



Wednesday, November 17, 2010

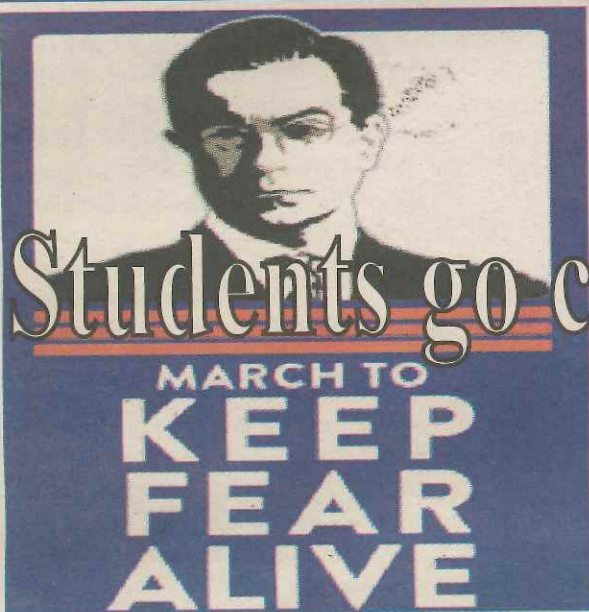


Photo courtesy of Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert Rally

Students go crazy for sanity

Clare Palo
Photographer

What do you get when you combine a couple hundred thousand people, plus crazy signs, plus two widely loved comedians? A good ole American time.

Political comedians Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert's "Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear" was held in Washington D.C. on Saturday October 30th, and drew crowds of people with hilarious witty signs, and creating a mob scene like never before. Some compared the crowd to President Obama's Inauguration, because there were similar amounts of people on the Metro. People from all over the country drove, flew, took the train, and walked the distance just to catch a glimpse of Comedy Central's staples, Stewart and Colbert.

The two rivals are known for their hilarious shows, "The Colbert Report" and "The Daily Show," to which

many viewers tune in every weeknight. Students and young citizens obtain their daily dose of news from the Comedy Central shows, where they hear reports on current events while also being entertained. These shows help keep the younger generation and young voters interested and informed on politics and news.

Some students attended the rally not to see the infamous Comedy Central stars, but just for the hype and an enjoyable way to spend their Saturday. Junior Jenna Van Dyck said, "Since it was [a] political rally, I thought it would be a fun thing to go to since we're so close to D.C. My friends and I just rode the Metro up." Many students did the same thing as Van Dyck since the rally was accessible by Metro.

Unfortunately, most were unable to fight the crowds since dedicated viewers arrived at the rally around seven in the morning, a good five hours early.

Students are used to watching the comedy shows

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Caffeine and alcohol: a deadly duo

Camille DiFolco
Editor in Chief

The use of alcohol and other drugs by the American teen population is hardly a new phenomenon. As a trend, teen drug use has only increased in the last fifty years, and in 2010, one in five teens will use illegal drugs, according to the National Teen Drug Abuse website. However, new

facets of the trend are developing all the time. One of the most popular crazes is also one of the most perilous: the combination of caffeine and alcohol.

While hardly a new concept – consumers have been mixing caffeine and alcohol for years, with rum and Coke an ever-popular choice– the recent flood of young adults being carted to the hospital after consuming a certain new product is alarming to many. Recently, manufacturers



Photo Courtesy of newsone.com

Four lokos are notorious for causing extreme intoxication, and in some cases have had deadly effects.

of the trendy and comparatively cheap alcoholic Four Loko energy drink have come under fire for marketing what amounts to a potent and dangerous product. Priced at approximately three dollars, the drinks have become increasingly popular

on college campuses in the last year. After students at Ramapo College in New Jersey and Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington landed in the emergency room with alcohol poisoning, this particular beverage came under intense scrutiny. 23 students from Ramapo College alone were hospitalized and consequently, the Four Loko drinks were banned from campus.

A highly-caffeinated alcoholic malt beverage, the Four

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Former West Potomac teacher sets out on a mission

Norris Brooks
News Editor

For Ariell Kirylo, life is about more than just sitting at a desk. After only one year of full-time teaching, Kirylo set out on a mission to help those in need. She resigned from her job as an English teacher at West Potomac, and co-founded a non-profit organization named IMA Generation with its current chairman, Gety Mpanu-Mpanu. Kirylo is the executive director.

IMA Generation's mission is to establish schools in impoverished regions of the world. IMA's purpose is to create awareness among today's youth, and the organization believes that schools are the center of the community. In order for a community to reach its full potential, IMA feels there needs to be a stable learning environment. When asked about the goals of the organization, Kirylo responded, "Many kids will never have the opportunity to travel abroad and come face to face with people of other cultures. The experience of travel is crucial to the intellectual development of an individual. IMA Generation will bring culture to those kids who will become ever so marginalized by the lack of these experiences. In addition, IMA will also raise money for school based projects in poverty-stricken regions of the world."

Starting a non-profit has not been easy for the vibrant young teacher. Kirylo explains, "it takes dedication, patience, and passion. Not much different from dealing with a classroom full of teenagers! There are ups and downs in everything that you do. Some days are discouraging, while others are fruitful." Currently, IMA Generation is finalizing their Youth Chapter located in Alexandria. The Youth Chapter will be hosting several free cultural events for Alexandria's youth. According to Kirylo, the events will include Capoeira (a martial art performed to drum beats), Samba/Afro-Brazilian dance, Krav Maga (an eclectic hand-to-hand combat system), cooking classes, oil painting, community projects, and more. Not only is IMA finishing the creation of a Youth Chapter, but it is also hoping to enhance two impoverished schools in Brazil and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In Brazil, the organization would like to focus on the Instituto di Cultura Brasile Italia Europa (I.C.B.I.E.), a school that supports students in Salvador de Bahia, and in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it wishes to assist a school called NDWENGA. NDWENGA is a



Photo courtesy of Ariell Kirylo

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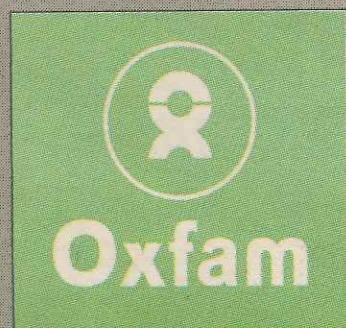


Photo courtesy of Michael Eflerman

Check out what club is making strides in helping the homeless!

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Photo courtesy of WP Athletics

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

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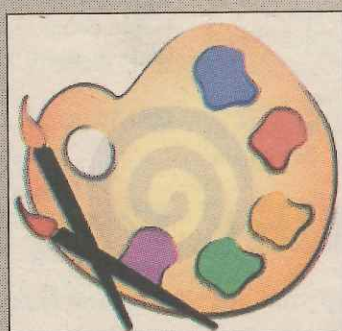


Photo courtesy of ClipArt

Find out which art classes are offered, and which is right for you!

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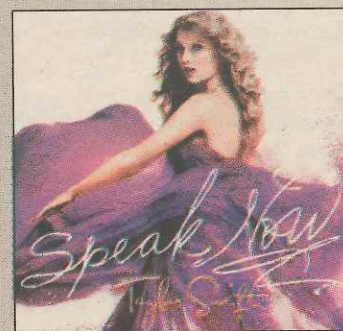


Photo courtesy of Big Machine Records

Check out the review of Taylor Swift's new album "Speak Now."

Just for Fun

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Photo courtesy of Laura Jacobs

Can you solve the most recent Sudoku puzzle on the back page?

H-Project combats hunger and homelessness

Sada Khan
Reporter

Take a look around. The kid sitting next to you in math class could be one of millions of youths that are under the age of eighteen and do not have an address. According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, every year 1.3 million youths become homeless. This is where the H-Project steps in.

The goal of the West Potomac club, The H-Project, is to stop this number from growing and to raise awareness about this horrific issue. Their primary focus is around the homeless teens in the local area and most importantly, the homeless students at our school. The H-Project does numerous deeds to help the homeless such as holding food drives, sock drives, and assembling hygiene boxes for less fortunate women and children. This year they are holding a Hunger Banquet, in which they hope to raise awareness of the many kids struggling with this problem.

The Hunger Banquet will give the attendees firsthand experience on poverty and homelessness. Upon arrival, guests will be assigned a random social class and will be fed accordingly. Senior Jeyna Diallo, president of The H-Project, said, "people will be randomly assigned a social class, and their class will determine what they get to eat that night at the banquet. The lower class will simply get a bowl of rice, while the upper class will get a three course meal. The middle class will get beans, rice, and a small portion of meat." There will also be guest speakers that will share their experiences with hunger to the rest of the people. The banquet will be held in West Potomac's cafeteria at 5pm on December 2nd.

Diallo hopes the banquet will be a success and anticipates that many people will show up. She said, "We are hoping to get people not just from West Potomac, but from Carl Sandburg, and the elementary schools and their families to participate." The tickets for the banquet will be put on sale in mid-November by the H-project members, priced at seven dollars for individuals, and \$20 for a family of four, with each additional family member five dollars.

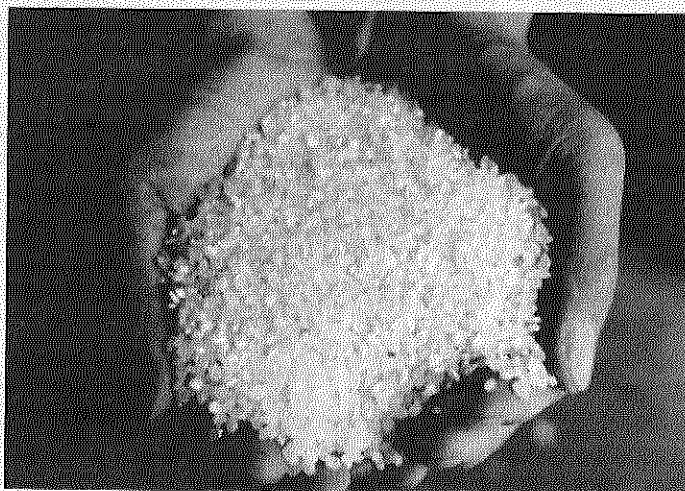


Photo Courtesy of UN World Food Programme

According to the United Nations World Food Programme website, there are 925 million undernourished people in the world. That means that 1 in 7 people do not get enough food to be healthy.

Junior Sarah Woodward said, "The banquet will be a great event because it will encourage participants to spread awareness on poverty issues." The H-Project hopes to raise money and encourage people to support their cause for homelessness.

Members of the H-project love being a part of this association. Junior Emily Key said, "I love being part of the H-Project. It gives me the opportunity to help, and with a growing club the people who need the help are more accommodated which makes it even more exciting. The people are all really fun and creative which makes the club and its activities very fulfilling."

This year, eight West Potomac students are currently homeless. Many students do not realize that these kids are struggling and living without a home. "I think this issue is so important because it is a problem that is right in our backyard," said senior Zeinah Adawi, H-Project secretary.

Many youths that do not have homes lose a lot more than a roof. They are deprived of a community, friends, and most importantly, safety.

Being homeless can also separate a family and lead to many dangerous issues. According to the How Stuff Works website, living on the streets makes people more vulnerable to abuse. In the past year, there have been 600 cases against the homeless. The homeless have been beaten by baseball bats, chains and raped. Not being able to live in a clean and safe environment leads them to have diseases that affect their health and well-being.

November is National Homeless Youth Month. Many non-profit organizations work to raise awareness for this growing epidemic. Organizations such as Standup for Kids are trying to get these teens into shelters and help them learn basic skills to live. Virgin Mobile also has a program for the homeless called the Regeneration, which unites many different groups and sources that help the homeless.

Marching band season ends on a high note

Emily Griffin
Editor-in-Chief

They have won many of the most cutthroat competitions, and are ready to take on the rest of the musical world. The West Potomac marching band is known for their precision in music and choreography, and this year is no different. Earning top honors in their competitions this year, the band is ready to be the top band in the nation.

The band has participated in numerous competitions this year. They took home first place during their first competition at North Stafford, and also won all of their captions. For the other competitions, the band placed either second or third. One of the band's proudest achievements came from their dedication and hard work for the James Madison's Parade of Champions show, in which they earned high honors. On October 30, the band reached their ultimate goal when they received the highest rating (superior) at the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association (VBODA) state competition. This means that they are the highest ranked band in the state. Also, they were 3 points shy of beating their rival, Chantilly, at the POC Festival last month.

Senior Callie Jacobs was impressed with how the band "really came together at the competitions and before football games when the pressure was high. I think that the band did a really good job this year of staying focused and working with each other before performances."



Photo Courtesy of Clare Palo

At the home football game on October 29, the marching band performed to a raucous crowd. They went on to compete at JMU that weekend, scoring second place in their division.

Other members of the band were really pleased with the overall wins of the band as well. Other members believe it was the consistent practices that they endured that gave the band the edge they needed to win the competitions. Senior Matthew Harper said, "We got our show completely on the field early in the season and that momentum carried us through the rest of the season. I'm extremely proud of the work that everybody put into this season and it truly made this season great. I'm also proud of the improvements we've made since last year, and I think those improvements really helped keep the morale of the band up throughout the whole season."

Despite all of their victories, Jacobs is still focused on improving the band. "I think the band needs to improve on working harder during practices because a lot of times there was no focus and we did not get a lot done," said Jacobs.

When the seniors graduate, they want to leave behind a band that is able to win any of the competitions. The marching band has placed in the top ranks for state and in various other competitions. Harper believes this success can come easily again to the band if they "continue their hard work and dedication that they showed this year in the coming years." Other seniors want to make sure that all the members remember how much fun marching band is and the skills that can be learned in it. Even though it is her last year in band at West Potomac, Jacobs wants the band kids to "remember to have fun and enjoy what you are doing."

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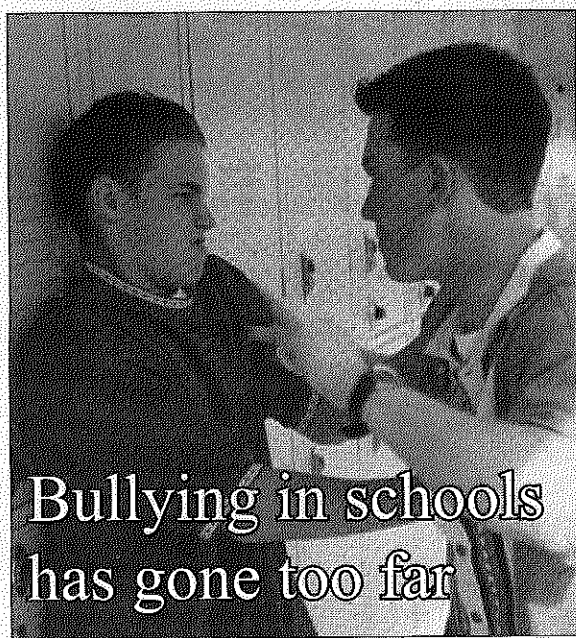
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Bullying in schools has gone too far

Photo courtesy of safenetwork.org

Laraib Ilyas
Reporter

"Give me your lunch money!" According to the GroundSpark website, at least once a month, 66 percent of young adults are teased, and about one-third are bullied across the nation.

Bullying, a form of harassment, is not a new phenomenon, especially in schools. Today, however, bullying is more common than any other crime in schools. The FCPS Student Rights and Responsibilities (SR&R) booklet defines bullying as "physical or psychological harassment on the part of one or more students toward another."

However, bullying is not only limited to physical or psychological abuse. It can be verbal, imitative, or even cyber. Bullying can take place in many different forms, including intimidating and threatening behavior, physical abuse, name-calling, teasing someone with malicious intent, verbally putting down others, telling lies about someone, spreading rumors, ridiculing, taunting, as well as sexual innuendoes or comments.

"When you start getting bullied your mind turns against you, and you become the bully," said an anonymous victim of bullying at West Potomac. "My grades started to slip, I started to yell at my parents, and beat my siblings. I took therapy because it was a problem that had to be attended [to]."

With the rise of social networking websites such as Facebook and Twitter, cyber bullying is more prevalent and common among teens than ever before. In fact, 32 percent of online teens have experienced some form of harassment via the Internet, according to ReadWriteWeb.com on cyber bullying.

"Yes, I have been cyber bullied multiple times on formspring.me. Even though people say anonymous things to me that can be hurtful, I think positive of it and know what is true about me," said freshman Ashley Pak.

To combat cyber bullying, sites such as SafetyWeb.com have introduced an application called "Find Help" on Facebook. This application allows users to report any violation or cyber bullying to Facebook officials.

No matter what form it takes, bullying can have lasting effects on its victims. For example, studies show that those who are abused by their classmates and peers are at risk for mental health problems, such as low self-esteem, stress, depression, or anxiety, according to kidshealth.org.

When signing the yellow SR&R agreement form at the beginning of the year, very few students and parents understand exactly what they are agreeing to. The small text in the SR&R booklet is fully read by the few and skimmed by many. This leads to the misunderstanding of important issues, like bullying.

"The SR&R booklet is boring and time consuming. But I know right from wrong so there is no point in reading it," said another anonymous West Potomac student.

In Fairfax County, students found guilty of bullying can face disciplinary action, including the possibility of expulsion, as listed in the SR&R. In an attempt to educate students and staff and address the issue of bullying, all Fairfax County public schools are required to have a character education program.

For more information about bullying prevention techniques at West Potomac and in Fairfax County, visit www.fcps.edu/news/bullyingprevention/index.htm.

Ms. Kirlyo, cont.

K-12 school located in Kinshasa.

For Kirlyo, this opportunity is a dream come true. When asked about working with IMA Generation, she responded, "I wake up every morning knowing the more energy I put into developing this organization, the closer I am to seeing my dream realized." As a teacher, Kirlyo dedicated hours upon hours of time to helping students, and she is continuing this process as the co-founder of a non-profit organization. As she eloquently put it, "Working with kids is my joy, but working FOR kids is my passion."

Kirlyo taught honors and regular English classes at West Potomac in the 2009-2010 academic year. Although she is involved deeply with her organization right now, Kirlyo does hope to return to teaching in the future. As she put it, "being in a creative and learning environment is what makes me the most happy. Eventually, my hope is to return to the classroom with the experience I have gained by creating and managing IMA." When asked about what she missed most about her former career, Kirlyo said, "I miss my students most of all. There was not a day that I did not smile. As some of you remember, sometimes it was hard to stop laughing at all! It is important to remember that being in school should be fun. Yes, I'm aware that sounds incredibly cheesy!"

If students desire to become involved with IMA Generation, they can attend the upcoming events. They can also tell family and friends about the goals of IMA and visit the IMA Generation Facebook page or main website at www.imageneration.org. IMA will be hosting its first youth activity on Wednesday, December 1, 2010, and Kirlyo encourages all to attend. The event will include an introduction to Capoeira. There will be a demonstration, instruction, and a musical performance.

Caffeine and alcohol, cont.

Loko drink is available in nine flavors, contains 12% alcohol, and is sold in massive 23.5 oz. units. It was reported that in some cases, college students who were rushed to the emergency room for Four Loko-related distress may have imbibed multiple servings. However, the exact amount of caffeine in a can is unreported, and so it is difficult to gauge whether even one serving of the drink is enough to send consumers to the hospital. In any event, the caffeine content is concentrated enough to mask the effects of the drink's alcohol content.

The essential danger in mixing alcohol and caffeine is that the powerful combination allows the drinker to stay up later and drink longer than they might otherwise do in an inebriated state. Caffeine is a stimulant and alcohol is a depressant, but they do not cancel one another out. Rather, the effect is a hyper-alert drunk who may not realize just how intoxicated they are, pushing them to drink more than they might regularly consume. This is especially dangerous to teens, whose bodies are often unable to handle alcohol metabolically. It is not surprising then, that there has been a recent rash of alcohol poisoning stemming from consumption of Four Loko.

Many lawmakers and public health officials have made recent moves to ban the deceptive drink, which disguises the malt liquor component with sugary overtones and vivid coloring. According to the *New York Times*, the beverage's alcohol content is effectively hidden by "confectionary drag" while a KATU article claims the drink has been dubbed "liquid crack" on the streets of Portland, OR. It would not be the first time that such measures were taken effectively. In recent years, both Anheuser-Busch and the MillerCoors Brewing Company pulled caffeinated alcoholic beverages from the market, after considerable outcry from politicians.

Manufacturers of the Four Loko drink, Phusion Products, LLC, posted a statement on their website which essentially said that "drinking Four Loko can be done safely and responsibly." The statement did not address the negative product reviews.

While caffeine and alcohol can indeed be a hazardous mixture, it is difficult to say whether or not the marketing of such alcoholic energy drinks as Four Loko will be banned in the near future.

Rally for sanity, cont.

and were urged to attend the rally because their favorite comedians and musicians, like Sheryl Crow and Ozzy Osbourne, would be there. Teenagers showed their support by dressing up in Halloween costumes and carrying around homemade signs. Some signs addressed the rally such as, "I am holding a sign," "I fear Colbert won't run for president," and "It's a sad day when our politicians are comical and we have to take our comedians seriously." Other supporters held random signs such as, "I love pineapples."

The crowd also did the wave numerous times when opening acts came and warmed up the crowd. People were so wrapped up in the commotion of the rally that many people forgot their party differences.

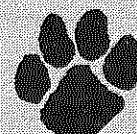
"It was cool how the rally brought everyone together

for a common cause, even if some of them didn't know what the cause was for. It was nice seeing people taking action towards something," commented Van Dyck.

Junior Celeste Zabowski felt, "[The rally] tried to change the general atmosphere of politics rather than politics itself."

It slipped their minds for a second that they supported sides of "Republican" or "Democrat," and they came together to have a fun time. Stewart and Colbert's goal was to make people aware of the insanity of the current political debate, but also to encourage the younger generation to get involved in the political scene and get hyped up about something. Their energy for the rally could easily transfer in to wanting to make a difference, and have the power to create change.

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WOLVERINE
WARRIORS:

Brandon Johnson

Tommy Friederich
Sports Editor

Shining on and off the field is this month's Wolverine Warrior, junior Brandon Johnson. He averaged 7.08 yards per carry, and led the football team to a 6-4 record. Johnson has been considered one of the best football players the school has seen. Yet, he still has one year left to play. Rushing for 1,134 and catching for 153 more, his statistics are unbelievable compared to many other athletes. He got in the end zone 21 times in ten games, and had six multi-touchdown games. Also, in four separate games, Johnson scored four touchdowns and in five games the superstar had 100 rushing yards or more.

Senior Daniel Carriker said of his fellow teammate, "Let's just say he makes the whole offensive line look really good. He has got every skill a player needs in my opinion." Despite the fact Johnson is a junior, he was elected as a captain by coach Eric Henderson who noted that, "Brandon showed all the qualities you want in a captain. He performs well in games, goes all out in practice, and shows great leadership among the offensive and defensive units." Johnson remarked, "it was an honor. I was given the job of leading the team, and it was my responsibility to lead the team on and off the field." Senior and quarterback Nik Dimitrijevic mentioned that "Brandon was a great teammate. I know he would do anything for me and anything for the team."

Throughout his childhood, Johnson played football and is now following in the footsteps of his brother, Devonte Johnson, who also played for West Potomac during his high school football career. "My brother made a name for himself as a football player at West Potomac, and I am trying to do the same thing," remarked Johnson. Understanding that if he wants to pursue football as a career, Johnson knows he will have to be in constant training. "In the off-season, I hit the weight room hard and go to the 7 on 7's to improve my skills. If I want to become a great player then I have to work hard in the off-season as well as in-season," he explained. Johnson looks up to many football players, the greatest player in his opinion is Minnesota Vikings receiver, Percy Harvin. "Percy's got every move in the book. He's so elusive and quick, he's just a beast," he explained. Johnson has many plans for his future regarding football, "I definitely want to play in college and obviously the National Football League. I just want to play football, and I'll do whatever it takes."

When he is off the field or out of the weight room, Johnson enjoys many hobbies such as cooking, "I am always watching the food channel, it makes me hungry, but I love it." Johnson also looks up to the late Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. This is because King had the courage to make a huge difference in people's lives. Johnson has proved to be a football player to keep an eye out for in the future. However, he has reminded many people that "I still got one more year to do my thing."

Coaching shortage leads to problems for sports programs

Jack King
Sports Editor

A coach is to a team as a wheel is to a unicycle. Without it, it really just does not work. So what is a team to do when they find themselves without a mentor, without that leader who guides their team on to the battlefield and onward to victory?

With several sports programs seriously lacking quality and established coaches, West Potomac athletics will continue to be a "joke" in the eyes of the majority of the Patriot District.

The West Potomac Lacrosse team is now on the lookout for their fourth coach in the last three years after the new JV coach resigned suddenly to accept a position at Bishop Ireton High School. For a team that is not usually one of the more competitive teams in the district, the loss took a toll on a lot of the players. Junior defender Drew Garden said, "it's pretty disappointing, because Coach Reid kept telling us how he was going to turn us into champions, and then he just bailed."

Another player, junior John Jasper commented, "when I heard he was leaving, I thought it was a really non-professional thing to do." Without a coach, the lacrosse team is once again left in a rebuilding stage. It is possible that the lack of an established coach could be a major reason for the team not being a top contender in the Patriot District. When asked how not hav-

ing a coach impacts the team, junior Joe Kirby said, "it's tough to get used to a new offense and new policies that all the coaches have. When you're always adjusting to little things like that it's hard to focus on winning games."

Unfortunately, the lacrosse team isn't the only team that has had coaching issues recently. The girls varsity basketball

Crew team found out over the summer that their coach would be stepping down leaving them without a skipper.

As far as competing with other schools in the district for coaches, West Potomac is way behind. The varsity lacrosse coaching staff at West Springfield High School is twice the size of the coaching staff for the entire lacrosse organization here at

West Potomac. This puts West Potomac at a huge disadvantage by not having a substantial amount of coaches that have sufficient knowledge about their sport and to guide the teams on and off the field. Three coaches in their first few years at any school simply can't measure up to a six man coaching staff with years of experience at another school.

The coaching situation at West Potomac is one that should be of big concern. West Potomac's sports teams are the most prominent representatives of the school in the eyes of the public. Although the Patriot District is one of the toughest districts in the state, if West Potomac could bring in qualified and established coaches into all of its sports programs, the school could become much more competitive than it has been in recent years. However, until then, it looks like many of West Potomac's sports programs will struggle against the ferocious power houses in the Patriot District. In fact, West Potomac could be at the back of the Patriot District for quite a while.

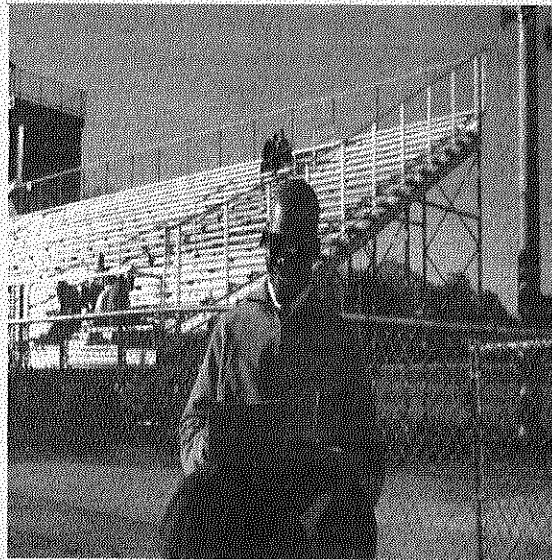


Photo by Clare Palo

Luckily, West Potomac does have coaches like Basketball coach David Houston, who have been dedicated to their programs for years.

team lost their coach midway through last year. "It was a little rough with our coach leaving half way through the season," said junior Sofie McMullen. The wrestling team was also searching for a new coach all the way through the new school year. In addition, the

Cross Country takes all the glory

Josh Belanger
Entertainment Editor

Ever wonder who the boys and girls are running on Fort Hunt Road every day after school? They are the cross country District Champions, and for the first time in school history, the boys captured the Northern Regional championship. From West Potomac,

all the way down Fort Hunt Road and back is the usual workout for the runners, but it is not unusual to see one of them running around the neighborhood or on the way to practice. The dedication these runners have for their sport runs deep, and it paid off this year with championship banners and for the second straight year, a trip to state.

The boys cross country squad is led by senior Ben Aleixo, who received First Team All-District, Mark Lotterie, Mark Hanak, and Brady Corum, who all received Second Team All-District honors. Aleixo and Corum also received Second Team All-Region Honors after their stellar performances at the Northern Regional race. The Lady Wolverines championship team is lead by All-Region runners Sarah Jane Underwood and Dale Lescher, along with Colleen Boyle, Sophia Passacantando and Sami Miller who received Second Team All-District Honors. Despite the fact

that so many of their athletes made All-District, the entire team is very talented. "We are really even and deep in talent and work together well as a team," senior and captain Ben Aleixo said of both cross country teams. The hard work in practice, running together on Fort Hunt Road and in Fort Hunt Park challenges each runner to put forth their best effort and talent every time the team runs.

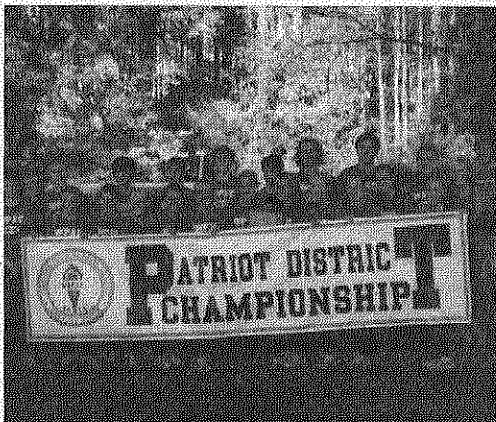


Photo courtesy of Sue Murphy

The Cross Country team proudly holds their Patriot District Championship banner after their memorable victory.

take the title, but still ran a very solid race carried by Sarah Jane Underwood and Dale Lescher, finishing third and qualifying for state. "I'm really proud of the team. We battled and ran good races despite the weather and the mud," commented junior Dale Lescher.

The talent is tough at the state competition but the Wolverines will continue to roll and finish better than they did last year. "We have always had the mindset to win," said sophomore Marc Lotterie, "and we believe we will continue to do just that."

By The
Numb3rs

6 The number of games won by the varsity Football team this year.

78 The number of points scored by the boys' Cross Country team to claim their first ever Northern Region Championship.

The total number of points scored by the golf team during the regular season this year.

November schedule for winter sports

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9				13
14	15	16				20
Coxwain Training: Crew	All Winter Sports Tryouts	Fall Awards Ceremony				
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	Wrestling Scrimmage at Yorktown	Freshman, JV, and Varsity Boys' Basket- ball scrimmage. Riverbend HS				Wreath sales begin: Crew

Winter teams hope to have success

Tommy Friederich
Sports Editor

Boys' Basketball

The 2010 boys' basketball team is hoping to win back-to-back Patriot district championships. "I expect us to win district [championship] again, we have everything it takes. During the off-season we all worked hard in the weight room and built our confidence up for the upcoming season," said senior point guard Daryl "Scooter" Copeland. Many players from last years championship team will be returning, including seniors Jay Dawson, Copeland, fan favorite Karl Grabbi, and juniors Todd Ferri and JAM Marinelli. Along with the returning players, new varsity players hope to make an impact such as sophomore Brandon Presely, junior Marcus Smith, and senior Jesse Fico. "I played my freshman and sophomore year, so I believe I'm experienced enough to play a major role for us in repeating a district championship," said Fico. Winning another district championship won't be an easy task for the Wolverines because the Patriot district is full of competitive teams such as T.C. Williams and West Springfield.

Girls Basketball

The girls' basketball team is looking to bounce back this winter after a rough and difficult season last year. Although it seems to be a re-building year for the team after the loss of their coach last year and the loss of some key seniors, the Lady Wolverines are determined to redeem themselves after last season. "We are trying to build the program this year so that our freshman and sophomores are in a position to do well in later years, but I still think that we can be competitive this season," said junior Sophie McMullen. McMullen will be an impact player on the court this year. Towering over her opponents at 5 feet 11 inches, McMullen is one of the most intimidating players on the court. Although it may seem as if the Lady Wolverines are going into a season to rebuild the organization, with some strong players returning, the team could end up being a dark horse in the Patriot District this winter.

Winter Track

The winter track program has been one of the most consistent sports programs in the school. After the cross country team won the district championship for both the girls' and boys', the distance section of the winter track team looks strong. "With the recent success of the cross country team I think our distance team looks strong, and hopefully our sprints team will come out fast, pun intended," commented senior Chris Dynes. Other than the running, the team looks to have a good season as well. Pole vaulter Krishna Kornopolu hopes to bring in some points for the team. "If I train hard, I think I'll have a good season," commented Kornopolu.

Wrestling

With a new coach, the 2010 wrestling team hopes to have a great season. The bulk of the team is the class 2012 which has stayed together since arriving here at West Potomac. "Our freshman year we all decided to do wrestling and we all fell in love with it. Everyone in this class and in the whole program is committed to making West Potomac a wrestling school," said junior Casey Hagan. The team consists of many good wrestlers that will contend for many individual district championships including senior Jordan Blair. "I made regionals as a sophomore and I weighed 80 pounds under my weight class. I got stronger during this year so hopefully I can make a run for states." Other wrestlers that are hoping to make an impact among the district are junior Nick Africano and sophomore Jon Henderson.

Gymnastics

The West Potomac gymnastics team has had a lot of success in recent years, most notably their regional championship in early 2009. They are expecting to continue their success this season with many good gymnasts returning, as well as a strong group coming into the program. "We think we can definitely compete for the District this year with a strong group of girls coming back and a solid group of girls coming into the organization as well," commented junior Monica Bell. Bell was on the regional championship team in 2009 and will be vital to the success of the team this season. Sophomores Nicole Marinello and Marien Voorhees will also be essential to the team's performance this winter. Overall, the gymnastics team is expecting to live up to the hype as one of the stronger teams in the Patriot District.

Swim and Dive

The swim and dive team at West Potomac is a scrappy bunch that continues to surprise even the toughest competitors in the district. Senior Mark Mattis looks to lead the way for the boys team in the pool this year. Mattis will be like a Marlin in the pool this season, and is projected to be a two time district champion, with a time of 4:52.36 in the 500 free and a time of 1:46.43 in the 200 free. "It will be a challenging year for the boys after losing Dan [Chalfont] from last year, but I think we'll still be competitive," said Mattis. With a very strong girls team coming up, Junior Reanna Dona will be making her opposing swimmers eat her bubbles all season long. Reanna has posted ridiculous times of 52.44 in the 100 free and 57.43 in the 100 back. With a strong boys team, and an exceptional girls team this year, the swim and dive team will continue to shock the Patriot District this year.

THE SIDELINE

Cross Country

October 28, 2010:

**GIRLS AND BOYS
TEAMS WON
PATRIOT DISTRICT
CHAMPIONSHIP.
GIRLS SCORE: 42.
BOYS SCORE: 56**

November, 4 2010:

**BOYS WON
NORTHERN REGION
CHAMPIONSHIP.
SCORED 78 POINTS.**

Football

October 29 2010:

**LOST TO LAKE
BRADDOCK**

**WEST POTOMAC: 17
LAKE BRADDOCK: 24**

November 5 2010:

LOST TO ANNANDALE

**WEST POTOMAC: 41
ANNANDALE: 31**

Volleyball

October 28, 2010:

**LOST TO T.C.
WILLIAMS**

**WEST POTOMAC: 0
T.C. WILLIAMS: 3**

November 1, 2010:

**LOST TO WEST
SPRINGFIELD**

**WEST POTOMAC: 0
SPRINGFIELD: 1**

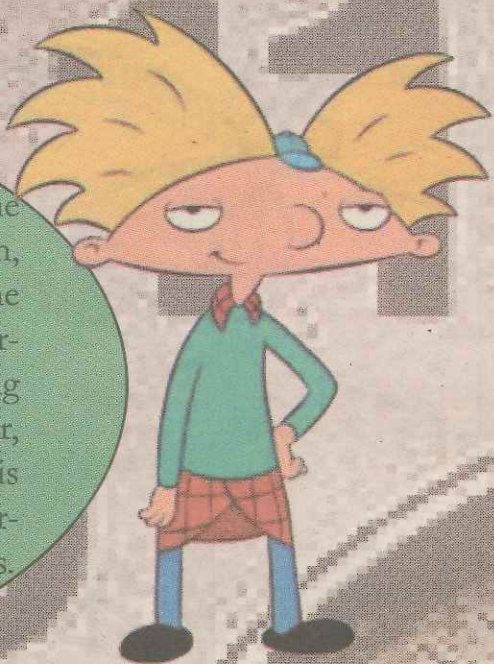
**MUST
WATCH**

**Will the
Dallas
Cowboys make
a drastic
change after
firing head
coach Wade
Phillips and
hiring
Jason
Garrett?**

Nostalgic kid shows from the '90s

HEY ARNOLD!

"Move it, football head!" The familiar line howled by 4th-grader Helga at her secret crush, Arnold, brings back beloved memories of the Nickelodeon cartoon. Based off the '80s "Arnold" comics, the show was created by Craig Bartlett and first aired in 1996. The series' star, Arnold, was a 9-year-old boy who lived with his quirky grandparents and helped his neighborhood friends with their everyday predicaments.

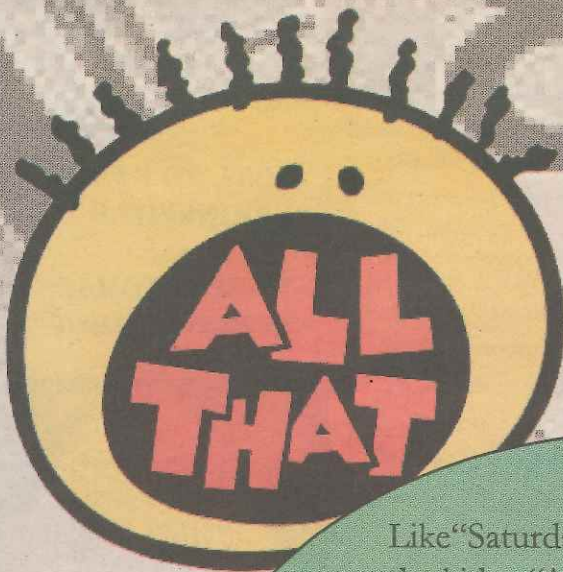
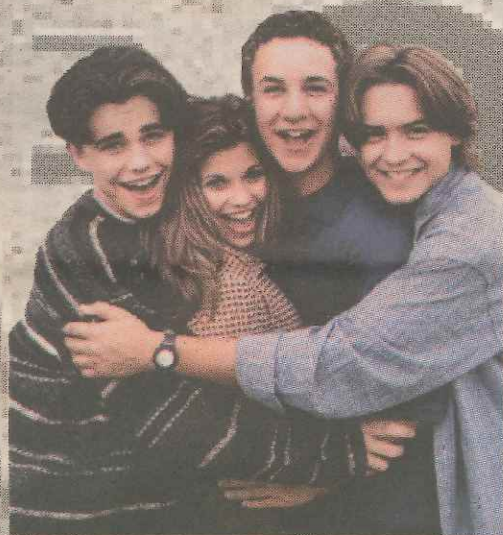


With eccentric characters like Skeeet Valentine, Patti Mayonnaise, and Porcupine, who could have forgotten the cartoon, "Doug"? Centered around the daring and awkward sixth grader, Doug Funnie, this animated series first made a appearance on Nickelodeon in 1991. Most episodes featured the imaginative Doug writing in his journal about life as the ne kid in school, his crush on Patti and his desire to overcome his bully, Roger Kluttz.

DOUG

Boy Meets World

Every Friday night for 7 years, viewers tuned in to ABC to watch Cory Matthews and his friends and family face the trials and tribulations of growing up in a Philadelphia suburb. "Boy Meets World," the comedy-drama series that gained a devoted following from 1993 to 2000, was renowned for its relatable adolescent characters and situations. Beloved characters include Cory, his best friend, Shawn, his girlfriend, Topanga, and his teacher, Mr. Feeny.



Like "Saturday Night Live," but geared towards kids, "All That" was a live variety show on Nickelodeon. The show is known for its comedic sketches, live musical guests, and of course, its catchy theme song sung by TLC. Memorable skits include "Good Burger" and "Vital Information." The show debuted in 1994 and ran for a decade. "All That" launched careers and spin-off television shows of stars Amanda Bynes ("The Amanda Show") and Kenan Thompson ("Kenan and Kel").



Arthur

Do you remember the wark Arthur? Or does bu as the bully who cannot thur is a book series by L a kid's show on PBS in and solved issues that v child's life. Even though still taught ways to fight load of homework, treat a





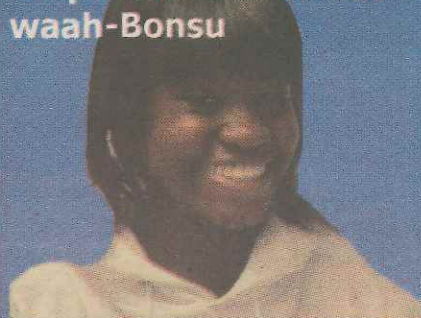
"I wish Disney would bring back 'Out of the Box'!"

-Junior Livvy Mickevicius



"'Catdog' was my favorite show. I found the chase scenes hilarious!"

-Sophomore Esther Antwi-waah-Bonsu



"I liked 'Clarissa Explains It All.' Clarissa was my first crush."

-Senior Burke Solo



"My favorite show was the 'Batman' cartoon because it was not dumbed down for children."

-Sophomore Joe Quinn



THE WEST PO BUNCH

"Kid's shows in the '90s were miles better than the ones on TV today."

-Freshman Lesya Melnychenko



"I thought 'Courage the Cowardly Dog' was such a clever and cute show."

-Sophomore Sarah Oveisi



"When I was little, I always wanted to be on 'Zoom'!"

-Senior Alexa Marinello



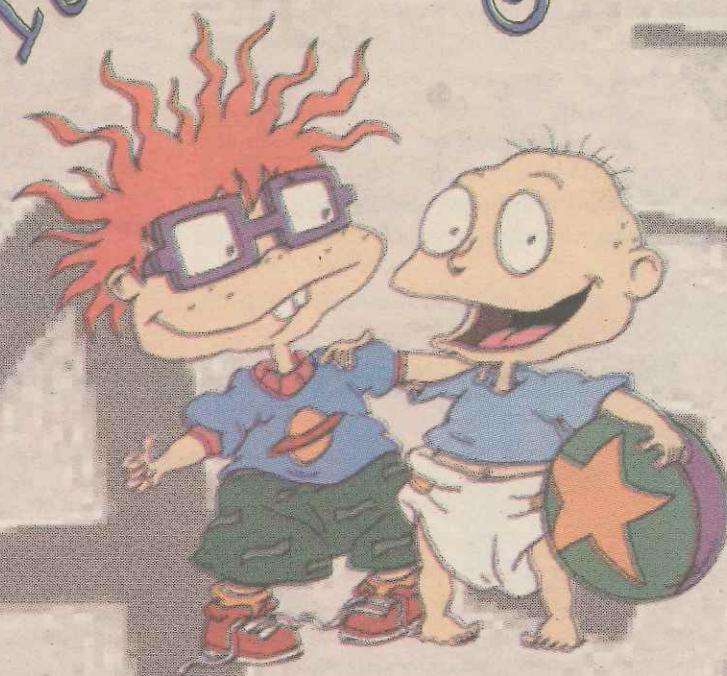
"In the late '90s, coming home and watching 'Smart Guy' was my daily routine."

-Junior Casey Hagan



"Rugrats," one of the first ever Nicktoons, was the ingenious animated series that ventured into the thoughts and imaginations of eight babies. The young main characters, including fan favorites Tommy, Chuckie and Angelica were fully developed and portrayed as being able to easily outsmart their adult counterparts. The show debuted in 1991 and was extremely well-received by its audience, becoming a Nickelodeon staple and contributing to the rise of the kid's channel in the '90s.

RUGRATS



g yet sophisticated aard-
Binky Barnes haunt you
ss his sensitive side? Ar-
Brown, which started as
Each show experienced
general problems of a
r is an aardvark, Arthur
ing, deal with an over-
es, deal with divorce, etc.

<REWIND

West Potomac shows a passion for art

Karley Zdebski
Assistant Focus Editor

A passion for art is said to be contagious, and competition certainly runs high within the art program at West Potomac. But which art class satisfies your taste? Are you enrolled in an art class for an "easy A," or are you intending to take art beyond the high school level? Some of the most distinguished artists at West Potomac are consistently taking steps closer towards their hopes in pursuing a successful artistic career. However, some students take part in the art classes for the unique experience, without any future plans.

Junior Livvy Mickevicius is enrolled in the ceramics class this year. She said, "Ceramics is a really fun class that lets me express myself. I hope that they continue ceramics so that I can take it for more than a year!" Ceramics is a new class this year that is popular with many students. It is a class where students that are new to art can learn new skills and express themselves through a clay medium. However, it is also a class where gifted artists of the school can show their immense artistic talents and abilities.

Sophomore Wake Coulter epitomizes the ideal of a young, yet inspiring and exceptional artist for his peers and teachers. He has been involved with art at West Potomac for two years now, and has taken computer graphics and Art 3. However, Coulter is hired outside of West Potomac to assist people in creating logos and posters for events and organizations. He explained, "I have always liked to just draw with pencils or markers, and recently I have started doing some drawings on the computer."

Aside from the art classes that Coulter has taken at West Potomac as well as at Carl Sandburg Middle School, he has never taken many outside classes. He remarked, "My dad taught me most of the stuff that I know and he has been my mentor since I was three." His motivation behind his unique style is simply drawing whatever comes to mind. For the future, Coulter hopes to be in another computer graphics class, but he declared, "Art is definitely a class that I will want to take again someday." In pursuing an artistic career, he has hopes and plans for being an illustrator, looking for clients or a potential cartoonist working for a magazine or newspaper. Although he makes his job look easy, Coul-

ter proclaimed, "the hardest part of art is thinking of a good idea. Once you have your inspiration, the rest is trouble-free."

Another student heavily involved in the art program is Sophie Spriggs, a sophomore, as well as an athlete. Spriggs participates on the volleyball team, swim team, and soccer team. While on the court, in the pool, or on the field, people often do not know about her underlying talent for art. As a freshman, Spriggs challenged herself by taking Art 1. Little did she know, it was not an "easy A" class. However, this did not stop Spriggs from excelling and she remains dedicated to art. This year, Spriggs is enrolled in Art 2.

Spriggs remarked, "Our first assignments of the year were relatively easy and Mr. Sanchez normally gives us good instruction, then allows us to do our art without disruption. It is also a pretty easy class right now." For anyone interested in the various activities of Art 2, Spriggs said, "We just finished self portraits, which were fun." Spriggs is another potential future artist. Spriggs alleged, "As far as being an artist, I would minor in art and try to tie my artistic abilities with something else in the future."

In addition, another optional art class is photography. Sophomore Sydney Maniglia is a second year member of the photography class. It has been said to be a challenging class at times, but Maniglia's hard work ethic creates a fun learning environment. She averred, "Photography is the highlight of my day, it is so much fun to be in." Photography guarantees numerous photo tasks and a recent favorite has been an assignment using the macro lens shoot. Anne Dunn, the photography teacher,



Photo by Clare Palo

Many aspiring artists in West Potomac demonstrate their skills in the art program. Other artists that do not take an art class at West Potomac demonstrate their abilities elsewhere. Pictured above is sophomore Wake Coulter working on an assignment for his art class. He has been noted by his teacher as a promising new artist after his high school career.

exemplifies a passionate and profound photographer for the students. Maniglia said, "she is so much fun. She has a passion for photography and knows every thing about it. It is awesome!"

The promising artists of West Potomac are prominent features for building upon the arts program. Other artists without future plans also contribute to building an environment where artists can freely express their talents through various mediums like paint, clay, and photographs.

A bite out of Alexandria

Laura Jacobs
Senior Corner Editor

Though many students choose fast food restaurants when they are on a food run, there are local venues that can give students the delicious taste of Alexandria. These venues may not be as well-known or popular, but their food is definitely worthwhile. These restaurants serve up a hot dish of originality, locality, and affordability for students and their families. Feast on the variety of foods and try them for yourself!

BGR- This burger joint is found in Old Town, Alexandria. If you are into local burger restaurants, you will be feasting at this joint. With fries crispier than those at Five Guys and burgers more juicy than those at Fuddruggers, Burger Joint has topped them all. Be ready to turn into a carnivore, unless of course, you like veggie burgers!

Prices range from \$10 to \$15
PERFECT FOR- fast food indulgences

Dishes of India- Open the door, walk downstairs, stroll to a table; this restaurant may seem like a hike to get to. Though this restaurant is half-hidden, the food is worth it. Found in Hollin Hall shopping center, Dishes of India serves traditional Indian food. Serving tandoori-cooked foods, curry dishes, and vegetarian alternatives, anything picked is excellent.

Prices range from \$5 to \$20
PERFECT FOR-romantic outings

Roscina's- The small, colorful family-owned business is situated in Hollin Hall Shopping Center. This restaurant is perfect for a student's salary, with a variety of scrumptious food for mostly under \$10. Try anything from jerk chicken to a vegetarian wrap. Though the food is good, the choices are run-of-the-mill. 703.768.0064.

Prices range from \$5 to \$15
PERFECT FOR- last minute picnics

Hunan Manor- This quaint Chinese restaurant located in Hollin Hall Shopping Center. Hunan Manor has a huge range of selection. Though their options are a bit pricey, their portion sizes are meant for sharing. The menu offers mouthwatering Orange Chicken, delicious General Tso's chicken, and a variety of vegetarian choices. Carry out, delivery, or pickup! 703.768.6888

Prices range from \$5 to \$20
PERFECT FOR- delivery at lunch!

High requirements for community service meet resistance

Anna Dreyfuss
Style Editor

Every high school student knows the feeling of waking up early on Saturdays mornings to pick up trash by George Washington Parkway, but is it really necessary? According to the United States Department of Labor, community service has risen over the past years. About 27% of the United States has performed volunteer work at least once during September 2008 to 2009.

However, these statistics do not reflect student's feelings towards mandatory service hours. "I think that being forced to do community service defeats the entire purpose of it, but it is a good thing. Students that choose to do it themselves should be rewarded for it," said senior Elizabeth Wolfrey. Of her work at assisted living facilities in the area, Wolfrey said, "I spend most of my day in school and then at work, neither of which consist or expose me to people doing community service, so daily community service hardly effects me."

Conversely, freshman Ashley Pak believes that completing service hours is rewarding to everyone. "Community service work affects us in life by knowing we can do small things to help out each other. It helps people daily by knowing that when we help each other out it can make our community a friendlier and better place," said Pak.

Although most students would rather poke their eyes out than commit to ten hours of service, some find it to be beneficial. "It should be necessary because it helps us to realize a greater life and become smarter in our community," commented senior Jacob Glaser. English teacher, Colin O'Grady said "I think we're moving in the right direction as far as community service is concerned and you'll see that in how active our Key Club and the H Project are. Those are two unbelievable clubs that have done an astonishing amount of work both here at West Potomac and in the larger community as whole. There is still a lot of progress that can be made, however, in terms of the way that community service is integrated into the coursework that

all students do as part of their regular program of studies.

A popular solution students have proposed is optional service hours. To the new idea, junior Jamar Edwards replied, "I would do it. I think if it's not forced and just proposed, students would do it and would get more out of it than just lying and saying it effected them." History teacher, Drew Hamlin, countered, "I do not think that the community service piece should be optional. It should be flexible and creative in its approach, but it needs to be an essential part of the sustained learning experience of the West Potomac student."

Overall, there are mixed feelings about community service in our school. Some believe it is a great character-builder. "It helps me because someone is always there willing to help someone else out without any price. It's the nicest, most selfless act someone could ever do," said Glaser.

In contrast, some students argue it should not be required and is just another cause of stress. "As if we're not busy enough with school during the day, then homework and for anyone that does a sport or has a job, it just adds to the stress," said Wolfrey.

What's Good in Hollywood

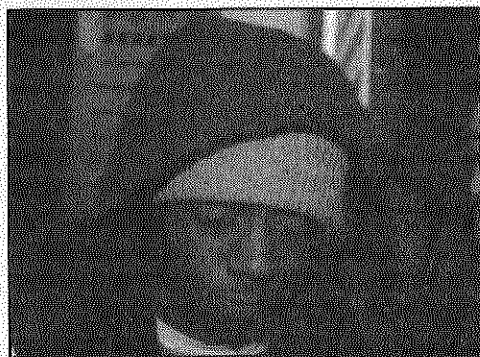
Sonia Garakyaraghi
Photographer



Photos courtesy of scrapetv.com

Michael Jackson is dead but his death case continues...

The famous pop singer, Michael Jackson, died on June 25, 2009, but his death is still a mystery. Jackson's father, Joe Jackson, is still fighting for his son's death case. However, on November 1, 2010, it was reported that the "wrongful death lawsuit" filed by Jackson would no longer be a federal issue. Part of the lawsuit against Michael Jackson's doctor, Dr. Conrad Murray, was dropped, and the federal court decided the remaining issues would be heard at the state court level. The remaining issues include Jackson alleging that Michael's rights were violated under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The federal judge said he could not have authority on the case, and Jackson would unlikely be able to collect monetary damages. Also, this case is likely to be combined with a case filed by Katherine Jackson, another member of the Jackson family, who sued the company that planned the London concerts for Michael Jackson before his death.



Photos courtesy of bloginity.com

Lil Wayne out of prison

"Aaaaaahhhhhmmmm baaaaakkkkkkkk" was the 28 year-old Grammy award winning rapper's tweet on Thursday, November 4 after being released that morning from prison. Dwayne Carter, also known as Lil Wayne, served eight months of a one-year jail sentence from a 2007 gun possession conviction. During his time in the Riker's Island Jail, Lil Wayne got in trouble for having a MP3 charger and a pair of headphones for which he received a month in "punitive segregation," according to the Department of Correction spokesman. During his "punitive segregation," Lil Wayne had to spend as many as 23 hours a day in his cell, and was only allowed out for visits, religious services, and one hour of recreational time. However, despite the setback, Lil Wayne released his new album, "I Am Not a Human Being," in October of 2010, which topped the Billboard Top 200 chart.



Photos courtesy of aceshowbiz.com

Demi Lovato Leaves?

18-year-old Demi Lovato, one of The Disney Channel's well-known singers and actresses, dropped out of her tour with the Jonas Brothers. The reason for this is still unclear. However, many fans believe it is because of her recent break up with one of the Jonas Brothers members, Joe Jonas. Another speculation is her past with bullying in middle school. However, according to her publicist on Monday, November 1, "Demi Lovato left her tour early this weekend in order to seek medical treatment for emotional and physical issues she has dealt with for some time. Demi has decided to take personal responsibility for her actions and seek help."

Who is Sam Adams?

Emily Woods &
Norris Brooks

Focus Editor & News Editor

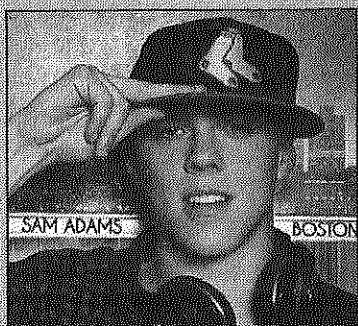
"Boston's Boy" is "Comin' Up" to the DC Metro Area. The 22-year-old rapper, Samuel Adams Wisner, is set to perform at the 930 Club on November 30th. West Potomac students are buzzing about the Party Records Tour.

Samuel Adams, also well known as Sammy Adams, was born and raised in Cambridge, MA. These roots prompted Adams to give himself the nickname "Boston's Boy." Unlike most celebrities, Sammy Adams was discovered in an unusual way. The Massachusetts native gained popularity after his release via YouTube of his single, "I Hate College," a clever remix of Asher Roth's "I Love College." After being discovered by hip-hop fans, Adams self-produced his first EP, "Boston's Boy" in March. Since then, critics have been praising his refreshing lyricism and innovation of genres. His success has even hit home. Junior Morgan Maniglia, who is attending the concert, said, "I am counting down the days till this show. I hadn't heard of him 'til this year, and now I cannot stop listening to him!"

Adam's audience at the concert in November will most likely be anticipating his performance of songs from his newest "Mixtape," which came out September 23. Some of his most acclaimed songs that fans will also hope to hear include "You Girl" and "Still I Rise." For

sophomore Hannah Werner, the most anticipated song is "Driving Me Crazy." When asked why, she said, "Driving Me Crazy" is a fun upbeat song that I know is going to sound great live. I am sure it will pump up the crowd, and kick off the start of a great concert!"

An alumnus of Trinity College, Adams has gained a large following of teenagers and college students with his relatable lyrics and themes in his songs. West Potomac graduate and now student at Virginia Tech, Molly Bowdring, said, "Sam Adams is huge at VT. He sings about scenarios college students can relate to, and people actually want to listen to what he has to say." He has performed at an array of venues, from Nantucket bars to universities to opening for the Ying Yang Twins. But will Adams performance on the 30th become out of control? The rapper was recently arrested on September 10 for incitement to riot and disorderly conduct while onstage at a concert for a Kansas State University fraternity. It seems West Potomac teens attending the show may be as rowdy as the performer himself.



Photos courtesy of hiptics.com

Taylor Swift is ready to "Speak Now"

Emily Woods

Focus Editor

Forget crying on guitars; Taylor Swift has moved on to bigger and better things. With provocative lyrics like, "I lived in your chess game/ But you changed the rules every day," it is evident that the 20-year old has grown up. She is not the same, innocent girl-next-door who captured America's heart almost five years ago with her debut single, "Tim McGraw." Swift has evolved into a young woman who sings about weddings and apologies. Her latest album, "Speak Now" which sold one million copies in its first week, flaunts Swift's new savvy and sophisticated side. On a track list of 14 songs, she simultaneously settles the score with Kanye West and boldly denounces her exes.

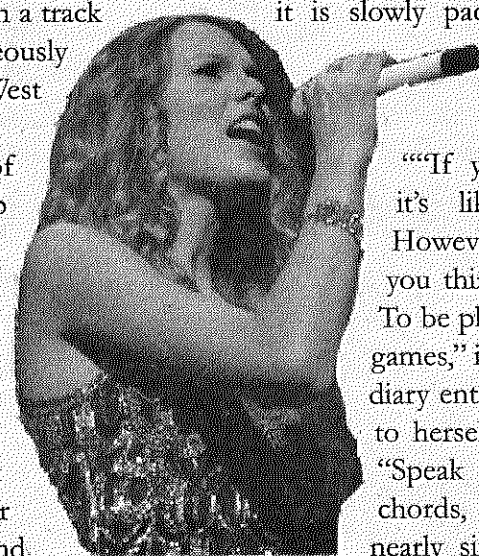
"Speak Now" is an array of musical styles ranging from pop to bluegrass to punchy rock. Notably, the album is entirely composed of Swift's own songs, and showcases mastery in lyricism. Swift has matured as an artist in undeniable ways. She no longer sings about a fanciful "White Horse" or crafts tracks about ideal men and preposterously romantic situations.

"Speak Now" is a collection of songs that allows listeners to relate to and empathize with the singer. Swift's guitar-driven title track is a lively and witty tune in which she breaks up a wedding and runs off with the groom.

However unlike Swift's previous sugarcoated albums, "Speak Now" is a bittersweet arrangement, with a heavy emphasis on the bitter. Rumored to be about Camilla Belle, the actress responsible for the end of pop star Joe Jonas and Swift's relationship, "Better Than Revenge" is a fast-paced rock anthem that sounds more like a musical fusion of Avril

Lavigne and Paramore than a typical Taylor Swift song. The lyrics can be construed as catty, as Swift belts out, "But no amount of vintage dresses gives you dignity." She continues her tirade in the most "country" song on the entire album, "Mean," a twangy tribute to all of Swift's harsh critics, which sounds similar to country sensations Sugarland or the Dixie Chicks' hit songs.

Amidst all of the album's delights, a few weak points exist. One of them is "Dear John," the painfully intimate ballad about singer-songwriter and Hollywood heartbreaker John Mayer. While the song is beautifully written,



Photos courtesy of hiopinion.com

it is slowly paced and filled with one devastating line after another. Swift recently told the *New York Times*,

"If you listen to my albums, it's like reading my diary." However, with lyrics like, "Don't you think nineteen's too young/ To be played by your dark twisted games," it appears "Dear John" is a diary entry Swift should have kept to herself. Other problems with "Speak Now" include repetitive chords, a few songs that drag at nearly six or seven minutes, and the song, "The Story of Us,"

which is annoyingly reminiscent of Miley Cyrus in her Hannah Montana days.

In our modern music industry driven by sex appeal and raunchy acts, many wonder how Swift manages to stay on top of the charts. She is no Ke\$ha or Britney Spears. But with three platinum albums and four Grammys, it's obvious that Swift's success is not dependent on glitz and glamour. On "Speak Now," the country-pop sweetheart proves that her music really does "speak" for itself.

Proposition 19: don't panic it's organic

Tyler Arnold
Reporter

"Yes we Cannabis," was the motto for the legalization of marijuana in California this November. The vote ended on November 2, 2010, at around 10 PM Eastern Time, which resulted in the decision not to pass the proposition. However, according to Politics-and-Worldnews.com, California has paved the way for legalization propositions all across America. This will not be the last people will see of the debate to legalize marijuana.

This topic has long been discussed among students and politicians, and with the high possibility of more debates about the legalization of marijuana in the near future, this could greatly affect the country. Under this proposition, the rules would generally state that any persons of at least 21 years of age may be able to hold a maximum amount of one ounce of marijuana. Also, they may use marijuana in a residence or in a public establishment that is licensed for onsite marijuana consumption such as a restraint, according to the Global Comment website. This proposition will, if passed in the future, open many doors that

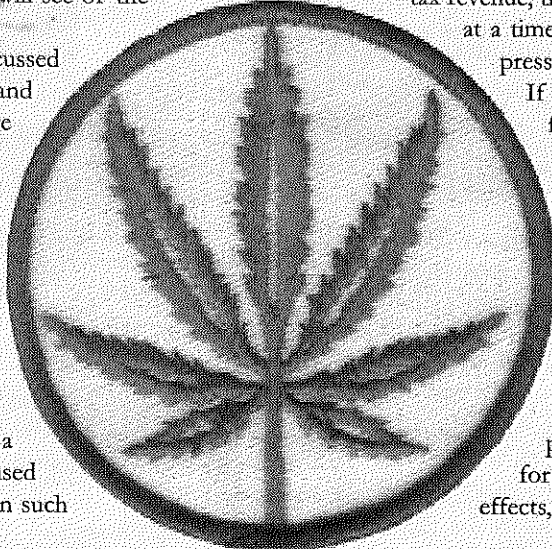


Photo courtesy of chasmerch.com

The legalization of marijuana was voted on in early November.

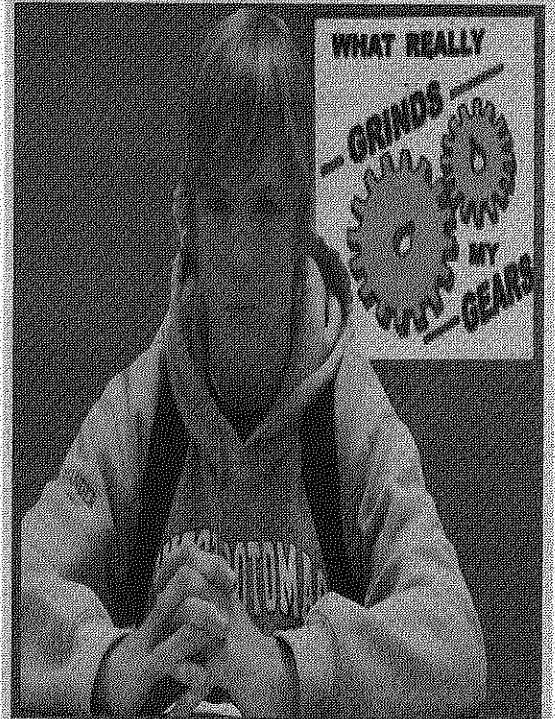
can benefit the country.

While this law may seem unappealing to many Americans, there are various benefits that could actually improve the welfare of the country. The government would be able to tax the sale of cannabis, the plant that marijuana comes from. During this time of economic hardship, the government would be able to receive more money because "the State Board of Equalization has estimated that imposing a \$50 per ounce levy on marijuana sales could generate \$1.4 billion a year in new tax revenue, thus generating a large amount of revenue at a time when the state is experiencing financial pressure," according to the *Mercury News*.

If this law were to be passed then the focus of the law enforcement would be on major cartels, dealers, and other unnatural and incredibly harmful drugs, such as cocaine and heroin, both of which are refined with chemicals. Opponents argue that this proposition is not solid enough to pass and could contain loopholes creating conflict in public safety.

Looking at both views of the proposition, logical points can be seen for each side. Despite its potential positive effects, the proposition did not pass, but it has not been defeated. Just as any law may have loopholes it can always be up for review, and in 2012 it will be voted on again.

You know what really grinds my gears?



Jacob Alexander
Opinions Editor

Everyone has their share of pet peeves and things that annoy them. One of mine would be the law that restricts the number of people a teenage driver can have in his or her car.

According to the DMV website, Virginia law states that teen drivers can only have one other person in the car during the first year they have their license, excluding family members. It is a sound law for people who are just beginning to drive because of the distractions other people can present. However, it does not take a full year of driving experience with a license to become comfortable enough to drive with more than one person in the car.

In Virginia, when a new driver receives their learner's permit, they are required to log at least 45 hours of driving experience within nine months. While teen drivers are completing mandatory hours, the law that limits the number of passengers allowed in the car is very important and makes total sense. In addition to these 45 hours, students are required to complete the Behind the Wheel course, getting them even more experience before they can drive on their own. After all of this, students have already had plenty of driving experience even on the first day they have their license. Yet they are still required to wait another full year before they can drive more than one friend.

However, once they have earned their license, teenage drivers tend to drive a lot more than they did when they had their permit. They gain experience much more quickly, and do not need an entire year of experience before being able to handle more friends in their car. Even with this in mind, teenage drivers already acquire enough experience while they only have their permit.

Frequently a group of teenage friends is hanging out, but only one or two of them have their license or their car that particular day, and in order to get all of them around at least one person has to drive more than one friend. Since all of these drivers in this situation have earned their 45 permit hours and have completed Behind the Wheel, they are all very capable of this, but if they do they are breaking the law. Teen drivers, even when they first get their license, are already capable of driving with more than one friend in the car, and the law forbidding this for a year is unnecessary.

Can the gay bullying epidemic be stopped?

Randa Elhage
Reporter

Most of us have been bullied at some point in our lives, right? But when bullying leads kids to depression and suicide attempts, it is a very serious matter. Recently, an increasing number of bullying cases have resulted in tragic outcomes, and the target has mainly been homosexual teens.

This recent rash of bullying incidents can most likely be described to homophobia, defined as the irrational fear or aversion to homosexuals. On his website, blogger Scott Bidstrup explains that homophobia is merely hatred and confusion.

This widespread fear is the reason why we have numerous depressed and suicidal homosexual teens. According to Paul Gibson LCSW from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, "lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth are at a four times higher risk for suicide than their straight peers."

In high school, most teenagers would just like to fit in. They want to make friends. However, society's point of view of a "normal" teenager generally means being attracted to the opposite sex. But expecting homosexual teens to "change" or to deny their true feelings is unfair, and can lead to broken families, teen suicides, increased fear, and hatred towards homosexual teens.

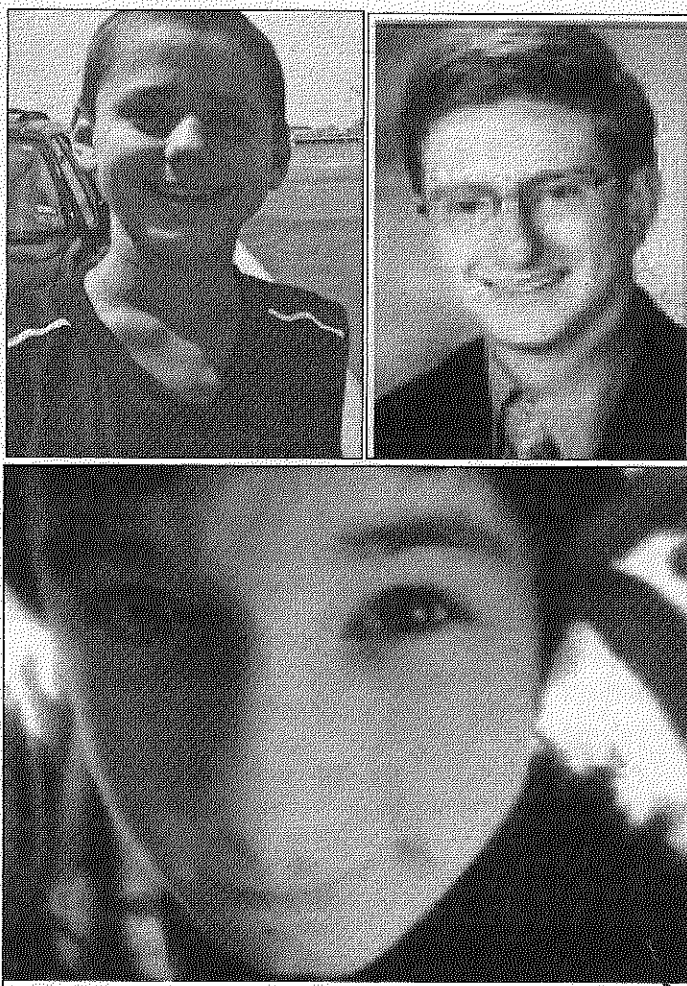
"Bullying someone because of their sexuality or gender expression is like bullying someone because of their skin color. It's making fun of something that is part of the person that they can't change. I think it's one of the worst forms of

bullying, especially because much of the bullying is done to kids who are just coming to understand themselves better and they're essentially being tortured for it," said senior Alexander Tyson, president of the Gay-Straight Alliance at West Potomac.

Many homosexual teenagers are faced with this struggle every day. In recent months, no less than seven homosexual teenagers committed suicide due to bullying. Although the lives of these seven teens have been lost, many hope the world can become a better place, in honor of their memory.

Though, this is not the first time homosexual teenagers have been driven to suicide due to bullying. In 1994, The Trevor Project was created as the leading national organization focused on crisis and suicide prevention efforts among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. This organization was created in honor of a thirteen year old boy, Trevor, who was bullied for his sexuality and took his life. As stated on their website, "The Trevor Project is determined to end suicide among LGBTQ youth by providing life-saving and life-affirming resources including our nationwide, 24/7 crisis intervention lifeline, digital community and advocacy/educational programs that create a safe, supportive and positive environment for everyone." The only way to prevent these suicides is acceptance. When there is acceptance it rules out fear, hatred, and

confusion. The only way to achieve this acceptance is through knowledge. If people were educated and just took the time to listen, many problems that face the world today would be easily averted. According to actress Jessica Lange, "acceptance and tolerance and forgiveness: those are life-altering lessons."



Photos courtesy of lgbtqnation.com, asian-nation.org and cbsnews.com

The teenagers pictured above were victims to homosexual bullying and this resulted in suicide.

Ask Laura and Leigh...

STUDENT LIFE

DEAR L & L,

I AM A TEACHER AT WEST POTOMAC HIGH SCHOOL. MY PROBLEM IS THAT MY STUDENTS WILL NOT DO THEIR HOMEWORK. I GET SOME IN EVERY CLASS THAT JUST DO NOT DO ANYTHING OUTSIDE OF MY CLASS. THEY ARE SMART ENOUGH! WHAT CAN I DO?!

-FRUSTRATED FACULTY



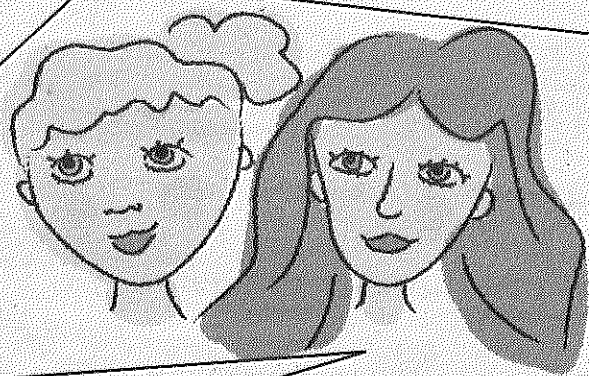
Dear L&L,

I'm gay, and it's really tough to make friends when you can't usually tell them who you really are, then you can get closer with them in a friendship. I really want to make friends that I can actually be honest with about my feelings. I'm so confused because they are actually really cool people. They sat with me at lunch one day because I didn't know anybody. I'm living a lie towards them and it feels awful. I'm living a lie towards everyone. I want to know how I can be more open towards my new friends, and everyone else, and my dad (who I haven't told yet).

-Anonymous

DEAR FRUSTRATED FACULTY,
LET US BEGIN BY SAYING THAT MANY TEACHERS PROBABLY HAVE THIS PROBLEM. PERHAPS YOU CAN CONSULT THEM FOR STRATEGIES TO MOTIVATE YOUR STUDENTS. IN OUR EXPERIENCE, WE ARE MOST LIKELY TO DO THE HOMEWORK WHEN WE FULLY UNDERSTAND THE ASSIGNMENT. WE SUGGEST YOU MAKE SURE THE STUDENTS KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THE ASSIGNMENT IS AND GO OVER A COUPLE OF PROBLEMS IN THE HOMEWORK AT THE START OF THE FOLLOWING CLASS. THIS GIVES STUDENTS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASK DIRECT QUESTIONS, AND CAN HELP YOU TO BETTER GAUGE WHICH CONCEPTS NEED REINFORCING. THIS REASSURES THE STUDENTS THAT THEY CAN DO THEIR HOMEWORK CORRECTLY, MAKING THEM MORE LIKELY TO DO THEIR HOMEWORK. FINALLY, THERE IS ONLY SO MUCH YOU AS A TEACHER CAN DO. ULTIMATELY, IF STUDENTS ARE CHOOSING NOT TO DO THEIR ASSIGNMENTS, THEN THEY WILL EARN A POOR GRADE AND THAT IS ON THEM. HOPE THIS HELPS!

-L&L



We believe that honesty is the best policy. True friends will love you for who you are, and not for your life choices. You should tell them, but be aware that their reactions may not be positive at first. It is also important to be honest with your parents, and we are sure your dad would be pleased that you are being honest with him. Know that this is a very delicate situation, however, and if you keep this a secret, it will be hard to stay true to yourself. Good luck!

-Laura and Leigh

P.S. Maybe you would like to look into the Gay/Straight Alliance club to meet some new people!

Student Shoutouts

Happy Birthday
Sam Ludovici!
Thou art a great
fellow!

- Clare Palo

Shoutout to the
cheerleading squad!
You girls had a
great season.

- Tommy Friederich

I am sorry I
missed your
birthday baby
Hong!

-Anonymous

Moes is
the best!

-Erik Liner

Need advice?

Email
LLlistening@gmail.com

Shoutout to the
cast and crew of
"Dream"! Keep it
lofty!

-Nellena

Happy
[belated]
birthday,
Sami!

Shoutout to the
Gymnastics team!

-Tommy Friederich

Shoutout to Callan
Memmo for
continuing to
inspire me!

-Anonymous

Here's to an awe-
some season for
the Swim Team!
Get pumped!

PP,
Don't forget:
L, L, & L
- WB

Want YOUR
shoutout
published?
Submit your
shoutouts to
a Wire
representative.
Shoutouts are
\$1.

Susana Lopez & Michal Harmata

Sami Kadonoff
Reporter

Norris Brooks
News Editor

How is senior year so far?

Senior year has been good. It feels nice to be top of the school, but it's also been really stressful because of college applications.

How many colleges have you applied to? What is your top choice?

So far I have applied early decision to George Washington, and right now that is my number one choice.

What senior superlative would you give yourself?

Best Laugh

If you could live in another time period what would it be and why?

The 1700's Europe, because I'd like to believe that I could be a part of the royal family.

Cannot wait to get on the road to college!

How is senior year so far?

I have turned in four applications, but I hope to apply to nine schools. My dream school is UVA right now.

Random facts about you:

- I like to beatbox.
- I used to be allergic to chlorine.
- I attended the Governor's School for Humanities
- I have been playing viola for 12 years.
- My favorite color is red.

What senior superlative would you give yourself?

I'd say it's a toss up between best dressed and best hair. Or most polite.

If you could live in any other time period, which would it be?

Victorian England without a doubt. Then I could wear bow ties everyday.

Photo Courtesy of Clare Palo, Sonia Garakharaghi and Clip Art



Just for Fun!



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Photo courtesy of sudoku.com

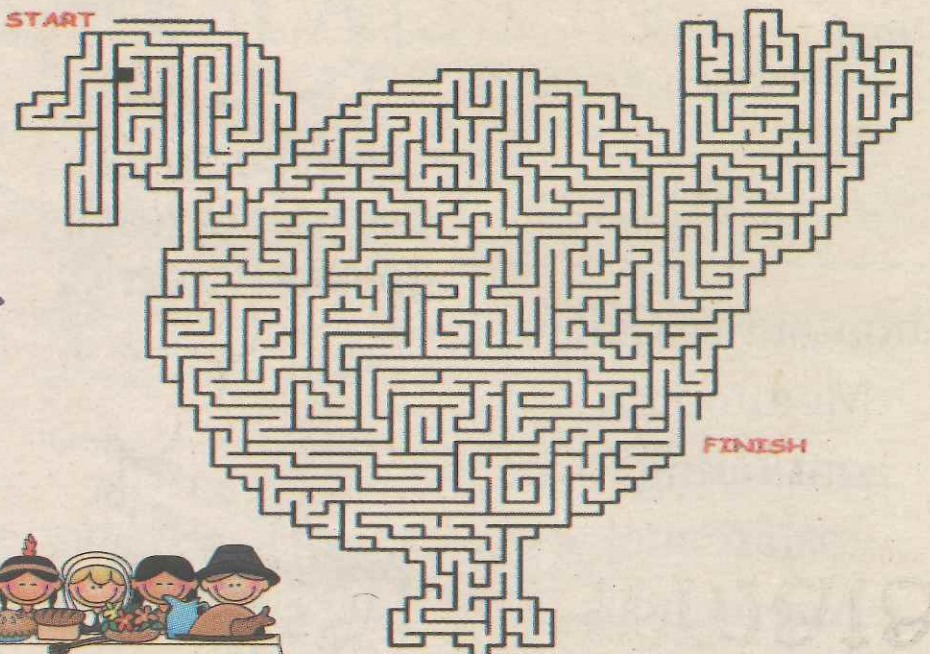
Did you know?

- The average cost of raising a medium size dog to the age of 11 is \$16,400
- Kermit the Frog is left-handed
- Each year there are more than 40,000 toilet related injuries in America
- The yo-yo originated as a weapon in the Philippine islands during the 16th century
- Turkeys can drown if they look up when it's raining

www.funfactz.com and www31.1800flowers.com



START



FINISH



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