

Friday, October 6, 2006

RIVALRY REACHES BOILING POINT

Kelly Wood & Erin Burke

Features Editor & Wire Reporter

Most students upon first entering our school quickly learn of our biggest rival: Mount Vernon. A heated rivalry such as this makes sporting events all the more fun to attend, but has this rivalry gone too far?

The night before this year's annual, and greatly anticipated rivalry football game, an innocent prank turned into an illegal and destructive act. Seventeen of our football players were caught on tape at two different intervals during the night vandalizing the school grounds. The first group was seen painting Mt. Vernon's rock and several surrounding trees with our school colors. What could have been a humorous prank became something much more serious when it was discovered that one of the trees painted was a memorial tree. The other group of players vandalized the school to a much greater extent. Mount Vernon students went to school Friday morning to find championship signs, the entrance to their football stadium, trashcans, sidewalks, Post-A-Jons, and various "No Parking" signs spray painted with West Potomac spirit symbols and words. There were also large blue paw prints painted onto the track.

The students involved in this incident faced serious consequences and some still to come. They were unable to play in the rivalry game on Friday night, in which we lost 39-0. The players involved also received AIA.

While they were not required by the school, many players

cleaned up their vandalism Saturday and Sunday. Despite being able to clean up most of the vandalism, the players still face charges for illegally destroying school property and trespassing.

What caused this rivalry in the first place? Well, perhaps the fact that our school and Mount Vernon are less than five miles away from one another had something to do with it. While we have a larger student population, both schools have similarly diverse and active student bodies. Even our school mottoes are almost the same. Ours being, "Excellence is a tradition" and theirs being, "A culture of excellence." We are just two regular schools with a desire to beat the other whenever an encounter is made.

Pranks between our school and Mount Vernon have escalated over the years. However, at one time, these now infamous pranks were harmless. One such innocent and humorous prank done to Mount Vernon in the past was partially burying their rock. This event explains why Mount Vernon currently has a much smaller rock, according to head of student activities, Mr. Dietze.

In the last four years, Mount Vernon returned the prank by painting our rock with their school colors of burgundy and silver. Once they even tarred it and covered it with dirt, feathers, and glitter. Almost all the past pranks were harmless, except for the one performed by Mount Vernon two years ago. Chemicals were poured onto our baseball field (also used by the field hockey team) and completely destroyed the grass. Due to the chemicals on the field,

the Hazardous Material team arrived. The field was in such poor condition that our field hockey team was unable to play on it and even by the spring, it was not fully repaired. The girls had to travel to Thomas Jefferson in order to play, and the baseball team was forced to practice at the Carl Sandburg field for most of the '05 spring season. Something such as this goes way too far for a school rivalry and becomes nothing more than a destructive unsportsmanlike act.

All sports events, in which we are playing our rivals, tend to be the most exciting, crowded and anticipated. The most popular of these is the varsity football game. The stands are always filled and school spirit is more evident then ever.

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Graphic by Katie O'Connor



Players trudging off the field at halftime on Friday's football game against rival Mount Vernon.

Photo Courtesy of Mount Vernon Gazette

Inside This Issue:



Photo Courtesy of KIRK

"Why was it that our star football players could lead the team, but members of student government were held back from holding office?" **PAGE 3**

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Election 2006

"When I realized the terrible smell filling up the school hallways was me, I was mortified." **PAGES 8-9**

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Photo Courtesy of Brynna Coons

Spanish Heritage Month

Sidewalk For Students

Devon Cain

Wire Reporter

The combination of treacherous ditches on both sides of the narrow Quander Road and the hectic traffic in the mornings and afternoons, poses a mutual threat to both drivers and walkers making the commute to and from West Potomac. Principal Rima Vesilind stated, "Every time there is bad weather it frightens me." It usually is not a good situation when there is a combination of new drivers, icy roads, and pedestrians, traveling the street at the same time. Worried about your safety? Some are fighting for a solution.

Faculty and concerned parents are on the warpath to build a sidewalk alongside Quander Road for some time now and while there is still

much left to do, some progress is finally being made. Chriss Pryately, an active mother leading the struggle to pave Quander Road and an active volunteer in the Career Center, stated, "So far the task is to only pave from Beacon Hill Road to Stokes Lane with the sidewalk." The "school side" of Quander Road (which includes the perilous ditch in front of our first entrance) would not be reconfigured in the present design. This presents a problem because as Vesilind pointed out, "In the mornings, buses leaving the school [from the entrance] have to turn into oncoming traffic right now, causing both traffic and safety problems."

Those involved in trying to get the sidewalk built are frustrated that plans are made solely for the section

See Sidewalk, page 7

Soaring 05-06 SAT Scores

Mariya Ilyas

News Editor

Out of a possible combined score of 2400 on the Scholastic Assessment Test I (SAT): Reasoning Test, our school averaged 1596 in the year 2006, increasing the most since 2005 out of any other high school in Fairfax County.

As a county, Fairfax County's average SAT score, as a whole, is 1643 which outnumbered the state and national average scores of 1525 and 1518, respectively. But, out of the 25 high schools in this county, only our school improved its scores the most in both critical reading and math. According to the Mount Vernon Gazette, "Though the school received the fourteenth highest scores out of the county's 25 high schools, West Potomac's performance on the SAT increased more than any other school on the math and verbal sections."

Other high schools such as Mount Vernon, Edison, and Fairfax either decreased or increased by only a couple of points in both 2005 and 2006. In 2005, our school received an average math and verbal score of 1017. Last year, in 2006, our math and verbal score increased my 56 points. "I'm thrilled [at this] and very proud of our students," said Career Center Specialist Ms. Barbara Conner.

The administration is very proud of this increase. We had 350 more students take the test last year, which is the highest number in the past four school years.

There are many sources behind the increase of our SAT scores. The English Department taught a unit of SAT vocabulary to its students. An elective class, Reasoning Skills, was offered to students last year and was taught by Mr. Colin O'Grady. "The way I taught the class was designed to help students improve their SAT scores by looking at the SAT as a completely different animal than any other test they'd ever taken," said O'Grady.

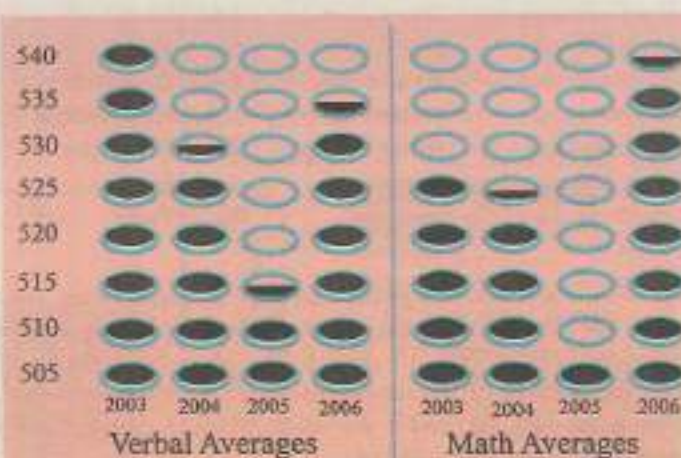
Many students spend their own time studying and preparing for the SATs. A Test Prep Program was offered to students as well. Like last

year, our school offers a PSAT/SAT Prep Program to freshmen, sophomores, and juniors. This program is designed to help students score higher on their PSATs or SATs. Last year, 79 out of the 231 students completely finished the Prep Program. It teaches strategies and offers different ways to approach the sections on the test. "It increased their [students'] familiarity with the format of the SAT questions," said Conner. Every Saturday session in Kogelman Theatre, the dedicated students took a section of a practice SAT under time pressure and were assigned the rest of the test for homework.

Conner and the other sponsors of the program are working to make the Test Prep Program as exactly as the real SAT environment. The location may be changed as well—Kogelman Theater's chairs were too comfortable and the students were seated next to each other, which is no the environment of the real SAT.

Not everyone took advantage of the PSAT/SAT Prep Program. Some students studied on their own time. "For the SAT, I studied the College Board Study Guide to prepare for the SAT. I did practice questions every other day. The book helped me a lot, especially in math," said senior Roshni Pattiath.

Students are encouraged to spend five to ten minutes daily on SAT prep drills available on this website: <http://www.fcps.edu/westspringfieldhs/career/testprep.htm>.



Source: http://www.fcps.edu/media/pub/principal/FCPS_SAT04.htm and Mount Vernon Gazette.

Graph by Drew Smith and Sam McCann



Poor Pluto

Pluto, since your discovery in 1930, you enjoyed membership in the elite club known as the solar system. But with a high tech study and extensive deliberation (i.e. a simple and hasty vote last month), you were demoted to "dwarf planet" status. But do not let your icy exterior get colder Pluto; we still love you here on Earth.

In case you had not heard, on August 24, the International Astronomical Association meeting in Prague decided that Pluto was too small (smaller than our moon) to be a planet. Pluto also does not have a clear path in its orbit, as it crosses paths with Neptune. Therefore, it is a dwarf planet, and joins the newly formed clique of trans-Neptunian objects.

Around campus, students had negative feelings towards the planetary status of our not-quite-a-planet-anymore friend. "If it's good enough to name Mickey's dog after," said sophomore Evan Grier, "then it's a planet." After being informed that Pluto was actually named after the Roman god of the underworld, he retorted, "Well, that shows that if Pluto was a person, it would have a dangerous bad-boy attitude... duh."

With this bad-boy planet in mind, one cannot help but worry what would happen to Neptune, with Pluto out there, thirsty for revenge. Even Pluto's orbit is threatening. Its unorthodox elliptical orbit often took the place of Neptune as the second to last planet from the Sun. But even so, its rebellious nature and small size should not have been the reason for its insulting impeachment. "It doesn't have to have a perfect orbit to be a planet," said junior Cindy MacPherson. Since it orbits the sun, Pluto should be a planet, as far as sophomore Gina Adamski is concerned. Being taught love and acceptance for offbeat individuals from elementary school, having to forget Pluto as a planet because of its strange ways seems so very wrong.

Speaking of elementary school, with this new dwarf planet classification, we have also made every child's solar system book incorrect. That Magic School Bus episode where the kids visit all nine planets now gives children false information. And as for that mnemonic device every child learned? My Very Excited Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas has now changed into "My Very Excited Mother Just Served Us Nothing," in the words of MacPherson. We should just go with tradition; Pluto has been a planet for this long, it should have stayed a real planet. Pluto will always stay a planet in many peoples' minds. As the saying now appearing in numerous protests, bumper stickers, and newspaper articles goes, "I don't care what the experts say, you'll always be my number nine."

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Thank you for your donations!

Corrections from Last Issue

On page 6, Mr. O'Grady was incorrectly identified as Mr. Mims.

On page 7, the National Student Leadership Conference (NSLC) was incorrectly referred to as the NSCL.

If find any corrections from this issue, please bring it to The Wire's attention in Room 418 or e-mail Kelcy.Pierre@fcps.edu

THE WEST POTOMAC WIRE

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RANTS and RAVES



A RANT FOR NO MORNING NEWS DURING 2ND BLOCK.

A RANT FOR HIGHER LUNCH PRICES, THEY WERE RAISED TO CENTS.



A Rave for the largest Cross Country team ever, with 64 members!

A Rave for the frisbee club that just started Wednesday!

Religious Response

Dear Editor,

The article "Teens Breaking the Tradition" suggests that people who follow an organized religion are not about love, connection and community. I would be wrong to say that Mother Teresa, a Mother Superior in Calcutta was not about love. This woman gave away her wealth and spent her life picking dying people off the street and giving them dignity when no one else would.

I would hope that the Wire would endorse such ideas as charity instead of simply making a new religion because you are not structured enough to adhere to beliefs. Why would anyone want to leave traditional religions if people like Martin Luther King Jr. or Mother Teresa are representative of the good they have to offer? It's no wonder people of organized religions live an average of 5 years longer than their non-religious peers. The structure in their religion doesn't kill their spirit, it encourages introspection and self knowledge. If you are a member of your own religion, the only person who really cares about your spirituality is (maybe) yourself. With organized religion, you have a group of friends towards a common goal.

Nate Snider, Senior

Dear Editor,

I just wanted to thank you for writing the "Teens Breaking the Tradition" article because I am one of the few Unitarian Universalist at West Potomac and when I mentioned my religion just the week before some sophomore boys told me that it wasn't a "real religion". It's nice to know that there is information out there informing the students, helping them look at different religions and see beyond their own.

Amanda Griffin, Junior

Wondering About Wedgies

Dear Editor,

I read your freshman 411 column dated Friday, September 8, 2006. I found it very interesting and full of good advice for freshmen. However being from the sticks, and raised in Prince William County, I am ignorant of certain "hip" words. Therefore, I am writing, not only to compliment you, but also (notice good grammar here) to inquire as to the meaning of the word "wedgies" and "wedgied." Does it hurt? Do you think it would go over well out here in the sticks? How would 80-year-old acquaintances react? Violently? Stupidly? With humor?

Anxiously awaiting an informative answer from you, whenever you can find the time.

Faithfully yours,
Althea Cooksey

P.S. What is freshman 411?

If you have an opinion on a school-related issue, please submit your Letter to the Editor of 250 words or less to Room 418 Quander, or e-mail us at: Kelcy.Pierre@fcps.edu. All submissions become property of The Wire.

Favoring Football Players?

Please, Let's be fair

Emily Kuhbach
Wire Reporter

You may not know it, but the recent incident involving seventeen of our varsity football players "leaving their mark" on Mount Vernon affects more than just those players. The way our administration handled the event has left more damage than any amount of spray paint ever could. As of now, it has officially cemented its reputation for giving football players preferential treatment.

One disgruntled senior is more than willing to provide proof of such discrimination. The individual explained how three juniors (at the time) showed up at last year's prom intoxicated and were given four days of out-of-school suspension as a result.

In addition, the students were not allowed to stay after school without the permission of a teacher. Let me also point out that the students did not harm anyone or anything while intoxicated. Compare this to seventeen football players committing two acts of trespassing, and, for a select few, vandalism. They, on the other hand, received three days of AIA (in-school suspension), had to sit out one game, and, according to an anonymous player, have to fully reimburse the school for the damage done, though no figure has been provided yet.

The administration made it nearly impossible for the prom-goers to run for student office because they could not stay after school, yet it allowed the football captains to keep their positions.

This makes almost as much sense as Principal Rima Vesilind's statement to the *Washington Post* that the players were given "significant consequences," but allowed to play in the next game because "we lost almost twenty players. [Not letting them play again would] punish the people who are innocent," she told us. In case the administration forgot, trespassing and vandalism are punishable by law. A one game suspension is not punishment; it is a time-out.

As for "not punishing the innocent," it lets the guilty go. If we really cared about the innocent, then why did we

force all seventeen players to endure the punishment, when it is common knowledge that only a few actually broke the law?

Many players believe that they redeemed themselves by spending the following Saturday and Sunday cleaning up Mount Vernon. However, of the disappointing number that showed up, many were accompanied by their parents, who did a good share of the clean up. We cannot hold these players' hands and pretend it is ok. It sends the message to the rest of the school that the blue and white jersey will get you off the hook.

Are we headed in the direction of Pat LaZar, the Maryland student who held up a smoothie shop with a gun and got to be captain of his high school football team? Now he wears a tracking device during every game, reports *USA Today*, but luckily for his team it does not interfere with his playing. I know we are still far from this extreme, but the administration has crossed the line this time.

Call me straight-laced, but this is a matter of crime and punishment and, deeper than that, the insane exceptions we are willing to make for our athletes. It is obvious that the administration's motive is to get these players back on the field so that they can win some games and give us some sort of morale boost. Maybe, in Vesilind's ideal universe, this would also somehow contribute to her plan to "eliminate failing [by some yet-to-be-determined future date]." I will not hold my breath.

According to the Student Responsibilities and Rights handbook, "The student shall be required to reimburse the School Board for any... destruction of property." Although it is said that this will be done, it is yet to be seen whether our players

A one game suspension is not punishment; it is a time-out.

fully pay the price for their damage, and I am not just talking about reimbursement. Our athletes do not deserve preferential treatment. They never have and they never will. The issue is when we will stop pretending they do. This incident presented us with an opportunity to set the record straight, but I am afraid we just took one for the team.

Punishment Paid in Full

Kate O'Connor
News Editor

Athletes represent their school, and are therefore held to a higher standard by the law and by their administrations. While some say that this helps "jocks" to get off easier, I disagree. When our seventeen football players were shoved into the limelight this month, the administration had an opportunity to turn their punishment into an example, to make their penalty serve as a warning to other students. Instead our school proved its ability to be fair and judge the situation, not profile the student.

What the seventeen varsity football players did was unlawful, immoral and it went too far. It is true that the players demonstrated bad judgment, but they also have shown good character. On the weekend following the vandalism, most of the players who vandalized the field returned to Mount Vernon and cleaned up whatever they could. The clean up was not part of their punishment, no one asked them to fix what they had done.

"Signs, outhouses, and sidewalks were damaged," explained Mount Vernon security administrator Michael Feighner. "Twenty to thirty spots had the West Potomac mark [the paw print]." Rumors flooded the school the day of the Mount Vernon game. Some of the 17 football players confessed to being nervous and told their friends about their crimes of the night before. Slowly news leaked out about what had happened to the Mount Vernon field. By 3:00 the entire team was in the Gunston building, changing for their game.

"They called us out of the locker room. That's when we got busted," recalled one team member. An ongoing police investigation will come up with a judicial punishment for the players, and on top of that the school administration also disciplined the players with three days of in-school-suspension and they were benched during the entire Mount Vernon game.

"It was lock down in the library," said one of the offenders who was caught. "If we talked, Manuel said we were gonna be suspended for five days. That's 30 days of no football." There was more than just football on the line too. A severe suspension or recommendation for expulsion could have jeopardized college acceptances and scholarships. Eighteen adolescent's futures rested in the hands of our school's

administration.

Inconsistency in other punishments of students has left the school wary of our penalty system. Gray areas make it difficult to hand out discipline that appears fair to everyone. However, in the case of the football players, the judgment was even more challenging. There were two groups that came to Mount Vernon the night of the vandalism.

One group stayed in front of the school, some painted the rock and others only watched. The second group rounded the building and proceeded to spray paint the school itself. Security cameras were able to distinguish that there were two groups, but they could not single out which players did what. Because of this, either the security officials could guess, based on the images, who had vandalized the field and hope that they got the right men, or they could compromise and give everyone an equal but lesser judgment. They chose the latter.

The school appropriately made the punishment for the football players fit the crime. Their discipline was severe, yet did not impact the entire school in the way that it would have if the team had been prohibited from playing for the rest of the season. "You just have to get past it, it's done" said Varsity football player, Andrew Swinson, who did not participate in the vandalism. The players still have a hefty fine to look forward to that will pay for the damage they caused. Two of the eighteen students caught vandalizing were over 18 and therefore will not be charged as minors. They could face a punishment as severe as a class 6 felony, which calls for one to five years in prison. This charge is unlikely, but possible. "I'm not worried, [I've been told] that I'll probably end up with around six months of

The school appropriately made the punishment for the football players fit the crime.

community service," said one of the two players over eighteen.

"I think I was punished fairly," shared a player after his last day of in

school suspension, "I ain't getting kicked out of school. I ain't getting sent to Bryant. What we got was fair."

High school is an awkward stage that everyone goes through, these are the years when developing adults make mistakes and consequently learn to overcome them. Everyone will mess up, but it is comforting to know that our school is on our side.

Adele's A-B-C's

Getting You Through Life, One Letter at a Time

Adele Hampton
Co-Editor-in-Chief

When one is on the newspaper staff, one is required to come up with as many story ideas as possible. Unfortunately, there always comes a time when absolutely nothing comes to mind. This, in some cultures, is called "writer's block." So, being a writer, I am blocked! As this commentary continues, an ellipsis will be put in place every time I cannot think of something to write. An example being: one day I was walking down the street when... (enter writer's block). This can lead to severe frustration for the reader, but unfortunately, that is just the way life works.

Ecdysiomania: an abnormal compulsion for wandering. When one has writer's

block, there is usually the urge to get as far away from the task at hand as possible. This tendency to put things off, also known as procrastination, can lead to...3 a.m. bed times which can then cause...severe schizophrenia. To prevent this, may I suggest giving yourself a reward for completing whatever you had to do. For example, if Johnny finishes his English essay, he gets a cookie. But then again, nothing is stopping Johnny from getting the cookie before he starts his essay. Johnny, like most teenagers, has no self control. If all else fails, round up a younger sibling to stay in your room and be as annoying as possible until the task is completed.

Although writer's block may seem like an innocent obstacle, it can become quite



Photo by J. Amanda Langley

dangerous. Mindless surfing of the internet can be caused by writer's block. Endless bourn on Facebook and MySpace are wasted. I offer this caution: do not go on chat sites while you are suffering from writer's block, the random strangers you meet do not have the answers to your problems and can not help you find inspiration.

While there are many dangers to writer's block, there are also benefits, such as a great cardio work-out. Pacing back and forth is an excellent source of exercise. Striding

around a room, depending on the size of the room in question, for at least a half hour, should produce some results. Waving hands and cursing in frustration can also increase the amount of calories burned.

Finalism: a belief that an end has or can be reached. Hopefully there will come a time when the writer's block will subside and your ideas will flow like Niagara Falls, causing you to snap out of your Facebook trance and return to whatever writing you happen to be doing.

Unhappily for me, this has not happened. But, if this has happened to you... I offer my congratulations. Another side-effect of writer's block is making statements that are really lame, such as the previous sentence. I apologize. As a result of having nothing better to say...this article will come to a sudden stop.

Woman in The White House?

Brittany Catina

Wire Reporter

Is it time for a female president? This age old question has stumped many and caused a lot of controversy. With the dawn of the 21st century, one would think that women in office would not be a problem. On the contrary, even in this day and age, people have yet to vote a female into office. Although, we have women of high political power, no woman has been elected as president or even considered as an appropriate candidate. There is a double standard that exists in our nation even if most people do not realize it.

Katie Couric recently made a debut as an evening anchor on CBS' evening news. One of the first comments she received was regarding her suit and the fact that it made her look fat. Not only was Couric critiqued on her outfit, people also criticized her hair (the color was too "brassy" and the cut was too "long"), her make-up, and her tan. With all this in mind, do you think anyone ever stopped to consider actually criticizing her for her work or commending her for a job well done? Charles Gibson, an evening host for ABC (a rival of Couric's) recently switched from morning to evening news as well. Do you think people once critiqued him on his outfit, or hair and nails?

Yet, another example of this double standard is Condoleezza

Rice. Rice recently went to Wiesbaden Army Airfield and was dressed in all black. Her attire consisted of a black skirt just above knee length and a black jacket with gold buttons down the front. To top off the outfit, she wore black boots that were flirting with the knee high length. People commented that her outfit made her look "sexy" and "powerful," or looked like something that would be worn by a dominatrix. On the other hand, some say that her outfit made her look very powerful, and stated that she is a woman who would perform any task necessary in order to fulfill her work duties.

With this comment in mind, maybe there is hope for a female president after all.

Finally, we have Hillary Clinton. Clinton is a New York senator of high political standing. She has been involved in politics since her husband (Bill Clinton) was in the White House. She has a forceful nature about her and is very opinionated. In many cases this would be respected in a male, however it is less well respected in a female and often the cause of a pejorative expression. Would any man receive this criticism? We have yet to see this as the case. Although to some Hillary Clinton might deserve these expressions of disapproval, a male would be considered strong,

opinionated, and willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done. These qualities are what make our president such good leaders.

English teach Ms. Kimberly Thompson strongly believes that we will soon see a female as president. Ms. Thompson hopes that this change will occur within the next 20 years. She hopes that voting a female into office will bring about any changes other than the fact that instead of Mr. President, our new president will be referred to as Mrs. President. Mrs. Thompson doesn't know of any candidates who she believes could currently fill the role but hopes that

there will soon be one ranking at the same level as the male candidates.

Our nation is closer to voting a female into office but there is still a lot of ground to gain. In order to finally have a female president, we must get over this double standard

In order to finally have a female president, we must get over this double standard that exists in our society.

that exists in our society. Most people believe that they will see an African American male as president before we even see a female president. Hopefully within the next 20 years we will see a female in the white house and not just as a first lady.

YES

"It shouldn't matter whether or not our next president is male or female. All America needs is a good leader and people shouldn't judge candidates based on their gender"

- Freshman Luren Floyd

"I think the world and the U.S. needs something new"

- Senior Ronnie Anderson

"Of all the sexist things out there today, if we had a female president this country would really be seen as free and liberated"

- Sophomore Maegon Weatherly

Is America Ready for a Female President?



Poll out of 350 people

NO

"Voters don't like females, I think America will have a Black male President before we have a female president"

- Senior Heydi Montufar

"Women have tried to run for president, but failed because they viewed being a woman as a viable political platform"

- Sophomore Neil Burke

Zero Zeroes or Zero Responsibility?

Erin Burke

Wire Reporter

Have you ever gone home on the last day of the grading period, only to sweat for hours while you wait for the mail and try to figure out an excuse to tell your parents about that F you got in Algebra? So maybe you should have turned in those few homework assignments, even if they seemed insignificant at the time. And perhaps that one test that you completely bombed had something to do with it, but never fear, the Zero Zeroes policy is here!

Thanks to the new rule, no one should ever have to worry about missing any assignments. The purpose of the policy is to help students raise their GPAs and reduce the size of that hefty D and F list we had last year. The policy states that if a student misses an assignment and receives a zero on it, they must make it up with that teacher by the next Flex period for that class or receive a referral to an administrator and a call home. Sophomore Peter Kosanovich stated, "I think a referral is too big a punishment for missing one assignment." As Ms. Vesilind said, "The purpose of the policy is to get our kids to pass. We want everyone to succeed." This is a nice thought. However, I cannot help but think that perhaps we are moving backwards.

While getting everyone to get better grades is a great idea, are we losing much more than F's on a report card? As many teachers will tell us from our first days of freshmen year to the time we graduate, high school is all about teaching us the responsibility that we will need to

succeed in the "real world". Is the "real world" going to make us redo assignments we miss until we receive credit? Will William & Mary or UVA call our parents if we fail to make up an assignment? I highly doubt that our college professors will hold our hands until we finally hand in that term paper we put off until the last minute.

I do not see how we are supposed to be mature, responsible students if we are forced to sit down with the administrator (along with another fifty kids in the same situation) and do that five point homework assignment we missed last week. Isn't that what they do to the bad kids who act up in elementary school? The policy is teaching us that it's miss an assignment, as long as we make it up within a week or so, since there are as many as seven school days until the next Flex period. So while it is nice to know that I will not have to worry about getting

Is the "real world" going to make us redo assignments we miss until we receive credit?

of making my own choices about my academic obligations more.



okay to

a zero on that homework assignment I missed on the day I was sick, I wonder if I will miss the responsibility

Zero Zeroes: A Number One Policy

Mariya Ilyas

News Editor

Along with the new Flex schedule, a new policy, known as the "Zero Zeroes," was implemented to increase student grades.

"Zero Zeroes" policy states no student will get a zero on any assignment, even when dressing out for PE...

If a student does not complete an assignment, he or she must make it up.

According to Principal Ms. Rima Vesilind

"[Make-ups are] up to the teachers [as to when they are due]. But I would think that the next Flex period should be a final deadline/guideline." If still not

finished, the administration will get involved, and if needed, parents too.

I think this is a great policy that can not only boost students' grades and GPAs, but also show students the importance of education and school work. It encourages students to finish their work the first time they receive it and receive full credit. This way, the overall school academic grades will improve.

"Yes, [I like the policy] because we get a better opportunity to pass the class," said sophomore Stephanie Mullet. "Since getting zeroes is not an option, everyone's grades will go up."

Last year, 806 students had an average GPA of 2.5 and below. But hopefully with this new policy, this number would decrease. "I think it [school's academic rate] will increase a whole lot, especially for the students who habitually do not get their work done on time," said sophomore Emi Rapavi. "Instead of missing an assignment and receiving a zero for it, you get a chance to make it up for reduced amount of credit. It compels the students to learn the material better because there is no way to get out of the assignment."

AP World History and U.S. Government teacher Ms. Emily Millians said, "If having it [the Zero Zeroes' policy] should help kids be successful, then it's great. It does not create situations in which they can fail."

Although the Zero Zeroes policy places more responsibility on teachers—having to nag students to complete their missed assignments and constantly keeping up with days as to when to stay after—it encourages students to learn the material. When asked if she thought this policy brought more work and responsibility on teachers, Vesilind responded, "Yes, initially. But not ultimately. When students give up and don't try, they never give the subject a chance."

I think everyone should take advantage of this policy

I think everyone should take advantage of this policy because it improves the reputation of our school. We come to school to learn education should be everyone's number one priority. Teachers should not have to chase us to get our assignments done, we should be responsible enough to do that on our own by now.

Defibrillators Add New Aspect of Safety to School

Evan Fritz

Wire Reporter

In any normal high school, health and medical treatment is usually something that is only addressed by a small, out-of-the-way clinic, this school being no exception. However if there is a fatal health emergency, a few crucial seconds are all that stand in the way of saving a life. Health risks are difficult to accommodate for within schools, one important step was taken to prevent fatalities from heart attacks. This step comes in the form of the placement of defibrillators in Fairfax schools.

The red boxes contain defibrillators installed throughout the school. These Automated External Defibrillators (AED) are designed to walk anyone through the life saving process in case of a cardiac arrest. The AED program was established through a partnership between Fairfax County Public Schools and the Fairfax County government.

It is reported that in the coming months 800 AED units will be deployed in county schools, recreation centers, and office buildings. One may think that placing defibrillators for public use would be dangerous in a school setting, as students may use them incorrectly to harm others who are not experiencing heart problems. These worries should be laid to rest as the defibrillators are designed so that it will only discharge a shock if it senses an irregular or non-existent heartbeat. Another reason why these AEDs are rapidly appearing in public facilities is because of the changes in the Good Samaritan Law. These changes remove any potential liability problems when using these defibrillators on someone in need.

Following the deployment of these defibrillators, training in both proper use of the defibrillators and CPR is available. However, the instructions enclosed within the AED are clear enough for

any student to understand and follow adequately. According to experts the first thing someone should do in an emergency is:

These methods can be used on anyone from infants to adults, however for toddlers there is a separate diagram for applying the



Photo by Heidi Coulter

shock pads.

Many students noticed the defibrillators, but are a bit skeptical about using them. "I have no clue how to use them, but it would be good to know in case of an emergency," said senior Marissa Watt. Whether one has previous training or not, the use of the AEDs is foolproof and there is no chance of harming the victim through its use. It is a welcome addition and it might just save a few lives in the county.

In Case of an Emergency:

- ♥ Check for breathing and a pulse.
- ♥ If neither are found send someone else to get an AED.
- ♥ Have someone else call 911.
- ♥ If there is enough time before the AED is brought back to the victim, any individual trained in CPR should begin resuscitation efforts.
- ♥ When the AED has arrived turn it on.
- ♥ The instructions tell the user to remove any articles of necessary clothing such as shirts.
- ♥ The two shock pads within the box should be applied firmly to the bare skin of the victim as pictured on the provided diagram.
- ♥ An electronic voice within the AED instructs surrounding individuals to stay clear of the victim as it analyzes heart rhythm.
- ♥ If the AED advises to apply a shock, a final warning to stay clear is issued and the user presses the flashing button to administer the shock.
- ♥ After each shock, heart rhythm is reanalyzed in case other shocks are necessary.
- ♥ After the shocks it is safe to touch the patient as breathing and circulation should be checked.
- ♥ Make sure that emergency personnel are on their way.

Election 2006 is in Full Stride

Sam McCann

Wire Reporter

With the mere mention of an obscure term, Senator George Allen (R) may have dramatically altered the landscape of the most important race on the ballot in the upcoming Virginia Senate election.

The term "macaca," a little known word with racial undertones, is a remark that all informed Virginia voters are now familiar with. While on the campaign trail, dubbed "The Listening Tour," in Breaks, Virginia (located in the southwestern part of the state), Allen drew attention to Shekar Ramanaiah Sidarth, a native Virginian, by calling Sidarth a "macaca," and welcoming the young man to his own country. With this, Allen added yet another layer to his hotly contested bid for reelection, where he faces Democrat Jim Webb and Independent Green candidate Glenda Gail Parker.

Although the Senatorial race is grabbing the vast majority of the headlines regarding the November 7th elections, it is far from the only vote on the ballot. Three representatives will also be elected, one each from the 8th, 10th, and 11th Congressional Districts, seats that incumbents James "Jim" Moran, Jr. (D), Frank Wolf (R), and Thomas Davis III (R) would like to retain. Several amendments to the Virginia Constitution are also on the ballot; the most controversial of these limits the definition of a marriage to a union between a man and a woman, therefore banning gay and lesbian marriage in the state. As one would expect, our school would be representative of the controversy, with the opinions as diverse as the student body itself. Many echo the sentiments of registered voter senior Neal Hardie, who argued, "As long as [the marriages] don't interfere with anybody else's lifestyle, what's the big deal." Others, such as junior Ashley Evans, disagree. "I don't think gay marriages should be allowed because marriage in our society should only be between a man and a woman," stated Evans. However, even with pressing issues such as this one

up for debate, the race for a seat in the United States Senate has definitely taken center stage.

Controversy has surrounded the campaigns for the candidates of both major parties in the race for the Senate. After the macaca remark, Allen apologized profusely, and personally called Sidarth. Many interpret the remark as a slip up that anyone could have easily made. Junior Brad Lupton explained, "Sometimes I try to say things and they don't come out like I [intend]. Sometimes people misinterpret what I say." However, Allen's misstep was by no means the only one made by a candidate in this election. His opponent, Jim Webb, ran an ad featuring former President Ronald Reagan without permission from Reagan's widow, stirring up controversy. At Mrs. Reagan's request, the ad was pulled, even though an unauthorized picture of the late President continued to appear on Allen's website. The controversy continued through September, with Allen reportedly denying his Jewish heritage, something many perceived to be insulting to Jews. The missteps certainly did not help the popularity of either candidate. Although he was "not enthusiastic about either [candidate]... it extended [his] disillusionment with the process and the candidates," explained English teacher Colin O'Grady.

With all the controversy surrounding the race, the election is undoubtedly still up in the air. A recent online poll conducted by *evote.com* concluded that Webb had a 1.3% lead over Allen in the senatorial election, as of September 12. The home stretch to the November 7 balloting will prove critical in shaping the future of the state, and with many Seniors eligible to vote, our school will play a crucial part in the decision.



"As of September 12 Webb had a 1.3% lead over Allen..."

News Briefs

Mariya Ilyas

News Editor

Ramadan

Ramadan is the holy month of the Muslim calendar in which all Muslims around the world fast—which is one of the five Pillars of Islam. During Ramadan, Muslims eat a meal at dawn, known as Suhoor, and do not eat anything



Photo by Mariya Ilyas

again until dusk, known as iftar. Between time, Muslims pray or read the Quran (holy book). Fasting gives Muslims a chance to experience the hunger that many poor people around the world face everyday. Muslims usually open their fast by eating dates. This year, Ramadan starts on Sunday, September 24, and ends on Monday, October 23. Every year, Ramadan starts ten days earlier.

On Saturday, September 30, the Muslim Student Association (MSA) held a Ramadan Annual Dinner in the cafeteria. About one hundred people showed up, including students and administration. The program included recitation of Quranic verses, followed by a guest speaker, and then dinner. Guest speaker, Hossain Goal, said "Islam is the most misunderstood religion in the world," defining some of the Islamic vocabulary to the diverse crowd. Sponsor of MSA Ms. Dahabo Said, said, "I am very pleased at how they [MYC] worked together. This is big event they pull together."

Homecoming Theme

The Homecoming theme for this year is "Passport to the World." Freshmen were assigned the country Canada, sophomores were assigned Egypt, juniors were assigned Japan, and seniors received Australia. Spirit week is from October 16 to 20. The Pep Rally (gym; 7th period) and the Homecoming football game against Lake Braddock High School will be on Friday, October 20. The Homecoming dance is on October 21.

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Back to School Night

Parents get a Preview of Student's Classes

Zach Feinstein

Wire Reporter

Back to School Night has happened ever since we started kindergarten. Our annual Back to School Night was held during the third week of school. This year's schedule was arranged so parents would go to every class for ten minutes (except first period, which lasted 20 minutes) with eight minutes in between each session.

Even before most parents and a few students started to arrive, our school was having a College Planning Workshop in the Springbank Building. This workshop was for seniors who needed help with preparing for college. Timothy Boyd, the Director of Student Services, said, "We [were] hoping [students would] come to the college planning workshop. Last year we had 300 people."

Throughout the night as parents walked around the school, they saw tables of students advertising and offering parents' assistance. For example, the Crew Team, Yearbook, and the West Potomac Academy were all handing out bro-

students and parents? Parents still see it as a valuable way to see what is going on in the school and what their children are learning. Most parents enjoy going to school, and meeting the teachers, and finding out what is going on in their son's or daughter's classes. Parent Fran Hicks said, "It's always great to meet the teachers and hear about the year ahead."

Even though teachers do not get paid for staying at Back to School Night, some teachers enjoy meeting their student's parents. Rita Foss, a math teacher, said, "I think it's effective because I personally want to put a face with a name and I think parents feel the same way." To encourage more parents to come, our school's administration sent out a "keep in touch" letter to all parents to remind them of when and where Back to School Night happened. Boyd also commented, "It's very important because it gives parents the opportunity to see their children's classes."

From the looks of things, Back to School Night will always be an opportunity for parents to see what their children

are learning, rather than just hearing "I didn't do anything at school" from their kids every night. Even though some parents did not come, it is still very important for them to know what their children are learning. Back to School Night this year provided an excellent opportunity for parents to

see how this school is run and to see why their child is complaining about a science class and praising their math teacher.



Photo by Bethany Catlin

Roles were reversed at back to school night when parents sat at student's desks and listened to their children's teachers talk about the year to come.

chures about their individual activities and giving directions to lost parents.

Back to School Night raises the question: is the event still effective for both



SAT prep teacher, Barbara Connor, talks to freshman Kenyn Hawkins about the upcoming fall PSAT

The SAT vs. The ACT

Kate Sigtey

Wire Reporter

Made well known by popular movies such as *Perfect Score*, all teenagers are aware of the SAT, the test that has the most impact on their acceptance to college. For most, this test is known as the SAT, but there is also another standardized test that is administered and not as well known, the ACT. How do you know which test is the most beneficial for you?

For the East and West coasts, the SAT is the more dominant college admissions test, while in the Midwest and South, the ACT is considered more dominant. Both tests are accepted widely among colleges, giving students the option to choose which test they feel they can score the highest on. "One third of students do better on the SAT, one third do better on ACT, and then one third do equally on both, so it's important for students to know the differences between each test and then talk with their counselor about which is best suited for them," said Mrs. Connor, of the Career Center. Our school is an active testing site for both tests, giving students the opportunity to take whichever test they would like. The SAT is administered seven times this year, while the ACT is administered five times. With more prep classes and advertisement as well as the PSAT's, the SAT is more popular at our school. "The ACT is not as well known, most students take the SAT because it is more prevalent in the East and there are also more prep classes offered," stated counselor Madelyn Turner.

Besides geographic differences, each test differs dramatically in other ways as well. The SAT test is a reasoning test, using more critical thinking. On the other hand, the ACT is an achievement test, based on curriculum. Both tests include an essay, but the key difference is that the ACT does not require you to take in English and math are assessed in both tests but the ACT also has a science section, which is seen more as just a reading test on scientific material.

Scoring is also completely different. Each section on the SAT is scored on a scale of 200-800 with the highest combined score being a 2400. ACT is scored compositely on a scale of 1-36. When sent out to colleges, all scores from the SAT are shown, but on the ACT students are able to choose which sections they would like the college to see. Consisting of ten sections (three critical reading, three math, three writing, and one masked), the SAT is 45 minutes longer than the ACT which only has four sections.

With the ACT becoming more and more well-known, many students are deciding to take it along with the SAT. "The ACT is now accepted and encouraged at a lot of the schools I'm applying to. It is another way for the admissions office to get to know me better as a student," states senior Amanda Walsh. Most students that take both tests feel that since you have to think in two different ways for each, it shows to the college that they are applying to how they can excel with multiple learning techniques.

October Calendar

October 6th	• Interims Distributed in 8th period	• PSAT testing	
October 9th	• Columbus Day-No school	October 19th	• U.S. Marine Recruiters at lunch
October 10th	• U.S. Navy Recruiters at lunch	• Financial Aid Workshop (CPP)	
October 11th	• Leadership Team meeting	October 20th	• Homecoming Game vs. Lake Braddock
October 12th	• Governors School info meeting	October 21st	• Homecoming Dance
October 13th	• National Honor Society meeting	October 24th	• U.S. Navy Recruiters at lunch
October 14th	• ESOL parent meeting (Dr. Dale)	• National Honor Society inductions	
October 15th	• Alcanza @ George Mason University	• Wheel Chair Rugby	
October 16th	• SAT testing	October 25th	• District Cheerleading Finals at Hayfield
October 17th	• College Fair at Fair Oaks Mall	• GT Parent info night	
October 18th	• West Potomac PTSA meeting	October 26th	• Underclass Picture make-ups
October 19th	• College night at Hayfield	October 28th	• ACT test
October 20th	• Homecoming Halftime	October 30th	• Senior Class Dinner
October 21st	• Powder Puff football game	October 31	• Wheel Chair Rugby
October 22nd	• Wheel chair rugby		
October 23rd	• Senior Class assembly		



From Rivalry, page 1

Because of the cheering fans, and occasional painted faces and belies scattered throughout the crowd, it is always a fun game to be at and witness. Junior Cady Hosse stated, "For this year's football game, me and some of my friends made shirts. I got so excited about the game and I don't even like football that much."

Football is not the only enjoyable rival game played throughout the year. Several other sports also get the opportunity to play our rivals at least once during their season. Even though the softball teams do not get to play each other during the regular season, they still play a scrimmage game each year for extra practice and to fulfill the desire to play one another. Head softball coach Dennis Day said, "For the Mount Vernon game we normally draw one of the biggest crowds and the atmosphere is very much the same as the playoffs. It's awesome!"

Although it is escalating to a dangerous point, our rivalry with Mount Vernon is a tradition that has lasted for years and will hopefully continue for the benefit of future students. As Mr. Dietze stated, "Rivalries are healthy and are done for fun and keep the school spirit up. A rivalry shouldn't hurt anyone and unfortunately, that is what is now happening." A rivalry is just one of the many defined characteristics of high school and makes the experience just that more enjoyable!



Tom Harvey
Owner

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Prices Start to Plummet at the Pump

Alex Keckeisen

Editor-in-Chief

As summer ends and winter approaches, consumers are seeing a drastic drop in gas prices across the region and the nation.

Many student drivers will now be able to breathe a sigh of relief. Analysts expect gas prices to drop to their lowest point since Hurricane Katrina forced gas prices to above three dollars in the D.C. Metropolitan region.

Junior John Falvey just got his own car and likes the dropping prices. "I think it's great that the prices are going down. I'm just happy they didn't hit four dollars like everyone said they would." Falvey, who buys his gas at Hollin Hall Automotive, likes the extra money that he is saving. "I like to go to 7-11 and splurge. I feel like I can buy the whole store but usually I just settle on a Double Gulp of Diet Pepsi." ABC news reported that the average driver will save nineteen dollars each month at the current prices but if the prices continue to

fall as we move to the winter, the amount saved will go up.

Gas prices are dropping primarily because of limited threats from hurricanes. Predictions started to surface more than a month ago when weather analysts downgraded the number of major hurricanes that would come from the Gulf of Mexico. Another reason for the drop is moving from summer gas to winter gas. If you remember, gas prices spiked up when the summer started, moving way above three dollars per gallon.

Mid-term elections may also be playing a key role in the drops. The GOP, who control congress, are hoping that the drops may ease the minds of the voters. Democrats, who many see poised to take back the house and the senate, are using the energy issue to boost polls. Many bills have been proposed for E85 Ethanol vehicles and Hybrid cars. The U.S. energy department is currently giving a tax credit of up to \$3,400 for hybrid cars, a \$1,400 increase over 2005. To find out if your Hybrid car qualifies for any tax break

or the gas mileage of your car go to www.fueleconomy.gov. The website also shares tips on driving more efficiently and maintaining your car. A few of the major tips include not driving over 60 mph, changing your oil regularly, and replacing air filters.

Expect prices to fall more before we hit the dead of winter but do not expect these drops to keep going too much longer. Falvey hopes for lower prices but does not expect much from the always rocky oil companies. "It will get low, but I doubt it will get below two dollars."



Photo by Brenny Carina

Drivers can breathe a sigh of relief now that gas prices have taken a nose-dive.

A Solution For Quander Road: New Sidewalks

Sidewalk, from page 1



The narrow Quander Road brings jeopardy for students who walk home.

Photo by Brenny Carina

of Quander Road reaching from Beacon Hill Road to Stokes Lane because the entrance and "school side" of Quander Road are some of the more dangerous areas. "The sidewalk should be built in the most cost-effective manner. This means everything that needs to be paved should be constructed at once," said Pryately.

Pryately, among others leading the campaign for a sidewalk, agrees that Quander Road in its current state is a disaster waiting to happen. The plans to implement a sidewalk have been underway for twenty years and having worked on the project herself for four years, Pryately feels that the time to act is now. She stated, "There is a lot of contention about this issue because both Gerry Connelly, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, and Gerry Hyland, our district supervisor, have committed funds to building the sidewalk." The road is congested with traffic in both the mornings and afternoons and serious accidents have already occurred.

Last year one of our school's runners, senior Danielle Morin, was hit when crossing to get to the other side of Quander Road. While she does not believe a sidewalk would have made a difference in her accident she does feel a sidewalk is needed. "I think that we do need a sidewalk on Quander Road between the Pulley Center and Quander Road especially because many students walk there and either have to walk in the grass or on the edge of the road. One slip and someone could easily fall into the middle of the road," Morin commented.

On the other side of Quander Road, there is a black-top path. However, Vestilind, among others, doubts the safety of this path. She remarks, "If you have ever walked on [the path on the other side of Quander] you'd be surprised how unsafe it is." Senior Rivers Johnson used to walk to and from school everyday and feels that, "Safety needs to be improved so that there is a secure way to walk on both sides of the street. I drive now, but I walked for three years and I definitely think we need [a sidewalk]."

Students Jostle for Space as the Halls Continue Filling Up

Colin Chaddock

Assistant Business Manager

Fairfax County likes to be big, very big, busting at the seams big, no more elbow room big. In the 1700's, Lord Fairfax (founder of Fairfax County) owned land grants that stretched out into West Virginia and Ohio. A remnant of the obesity that was Fairfax County in 1700 still lingers in Fairfax County Public Schools.

According to the Fairfax County Public Schools website (fcps.edu), Fairfax County is the thirteenth largest county in the United States. Fairfax County Public Schools earned this right by covering a whopping 395 square miles and teaching 164,295 students in the 2005/06 school year. Some students at the start of this year say that there are too many students in this school. "I have noticed that there is overcrowding in some classes, but not in others" said sophomore Darrel Sharp.

Our school, one of 21 high schools in Fairfax County, has always appeared big. "The hallways have always been packed," said sophomore Danny Peterson. Last year, there were 1,658 students being taught by about 165 teachers. This year, there are 1,965 students being taught, and increase of almost 300 students over



Photo by Devyn Cain

Side by side, students attempt to leave the school after the bell rings. It's the crowd that quickly forms, traffic almost comes to a stop.

the course of a year. An increase of that amount would lead to larger class sizes, which many people have noticed. So what little elbow room and air we had last year, was swallowed by incoming students. These numbers found on the FCPS web site do not include Academy Center and the Pulley Center, so the "real" number of students at this school is in fact much larger.

It will be interesting to see if larger class sizes lead to declining grades, or students feeling less connected to teachers. Small classes are one of the strongest points of Fairfax County Public Schools, and with more students and less teachers, how is this possible?

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When It Ra



What's That Smell...It's Jayne!

Jayne Seward

Wire Reporter



Photo by Katherine Langley

Senior Jayne Seward could not stand the smell of herself the day she got fumes from a skunk on her.

Every girl dreams about her first birthday in high school, walking into school wearing her perfect birthday outfit, and having all of her friends cheerfully greeting her with gifts and balloons for everyone to see. On my fifteenth birthday, the exact opposite of this happened. When I awoke on June 15th my freshman year, I was expecting my usual happy birthday surprise breakfast from my parents and an early present before school, but I got an extra surprise.

My dog had gotten into a bit of a fight with a skunk while the rest of the house was sleeping, and although my parents had locked the dog in the garage, the smell had somehow spread through the entire house. Not only did the house smell like skunk, but I, unknowingly did too. Not aware of the way I smelled, I got ready for the day as if it were an ordinary day of school. When I got to school, my day began to get worse and worse. As I walked through the halls, everyone I would pass would say, "What's that smell?" When I realized the terrible smell filling up the school hallways was me, I was mortified. I thought at least my friends would cheer me up, but I was apparently wrong. Instead of balloons and presents, I got laughter and teasing. They gave me a sweatshirt and sprayed me with a number of perfumes, but when nothing worked, their solution was that I walked 10 feet behind them. It was my fifteenth birthday, and no one, not even my best friends, wanted to be near me. It is by far my worst day of high school I have ever experienced.



Kevliff is now able to walk around the school in the air that could cause her to have

Gas...Oh the Humanity!

Tidac Johnson

Wire Reporter



I think that everyone can admit that in our lives we all have had some pretty bad and embarrassing moments in school. From passing gas, to tripping and falling, which one tops the scale of being the worst? To find this out, we went out and interviewed a group of people to find out their super-embarrassing moments in school.

Going to a new school, you sometimes feel weird, but going to high school for the first time, you feel even weirder, and having a huge embarrassing moment in school in front of everyone is the cruelest.



Photo by Brittany Carina

Dorotha Johnson sits on the floor just like she had the day she let one slip.

Freshman Dorotha Johnson said, "To me, the most embarrassing moment would have to be when my teacher was teaching a lesson in class and we were sitting on the rug on the floor. Loudly, gas slipped out of my butt exclusively. I was so embarrassed because everyone made fun of me the entire day." Freshman Kevin Wares described his own worst day. "When I was in sixth grade, I had a bald spot in my head. I was so mad and I felt awkward." Freshman Mariette Parker said, "When I fell in front of all the boys in the hallway on the first day of school, I felt very upset."

Sophomore Kia Hairston described her most embarrassing moment, saying, "Ummmm... I was embarrassed when me and my boyfriend were playing around and he tripped me up in front of everybody. I laughed at first, but then I was kind of upset. But now I laugh about it." Sophomore Austin Weiler said, "The worst day of school for me was when I came to school with my head shaved, I felt fine after everybody got used to it." Even though we hate having bad and embarrassing days of school, life would not be life without them.



Have you ever had a bad day? One so humiliating! Every single one of us has. Teacher, Annica McKenney, is not.

McKenney used to be a basketball player in high school in Florida. According to McKenney, hitting the backboard or making a shot was easy. One day during the season McKenney's team was playing against a fairly good school, McKenney and her team lost the game.

They were losing seventeen to fifteen. McKenney was nervous and heard a ripping sound. She stepped off the van, she bumped her head. The noise was her pants ripping even though she was on the hydrant. "My butt was hanging out," she said. Coach the entire game with a rip in her pants. She was humiliated.



Ivy Poisons School Day for Cooksey

Rash Brought Humiliation and Intense Itching to Routine Monday

Hooff Cooksey

Co News Editor

A typical day at school is usually filled with uneventful classes and a somewhat boring lunch, but every once in a while, there is that one day where everything goes wrong. They trip in the hall, fail multiple quizzes or tests, drop their lunch, and maybe even injure themselves.

Students, however, are not the only ones who have bad days. The staff at this school or any other school has had a horrible day in their life.

I personally experienced my worst day in seventh grade at Carl Sandburg Middle School. It was a regular Monday morning. Most students walked in to the building in a daze from lack of sleep. However, I had other worries on my mind not concerning sleep. The weekend prior to this horrible day, I had gone to a friend's grandparents' farm, where I hung out and then slept over until Sunday morning. On Saturday night, we built a huge fire, throwing immense amounts of sticks and leaves into it. However, with it being dark, we were not quite sure what was going into the fire, and it turned out that poison ivy vines had been thrown into the fire. To top it off, some people had been using these stiff vines as marshmallow sticks, including myself.

On that horrible Monday morning I was told by my parents that I had to go to school, even though my entire body was covered in poison ivy. The smoke from the fire had covered my body with poison ivy oil, and it only took a day for the reaction to occur and set me up for the worst day of my life. I had to go through a school day with both eyes almost totally swollen shut, unbearable itching, and even pain, and to top it off, the endless questions of, "What happened?" and "Are you alright?" This was the most unbearable, miserable day of my life.



Photo by Brittany Carina

Hooff Cooksey is looking a bit angry after remembering his worst day during Middle School when he had his all over his face.



Have you ever had a bad day that you are cursed; doomed to have another? Senior Kristen McCarthy says, "I had a bad day, but not a coffee all over myself."

This event alone would have made a bad day did not end there. "Then I spilled coffee on myself," she said. She would have been lucky if she was not so fortunate.

"I went to my second period class," McCarthy, recalling what happened that day. She had completely forgotten that she was AP World; her only AP class of the year. Later that day, she was handed back a test recently taken. "What was my grade?" she asked. "A," her day? Unfortunately, no. She had a bad day.

By now, one would think McCarthy's bad day allowed to happen to her in a math class, on her way to the foreign language class. After math class, on her way to the foreign language class, one of strangers witnessed her cell phone was missing. It had simply been replaced, not her.

ns, It Pours



Asthma Attacks Kreloff

Drew Smith

Wire Reporter

Ever think you have had the worst day in the entire world? I had one of those days, until I heard about what happened to Mrs. Kreloff one day. Before she came to be one of our Vice Principals, Mrs. Kreloff was an AP Psychology teacher at Lee High School. One day, she was sitting with her class, having a discussion about a topic in psychology, when she started to cough and could not catch her breath. She started to hear a roar in her ears and her vision began to fade; she was having an asthma attack. When you have an asthma attack you start to panic and can't breathe. This panic causes you to hyperventilate, which makes your throat and lungs swell, making it difficult for oxygen to get into your lungs. It is an extremely scary experience for both the asthmatic and any bystanders. "I turned blue; one of my students had to revive me. Thank goodness she was a lifeguard and knew CPR. For a little while there, I thought I was gone." She later came to find out that this terrifying attack was caused by the excess dust in the air due to the school's recent renovation. Mrs. Kreloff was forced to make a very difficult decision, either stay at the school that she loved, or move on to where she would be safer. Unfortunately, because the threat of another asthma attack was too great, she was forced to change schools. So, after being at Lee High School for twelve years, she made her less than graceful exit and moved onto our high school, where she is known and loved by all as the Senior Class Administrator.

Photo by Marya Ryan

ey Don't Just Spray Water

Fire hydrant impales teacher's precious pants.

daon

Wire Reporter

Looking back on and thought, been there and Psychology as she shares her story.

a small high school down in as absolutely terrible and just uses was an accomplishment. basketball players traveled to they arrived at their opponents' he van and headed in to play

Genney squatted down in a fit turned out that when she had instant, tearing her pants. The y had when she tore them on Genney explained. She had to her pants that faced the fans.



Photo by Drew Smith

McCarney stressed over being humiliated in front of a large crowd when her pants were ripped.

ancholy Morning for McCarthy

Anum Jaffri

Co News Editor

end? It almost seems like pen to you for the rest of ted at breakfast. "I spilled

ay awful, McCarthy's bad nd got to school late," she k streak ended there, but

nd out I had a test," said horrible day sophomore st, and worst yet, the class the first AP class she had s class, where the teacher would be the highlight of est.

d the quota of bad things t her pencils were not over. she fell down the stairs Although not hurt, plenty iness. Then she realized later she realized it had one drove her crazy.

Though it was a horrible day at the time, she had the support, as well as the pity, of her friends. "I just laugh about it," said McCarthy about looking back on that day. "Cause it happens."



Photo by Drew Smith

Sally McCarthy holds up her embarrassing "F" she received on a test on her worst day of school.



All in a Night's Work

Devon Cain

Wire Reporter

With an amused twinkle in his eye and a slight smirk on his lips, senior Jack Soule recalled the single worst day of his educational career.

Soule experienced his worst day of school in the spring of his junior year starting one night when he was up until one o'clock a.m. working on an AP English Language project. The project was about the portrayal of death and how it has changed throughout American literature- not really his idea of a good time. He had to find a heap of pictures and a lot other information about death which he then glued to his poster board before typing up a paper. Jack finally got to bed in the early hours of the morning just to wake up again at four o'clock a.m. Brandon McDowell, a fellow swimmer, picked him up and together they went to Carl Burke, an Olympic swimming group. Practice went from four thirty to six o'clock a.m. and by the end, Jack commented, "I was dead tired."

He traveled to school in a daze and was drowsy all through his history class. In class, teacher Jeff Feinstein was doing a review activity where each student received a card with an event on it and every student would have to stand so that the events were in chronological order. When all the students lined up Jack was near the end. As Feinstein walked down the line and questioned each student about their event, Jack, having had a mere three hours of sleep, felt his eyelids getting heavier. Jack was almost about to explain his event when he just about tumbled over into the desks in front of him; he fell asleep standing up! Luckily, he caught himself and woke up just as Mr. Feinstein asked him to explain the significance of the Camp David Accords. "I had no idea what they were," Soule shared with a chuckle.



Photo by Drew Smith

Jack Soule takes a break from playing the trumpet; at least he is not sleeping in band class.

Helpful tips to get you through your worst day of school:

1. Focus on what is front of you in the day and not what has already happened.
2. Take deep breaths and know that the day will be over soon.
3. Do not get frustrated because that will only make your day worse.
4. Talk to a good friend or teacher about it. Usually when you talk about a situation it helps because it gets it off your mind.



Feinstein's Foul Day

Kyle Rosenkranz

Wire Reporter

"I've never had a bad day of school," said eight year History teacher Jeff Feinstein. But Feinstein has in fact had a day he calls his "worst day" when he had surgery on his foot last year.

Feinstein taught World History and AP US History last year at this school. In the middle of the year he tore a ligament-possibly after having a fall-which required mild surgery. As soon as he began recovery, the doctors discovered he had developed a blood clot in his foot. Feinstein had to miss even more days of school, making his schedule very tough on him. "It was also quite hectic trying to plan for my absence while putting together a lesson for the substitute teacher," said Feinstein.

The time Feinstein missed impacted a lot of people he knew. Feinstein stated that that day affected his "students and his colleagues in the Social Studies department," but "they were all great; they helped the substitute and the day went

smoothly," said Feinstein.

Missing work can cause many problems for a teacher and a student especially when it involves surgery and Feinstein's "worst day of school" proves it. Hopefully, Feinstein will never have a foul day like that again.



Photo by Laletha Langley

Mr. Feinstein can now proudly say that he can walk on his foot and that it is doing much better.

The Work of a Saint

Rookie's Role: to bring team and city back to prominence

Nevin Albert

Wire Reporter

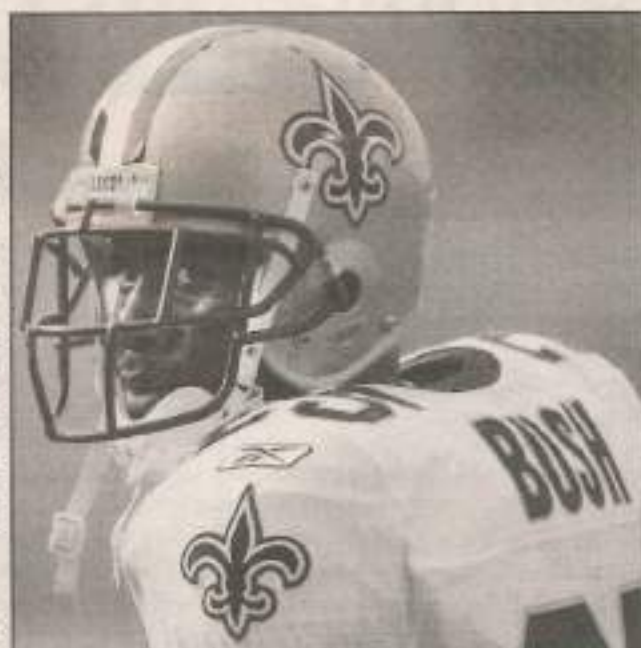
With the second overall pick in the 2006 National Football League Draft, the New Orleans Saints selected Reggie Bush. Not only did the Saints draft the most versatile and dangerous weapon that has not been seen since the likes of Hall of Famers Gale Sayers and Barry Sanders, it gave the city of New Orleans somewhat of a savior figure after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. After two national championships and a Heisman Trophy on the collegiate level, Bush faces tremendous pressure and expectations on pro football's brightest stage, but the biggest question seems to remain whether he can not only carry the Saints back to promise, but the entire city of New Orleans as well.



Thousands gathered to see the re-opening of the Super Dome against the Atlanta Falcons, which the Saints won 23-5. During Hurricane Katrina the building housed thousands of evacuees.

No one has doubted Bush's tremendous potential and upside, and this excitement has created a buzz around the league. The biggest question, however, is whether or not he can be an every down back. At the University of Southern California, Bush was used all over the field and racked up 3635 total yards and 31 touchdowns in only his last two years, but numbers alone can not even explain just how good of a player he actually is. His elusiveness and speed has made him a downfield threat every time he touches the ball, and his big play ability has been seen on highlight shows across the country. Whether at running back, wide receiver, or returning kicks, Bush has a chance to go the distance at anytime.

Bush's savior image to the city of New Orleans has expanded well of the field. Since being drafted, his actions on the field have paled compared to what he has done for the community. Over the last three years, there have been talks about moving the Saints to another location due to revenue problems. The impact of Hurricane Katrina turned the possibility into a reality, however, with the selection of Bush, not only has merchandise numbers soared, every home game has been sold out. Bush has also helped in donations to the city; he recently helped Holy Rosary High School from closing down after giving them \$50,000. He also paid \$86,000 for an artificial turf at the Tad Gormley Stadium that hosts six high school football games a week. However, his influence as a savior on and off the field



The selection of Reggie Bush has brought back hope and inspiration to the city of New Orleans that was desperately in need after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. So far Bush has gone through his on and off the field actions.

goes far beyond just money. Too many Bush may just be a great athlete, but to the people of New Orleans he is a true Saint. He has provided New Orleans with inspiration and given hope to a devastated community, and has pushed them closer to a light at the end of the tunnel.

Bush is heading into the 2006 season with the weight of a whole city on his shoulders. As much as his career at USC was a blessing it is as much a burden. On one hand it made him worth 62 million with his contract and sponsorships, on the other he now just cannot be good. It now does not matter what he did in college, he has to be great in the NFL. He has to once again to the world he and his team can be successful.

Field Hockey Fights Back

Hooff Cooksey

News Editor

The Field Hockey team came into this fall season not expecting a lot from this year's team. They had lost almost their entire varsity team to graduation, so this year's team is filled with mostly juniors and sophomores. Senior captain Jana DeCoster said that though all of the young



Our school's JV field hockey team scrimmages during practice. The JV squad is an important part to the team's future by providing young impact players.

messes up the seniors and captains address the problem nicely, but at the same time they really get the point across," said the youngest player on the varsity team, freshman Michelle Gilmore. She also stated that the captains are very "nice" and "funny" which really helps the team relax and not worry about any problems ahead of them. Junior Jenn Hofmann said, "I was nervous coming into this season, but I am very pleased with how our team has come together and how we are playing to our fullest ability."

The team is not perfect; they need to work on both shooting and the fact that they have very little experience. This alone, if not fixed, may hurt them in the long run. "The team gets along very well, and works well together," said DeCoster, which will help the team overcome any adversity they face in the rest of their season.

Captains Jana DeCoster, Kristen Massey, and Sara Mathewson, hope that their young varsity team can overcome tough opponents like Lake Braddock and South County.

players on the team have lots of potential and talent, they lack the most important key: experience.

The team began their season with daily practices starting about three weeks before the start of school. This followed with some scrimmages and then the official season began. The season started with a loss, but the team stormed back and won their next game, and then two more in a weekend tournament at Herndon. "The team is feeling much more confident with themselves after winning in a tournament we thought we could not even compete in," said DeCoster. The seniors have stepped up significantly and are leading both junior varsity and varsity, which is one of the main keys to the team's success. The varsity and junior varsity team practice on the same field, so people are able to learn from one another. "When the JV

Cross Training Connection

Caroline Staples

Funs Editor

As junior Beth Ellis finishes her first mile repeat during a cross country practice at Fort Hunt Park, she thinks to herself; why am I sprinting down the road when I am a rower on the Crew Team?

Many athletes at our school will cross train during their off season with another sport other than the one they focus on. For example: Ellis, along with friend, junior Emily Kuhlach, cross trains with the cross country team during the fall season in order to prepare herself for the winter crew conditioning and spring crew season. "I'm conditioning for conditioning," said Ellis. Although her coach thinks it is a waste of time and feels like she should be joining ODBC (Old Dominion Boat Club), Ellis believes it has helped her significantly so far considering she lost eight pounds in the last two weeks of practice.

Cross training does not always mean joining a different sport during your off season though. Some students find it easier and more convenient for them to cross train on their own. Doing a

variety of exercises, such as swimming, running, lifting weights, or playing tennis throughout the week will give athletes an assortment of workouts that deal with different parts of the body. This will one; help prevent boredom for the athlete, and two; keep them in shape by doing other aerobic activities that use the same muscles as your designated sport would, but in different physical endeavors.

Gym teacher and JV Football coach Mr. Tyrone Strothers, who has been coaching for four years at our school, said that cross training is a necessity in their program. "Everybody will be asked to do another sport in both the winter and the spring," said Strothers. Football players are requested to do some form of athletics year round including weight lifting in the spring that is held by the football coaches. In previous years cross training has helped the football players become faster and stronger.

Besides helping athletes, cross training furthermore lets coaches know their players are dedicated. Coaches also do not have to worry about their athletes coming back the following season dry and out of shape.



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Scholarships Came Marching In

As college looms, so do the opportunities for Athletes

Alex Keckeisen

Editor-in-Chief

The sun begins to set on the field as Hunter Lord takes the mound late in the game. The rest of his team, emblazoned in silver and blue, walk briskly to their positions, hoping the game will end soon. Parents seem to be a dominating majority in the stands with very few teenagers dotting the crowd. The game score will not show up in the Washington Post the next day, but to the players looking for scholarships, it is much more important than getting your name in the paper.

Lord, who is currently looking forward to playing in college, hopes that these games will boost his chances with some of the big schools. In the spring, he does play

for our school's varsity baseball team, but for now he plays for the attention from a select few and not for students at our school. Colleges such as Longwood, Virginia Tech, and James Madison have showed interest in Lord because of his superior pitching abilities and quick responses when playing at short-stop.

Many sports boast higher level competition for their elite. U.S. Youth Soccer has used the Olympic Development Program (ODP) for years to facilitate talent. ODP's philosophy, which is stated on their website, is to "identify players of the highest caliber on a continuing and consistent basis, which will lead to increased success for the U.S. National Teams in the international arena." Alex Mounts has been part of the program



Hunter Lord, seen here rounding the bases, has been an on constant bright spot on our varsity team since his sophomore year with his tremendous talent, continuous drive, and effort.

for about 5 years. "It's a good connection to have. You meet a lot of coaches that are well known and have high credentials," commented Mounts.

One of the largest high level competition groups is the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU). AAU, which was formed in 1888, has been training amateur athletes for international competitions, including the Olympics, and also sanctions an unprecedented 40 sports and 250 National Championships.

Such wide and serious sports can also take a toll on pocket books. Mounts, who has traveled to Tampa Bay, Florida for tournaments, has had trips totaling thousands of dollars because of the extent of travel expenses. The Tampa Bay Sun Bowl boasts many opportunities for high school

athletes as over 184 coaches are represented but many believe that the competition level is flawed because of the money spent. While many great talents are discovered, some parents are just not willing to write the big checks for their kids to play sports, sometimes leaving the best players on the outside looking in.

For now, Lord plays without the attention, something he explains he has never had to thrive on. His next pitch goes low, but in the strike zone as a clear strike ends the game. Parents begin to mingle more before shuffling towards the dugout as the players put their equipment away. Lord can see his excellent outlook in the near future and while the game on this particular night was important, the reason he is playing is a much bigger picture.



Hunter Lord waits patiently for the pitch while at bat. State colleges, such as James Madison, Longwood, and Virginia Tech have shown interest in the senior pitcher.

Cross Country On The Run Again

Jon Yoo

Sports Editor

As usual, our school's cross country team is off to a quick start to their season. However, with a rather unproven squad with plenty of potentials, led by juniors Paul Devar and Elizabeth Heath, this season is unlike most others. Through their commitment and consistency, success seems to be just around the corner.

With the key losses from last year's veteran squad, led by Frank Devar and Diana Burk, many would expect the cross country team to take a step back in their progress. Under the strong guidance of Coach Don Beeby, this step has been avoided, and the team's youth and inexperience has been turned into potential and excitement. Junior Rachel Storey said, "Beeby understands the entire team on a personal and athletic level. He understands the mentality of runners, and just how much to push them. He basically knows how to make each of us better, and that makes him such a good coach." This has been a key to the team's recent success at the Monroe Park Invitational, which consists of nearly 750 competitors. In the 2.98 miles race the freshmen girls finished first, and Heath placed first for the varsity. This type of outcome has created a lot of excitement and a new confidence for the entire squad. Senior Nick Waxowski said, "Even though we have a young team, we have a lot of potential. Most of our best runners are only either sophomores or juniors." Most recently both the boy's and girl's squad breezed through their Ft.

Hunt Time Trials, with both Devar and Heath shattering the three mile course records.

Along with Devar and Heath, juniors Kelly Carmichael and Kelly Jemison are expected to lead the rest of the lineup through tough events against rival opponents to reach their ultimate goal in the postseason. Junior Natalie Lord said, "We are all really looking forward to the postseason because that is what everyone really needs to push it so we can go to states."



The boys cross country squad push each other during one of their rigorous three mile time trials under Coach Don Beeby.



Senior Nick Waxowski loosens up before practice. Stretching is an

Cross Country Fall Calendar

October 7	Glory Days Invitational	Bull Run Park	12:00 p.m.
October 14	Georgetown Prep Inv.	Bethesda	12:00 p.m.
October 19	Patterson Festival	Buck Lake	4:30 p.m.
October 26	District Championship	Buck Lake	4:15 (Boys) 4:45 (Girls)
November 2	Region Championship	Buck Lake	3:15 (Boys) 4:00 (Girls)
November 11	State Championship	Conestoga	THA

In The Numbers

22

straight passes that quarterback Mark Burnell completed in the Redskin's 35-15 win against the Houston Texans, an NFL record.

3

touchdowns that senior receiver, Neal Hardie, has scored so far this season. Hardie has scored in every game that he has played in.

7th

place that junior Elizabeth Heath finished at the Spike Shoe Invitational at Penn State. She finished with a time of 18:54.45 in the 3 mile event.

1

reported suicide attempt by the always controversial Terrell Owens. The Cowboys receiver later denied the bizarre incident.

A Day in the Life of...An Engaged Senior

Sydney Smith

Wire Reporter

Tammy Santori is an average seventeen year old high school senior, but with one difference- she is engaged.

Santori is engaged to be married to long-time boyfriend Jason Gautam, who is also seventeen. The two met under an unlikely circumstance, through Santori's ex-boyfriend. "It was really weird because my ex had told Jason a lot of bad stuff about me because he did not want us to date. But when he saw the opportunity to meet me, Jason practically threw my cousin onto the couch so that he could get to the door to meet me."

Now that the couple is engaged, Santori's day has become increasingly more hectic than her peers. Every morning, she gets up early and gets ready for school. On the days she is not driving, she rushes out to meet the bus. After classes, she heads over to Gautam's to talk about the wedding. "We talk about when, where, and the money. And then I go to work to make money for the big day." Gautam is a recent graduate from Quander Road School. According to him, "It is one of those things that still surprise me. I think 'Wow, a wedding.' I have not had a doubt, I still feel as strong about it now as I did then [at the engagement]."

Unlike most of the brides in the world, Santori seems to be unusually calm under the circumstances. "I'm very much excited. I'm not stressed now, but I'm nervous. The closer I get to the wedding, the more nervous I'll get." Another

disadvantage she has is the time factor, but she has that one figured out too, sort of; "I have no clue how I find the time to fit it all in. It just somehow works out." Santori's Drama teacher, Kathie McCormally, offered some helpful advice. "Be organized. It took me one week to plan my wedding, but it was not a very big wedding. Also, proceed with caution." McCormally also noticed how calm Santori seemed. "She is a very nice girl. She's very helpful in the theatre and she has a great attitude." Santori is fortunate enough to have great support from her friends. Two friends in particular, Stacey Selman and Kat Brewster, are helping her to make her wedding dress. "She has a design picked out, so we're getting the fabric and then we're sewing the dress." Selman is not worried about Santori's possible Bridezilla tendencies. "I think she [Tammy] will handle the pressure well since she has everything planned out so well."

The most interesting thing about Santori is how nontraditional she is, so it is with great surprise how traditional the engagement and wedding are shaping up to be. "He got down on one knee and proposed." The blushing bride-to-be also shared that her wedding will be sometime in June and it

will be partially traditional. "We're planning on the basic walk down the aisle. It's going to be in church where his uncle is the pastor and we'll have the reception in a park nearby."

The couple even has their future mapped out. Santori plans to graduate high school and they both plan to attend Northern Virginia Community College. In the meantime, they are planning on getting an apartment with the groom's cousin. "After college, we want kids. We want a boy and a girl, but we'll take what we can get." The couple already has family names picked out for their future children.

But, what do their parents think? "My mom is ecstatic. My dad, I haven't told him yet but he knows. There's nothing he can do about it because I'll be eighteen. We don't talk about it; it's like the giant elephant in the room."

In an age where divorce is as common as the flu, Santori shoots down negativity from those who question her upcoming nuptials. "They're not me. If they'd like to take a day in my shoes, go ahead. It's not up to them; they're not the ones in love, so it's not up to them." Despite all of the negativity associated with teen marriages, Selman believes that, "...it's going to work out."



Santori poses with her fiance Jason Gautam. The two plan to marry sometime in June.

Photo by Drew Smith

Fall Television is the Place to Be

Sandy Slippen and Sam McCann

Copy Editor and Wire Reporter

It is fairly clear that the average high school student does not look forward to the months of September and October. With the carefree months of summer being officially over, many students have a hard time re-adjusting to the often monotonous doldrums of school. Despite this ordeal, these two months of fall contain some pleasures. The fall television season begins this month, and many of your favorite shows will be returning from their summer hiatus. This season looks as strong as ever, with many diverse, promising new shows. This is a guide to the upcoming season, highlighting four new programs that promise to have viewers buzzing.

Friday Night Lights. Airing Tuesdays at 8 PM ET on NBC (premiere date October 3):

Based on the novel and popular 2004 feature film starring Billy Bob Thornton, *Friday Night Lights* is a weekly drama about the daily lives of a rural Texas high-school football team. *Lights* will also focus heavily on the team's coach, played by Kyle Chandler. Promising the heart and adrenaline of the film, *Friday Night Lights* will likely be a new favorite show this season, especially to those with an interest in football. "Because of my obsession for and outstanding knowledge of football, I cannot wait to dedicate my

Saturday nights to not only college football but also that week's episode of *Friday Night Lights*," said junior Megan Donovan.

Heroes. Airing Mondays at 9 PM ET on NBC (premiere date September 25):

Taking a page from ABC's *Lost*, supernatural drama *Heroes* follows a random collection of average people united by one mystery—suddenly gaining individual superpowers. The group includes a drug-addicted artist with the ability to affect future events, and a high-school cheerleader who cannot feel pain or

be harmed. A large ensemble cast, including Ali Larter, Milo Ventimiglia, Adrian Pasdar, and Hayden Panettiere, shapes a diverse set of characters. Sophomore Matt is one of the many looking forward to the program, stating, "I think the show will be interesting because it is different from all of the generic shows on television now." After an exciting premiere, we feel *Heroes* delivered on its promise to be the next great television show. With a set of relatable characters placed in an extraordinary situation, *Heroes* is an easily inviting program.

Jericho. Airing Wednesdays at 8 PM ET on CBS (premiere date September 20):

Ripped from the worst fears of those from the nuclear age, CBS' new drama *Jericho* pits the residents of a small Kansas town in the midst of a nuclear disaster. In the program, several terrorist attacks leave most of the United States in ruins, with the townspeople amongst the few survivors. However, with their world having just undergone a radi-

cal change, the townspeople must adjust in order to make it through an even greater struggle—the aftermath of a nuclear fallout. After viewing the pilot, *Jericho* is most assuredly a pulsating, complex television program. It poses intriguing feelings of isolation and suggests a constant, unwavering tone of doom throughout, making it an excellent show to follow if you enjoy solving mysteries.

Ugly Betty. Airing Thursdays at 8 PM ET on ABC (premiere date September 28):

Are you afraid of being the odd person out at work or school, or do you enjoy watching people unintentionally humiliate themselves? In ABC's new comedy-drama *Ugly Betty*, a hard-working young woman from Queens, New York named Betty Suarez (played by America Ferrera) is hired as an assistant to the head of a fashion magazine called *Mode*.

Betty would seem perfectly suited to the job, except for the fact she's rather plain and chubby, immediately making her an outsider among her fashion snob co-workers. Anyone who has ever found themselves as an underdog in any situation should be able to relate to *Ugly Betty*, making it one of the fall's most accessible new shows.



The new hit show, *Ugly Betty*, starring America Ferrera, airs on Thursdays at 8 PM ET on ABC.

Jeremy Cowart/KRT

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DONDE HAY ALGO PARA TODOS

(Where there is something for everyone)

Emily Kuhbach

Wire Reporter

Did you know that it is currently Hispanic Heritage Month? If not, for your sake, please keep reading. You might think to yourself, "Oh, it is just another month dedicated to another cause," but this one is different, and that is because this is the first Hispanic Heritage Month we celebrate with the backing of the Latino Leadership Coalition (LLC). Just formed last spring, this may be the best club you are not a part of.

"You have to bring pizza to the next meeting!" was the immediate reaction when senior Claudia Siles, membership chair, phone went off during a recent meeting of the LLC. As the club soon informed me, its only rule is that one's phone cannot ring during meetings. The consequence? The offender has to bring enough food to feed the entire club the next meeting. Do not be fooled, however; there is a lot more to this rule. Like all other decisions made by the LLC, it was proposed and voted on by members.

Despite the club's young age, it already has an extensive staff of officers who put all their effort into their jobs, not to mention the well-thought out constitution. It was cool to find that the meetings are conducted entirely by the students; the sponsors pull up a chair and let the officers run the show. President Jocelyn Garay, a junior from El Salvador, and Membership Chair Dereck Parada, a half-Vietnamese and half-Bolivian junior, led the meeting, making sure it was both fun and efficient—a hard combination to pull off. The secret to

this organization's success is that the students truly enjoy being there and believe in what they are doing. It is a totally open environment and proof of student action, and members are encouraged to share their thoughts on anything at all.

During one meeting, conversation ranged from beating stereotypes to book clubs to Barbie. Garay made it clear that this club is all about helping people: helping members to develop leadership skills, helping the community, and helping Hispanics who need support. Most importantly, this bond seems to exist among the club members because of their common cause. At one

"party culture, gangster" stereotype, while Kasun chose to phrase it as the "Taco Bell, 'Drop the Chalupa,' JLo" view. Garay stressed how it was the club's job to bring cultural awareness to the school, work to end racial discrimination, and honor the Latino culture. Kasun agreed, stating that she believes that the American stereotype is a "reduction of what a Hispanic is... Just like any, Hispanic cultures have more depth."

Luckily for us, the LLC has planned a number of activities to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs from September 15th–October 15th. This includes Latin music in the mornings (a nice break from the classical), Hispanic heritage trivia on the afternoon announcements, an essay contest open to any student writing in any language, and, the main event, the Hispanic Heritage Month Assembly held during Flex on Thursday, September 28th.

Luckily for you, Hispanic Heritage Month is only about half over. That means you still have about two weeks to take full advantage of what it has to offer, and the LLC would love to help. Part of trying to end discrimination is making sure you do not create it yourself, and the LLC makes it very clear that it is accepting of everyone. No, you do not have to be Hispanic to join. Heck, you do not even have to be enrolled in a Spanish class. The only requirement is a desire to learn about another culture, and there is more than one good reason to consider this one. "Hispanics tend to embrace and celebrate life," emphasizes Kasun. With a philosophy like that, what is not to like? (The Latino Leadership Coalition meets every Wednesday in Mrs. Kasun's room, Room 442.)



Frank Pagon and Carrie Beyer enjoy dancing in their Spanish class while wearing sombrero.

point during the meeting, Garay spontaneously invited the whole club over to her house to make T-shirts for the upcoming assembly. Later, a good deal of the officers gave out their phone numbers, ensuring members that they were easily accessible if anything came up.

Both Garay and ESOL Department Chair and LLC Sponsor Gail Kasun spoke about the club's desire to change the stereotypical view of Hispanics. Garay called it the

Deals and Steals for Homecoming 2006

Erin Burke

Wire Reporter

"I've never been to Homecoming before, so I don't know how dressed up people get," said sophomore Gloria Howell. Are you wondering what to do for Homecoming? What to wear, where to shop, where to eat? Well, for those of you out there with no idea where to start, here are some tips to help you out.

For "the" dress for \$30-\$70:

- Macy's
- JC Penny's
- Forever 21

For dress splurges (\$100-\$150):

- Group USA, Potomac Mills
- Jessica McClintock, Tysons Corner

For the perfect restaurant to please both your palette and your wallet, go to Old Town:

- 219 Oriental, on King Street (\$10-\$15 menu)
- Mai Thai, on King Street (most meals under \$15)
- Chadwick's, on the Waterfront
- Portner's, St. Asaph Street

If you want to go ultra-cheap:

- Ruby Tuesday's
- King Street Blues
- Five Guys

Homecoming does not need to cost a fortune to be fun. If you do not have the time or the budget to go out and get a dress, try one you already own. Do research online so you know exactly what you want before you leave for the mall. Or, hold a "dress



One of the best parts of the homecoming night is getting to model and show off the gorgeous dresses you got. These senior girls enjoyed posing in Old Town for their homecoming pictures.

swap" with a bunch of your gal pals and wear one of their old dresses from last year or earlier. Get together with all the girls and have a each other do your hair and nails instead of getting them professionally done at a salon, which can be very expensive. For cheaper dining, go with a group of people rather than just as a couple, or go to someone's house and have a caterer. Look up restaurants online to get their menus and prices. You can make any restaurant, even Five Guys, a great atmosphere with all your friends in their dresses and suits, even if you do get strange looks from some other customers. You could even have everyone gather at one person's house, bring food to share, and sit in the backyard for dinner.

Remember, it is just a school dance, and it is all about having a good time with your friends. As long as that happens, it will be a great night no matter what the cost.

5 Minute Lunches

Devon Cain

Wire Reporter

Unfortunately, it is not very likely that the students of this school will get off-campus lunch privileges this year. It is even more unlikely, however, that students will be satisfied with the less-than-unsatisfactory lunches available to us in the cafeteria. Junior Laz Marann commented, "I've had pizza before and [the pizza in the cafeteria] isn't pizza."

As growing human beings, students need as much sleep as possible, no matter what all those scientific studies say. Oh yeah, they say the same thing. When it comes down to it, we definitely do not have ten spare minutes in the morning to prepare a nutritious and fulfilling lunch.

Here are some five minute school lunch recipes for the early mornings. We promise no "meal-liner" parties included.

Peanut Butter Sandwich Upgrade

Materials (feel free to substitute; you are not getting a grade here):

- 2 pieces of bread
- ½ cup of your favorite peanut butter
- 2 tbsp. of honey
- 2 tbsp. of sunflower seeds

Procedure: In a small bowl combine peanut butter, honey, and sunflower seeds. Use to make sandwich and have them down the middle. Grab a bag of chips, a juice pack and a cookie—BAM! You are at Panera status.



Wrap REMIX:

Materials:

- 1 tortilla
- 3 meat slices
- 2 cheese slices
- 2 tomato slices

2 tbsp. of mustard (spice it up if you want)
Procedure: Spread tortilla with mustard and add meat, cheese and tomato. To put the wrap together, fold the end of the tortilla that is closest to you ¼ of the way up and then roll from the side. Add some tortilla chips in a Ziploc bag, a lemonade, and some rice pudding. That's right, it's fiesta time.

Get Dirty For Dessert

Materials:

- 1 Snack pack of Chocolate Pudding
- 4 Oreo cookies, crushed (it's kind of fun to smash something in the morning)
- 8 gummy worms
- 1 paper bowl

Procedure: Throw materials in your bag and assemble at school.



Combine the chocolate pudding, crushed Oreo cookies, and gummy worms. Enjoy. It's delicious. If you are really good: Make the sandwich ahead of time. Hanson said, "I make my sandwich before I go to bed." Whether you throw together your lunch at night or in the early hours of the morning, one thing is for certain: It is going to be a delicious day.

A Journey Abroad

Zach Feinstein

Wire Reporter

When everyone is young, they dream of traveling the world. Maija and Lisa Butler have been given this chance while in Sweden on an exchange program called Youth for Understanding. The Butlers, who are twins, graduated from our school last year and are currently in Sweden.

This year, they are in their thirteenth year of high school or thirteenth year abroad, as it is called. High schools there are called gymnasiums, and Maija said, "It's organized much more like a university in that there are far fewer rules, but the student is responsible for more."

In this program, the Butlers are not together. Maija is in the city of Karlstad, a town in central Sweden, and Lisa is in the city of Västerås, a town about an hour northwest of Stockholm. Both cities are roughly over a hundred miles apart.

When asked about Sweden's culture, Lisa said, "The country

as a whole embraces the idea of moderation—"Lagom", they call it,—and avoids extremes in everything from work and play to politics. The people here tend to be rather reserved and adverse to confrontation which makes for a social atmosphere very unlike that in the United States."



Lisa and Maija Butler enjoy their time in Sweden with some of the friends they have made in Sweden.

Photo courtesy of Lisa Butler

they began the application program last fall.

The girls have said, when compared to the United States, Sweden is much different. "The majority of Swedes would rather walk or bike for half an hour than drive for ten minutes," said Maija. She also said the country is a welfare state, which means they have very high taxes, but the government provides a lot of benefits. Although Maija and Lisa both love their new home, they still miss the U.S.

The Butlers will leave at the end of June 2007. Next fall, when school starts, Lisa will be attending St. Olaf

College in Minnesota. Maija will be attending Franklin College, an American college located in Lugano, Switzerland. Both sisters have learned that visiting a foreign country helps you understand other cultures and to better understand the U.S.

The Butlers say they joined this program to learn the Swedish language fluently and to better understand the differences between the United States and Sweden. Both sisters decided about two years ago that they wanted to be in a foreign exchange program and

Welcome to America

Grace Powell

Opinions Editor

It would be hard to describe the emotion hanging in the air that August morning, mothers and fathers tightly embracing their children amidst the bustling Frankfurt airport Tschüss, saying goodbye. Junior Melina Stahl remembers it as a time involving many tears. "We all cried. It was sad." It would be eleven months until the family would be reunited. Stahl and a few other natives from Hamburg, Germany would be away from home living in the United States.

Stahl's journey took her over five thousand miles across the ocean and into the boiling pot of New York City. After three days of sightseeing and shopping in Times Square, the students boarded a plane for Washington D.C. A wave of anxiousness and excitement washed over Stahl. "I was nervous," she admitted. She would be meeting Ian and Ingrid Guch, formally known as the "Host Parents." They would shelter her and care for her the next eleven months. As she stepped into the terminal of the airport, her worry slowly eased away. "Welcome, Melina," said the sign held by the Guchs. After a tour of D.C., they entered a neighborhood only minutes from our school.

Stahl, if you have not figured out already, is an exchange student from Germany. Just when life was beginning to get monotonous, Stahl's friends told her about AYUSA (Academic Year in the USA), an organization for exchange students. "I was a little bored every day at the same school, seeing the same faces; I want[ed] to try something new." Undergoing this process was not easy. "It was very long!" she sighed. The process involved much paper work, phone calls, doctor appointments, letters and more. Stahl applied early that summer and finally flew to the U.S. in August.

Life is obviously much different here in America. Stahl was immediately awed by the size of things in our country. "Everything is much bigger: cars, houses, everything," she said. The size of our school was also larger than Stahl's school in Germany. Her Ger-

man school, she expressed, contained only one building, and students did not switch rooms for each course. However, some things do not change between societies. Stahl enjoys most of the same activities as Americans stating, "I like to go to the cinema...I love shopping!" Stahl also likes to meet new people and listen to music.

Stahl has come here to learn. "I want to learn English and to see if I can make it on my own." Some of her more fun classes include Cooking, Photojournalism, and Theatre Arts.

Stahl's Family and Consumer Sciences teacher Ava Bergam had this to say about her. "She is very cooperative, she seems to make friends very easily, she is always happy!" Her learning is not limited to the formal education, but extends



German exchange student Melina Stahl waves hello to her new life in the United States.

Photo by LaKeitha Langley

within sight seeing. The Guchs expose her to many interesting activities. "We often go out to eat and sightseeing. They [the Guchs] are pretty cool, really nice, awesome guys." Though she does not feel too homesick, she still misses her family and friends, whom she contacts daily by emails and the telephone.

Despite having studied English since the 3rd grade, language is still a slight struggle for Stahl. "It is complicated—some people talk really fast...the accents are different, jumbled!" However, she manages to get by with her sweet smile and personality, along with phrases such as, "What, please?" Friend, junior Somayah Behnam, commented, "She's [Stahl] a good person to talk to and learn about Germany!"

Stahl is a brave girl; she has crushed barriers of repetitive living to see the world. "I like it here," she said, and we like her.

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Washington, D.C.

REVIEWS

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly...of Movies

School is in-School for Scoundrels

Sydney Smith

Wire Reporter

Picture this, Napoleon Dynamite himself in an itty-bitty Speedo poolside with a beautiful Aussie brunette. If you are thinking, "that is too weird, I could not watch that," then you are wrong. After several failed attempts, Jon Heder finally launched into stardom and possible box-office gold with his latest film, *School for Scoundrels*.

Heder plays a sweet, sensitive meter maid living in New York City. Within the first ten seconds of the film, he is shot at and robbed by two gangster-looking thugs in the street, whom Heder has just given a ticket to. Then, he is fired from the Big Brother program for being too depressed. Trust me, it gets better. His life is changed when a friend tells him about this special class. Now the good stuff rolls in.

"Does anyone here own a self-help book...? See there's your problem; you can't help yourself, because your self sucks." These words set off the mood for the rest of the film. Their speaker is Dr. P., played by Billy Bob Thornton, you know the guy who used to be married to Angelina Jolie, but she dumped him because of his immaturity. That being said, his role suited his still present immaturity. Accompanied by Michael Clarke Duncan, the pair runs a class geared to help a group of anti-social misfits to get girlfriends. Heder, naturally, signs up. As Heder emerges as the alpha student, Thornton feels threatened and becomes very competitive and tries to go after Heder's girl, Amanda, played by newcomer, Jacinda Barrett.

The classic plotline of two guys going after the same girl ensues, only this is much better. The film's trailer does not do the film justice. Thanks to movies like *Fight Club* and any Jet-Li film, we all know what grown men fighting looks like, but in this movie, the men fight with wit and class. One of the best scenes is when Heder and Thornton square off in tennis, only they are on the same team. Heder slams Thornton every time

right in head with fast balls, and uses his old-fashioned wooden tennis racket. Thornton, never one to play the offensive, retaliates by vandalizing Amanda's apartment and pointing the finger at Roger.

One of the best parts of the film is Heder's character. Roger is a sweet, sensitive, and thoughtful guy, who has a surprising hot factor, think John Cusack as Lloyd in *Say Anything*. He plays the type of guy you want to date and bring home to meet your parents. Another good point about the film is that it is a good, clean film. Barrett is shown as a classy, sophisticated woman, the object of Roger's relationship desire. One of the smarter moves of director Todd Phillips, known for films like *Star Trek* and *Hitch* and *Old School*, is that he cast comedians, like JNL's Horatio Sanz, instead of actors to play Roger's faithful friends. By doing this, the comedians are able to inject comedy into some of the film's more serious scenes.

The only really tragic part of the film was the character of Becky, played by Sarah Silverman, who is Amanda's roommate. Becky is a tragic character because she is just too mean. Her cruelty is used to

hit Roger while he is down and to lower his already dismal self-confidence. Her pure dislike of all men is unreasonable, and it seems too unlikely that the character of Amanda, who in contrast looks like a saint, would live with a person like Becky. Silverman, who is known best for her role in *School of Rock*, would have been better utilized if her actions were not so cruel, and if some humor

has been injected into her lines. Also, Michael Clarke Duncan is just too much, some of his lines would have been better had they been edited out. Also, even though Thornton plays the perfect villain, he just seems like an old man trying to be young again.

Despite these negative notes, *School for Scoundrels* is a perfect, light comedy. Yet another bonus is that it is a film that teens can watch with other teens or with their families. *Scoundrels* is rated PG-13 and was released nationwide on September 29.



A scene from the humorous comedy, *School for Scoundrels*, featuring Jon Heder, who formerly played the hilarious character of Napoleon Dynamite.

Photo Courtesy KUT Campus

Black Dahlia Disappoints

Jocelyn Finrock

Style Editor

The *Black Dahlia* made over ten million dollars the first weekend it came out and came second in the box office. The film is directed by Brian De Palma, director

of *Scarface* and *Mission Impossible*. It is based on the novel by James Ellroy, about one of the most famous yet gruesome murders in California history where aspiring actress Elizabeth "Betty" Short was tortured and terribly mutilated.



The horror movie based on a true story, *The Black Dahlia*, attracted millions to the theaters but left viewers confused and disappointed.

The *Black Dahlia* takes place in 1947

with leading stars Josh Hartnett, Scarlett Johansson, Hilary Swank, Aaron Eckhart, and Mia Kirshner. With these talented actors all in the same movie, many would think that this would be an astonishing film. However, it is disappointing. You are expecting De Palma to deliver a well-acted and thrilling murder mystery but instead get a disturbing and confusing murder film. Many scenes in the film were completely needless and made the film tasteless and runchy. The acting was good but not as worthy of applause as some of the actors' previous films. "It was a very controversial film. Some of the elements portrayed could have been left out and the movie would have been better as a whole. It took a lot of turns and I was confused multiple times," said senior Christina Christian.

Hartnett stars as Bucky Bleichert, a former boxer who becomes one of Los Angeles's top police officers and partners up with detective Blanchard. While they are involved in a shootout, aspiring young actress Betty Short is found dead, her body gruesomely mutilated, with a ghostly grin left on her face carved by a knife. Bucky and Lee are given the assignment to find out who murdered Betty (nicknamed "the Black Dahlia").

The film becomes completely twisted, with multiple story lines. There is a strange love triangle between Bucky, Lee, and Kay Lake. There are multiple, scandalous affairs with Bucky and Hilary Swank's character Madeleine Linscott, who is a complete freak-show with a shady past and happens to look exactly like the Black Dahlia. Then, there is Madeleine's insane family; Lee struggling with a heartbreaking death in his past; Kay's dark secrets; shady, fanatical characters who do not fit into the story at all, and then there is the solving of the murder, which is what the whole movie is supposed to be about. Confusing? Yes.

All in all, this crazy, confusing film is not worth seeing. With the worst possible ending and terrible story lines, it is sadly disappointing.

The Tenth Circle: A Book of Family Ties

Sara Mathewson

Style Editor

The Tenth Circle, a novel by best-selling author Jodi Picoult, is an interesting page turner that keeps the reader on the edge of their seat, with shocking twists and surprises. It displays the difficulties in keeping the ties of a family strong, and also shows the love parents have for their children and the lengths they will go to protect them.

Picoult centers her focus on one happy family: a mother who works at a local college, a teenage daughter, and a stay-at-home father who makes his living drawing comic books. As a child, Daniel, the father, lived in the Alaskan bush as the only white kid in a native village. He spent his childhood fighting off other kids, stealing and drinking. After he left Alaska and met the love of his life,

Laura, he changed his attitude and learned to suppress all of his anger. When his daughter Trixie is born, she becomes the center of his world. He vows to protect and love her for the rest of his life. Things are going well until Trixie is date-raped, causing all of the lies and deception in the family began to surface. When this tragedy happens, Daniel can feel his old anger resurface and begins to show his old violence.

The novel focuses on the levels of hell, which is what Daniel felt like he was going through. It is a story about a man's undying love for his daughter. Picoult does a brilliant job of depicting a troubled man, suffering between his two identities, that of a calm loving father, and that of a scared and angry person trying to make his own way in the world. Senior Rebecca Holloway said of the novel, "I haven't read the book, but after

hearing the plot I am interested in it. It seems like it would be psychologically interesting." The novel will keep you on the edge of your seat, presenting you with new twists and turns that come unexpected. With over three-hundred pages, there is not a boring page in the entire novel.

The Tenth Circle is only one of thirteen novels by Jodi Picoult since 1992. Among her other top sellers include the books *My Sister's Keeper*, and *The Pact*, which was made into a movie recently. Unfortunately, the novel cannot be found in the school library, but in numerous other book stores in the area. School librarian Adrianna Meeks said, "Jodi Picoult is a great and interesting author." It is a worthwhile read, appealing to those who like drama and romance novels.

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Jon Yoo &
Sara Mathewson
Style and Sports Editors

With a loud grunt, senior Kristin Massey whacks the ball across the field to her waiting field hockey teammates. Her mind is focused for now, but her real thoughts are on the slap boxing match she has set up against senior friend, Chris Farquhar, after practice.

Welcome to the daily life of Kristin Mari Massey, living every second to the fullest while making everyone else's life a little more fun. Friend and fellow teammate, senior Jana DeCoster, said, "Kristin reminds me a lot of the meathall from Aquatene Hunger Force, she's really outgoing and goofy." In her free time, Massey likes to hang out with friends. Her and DeCoster like to do anything from watching Tivo at home, to driving around jamming to Backstreet Boys and O-Town with glow sticks.

"Domination is what defines me," said Massey of her athletic abilities. For three years, she has been a tri-athlete at this school, participating in field hockey, swimming, and softball. She is currently one of the three captains on the field hockey team. "I try to dominate every play of every game," Massey said.

Massey not only busies her life with friends and sports, but she keeps up with difficult classes as well. She is currently taking AP Government, AP Literature, and Geosystems. After high school, Massey's future bright. She said, "I plan on settling down in college with Bryan Redding in the

hills." She is currently in the process of getting a new Volvo wagon, and she loves being able to lend her car out to friends when they need it, because Massey always looks out for her friends when they are in need of a favor.

With an outgoing personality, Massey places herself in the center of many people's lives. Farquhar said, "She is different from everyone else because she doesn't listen and she can eat, a lot." Massey and Farquhar met in kindergarten at St. Mary's when they were young. Senior Neij Mehta said, "She has incredible strength, she is the player of the game."

Massey is driven, athletic, intense, and very intelligent, cementing her future success. With the support of family and friends around her, she always has a positive outlook on life.



Photo by Lakisha Langley

Dedicated DeRose

Angie Palma
Business Manager

Senior Chris DeRose is best known for being a very hard worker who is dedicated to anything he partakes in. When asked what he does in his free time, Chris responded without hesitation, "What free time?" For the past three years, Chris has been involved with our school's marching band, but this year, he left band behind to join cross country. With this being his first year running cross country, many are impressed with him ranking as one of the top runners for our school's team. Fellow runner and close friend, senior Matt Morley, said, "This is Chris's first time running for the cross country team and his times are better than mine."

Academically, Chris has got a lot on his plate with Calculus, AP Government, and Political Science. His favorite class, however, is Photo 2. Chris's amazing photographs have caused his friends to be envious of his talents. Close friend, senior Marissa Watt, looks upon Chris's work with a different point of view. "Having Chris as a friend is like having a personal photographer and the best part is, I don't have to pay him."



Photo by Angie Palma

Along with running and photography, Chris is very passionate about music. He always has his iPod on him. Chris really enjoys finding new bands that no one has heard of and hates when bands sell out. Watt said, "Chris is always searching for new bands and then calling me to tell me about them." So it came as no real surprise when he told his friends that he was starting a podcast, *The Weekly Throwdown*. The podcast is managed solely by Chris and it takes about a week to set up each episode. The preparation process includes getting permission from all the bands in order to play their music and then recording commentary to go along with the music.

After high school, Chris is planning on attending college to study science. His top choice at this point is Ithaca College in New York. Regardless of what school he goes to, Chris is destined for greatness. Always striving to give all that he has, Chris is never afraid to ask for help and anyone who really knows him would say that he will go very far in life.

[the weekly
throwdown]

Chris runs the podcast, *The Weekly Throwdown*, which plays music along with his commentary.

Capable Copeland

Grace Powell
Opinions Co-Editor

Throughout the high school journey, students tend to gravitate towards those who exhibit aspects of leadership. We like to be around someone who knows who they are, where they are going and has a plan on how to get there. Senior Jonathan Copeland is one of those people. Standing over 6 ft. tall, it is hard



Photo by Lakisha Langley

to miss his confident stride and friendly smile.

What makes him so unique, what places him a little higher than the rest? His desire to succeed. "I like being the best," he said, smiling sheepishly. Copeland is not one to slack off and let opportunities surpass him. He has immersed himself in classes such as AP Statistics, Business Managing/Law, and Marketing. He is also participating in FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) to prepare himself for the future. Copeland is currently the vice president of his senior class, a token from his snazzy slogan, "Vote

for the man with the deep voice." To put his height to good use, Copeland participates in track and basketball.

Though school work is a serious business for Copeland, he is passionate about the art of photography. "I think it's fun to compose through the lens," he expressed. To sharpen his skills as a photographer, Copeland has enrolled himself in Photojournalism 2.

Behind many successful individuals lies a loving family. "My parents encourage me to do my best in everything," said Copeland. He admits that his parents are crucial in helping him make decisions and showering him with love and guidance. Copeland has two younger siblings whom he cares deeply about. "I try to do a lot for them [like] listen to them and help with their daily problems." His thoughtful personality rubs off during school among his peers and friends. "Jonathan Copeland is a great friend and a positive role model," exclaimed senior Candice Watson.

Being one to make plans for higher education, Copeland thinks he would like to attend Hampton University for a career in communications (broadcast and photojournalism). One of Copeland's favorite instructors, English and Leadership teacher Sandra Bobo, has nothing but high expectations for his future. "He is an upstanding individual that will definitely go far in life." Though Copeland's competitive edge echoes the "Don't hate the player, hate the game" philosophy, it is evident that his character is caring, compassionate and motivated. Copeland is a leader, one whose reputation sets an example that many would be willing to follow.

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Lively Lear

Zach Feinstein
Wire Reporter

Some people love writing, some people love drawing, but Rachel Lear loves to act. Lear, who has been acting since she was four, is quite an accomplished actress at our school. Last year, Lear was on the cast of *Anna of Green Gables*, *Harvey*, *The Boyfriend*, and she directed a One Act. Mrs. Kathie McCormally, Lear's acting teacher, said, "She's a leader in the department and she plays great character roles. She's a serious actress who's always focused. (She) is fun to work with." Lear is the Head of the Cappies and the lead Cappie critic, and she is the head prop director for our school. A Cappie is an actor or actress who goes around to other high schools and critiques their plays. She is also the co-president of the Thespian Honor Society with her fellow thespian Candace Scholz. Scholz said Lear is, "Talented, very bright, and organized. I've known her since



Photo by Lakisha Langley

second grade and she has definitely grown up." Currently she is trying out for a part in our school's new production of *Jabberwock*.

Although her passion is acting, Lear also excels in her academics. This year alone, she is taking AP Calculus, AP Government, Tech Theatre, Dance 2 and AP Literature. Last year, she took AP Psychology, AP English, and AP

Latin. In her sophomore year, she also took AP World. Even with that tremendous workload, she is still able to maintain a GPA of greater than 4.0 and is in National Honor Society. But her favorite class by far would have to be Mrs. McCormally's Theatre Arts 4 class. She said, "Mrs. McCormally is the greatest teacher ever!"

Lear, who has traveled to Europe and met Jay Leno, says when high school is over she definitely wants to go off to college. She is currently looking at Boston University, New York University, University of California in Los Angeles, University of Southern California, and local schools. After college, she said, "I'm hoping to major in acting and move out to L.A. or go to Broadway. But life is a curvy road, you never know where it's going to take you. I'm open to anything."

For Lear, acting has always come easy to her and she sees acting as a way to "help her vent." Tory Wong, one of Lear's close friends, said, "She is the sweetest person ever and she helped me in AP Psychology. She is very good in acting and I've seen most of her shows. She comes to the football games to support our friends in marching band." Even though Rachel Lear is a devoted actress, she said, "I'm a fun person and I like waking up each day looking forward to what the day will bring."

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