her favorite sports team is fine. Asking questions that go beyond general information would be inappropriate. It is important for teachers to use good judgment in disclosing personal information."

The Virginia Board of Education is in the process of creating a document, "The Proposed Guidelines for the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct & Abuse in Virginia Public Schools," which will outline acceptable and unacceptable behaviors of students and members of staff through means of technology, including Facebook, Twitter, and text messaging.



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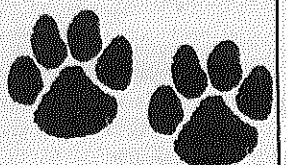
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Ups and downs in the sports world

Tyler Arnold
Reporter

The Super Bowl, the Masters, the National Basketball Association [NBA] playoffs, the Stanley cup, and March Madness all attract sports fans throughout the year. Only the best athletes play in these championships and the victors rise as the dust settles over the field. Over the course of 2011 America has seen the Packers face off against the Steelers, marveled as UConn beat Butler, witnessed the underdog Charl Schwartzel putt his way to the top, and scooted to the edge of their seats to see who will take home the Stanley Cup. While these matches are only a few of the most popular sports

there are many other events that can occupy sports fans. From skiing to polo there are a plethora of sports and they all have their premiere matches of the year.

One of the most watched sporting events of the year was the Super Bowl and the Packers, led by Aaron Rodgers, dropped the Steelers to take hold of the win. This game produced top performances in passing, rushing and receiving for the year in front of millions of viewers. According to ESPN.com A. Rodgers led passing with 304 YDS and 3 TDS while Steelers tailback R. Mendenhall ran with 14 CAR, 63 YDS and 1 TD

and the top receiver was Green Bay's J. Nelson with 9 REC, 140 YDS and 1 TD. While the National Football League [NFL] is now safe from lockout the prospects of teams making the 2012 super bowl are under way with the Green Bay Packers have Odds of 6 to 1 (Hollywood Sportsbook, New England Patriots' Best 2012 Super bowl Odds are 5 to 1 (Sportbet), Pittsburgh Steelers' Odds to Win the 2012 Super bowl are 8 to 1 (Hollywood Sportsbook), New Orleans Saints' are 15 to 1 (Hollywood Sportsbook) and the Indianapolis Colts Current 2012 Super Bowl odds are 18 to 1 (Hollywood Sportsbook) just to name a few big teams.

March is a highly anticipated month for sports fans because of March Madness and the craze that sweeps colleges across America. This year UConn

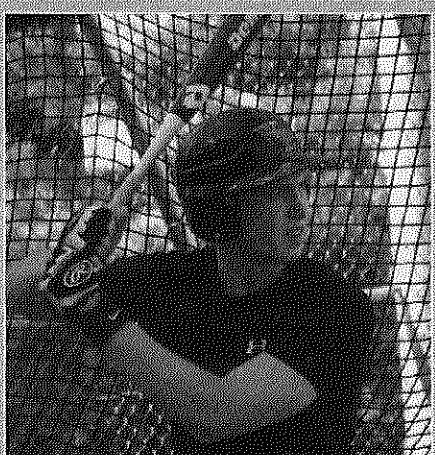
beat out Butler, 53 to 41, and the bracket was full of upsets and surprises. With VCU's huge advancements in the southwest, UK's strong battle to claim the east, Florida's close game with Butler in the Southeast (74-71), and Arizona overpowering Duke in the West there was plenty of action for viewers. Almost every game kept people guessing and with the NBA playoffs underway and the championship right around the corner, sports fans everywhere are hoping that the NBA will be just as riveting as the National Collegiate Athletic Association [NCAA] championships this past year.

While the Super Bowl and the NCAA are widely viewed in America, the Masters is a huge worldwide event that brings in a large fan base to Augusta, Georgia every year. The tournament is unique because someone who is on top one day will be losing horribly the next, and this year, just that has happened to young player, Roy McIlroy, age 21, was leading the tournament. On the fourth day he bogeyed 7 holes and double bogeyed 2 and at the end of that day he dropped to 12th in the standings. On the other hand a random player, Charl Schwartzel, a professional golfer from South Africa, birdied his last four holes and won the Masters. There are many sports that leave fans on edge but the Masters has surprises even swing. It is a game that can change with just one wrong move.

This year in sports has come to a strong start and the rest of the year is sure to keep sports fans guessing and cheering for their favorite teams. The Stanley Cup is closing in along with the NBA Championships and with the NFL lockout official off there will be plenty of sporting events coming this year. America's favorite pastime is in full gear and our local team the Nationals, is starting the season the right way. For sports fans there will always be something to watch and there will always be those best matches with the best players that bring in fans year after year.

WOLVERINE WARRIORS:

Sean Trenchard



Tommy Friederich
Sports Editor

Since the day he was five years old, junior Sean Trenchard has been playing baseball at a high level. Trenchard grew up in Fort Hunt, Virginia and has been playing baseball, baseball, and more baseball ever since. He started young playing baseball in the local Fort Hunt Baseball League. He went through all the leagues such as T-Ball, A, AA, AAA, juniors, and eventually became a varsity baseball starter his freshman year. Trenchard was very successful in his little league career winning four district championships and one state championship. "I have played baseball since I can remember, my childhood was playing baseball with my best friends. Playing in the Fort Hunt Little League was some of the best times of my life." Trenchard led the team in many offensive categories his freshman year as well as playing solid defense at short stop. "It was definitely hard to be a freshman on varsity but I believe it gave me a lot of experience that has helped me today." During Trenchard's sophomore season he continued his success and played well as the Wolverines struggled to win games. So far this season, Trenchard has been on fire hitting four home runs and leading the teams RBI's with 19. He also played power forward on the basketball team for two years.

Trenchard is not only an outstanding baseball player but he also played two seasons on the basketball team. He also excels in the classroom holding a 3.5 grade point average. "School is a lot like playing sports, the harder you work, the more you get out of it," said Trenchard.

His teammates think very highly of him. "Sean is a great all-around player, he is a great hitter, has a solid glove, and is fast as well. Sean plays hard in practice and that allows him to be competitive in game," said senior Will Andrews.

"We can always count on Sean to come up with a big hit. He always has a big impact on the game both offensively and defensively," said junior Casey Hagan.

Trenchard has a very bright future ahead of him and hopes to play in college. "I really want to play in college and hopefully will get a shot at the big leagues." He definitely has the talent to do some big things in his life with baseball.



Bonds to be bound behind bars

Karley Zdebski
Assistant Focus Editor

Barry Bonds' trial has perhaps caused more drama than the everlasting gossip whispered amongst the school population. Even Twitter offers a sufficient amount of information regarding the trial and its day-to-day steps forward.

Steroids are often used by athletes, whether they are playing on high school teams, for college or professionally. Many athletes turn to steroids when they are in high-pressure situations in which they are expected to become stronger and fit, especially in a short time span. However, using steroids comes with undesirable side effects. Some of these include variation in the hormonal process, increased levels of cholesterol, and severe acne. Many people are positive that Bonds is guilty and call his actions immature and inappropriate, but others admire him so much that they cannot believe he could be guilty. Sophomore Alex Amico said, "It was obvious that he was going to be convicted for using steroids. He is definitely going to jail and I thought that Bonds was using steroids before the whole allegation. Have you seen his head?" Bonds was the left fielder for the San Francisco Giants and is one of the only players to ever hit thirty home runs in twelve consecutive seasons. Bonds left many loved ones in a commotion of confusion and fear. What

effect would the alleged steroid usage have on his three children?

Three years ago, Bonds certainly needed a refresher of the consequences of lying. In a rather asperating, yet practical saying, "When you tell the truth, you are bound to be in less trouble than if you were to lie" while discussing the matter with the judge Bonds denied his usage of the drugs to the jury, which brought him to the San Francisco federal court. The judge and lawyers called twelve jurors to court as well as four alternates because of the lengthy trial.

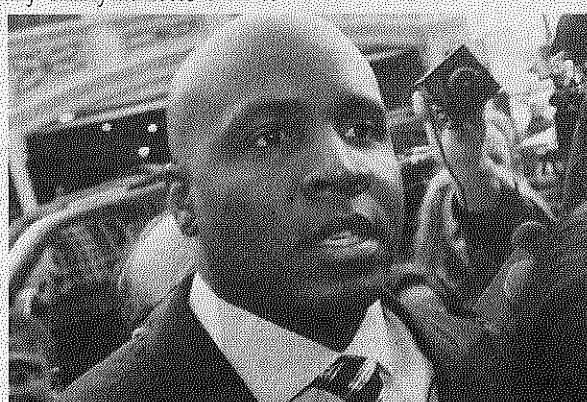


Photo courtesy of nydailynews.com

Barry Bonds is currently on trial for lying under oath about using steroids in Major League Baseball.

testimony was truthful or not.

Although the final verdict is several weeks away, the five counts against Bonds can result in a maximum sentence of ten years in prison if convicted.

The jurors expressed many different perspectives regarding the case. Juror number 22 said, "...I do not know if I could judge Bonds after providing me so much entertainment...I do not think I could find him guilty." Others expressed that the use of steroids is appropriate to assist in an athlete's job and efforts to become better.

It is possible that the majority of the people wrapped around the case are more concerned that Bonds lied rather than the fact of actually using the drugs. Bonds is accused of four counts of making false statements and one count of obstructing justice before the judge in 2003. Now, the question is focused on whether or not the

BY THE NUMBERS

5 The number of points scored by the boys' varsity lacrosse team in their district victory over Robert E. Lee High School.

The number of runs scored by the varsity baseball team in their district victory over T.C. Williams High School.

12

NFL rookies hope to have bright futures

Jack King
Sports Editor

On April 28, 2011 National Football League [NFL] commissioner Roger Goodell opened the most covered and most anticipated draft of any major sport in the world: the NFL draft. As the boos rained down on commissioner Goodell from the crowd due to the current NFL labor dispute, football fans around the nation sat glued to their Televisions, eager to see where the college football stars would end up. Many picks were expected while others came off as total surprises and in some ways downright shocking. As always, the draft was highly publicized and a success for most teams but now the question that has arose is how NFL team's picks affect their organizations.

Many teams at the draft this year made picks that will greatly benefit their team and their entire organization. With the first pick of the draft, the Carolina Panthers selected quarterback Cam Newton from Auburn University. Many people think Newton will turn out to be a Jamarus Russell in the NFL. "Cam Newton is a good quarterback but I don't think he was the right pick for the Panthers," said junior Cormac McPherson. Russell was picked first overall by the Oakland Raiders in 2007, but turned out to be a draft bust in the few seasons he played for Oakland. While Newton does not have much experience with an NFL style offense, one cannot underestimate Newton's athleticism and his ability to completely dominate a game. Whether he is playing for Westlake High School, Blinn College, or Auburn University, Newton seems to have an immediate and lasting impact on whatever team he plays on which is exactly the kind of player the failing Carolina Panthers team



Newton smiles for pictures after winning the Heisman Trophy.

needs. Due to his athleticism, size, and determination, Newton certainly has the ability to become a premier quarterback in the NFL.

The Atlanta Falcons made a bold move in the draft trading up about twenty picks to pick up the elite receiver they were looking for in Alabama's Julio Jones. Jones will be a huge weapon added to the Falcons offense next season. With the addition of Rodney White and Tony Gonzales, the Falcons established quarterback Matt Ryan now has three big targets to throw too. "When you have a quarterback like Matt Ryan throwing to three really good receivers it could make a pretty deadly offense," commented junior Kevin Prescott. In addition, Jones was one of the best blocking receivers coming out of the draft which will improve the Falcons running game. The Redskins never fail to disappoint their fans lately. The Skins had the number ten pick in the draft and had an opportunity to pick up a top quarterback prospect in Missouri, Blaine Gabbert. However the Redskins passed up the opportunity and traded their number ten pick to the Jacksonville Jaguars. The Jaguars ended up picking up Blaine Gabbert and the Redskins picked up defensive end Ryan Kerrigan from Purdue with the sixteenth pick they received from Jacksonville. At the end of last season the Redskins benched starting quarterback Donovan McNabb suggesting that they would also be getting rid of McNabb during the offseason. While the Redskins have not been able to trade McNabb yet due to the NFL Lockout situation, Gabbert would have been a prime replacement if the Redskins choose to go in that direction in the future.

The draft was undoubtedly full of surprise moves, trades, and picks by many different teams. After all, six quarterbacks jumping off the board in the first round is extremely rare in itself. Packed with abrupt picks and unbelievable moves by the most unexpected teams, the NFL Draft proved once again why it is the most publicized and most popular draft of any sport in the world.

There is no such thing as a seasonal athlete

Tommy Friederich
Sports Editor

"There is no offseason" said sophomore football player Jon Henderson. What he meant is that even when it isn't technically football season, he is still working hard to become a faster, stronger, and overall better football player. Many students at West Potomac sit around eating Chipotle and playing video games when school is over with during the summer. In fact, summer time is often when many student athletes perform some of their most important and intense training. Without a coach present to push these athletes to try their hardest, it is often a difficult task for people to train on their own. "It is all about willpower, you have to want to want to get better. I do not work out by myself for myself, I do it for my teammates because they are counting on me to be the best player I can by the time the season comes around," said junior football player Joseph Marinelli. Professional athletes are the best of the best in their sports because that is their job, and playing their sport is all they do. They get the most practice and the most experience which helps them become the best.

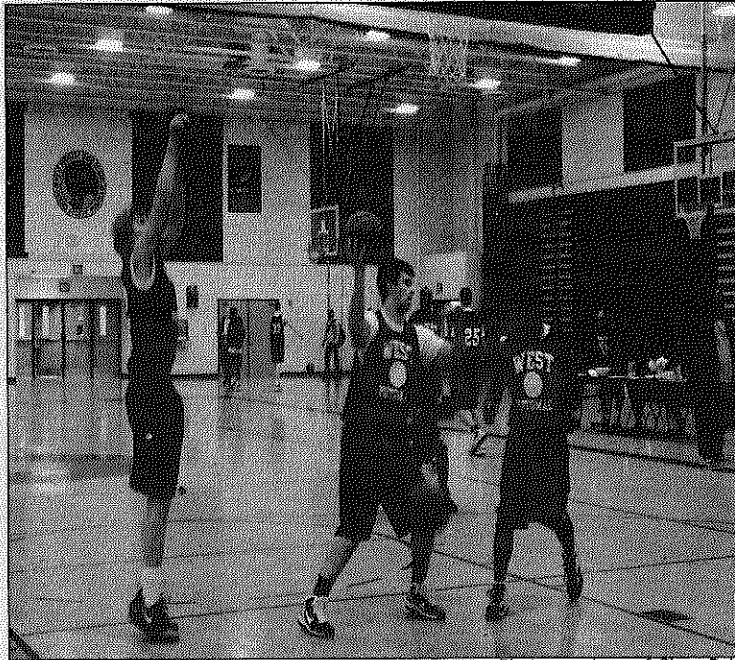
Different sports require different types and strategies of training. Brady Corum, a junior cross country runner recommends this to fellow XC

runners, "You just have to get used to running every day, hydrate and eat smart and do different variations of workouts." As for field hockey, junior Jessie Dartoozos suggests this, "You need to make sure you are overall in shape, you have to be running along with a little bit of lifting." Sophomore football player Caleb Henderson believes, "Weight room is the key to becoming a great football player. A player with all the athletic ability in the world is nothing without being properly weight lifted. If you weight lift and run in the offseason you come into the season with a distinct advantage over other athletes not only on your team but on other teams as well." Another way to prepare for the fall season to come is to make your diet healthier. You cannot just drink soda and eat McDonald's all summer long. Hydrate yourself with water and eat foods with a lot of nutrients and fiber. Stay away from chips and instead eat fruits, vegetables and lean meats such as chicken and turkey.

The fact of the matter is, the harder you work, the better you will be. All the cliché quotes your mom and dad have been telling you since day one are actually true. Talent can only take you so far. If you want to be the best of the best, you have to train harder than the best of the best. Anyone can be a great athlete; you just have to work hard for it.



Senior Atlee Hershner practices hard before the lacrosse season so that he will be prepared. The lacrosse team also works hard in the weight room.



The basketball team holds summer workouts to get ready for the winter season. Many of the players participate so that they can be the best players possible.

Sound Bite

"The drivers have one foot on the brake, one on the clutch, and one on the throttle."- Bob Varsha

THE SIDELINE

BASEBALL:

--WEST POTOMAC V.

T.C. WILLIAMS: 3-1

--WEST POTOMAC V.

WEST SPRINGFIELD: 1-3

--WEST POTOMAC V.

LEE HIGH: 9-1

--WEST POTOMAC V.

LAKE BRADDOCK: 1-12

SOFTBALL:

--WEST POTOMAC V.

LEE HIGH: 22-3

--WEST POTOMAC V.

MADISON: 4-3

--WEST POTOMAC V.

WEST SPRINGFIELD: 14-1

BOYS LAX

--WEST POTOMAC V.

T.C. WILLIAMS: 7-14

--WEST POTOMAC V.

WOODSON: 0-16

--WEST POTOMAC V.

LEE HIGH: 5-4

GIRLS LAX

--WEST POTOMAC V.

WOODSON: 5-11

--WEST POTOMAC V.

ANNANDALE: 6-17

--WEST POTOMAC V.

T.C. WILLIAMS: 21-11

BOYS SOCCER

--WEST POTOMAC V.

WOODSON: 2-1

--WEST POTOMAC V.

T.C. WILLIAMS: 0-1

GIRLS SOCCER

--WEST POTOMAC V.

YORKTOWN: 1-1

--WEST POTOMAC V.

HAYFIELD: 2-0

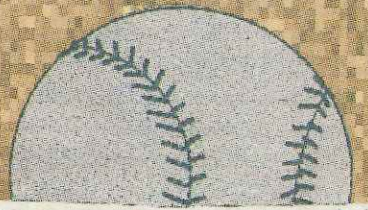
West Potomac Secret



I SLEEP
NAKED.



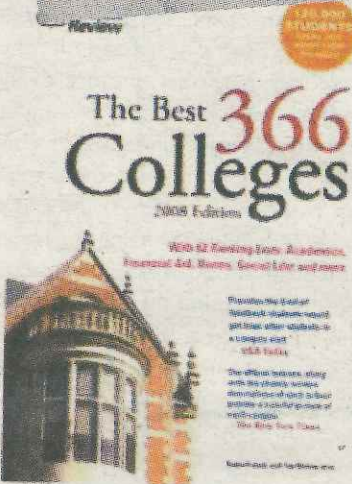
I wish that I could come
out to my family...



I wish I wasn't so
strong. I hate
softball.



I hate living in Alexandria, VA and
I can't wait until I move



I'm
afraid I
won't get
into any
college.

People tell me
I'm beautiful
all the time.
But I'm still
waiting to
hear it from
the one person
that really
matters:

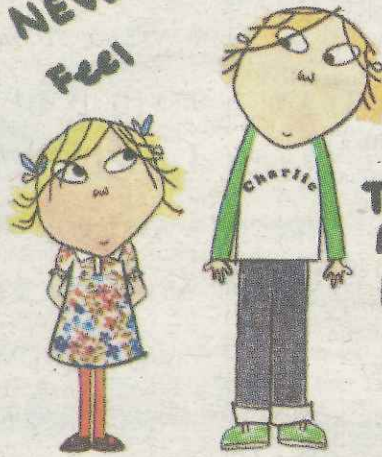
The
girl in
the
mirror



I'm worried I never will...

I always pretend to
give my Oscar speech
every morning.

I NEVER
FEEL

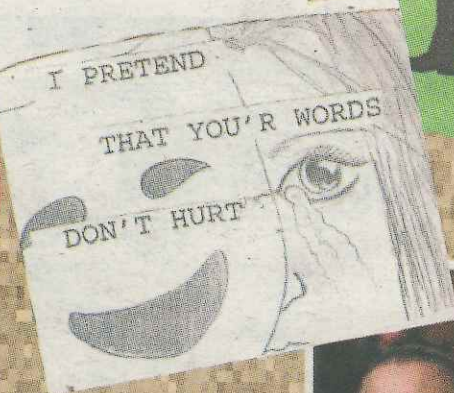


THAT I AM
AS GOOD AS
MY BROTHER

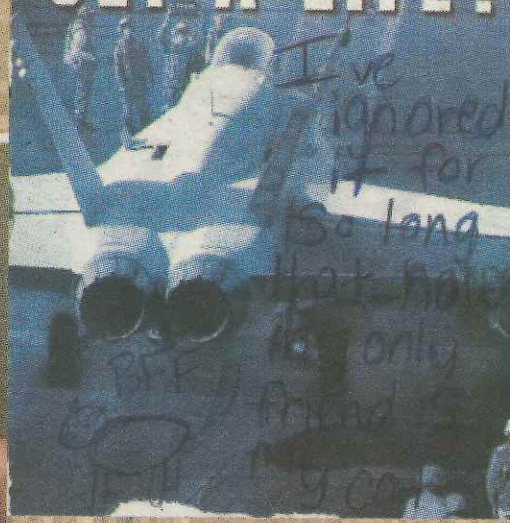
I HAVE
A THING
FOR MY
teacher...

I Wish I was SKINNY.

I
HATE
YOUR
FRANCEE



You know that little
voice that says
GET A LIFE?



When I became a teacher, one of my goals was to always
be an inspiration to my students.

But now that the year is almost over, I realize
that it is *me* that has been inspired.

I don't say this enough, but in case you
didn't know,

You inspire me.



Every single day.



I am in love with
my Best friend!!

Yes!

I want to get
married just to
say yes to the
dress!

Notes FROM the EDITOR - on - POSTSECRET

Q: WHAT is PostSecret?

PostSecret is a community art project in which people mail in anonymous secrets to be posted on a popular and frequently updated online forum. The secrets are displayed on creative homemade postcards and range from confessions of sexuality to silly habits.

"PostSecret creates this model of a safe, non-judgmental place to share your secrets where you don't feel weird or different or strange or alone."

Q: WHY PostSecret?

— Frank Warren

Q: WHO founded PostSecret?
A: Frank Warren

Thank you to all who contributed PostSecrets!

*for more info, please visit www.postsecret.com

This is how I feel



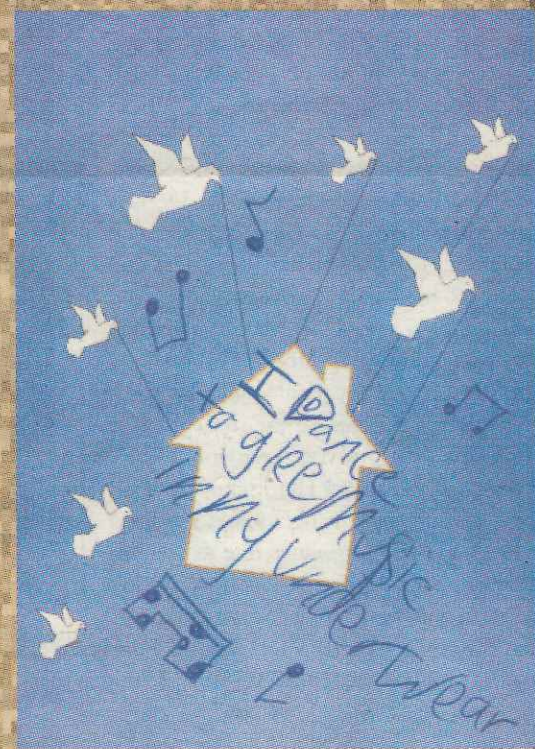
without makeup.

When you talk, all I hear is

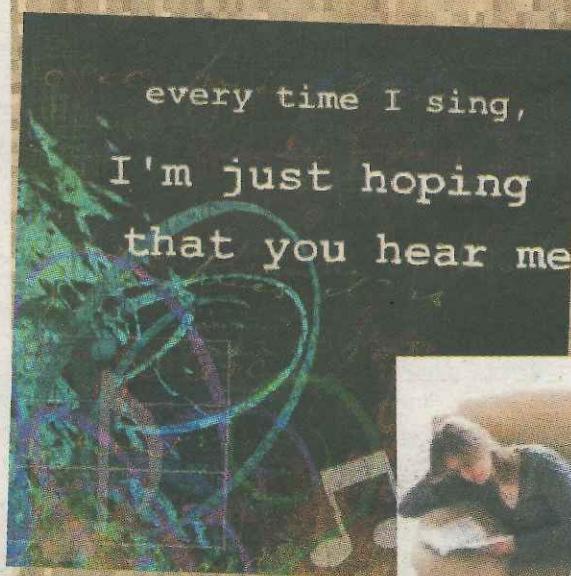


WAH WAAAH WAH

I liked him first...



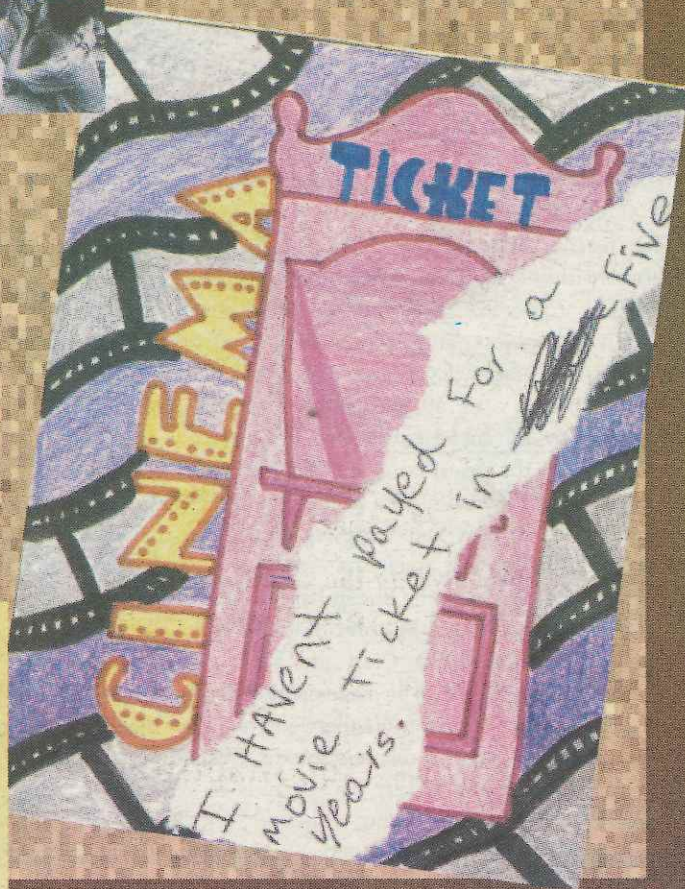
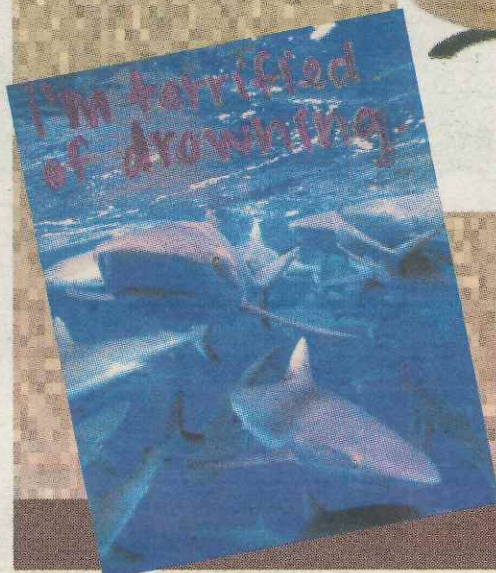
every time I sing,
I'm just hoping
that you hear me



I would rather curl up with a good book than go out.



I never really hear you, because the sound of your "voice" makes me want to KICK SOMETHING



Discovery the mystery of West Potomac history

Laura Jacobs

Senior Corner Editor

The day of infamy was not the day the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, but was 37 years and 28 days later. When Fort Hunt High School was set on fire on December 28, 1978, two high schools were forevermore associated as one.

A neighborhood paperboy, Kevin Bolin, reported seeing smoke from Fort Hunt High School, where now stands Carl Sandburg Middle School, around 4:30 a.m. on December 30, 1978 to the local fire department. The front branch of Fort Hunt High School, where administrative offices operated, was completely torched. The fire had also been set deliberately in four other places throughout the school including the cafeteria and the computer room. The police later arrested three Fort Hunt High School students. The outcome was devastating, resulting in 4.5 million dollars in damage.

Yet that was not the worst damage; the community was left crippled in chaos. Fort Hunt High School was immediately closed for the rest of the year, from January to June of 1979. On January 4, 1,700 Fort Hunt students were sent back to school, only this time, to their rival school, Groveton High School, which now exists as West Potomac High School. Groveton students went to school from 7:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., while Fort Hunt students attended from 12:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. However, the Fort Hunt students' schedule got changed from 1 p.m. to 6:05 p.m. to maintain the state-required 45 minute periods. On January 16, the school board met to discuss plans for the future of Fort Hunt High School. The meeting, held in the auditorium of Groveton High School, was overwhelmed with angry parents and students. The Superintendent of Fairfax County Schools, Dr. David, proposed that "Fort Hunt be reopened by September of 1979 at the very latest and the students remain at Groveton on a split schedule until the end of March, at which time they would move to Mount Vernon." At Mount Vernon, the day would again be comprised of split schedules for the students. The proposal was put to a vote and won 7 to 3.

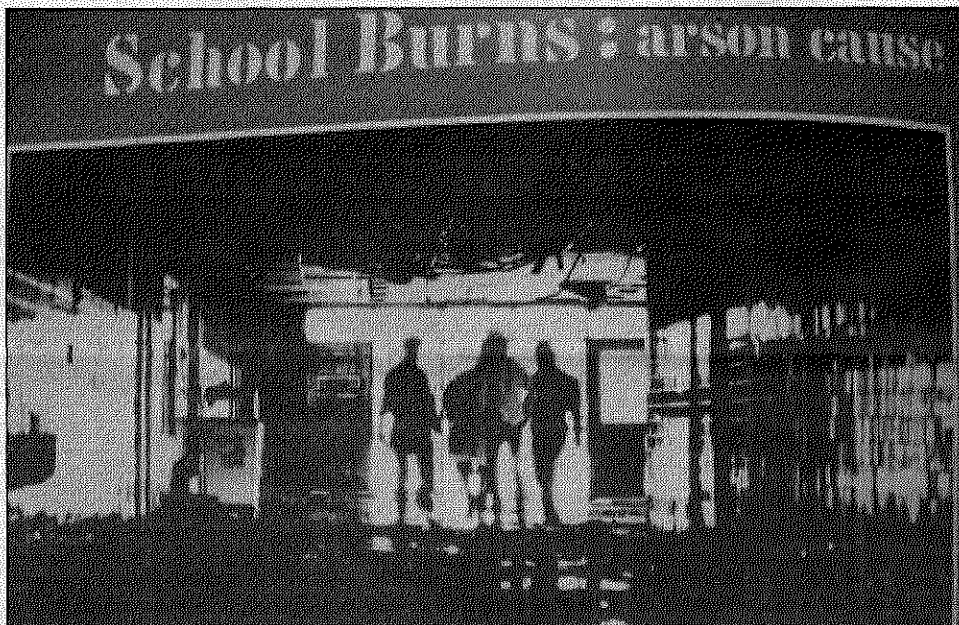
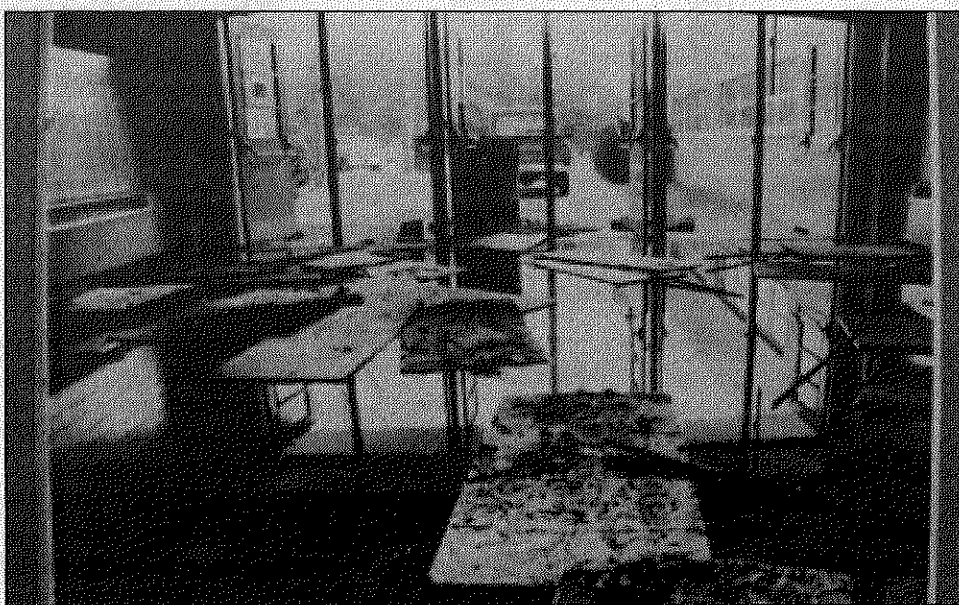
Nevertheless, Fort Hunt High School opened the next year; though flying rumors reported the school was going to close due to student population declining and the county having to pay for new schools in the western part of Fairfax County. "From 1979 to 1985, the Fort Hunt community had the feeling that the high school was on borrowed time. At some point, that magic number of 1,250 became the school

population trigger. Once Fort Hunt High School hit it, the school would be up for closure," explained Mary Anne B. Marshall. According to a Washington Post article published in December 1984, "Closure Plan Shocks Groveton High School Students," the superintendent appointed a task force of citizens to study declining enrollment in March. In October, after careful tracking of the high schools, the task force urged the county to "convert Fort Hunt High School to an intermediate school serving Groveton pyramid, and to send Fort Hunt

students to Groveton and Mount Vernon." However, in December, a day known as Black Thursday to Groveton students, the superintendent addressed to the board that he wanted "Groveton to be converted to an intermediate school feeding Fort Hunt and Groveton students to be sent to Fort Hunt or Mount Vernon." Immediately thereafter, the community burst with coalition, intensifying the battles between the two high schools. The groups raised money through bumper stickers, shirts and donations. Parents wrote to the board and made speeches at various hearings to convey their distress of having either school closed.

Another proposal was submitted with alterations, by the superintendent in February. He thought it was best that Fort Hunt High School would feed to Groveton High School and that Foster intermediate school would feed to Mount Vernon High School, leaving Whitman to close. The decision was in favor 6-4 that Fort Hunt would close, dismissing the 5-5 for Groveton High School to close on March 14, 1985. This was the first time in history a high school in Fairfax County had to close.

It was announced that along with the emergence of Groveton High School and Fort Hunt High School, a new name for the high school, a new mascot, and new colors would also be introduced to provide a "clean slate." The student governments of both high schools got together, and jointly decided on naming the new school. Yet, the mascot, colors and name of the new school were to remain a mystery to the community until the new school year. Some of the name choices the student government considered were South Potomac Panther or Springbank High School. However, the name West Potomac, with the colors of blue and white, home of the Wolverines prevailed.



Photos courtesy of Laura Jacobs

The pictures shown above show the devastating fire of Fort Hunt High School, which is now Carl Sandburg Middle School, which led to the creation of West Potomac High School, home of the Wolverines.

West Potomac lends a helping hand to Alabama

Emily Woods

Focus Editor

"There is a dire need for help in our own backyard," said Key Club Sponsor and English teacher Suzette Henry. Henry's words highlight the severity of a tragedy that has hit home with the West Potomac community.

On April 27, thousands of Alabama residents had their lives changed forever. In a ruthless and unprecedented outbreak, an estimated 13 tornadoes swept across the state, devastating 30 counties. The death toll reached 236, with the storms taking over 40 lives in the city of Tuscaloosa alone. Officials are considering this to be the most destructive tornado outbreak since the Great Depression.

Although the death count in itself is tragic, perhaps even more shocking is the number of people left without a home, job, or family. Those fortunate enough to survive the deadly twisters now face crippling damage in their lives and communities. Immediately following the storms, a state of emergency was declared, and personages from President Barack Obama to Charlie Sheen have gone to Alabama to lend a hand in the relief effort.

Now it is our turn to contribute. As their last service project of the year, two student organizations, Key Club and National Honor Society [NHS], have put together a drive to benefit those in need in the South. According to Henry, the Key Club realized during their course of collection for Japan that the situation in Alabama was something that was much more relevant to West Potomac. She goes on to explain, "Several of our students and faculty have friends or family who were affected by these storms."

Even if you do not know somebody who is suffering through the aftermath of the disaster, the residents of Alabama need your help. The drive held by Key Club and NHS

will start May 18 and end June 1. They are looking to collect toiletries (especially feminine products), blankets, non-perishable snacks, and any other necessities that will provide aid. All items may be turned in to the main office, the library, or Rooms 406 and 407. Please donate anything you can and continue to keep Alabama residents in your thoughts.



Photo courtesy of New York Personal Injury Law Blog

West Potomac offers many opportunities for students to help the victims of the tornadoes in Alabama, including the Key Club drive.

It is time to StumbleUpon new things

Jacob Alexander
Opinions Editor

Despite Google, Yahoo, and the other major search engines on the Internet today, sometimes it can be hard for people to find just what they are looking for. Sometimes they are not even looking for anything in particular. In this case any ordinary search engine will not get the job done. In situations like this, websites such as stumbleupon.com can be very useful, even when they are being used to simply pass the time.

Stumbleupon.com is a quickly growing discovery, a type of search engine website, in which members click the "Stumble" button and are then taken to a web page after specifying a few topics of interest from a list. This system ensures that members, sometimes referred to as "stumblers," will always be taken to an interesting website that they will likely enjoy. Stumblers can then vote on whether they like or dislike the page, and if they click the "like" icon it will be added to their favorites for easy access if they choose to return to that same page.

StumbleUpon uses a like and dislike rating system so stumblers will only stumble upon websites that other stumblers have requested. Stumblers also have the option to choose what they are interested in, so the sites that they are taken to will have been requested by people with similar interests. These sites come from a growing number of URL's that StumbleUpon uses. They are categorized and then rated by viewers to ensure stumblers only come across interesting or fun sites that fit their interests. Users can also put their own pages on the StumbleUpon index by clicking on a StumbleUpon badge on their site.

All of the sites that stumblers come across are unique, and most of them are not very familiar to most people. This ensures that every stumble session will be interesting and new, keeping people entertained. Every stumble is unique and interesting, leaving the stumbler yearning to stumble more each time.

If users have something specific in mind that they want to look for, StumbleUpon also has a search option. Using this will not bring up as many options as Google, but it may find the searcher what they are looking for or bring them to something interesting. Also, using Google, Bing, or other large search engines will come up with many results and it becomes difficult to find one site that satisfies what was being searched. StumbleUpon narrows the search down and the results are almost guaranteed to still be interesting and enjoyable.

Although StumbleUpon has been around for a while now and has obtained a good number of users over the years, it still goes unnoticed by many people who would definitely enjoy it. Many people at West Potomac would agree that their fellow peers would enjoy it if they started "stumbling."

"StumbleUpon is a really cool website. A lot of students would really enjoy it if they knew about it and tried it out," said junior Niko Knoblauch. Other students are a little more passionate about the website. Junior Kyle Anderson exclaimed, "StumbleUpon is my life." Overall most people who have been on StumbleUpon have enjoyed the site and all agree that more people should try it out.

Photo courtesy of seampendia.com

Spring is here with *Bye Bye Birdie*

Leigh Orleans
Student Life Editor

West Potomac's spring musical production of *Bye Bye Birdie* was held the first weekend in May. The set, characters, and costumes did a fabulous job illustrating the late 1950's American pop culture scene.

Bye Bye Birdie tells the story of a rock and roll singer who was drafted into the army. The singer, Conrad Birdie (senior Graham Dickerson), is dressed in flashy gold costumes and speaks with an Elvis Presley swagger. Albert Peterson (senior Burke Solo), Birdie's agent, is dating his lovely secretary, Rose Alvarez (senior Amanda Alves) who desperately wants Peterson to quit show business. Albert's mother (junior Maggie Solo) strives to keep her momma's-boy from marrying Rose. For his final farewell, Conrad will bid a typical American teenage girl goodbye with a kiss. Kim MacAfee (senior Madeline Weisblatt) in Sweet Apple, Ohio wins the honor.

Once in Ohio, Birdie becomes tired of his life and goes out on the town with the teenagers. He feels tense with Albert and no longer wants to be supervised. Rosie, still waiting for Albert to propose after eight years, invades a Shriners' meeting where she performs a seductive dance, followed by her dragging the men under the table. Finally, Rosie is reunited with Albert, and Kim gets back together with her home town steady, Hugo Peabody (sophomore Joe Quinn).

The Solos were fabulous. The sibling duo of sophomore Maggie and senior Burke Solo playing mother and son was a hilarious combo. Maggie's protective, self-pitying mother role portrayed with an outlandish accent and topped off with an eccentric fur coat was a great laugh. Another character adding satire to the show was senior Connor Chilton as Mr. MacAfee. His role as an out-of-date father with witty historical allusions is a classic goofy parent part.

One flaw that impeded the performance of this show was the technical difficulties experienced during each night of the production. The microphones short-circuited in the middle of songs and it distracted from the music. Also, the pit, while talented, was somewhat overpowering to many of the pieces. Other than that, the music in the show was very well done.

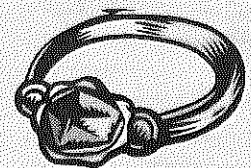
PROJECT SAFE

Strategies Aimed at Family Empowerment
Group, Family, and Individual Counseling

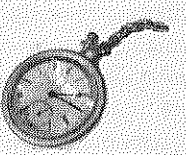
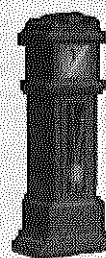
P.S.

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One nation under which "God"?

Anna Dreyfuss
Style Editor

We have all been muttering it under our breath at 7:30 am since we were five, but do students really think about the Pledge of Allegiance?

First, a little history: in 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower signed into law a bill that added the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance, inspired by President Abraham Lincoln's usage of the phrase in the Gettysburg Address. However, in Lincoln's time, "under God" was a way of saying "God willing," so its usage in the Pledge is not even grammatically correct. The Pledge was originated to proclaim loyalty to the United States, but has it blurred the lines that separate church and state?

Let's be honest. How often do we see students refusing to stand up during the Pledge? Pretty often. Although many are still patriotic, some students also refuse to say the words "under God" because of personal beliefs. In fear of being publically humiliated and being called a "terrorist" students are almost forced to stand up anyways. This should not be the case and especially in large schools, like West Potomac, which represents at least forty different countries and many religions, there must be respect for everyone, not just the majority.

There have been many court cases dealing with this topic. In fact, in 2002 a three judge panel of the ninth Circuit Court of Appeals declared the addition of the words unconstitutional. Judge Alfred T. Goodwin wrote, "Profession that we are a nation 'under God' is identical, for Establishment Clause purposes, to a profession that we are a nation 'under Jesus,' a nation 'under Vishnu,' a nation 'under Zeus,' or a nation 'under

no god,' because none of these professions can be neutral with respect to religion." The California Appeals Court rejected calls to rehear the case or reverse the ruling, and the case headed to the United States Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court had to decide where to draw the line between separation of church and state, listening to arguments like Michael Newdow's, an atheist who objected to the religious phrase in his 9-year-old daughter's school. He sued the school, Congress, President George W. Bush, and others to eliminate the words. The Supreme Court overturned the Ninth Circuit, letting the words "under God" stay in the Pledge.

A common argument is that Americans have been reciting the Pledge with these words for the past 57 years and that it is tradition and a nationwide practice. However, so was segregation in schools, but before *Brown v. Board of Education*, African-American students felt their rights being taken away from them. Although in this situation it is only a small percent (according to the Associated Press Poll, nine out of ten

Americans do not have a problem with the phrase), including "under God" in the Pledge nevertheless violates one's rights.

In 2005, the Fourth US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled against a Virginia parent who objected to saying "under God" in the Pledge and in 2010, Newdow furthered his case and asked Congress to have "under God" be unconstitutional. They responded it was not unconstitutional, but students are not required to say it in classrooms. Although many say it is fine because students do not have to say the words, it still takes away their rights, whereas not having the words at all would give anyone the right to show patriotism. After all, was not religious freedom the reason why America was created in the first place?

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under —, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Photo courtesy of greenwichmeantime.com
The two most controversial words in the Pledge of Allegiance are arguably "under God," added in 1954.

When does protesting the war become inappropriate?

Jack King
Sports Editor

Imagine a close family member was just killed fighting overseas for their country. As if this were not tragic enough, imagine at their funeral a small group of people from Topeka, Kansas were standing near the funeral shouting and holding signs with hateful phrases such as "Thank God for Dead Soldiers." Unfortunately, for some families this is a reality. Members of the Westboro Baptist Church (WBC) have been protesting and picketing funerals of fallen soldiers for years now, claiming the reason American soldiers die and other disasters, such as bombings and plane crashes, happen is because America tolerates homosexuality. While the Church's message is sadistic and offensive, the government has done little to silence the church and has only set restrictions on how close the WBC can be to a funeral.

The fact the WBC is still allowed to preach such a hurtful and angry message against gays, lesbians, Jews, Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Hindus, and nearly every other denomination other than theirs, baffles my mind. Most students like to constantly remind others of their right to free speech, however, these protests, this message, and these outrageous accusations are way over the line. There are also restrictions regarding the right of freedom of speech in the United States. Any speech that "would be highly offensive to a reasonable person, and is extreme and outrageous," is not entitled to First Amendment protection. The government has set standards as to how close the WBC can stand to a funeral when they protest, however nothing has been done to silence the voice of these lunatics.

People make derogatory statements about homosexuals all the time, but many of these statements, made by common people in jest, are not meant to target the entire gay community. The WBC has intensified the negative statements into full on hate slurs such as "God Hates Fags" and "Fags Die, God Laughs."

Los Angeles Lakers star Kobe Bryant was fined \$100,000 by the National Basketball Association

[NBA] for making one derogatory remark to a player of the opposing team. Is it reasonable for Bryant to be fined for making one comment towards another player while the WBC is merely required to maintain a certain distance from the funeral grounds as they heckle and harass military families mourning over the tragic loss of a family member?

One family did try to take legal action against the church when they picketed their son's funeral. Albert Snyder, father of Marine Lance Corporal Matthew Snyder, sued the WBC for causing emotional trauma and for publishing defamatory information about the Snyder family. In addition to picketing the funeral, the WBC posted statements saying that Snyder's family had "raised him [Snyder] for the devil," and "to defy his Creator, to divorce, and to commit adultery." The case eventually went to the Supreme Court where the WBC won the lawsuit in an 8-1 decision. The court said that while the Church's message was outrageous, the protest was still protected by the First Amendment because it brought "matters of public concern," to the table, meaning gay rights. This explanation is nothing more than a pathetic excuse. There is no reason as to why the WBC should not have been convicted in the trial when they were clearly there to insult the Snyder family and to attract public attention.

The WBC has finally worn out its welcome in a country that is moving forward towards toleration. There is no reason that the WBC should not be completely shut down and silenced. The message they preach is not protected by First Amendment rights and it is very offensive to people of nearly every faith. Also, the WBC knowingly published false information about

Snyder and his family which is not protected by the Constitution. For the United States Government to defend a group that despises America so much is outrageous. No matter how many counter-protests are made against the WBC and no matter how many people oppose thier message, the only way they can be silenced for good is if the government puts a stop to the situation once and for all.

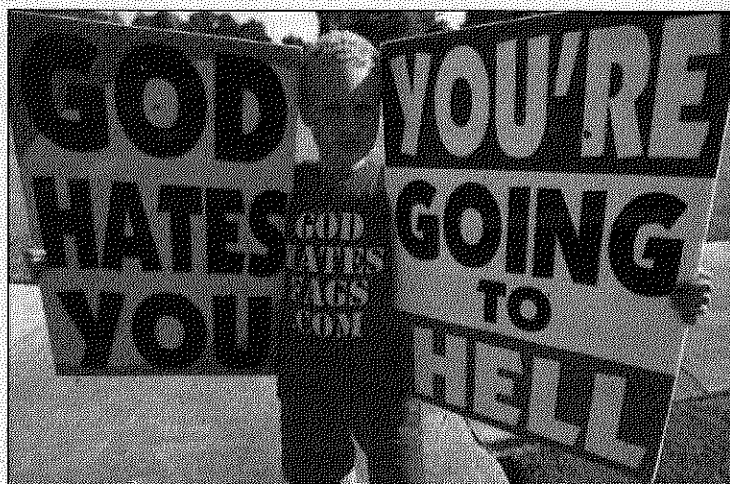


Photo courtesy of morrisonworldnews.com
Protesters for the Westboro Baptist Church cross moral lines by protesting at dead soldiers' funerals.

You know what really grinds my gears?



Jacob Alexander
Opinions Editor

Sunday, May 1, 2011 was a very memorable day in America. As most Americans old enough to comprehend the war on terrorism know, this was the day that the information about the death of the prominent Al-Qaeda leader, Osama bin Laden, was released. So far many Americans have been celebrating this event and seem to think it is just about the best thing that could have happened. However, many people have taken this celebration too far.

First of all, people are celebrating his death, and the death of a person, no matter who they were, should never be celebrated. It is naïve of Americans to celebrate his death because when it comes down to it a death is a death. Many Americans try to live with very high morals, and being happy about someone's death is doing exactly the opposite of this. It is a good thing that bin Laden is out of the picture as far as the war goes. It is alright to be happy about this, but it is still wrong to celebrate the specific fact that someone is now dead. Many people are confusing their happiness about his death with the fact he cannot lead future terrorist attacks. It is understandable why some people may not have thought about it this way. They most likely did not mean for their celebrations to convey they are happy about a death. However, when this has been taken into consideration, people should stop celebrating the way they have been.

Another reason many Americans do not understand is that bin Laden's death is not the automatic end of the war. Just because he is no longer leading Al-Qaeda, this does not mean no one else has taken over or will take over. Also, bin Laden was praised among many individuals; many of whom could pose potential future terrorist threats. This means there are people who are angry about his death and are seeking revenge, which could actually intensify the war, not end it. Since bin Laden was the mastermind behind the terrorism prior to war, his death will probably lead to the end of the war or at least more manageable way to finish the war. However, that does not in any way mean that the war is over now. We still have to be very careful and cautious; if anything, we have to be more cautious of future events.

Before bin Laden's death most Americans were tired of the war and wanted it to be over. One of President Barack Obama's main arguments was that he was going to end the war and pull out. However, now that the main enemy has been killed many Americans are again starting to support the war. Doing this is hypocritical for many reasons. First is because these Americans were extremely angry at former President George W. Bush for staying in the war, and now they are supporting it without giving Bush any credit. In fact, many people are giving Obama all the credit for this victory, when he really did not have that much to do with it. If it were not for former Presidents Bill Clinton and Bush we would have never been in this situation. Most importantly, bin Laden would not have been found. Obama does deserve some credit, but all he had to do was give permission for the operation to go through. Almost everything was set up for him and the majority of the credit should go to Bush, not Obama.

It is understandable this event has given closure to families who lost loved ones in the September 11, 2001 attacks. It is also understandable for them to be happy. However, this is being over-celebrated and over-exaggerated among too many people. Yes, this is an important victory for the United States and for families who were affected by bin Laden on September 11. But it is still another death and there is still much more to take into consideration before celebrating the war's end.

Ask Laura and Leigh...

Dear Laura and Leigh

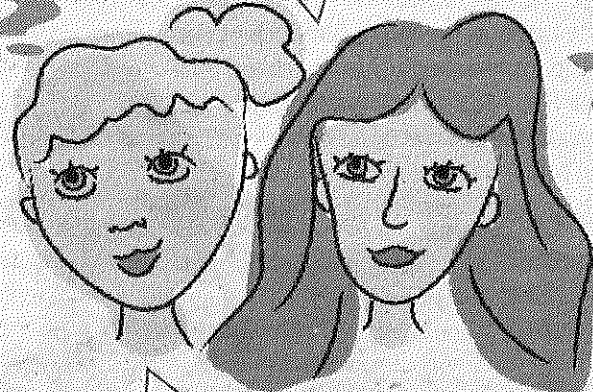
I am worried about my friend. Every winter, all of us get in a sort of slump that makes us somewhat depressed and unsocial, but by the spring time, we are usually fine again. It is kind of like mild seasonal depression, I guess. But we have one friend who recently has really been worrying us because the weather is changing and their outlook on life is not. I am afraid they are never going to enjoy life again or even worse, they are going to do something to hurt themselves. What should I do?

Worry Wart

Dear Worry Wart

The first thing you should do is talk to your friend to make sure there is not something specific that is bothering them. Maybe there are conflicts at home or in their personal life that they have not made you aware of. If this is actually depression that is something you should confront them about discussing with their family. Depression can be a serious matter and you should definitely be better safe than sorry.

-Laura and Leigh



Dear Laura and Leigh,

I have a friend who is a size zero, but she is always skipping meals and talking about how much she needs to work out. I tell her all the time that she doesn't need to lose weight, but she insists that she does. She's also acts very defensive whenever I try to talk to her about it. I want to respect her privacy, but she's my friend and I'm really worried about her. What should I do?

A Concerned Friend

Dear A Concerned Friend,

This is a tough situation, but perhaps the best thing you can do is continue trying to talk to your friend. Sometimes being a true friend means telling the hard truth, even when it may hurt someone's feelings. Maybe if your friend knew how concerned you were about her, it would help open the door of communication and show her the seriousness of the issue. Depending on the situation, you may want to seek the advice of a counselor or your friend's parents. A lot of teens struggle with a negative body image and it is important to remember that what your friend really needs right now is support. Keep trying and don't be afraid to speak out if you need to. That's what a true friend would do.

-Laura and Leigh

Wacky State Laws

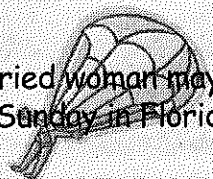
In Idaho, a citizen is forbidden by law to give another citizen a box of candy that weighs more than 50 pounds.



In Michigan, a man legally owns his wife's hair.



An unmarried woman may not parachute on Sunday in Florida.



In Alaska, it is illegal to look at a moose from the window of an aircraft or another flying vehicle. It is also illegal to push a live moose out of a moving aircraft.



In Nebraska, a parent can be arrested if his or her child cannot hold back a burp during a church service.



In New York, a fine of \$25 may still be levied for flirting.



TIME TO PLAY SUDOKU!

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SENIOR CORNER

Julie LaBelle & Evan Raj

BEST FRIENDS.

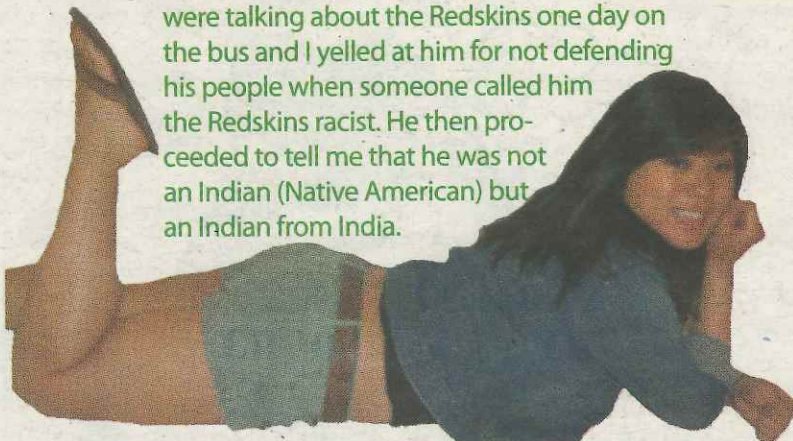
My oldest memory is when we were Freshman Lunchline Buddies '08

If life were a song it would be Bootylicious by Destiny's Child.

Most useful class is Economics, as awful as it is, you can learn some pretty interesting things that you can apply to everyday life.

I am going to Virginia Commonwealth University!

Most embarrassing moment was when we were talking about the Redskins one day on the bus and I yelled at him for not defending his people when someone called him the Redskins racist. He then proceeded to tell me that he was not an Indian (Native American) but an Indian from India.



We met when I walked into the boys bathroom.... BY ACCIDENT.

He reminds me of a lemon; he can be sweet and sour all at the same time.

We met when Julie walked into the boy's bathroom... she was probably there on purpose

A song to describe us would be Soulja Boy - Donk.

I am jealous of Julie's superior wit.

We like to eat together.

She reminds me of an onion because she makes me cry.

The most useful class at high school would be Government, because it has direct applications in the outside world.

My oldest memory is being lunch line buddies...Julie thought I was Native American and asked me what my spirit name was...

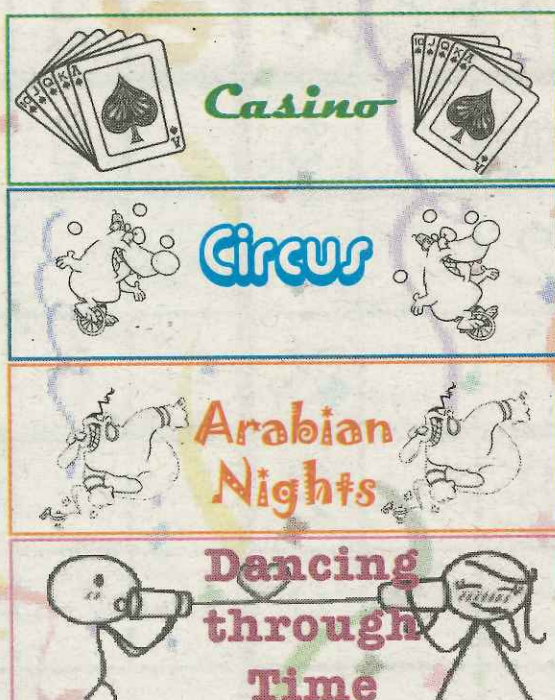
Most embarrassing experience with Julie was probably when we went to Tech and stayed with my brother and at the end of the trip he asked me who that weird little Asian girl was.



VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE HOMECOMING THEME FOR NEXT YEAR!

Help the SGA choose the theme of the week's events and the Homecoming Dance.

CHOOSE FROM THESE FOUR OPTIONS:



Vote on Blackboard under your class page May 18-21!
Homecoming will take place September 26 - 30!
The dance will be on October 1!

IT IS THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN...

Election Time!

Vote for your Class and SGA officers for next year!

Voting begins on May 18 and ends May 21!



Vote on Blackboard under your class page.

Instructions will be posted on announcements and computers will be available in the Cafeteria to vote during lunches.