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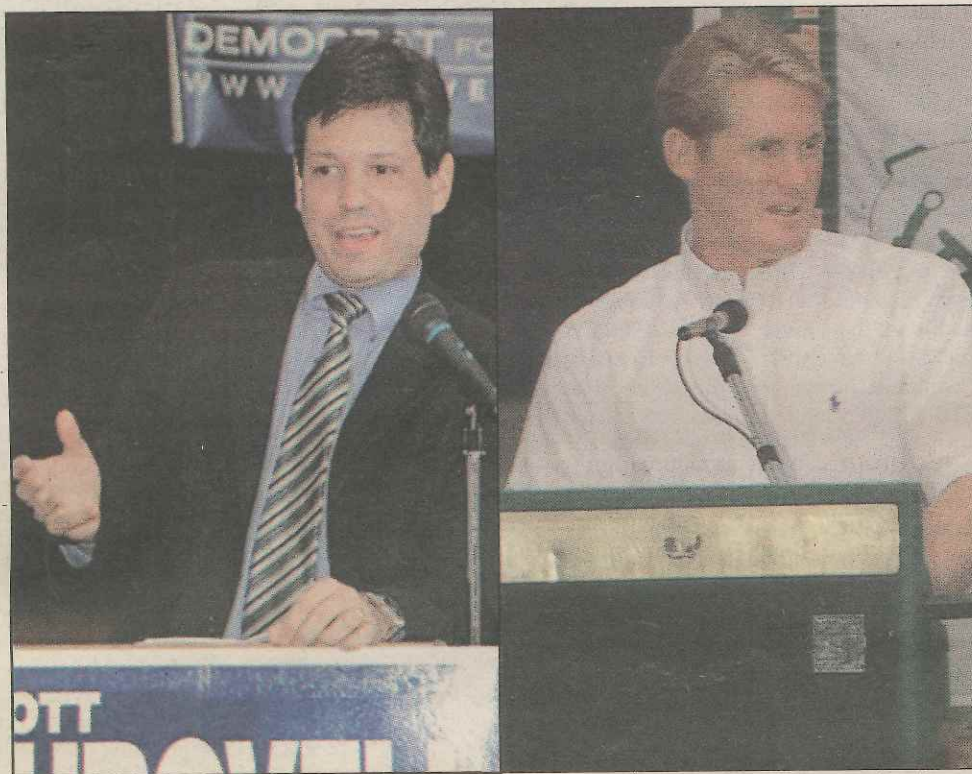


Photo Courtesy of bluevirginia.us Photo Courtesy of www.gojay.org/mediaroom
Scott Surovell (left) and Jay McConville (right) are the leading Delegate candidates for district 44, speaking to the public.

Delegate Race Becomes Competitive

LUCAS ALEXANDER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The big question: Who will win?

District 44, the Mount Vernon District, is holding a Delegate race that is becoming very competitive. This district, which our school is a part of, has seen Jay McConville (Republican), Scott Surovell (Democrat), and Gai Parker (Independent), come to the forefront of the election.

Our area has seen a large amount of campaigning between the two leading candidates, McConville and Surovell, consisting mostly of the numerous amounts of posters on the side of the road. Both candidates also have websites, gojay.org for McConville and surovell2009.com for Surovell, as well as made public appearances, including one where both candidates came to our school on Back to School Night, September 22.

The candidates are both very locally oriented. McConville, who attended Bishop Ireton high school, lives in Waynewood and

"has served for seven years on the Fort Hunt Youth Athletic Association (FHYAA) board, the last four as President," according to his website. He is also currently a Vice President at Chandler/May, Inc. and is a distinguished army veteran. He has three children; his son Colin is currently a senior at our school.

Surovell, who actually attended West Potomac High School and was in the first class to attend all four years, lives in Tauxemont with his wife and four children. "Scott is a co-founding partner and owner of Surovell Markel Isaacs and Levy PLC," states his website. It also outlines that he "was selected for the Fifth District Attorney Discipline Committee" and "was an ex parte member of the Fairfax Bar Association Board of Directors" in 1998-1999.

On his website, McConville outlines transportation, fixing the economy, education, researching energy technologies, protecting the environment, and supporting veterans are the issues he views as important.

In an interview, McConville stated that "Mt. Vernon residents are concerned about the economy... and the traffic problems that

See Delegate on page 4

Adult Relationships Taken Too Far

KATIE WOODWARD
REPORTER

At two a.m. on September 20, a Hayfield Secondary School teacher was found intoxicated in her car with a 15-year-old boy. The teacher was arrested and charged with public intoxication and contributing to the delinquency of a minor after a patrol officer discovered them.

A further investigation by the county found the teacher and teen (who she taught at her previous school) had been exchanging sexually explicit texts before the incident, and authorities have reason to believe the adult female and minor may have been involved in a more intimate relationship. Although this is obviously an extreme case of inappropriate teacher-student relationships, it is one that has become more common in the past few years, and raises an important question in the education world: Where do schools draw the line in teacher-student relationships, and how friendly is too friendly?

Fairfax County Public Schools do not specifically outline how students and teachers may or may not interact, such as through texting or phone calls. However, the county does reserve the right to suspend or revoke teaching rights should a teacher engage in "improper or immoral conduct." In cases such as the Hayfield scandal, where laws may have been broken, the state of Virginia outlines behavioral expectations, and prohibits "engaging in criminal, dishonest, immoral, or disgraceful conduct that brings the school system into disrepute." This is more commonly referred to as moral turpitude, which is conduct considered contrary to the community standards of justice, honesty, or moral goods.

While there have never been such cases at our school, the majority of students have grown up using technology as a means of informal communication, and befriending teachers through Facebook and like tools have blurred the distinction between interaction with friends and adults. This has a lot to do with the fact that teens are used to interacting in a quick and personal way, a style which is often read as out of line by adults. And when adults open themselves up in a similarly informal way, it can get confusing for both parties. In general though, the majority of teachers use these online resources as an additional means of homework-based communication, such as science teacher Erin Sikes, who uses Blogspot to post videos for students and allow them to submit various homework assignments.

In contrast, feeling comfortable with adults can be beneficial too. Many students have a particular teacher or coach they look up to, such as senior

See Relationships on page 4

Traffic Patterns Create Daily Problems for Students

BRYAN JACOBS
STYLE EDITOR

This year, morning traffic patterns at our school have brought many students and teachers to a grid lock. This is a result of an earlier start time, poorly conducted traffic management, and over-congestion of a dated traffic system. The current situation is bound to continue and maybe even worsen if conditions are not improved.

Many students agree that the current situation needs to be addressed promptly. Senior Erin Parker commented on the traffic situation and said, "Traffic in the morning is horrible. I do my best to avoid as much of it as possible by going through Belle Haven instead of turning straight on to Quander Road from Fort Hunt[Road]. I really hope the administration does something productive out of the traffic mess. I mean, instead of cutting down all the trees and bushes why don't they cut back on the amount of time it takes for us to get to school, something that would actually help us academically? I can't even count the amount of times I have been late to first period on my fingers."

On average, the time that it takes for a car

to drive from the intersection light at Quander Road to the school parking lot is 13 minutes. Accordingly, students have to factor in an extra 13 minutes of traffic into their hectic morning schedules; topped with a 7:20 start time; this is a recipe for disaster. Senior Brian Linnell expressed his anger over the morning traffic congestion and said, "The morning traffic is a serious problem. I live only 5 minutes away but on a good day it takes me 15 [minutes] from my front door to my parking spot. I hope that the new administration can have someone directing the traffic flow so as to make things a lot easier for everyone." The current situation cannot be blamed on a certain group of people like students or administration because both add to the problem; however, both groups can be proactive in an approach to find a solution.

Alternative routes have been used by students for many years, and are an excellent and practical response to waiting in our school's rush hour. There are many other alternatives to our school's rush hour. The most practical and green alternative is carpooling to school. Although, carpooling can carry a social stigma with its relation to not having a car and

therefore less money, buses and carpooling take more than 55% of the entire school population every day. This alone takes over a 1,000 cars away from our school's rush hour and allows for somewhat of an easement on traffic. Junior Madison Pearce is constantly looking for easier and more eco-friendly ways to get to school, which includes carpooling with friends. She stated, "Driving to school allows students a

See Traffic on page 4



Photo by Laura Zitnik

Many students that drive to school every morning have to face the horrible traffic jam in order to get into the parking lot.

Students Question the Power Held by Substitute Teachers

Students are usually overjoyed when they notice that their class has a substitute teacher. This signifies an easy way to slack off and is almost as desirable as a snow day. The teacher's lesson plans are vague, and substitutes have a hard time keeping students busy. This can lead to a class that is similar to a free period and students that are out of control. When substitute teachers come to teach a class, they do not get the same amount of respect as teachers do for a number of reasons.

Students can easily take advantage of a substitute teacher. A substitute of two years, Ms. B discussed what she thought about students taking advantage of subs. "No, not this substitute. They sometimes try," she said. A sub for seven years, Mr. Smith said, "Yes, students do sometimes take advantage of substitutes. It's human nature, especially at a young age, to want to challenge authority or see what you can get away with. We did that in my high school, too!" Regular, every day teachers have more power because they can control a student's grade. They have greater authority. However, substitutes can only write the student's name down and expect a consequence to be given. They have little or no impact on a student's grade. Also, substitutes do not know the seating and names of the students. This has a great impact on the way students regard subs. Students can easily confuse them without having to receive any disciplinary action. Students, especially high school students, are known for being able to easily intimidate substitute teachers. Mr. Smith said, "As to how students take advantage, it varies -- from excessive chatter to overuse of restroom privileges to tricks for getting out of class! But a certain level of playfulness is OK, as long as the class stays focused on accomplishing assignments, and listens to the sub." These are only some of the plethora of reasons why students take advantage of substitutes. Although it can easily be done, students should not disrespect substitutes.

Students at our school often treat subs poorly. Most first year subs are shocked to find how disobedient many students are and how disrespectful they can be. This should not be expected when substitutes come to the classroom. Although they do not have the same amount of authority, they should still be treated fairly. They are supposed to help students with their work and studies, not baby-sit them. Also, with their low wages and constant struggle to find a job opening, their lives can be difficult. They take these jobs solely on their undeniable love of teaching and children. They should receive the same amount of respect and admiration from students, as they give to them.

WEST POTOMAC HIGH REPORT CARD

1ST QUARTER

SCHOOL FOOD

D-

FALL SPORTS

C

SCHOOL STAFF

C+

HOMECOMING EVENTS

A

OVERALL SCHOOL GRADE

C+

RANTS and Raves

A **RANT** for mornings beginning with a megaphone.

A **rave** for the end of first Quarter. We're 25% there!

A **RANT** for the cold weather and rain.

A **rave** for West Potomac's Homecoming game win.

A **RANT** for the Homecoming half time show being cancelled.

A **rave** for cheesy/scary Halloween movies

Seniors Miss out on The Homecoming Activities

Dear Editor,

As the parent of a senior, I would like to say that the decision not to reschedule Homecoming was ill advised and totally unfair to this year's graduating class. When this class was in its sophomore year, we had the exact same weather problem, but whoever was making the decision at that time had the good sense to postpone Homecoming to Monday night where the half time activities could go on as planned, albeit a few days late. My understanding is that this year's decision to play a game in the rain on Friday evening without all the Homecoming festivities, rather than postpone it a few days, was based on the "fact" that there was "just no other time to do it." I'm not sure what sports activities could be taking place at the school the following week that would hold precedence over Homecoming. I also heard that Monday night was a problem because the cheerleaders had a competition. I believe this is a good excuse but not really a legitimate reason. While I understand that cheerleaders are an integral part of the Homecoming program, they are only one component. Certainly we would miss the cheerleaders' presence, but I don't believe that this group should be more important -- or be given more consideration than -- the football players, the marching band, the dance team, the pom-pom team, the Homecoming Court, and the students who worked so hard on the class floats. And what about Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday when the cheerleaders could be included? I sympathize with the disappointment of the senior class with this turn of events. They have supported West Potomac over the past four years and deserve better. It's too bad that they will have to look back on their senior year Homecoming as quite literally, a washout. I sincerely hope that should this happen again, the powers that be at West Potomac will think more carefully about what this event means to our students before making a decision out of convenience. Let's make sure that what happened in 2009 is an exception rather than a precedent.

Parent Barbara L. Micale

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: laura.zitnik@fcps.edu. All submissions become property of *The Wire*.

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Creigh Deeds is a Good "Deed" for VA



GWEN FISHEL
COPY EDITOR

The Virginia gubernatorial race is certainly heating up. For Democratic candidate Creigh Deeds and Republican candidate Bob McDonnell, November 3 is right around the corner.

This fall, some of the seniors at our school will be able to vote in their first election, and it is ideal that each of them actually take a look at the candidates running in this year's election, and vote based on their political ideas, and not allegiance to a particular party.

Both these men have made a significant impact in Virginia, and both are fine men. However, when one takes a look at what legislation they have supported and their vision for the future of Virginia, Creigh Deeds seems to be the best choice.

Creigh Deeds is a candidate who will fight for Virginians, and who understands the issues that face not only Northern Virginia, but the concerns of the entire commonwealth. One of Deeds' strongest campaign promises is to focus on improving the economic problems in Virginia, while keep taxes low, which is an anxiety for the working class and wealthy alike.

On his campaign website, he explicitly notes how, as governor, he would address the economic crisis in Virginia. He hopes to provide "immediate solutions for small business owners, homeowners, and workers, create jobs through a statewide transportation plan, make government leaner and more efficient, and make Virginia a leader in green energy jobs." These plans are better for the economy because they establish the fact that there are ways to create jobs through economic relief.

However, this is only the work to be done by Deeds on economic issues. Deeds has defined stances

on many issues. Educational, environmental, and transportation concerns are just a few.

For many students, educational priorities are a big deal. Deeds agreed and supported Mark Warner in giving the largest sum of money from the state budget to K-12 education in Virginia history. Deeds also pledges to give teachers larger salaries. He wants to increase and improve standards that will prepare students for the 21st century workplace, as well as make sure that students are only given the best teachers in every classroom. All of these things will help ensure that the students of Virginia will be successful wherever they venture in life.

The environment is another concern of Deeds. During his time in the Virginia General Assembly, he was a primary sponsor of the Agricultural Stewardship Act in 1996, which helped Virginia's farmers address their issues of the water to which they had access. He hopes to help restore the Chesapeake Bay - our country's largest estuary, make sure that the state government is going green, and reduce carbon emissions in Virginia. Deeds focus on specific issues in the environment will lead to a healthier Virginian atmosphere.

Transportation unease in Virginia is also a large concern of voters as they enter the polls. If Deeds is elected governor, he promises to make wider use of and expand public transportation

to its most effective form, develop more pragmatic commuter rails, and make traffic flow better. All of these initiatives will help provide transportation to job opportunities and therefore hopefully stimulate the economy.

All in all, Deeds will serve the Commonwealth of Virginia, and help make the changes necessary to keep Virginia up to date in this new age- the 21st century. Therefore, when students step into the voting booth, they should consider Deeds as a plausible, as well as the best, choice for governor.

gfishe@wpwire.com

McDonnell

• bobmcDonnell.com

• Grew up in our area of Northern Virginia, and attended local schools Woodley Hills Elementary, Walt Whitman Middle School, and Bishop Ireton High School. He later made a career in the Army.

• Began his career in the Virginia House of Delegates and in 2006, he was elected Attorney General of the commonwealth.

Deeds

• deedsforvirginia.com

• Grew up in rural southern Virginia, and went to Concord College, before attending law school at Wake Forest University.

• Began his career in the Virginia House of Delegates.

• Lost the attorney general position in 2006 to McDonnell, in closest margin in Virginia history.

LARGE AND IN CHARGE



LUCAS ALEXANDER
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

MICHAELA ACCARDI
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

There are two sides to every story.

This is the case with the new grading scale. On one hand, it does make getting higher grades a little easier and takes some pressure off of students. However, it also shows colleges that the grading scale was changed and instead of being known as the county with the hard grading scale. Fairfax County is now just another regular county. While it may make life easier, colleges know this and take that into account.

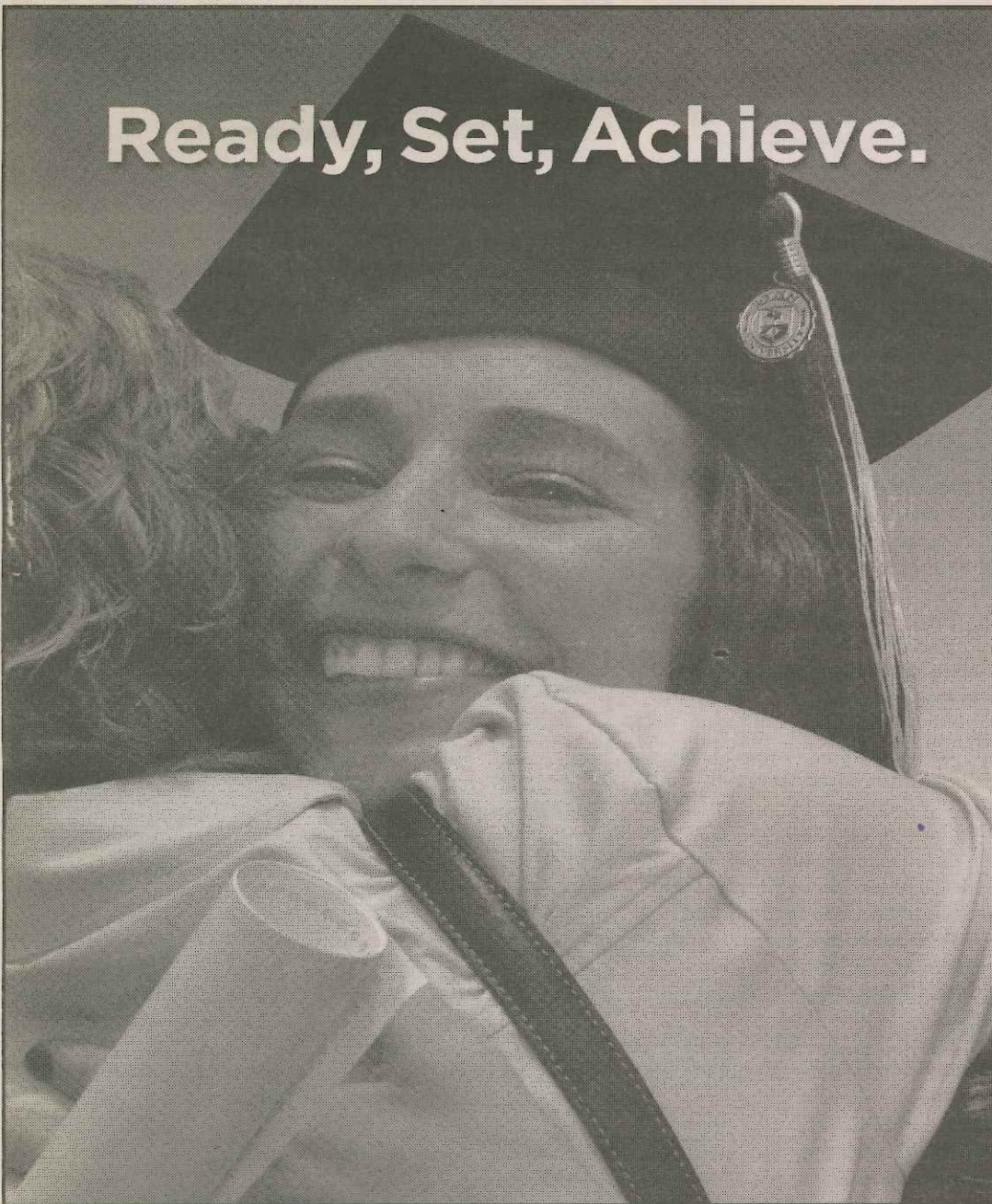
As a high school senior, Michaela received a 91 percent and Lucas received an 87 percent on a recent math test. While at first we both thought they were lower than our usual standards, we realized that with the new grading scale, those grades go up from a B+ and a B, to an A- and a B+ respectively. This raised our spirits some, but in reality does this grading scale make our grades any different?

Since freshman year, the Class of 2010 has had to work hard to receive an A, needing at least a 94 percent. However, to receive an A in this grading scale, you still need a 93 percent. This does little to change the grade for an A and in reality, while in some occasions the grading scale may slightly boost GPA scores, it does little in affecting a student's grade.

Colleges received transcripts from previously graduated classes and requested a Secondary School Report. This gave colleges specific information about our school including the detailed grading scale. When a student came close to straight A's with a few B+'s or B's it still looked outstanding to colleges. Fairfax County was looked upon highly by colleges because of the difficult grading scale. Now Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) are just another group of students that works for an A-.

Report cards will soon come out and the administration will see that some students will still strive for the best while others love the look of their A-'s instead of B+'s. In the long run though, it is the same number with a different title. Was this grading scale put in place to make students feel better about themselves? It has become more of a psychological thing, because an A- seems better than a B+. Overall however, it is not because colleges do not see the difference. lalexander@wpwire.com maccardi@wpwire.com

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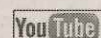
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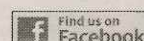
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School Celebrates Hispanic Heritage

SARAH HOLLOWAY
REPORTER

September 15th kicked off the start of Hispanic Heritage Month which ran until October 15th.

In recent months the Hispanic community has seen many accomplishments, one of them being the induction of Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who is of Puerto Rican descent. In the 2007-08 school year, the Hispanic population was about 18%, so at our school there is a lot to celebrate this month.

Starting in September of 1968, Lyndon B. Johnson put into effect the Hispanic Heritage week at the request of Congress to recognize the culture and tradition of those from Spanish-speaking countries and of Latino descent.

The week was then expanded to a month-long period which began on the anniversary of independence for five Latin-American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua).

The most recent estimation of Hispanic-Americans in the U.S. was somewhere around 46.9 million, which makes people of Hispanic origin the largest minority group.

Just a few of the events held in Washington, D.C. to kick off the month are Hispanic Heritage Month Family Day at the Smithsonian, Fiesta Musical at the National

Zoological Park, and a Latin Jazz Celebration at the National Postal Museum. With millions celebrating their culture over the next few weeks, our school gets in on the action as well.

Classrooms at our school are displaying posters made by students about Hispanic leaders who have influenced

American society, and the Latino Leadership Coalition (LLC) had an assembly Friday, October 9, 2009, to honor the month and those who are a part of it.

The assembly opened up with a "Bienvenidos" ("Welcome" in Spanish) from president of LLC, Sandra Vargas. As it progressed, guest speakers such as Jocelyn Garay, West Potomac Alumn, Alan Mackritis, Daniel Rivera and others talked about all the things that make the Hispanic race so strong and successful.

There were poems read, picture PowerPoints, and even dancing to close out the lively ceremony. In President Sandra Vargas' own words, Hispanic Heritage Month is "a time to remember and celebrate contributions of Spanish culture."

With that in mind, Hispanic Heritage month has been a great success here our school

with the support of our diverse student body and cultured teachers.



Photo by Sarah Holloway

Hispanic Heritage Month is celebrated with by our school's Latino Leadership Coalition. They had an assembly on October 9, 2009 to honor their heritage and have other students experience their culture.

Child Captive Free to Return Home

CAMILLE DiFOLCO
REPORTER

"Jaycee Lee Dugard is a white female, 4'7" tall, weighs 80 pounds, has straight blond hair and blue eyes. She has a gap in her front teeth ...and was last seen wearing a pink jacket, pink stretch pants, a white t-shirt, and white canvas tennis shoes."

For the past 18 years, this was the official description inscribed on thousands of missing persons posters in the hopes of recovering the young girl. The same poster was featured on countless websites, including www.find-missing-children.org, and now boasts the triumphant banner: "located."

On June 10, 1991, eleven-year-old Dugard was kidnapped from her school bus stop by spouses Phillip and Nancy Garrido as her stepfather watched helplessly from a few blocks away. On August 24, 2009, she was finally recovered.

Dugard was found living in her kidnappers' backyard in squalid conditions. She had been living there for almost two decades, unnoticed by any neighbors. Dugard also has two daughters by Garrido, ages 11 and 14, both of whom lived in the yard with her. She was discovered after two police officers working at the University of California at Berkeley became suspicious of Phillip Garrido. His odd behavior led them to perform an extensive background check.

It turned out that Garrido is a registered sex offender; he served 10 years of a 50-year federal sentence for rape and kidnapping, and less than a year in prison for a Nevada sentence of five years to life for sexual assault.

Dugard was diagnosed with Stockholm Syndrome, a condition in which a victim identifies with and sympathizes with their captors. Since recovery, she has lived with

her parents and is, by all accounts, reacclimating well.

Stepfather Carl Probyn is ecstatic over Dugard's recovery: "I'm feeling great! ...It's like winning the Lotto!"

The law is filled with loopholes that allow registered sex offenders and kidnappers, like Garrido, to walk free. Even while on parole, he managed to imprison and rape Dugard, and he is now a suspect in

to harm people, and I'm really glad that even though [Dugard] was imprisoned for 18 years, that she is finally home and safe... If anything like this happened to me, I don't know if I'd be able to readjust to normal life as quickly as she seems to be."

"I personally find this disturbing that someone [could] even think about [committing this crime]," agreed sophomore Sam Ludovici, "They are definitely in the wrong, and need to be punished by the law."

"Parents should wait with their [young] children at their bus stop, and enroll their children in karate and other self-defense classes," advised junior Amanda Alves.

In cases of abduction and/or violation, it is important to remember that the victim is *never to blame*, and according to www.aegisprotective.com, victims can take whatever measures, be it surrender or retaliation, to save their own life.

In addition, the New York Police Detective Bureau recommends the following precautions to protect oneself against sexual assault:

When coming home late at night:

-Do not accept rides from strangers, and avoid shortcuts that aren't well-traveled or well-lit.

-Keep your entryway well-lit.

-Know of reputable stores that stay open late, and head for these if you suspect you are being followed.

-When at home alone, keep doors and windows locked.

-Avoid sleeping with your window open.

-Use the peepholes on your door and do not answer the door if it's a stranger.

-And the number one precaution to take? Use common sense - if something feels wrong, it often is.

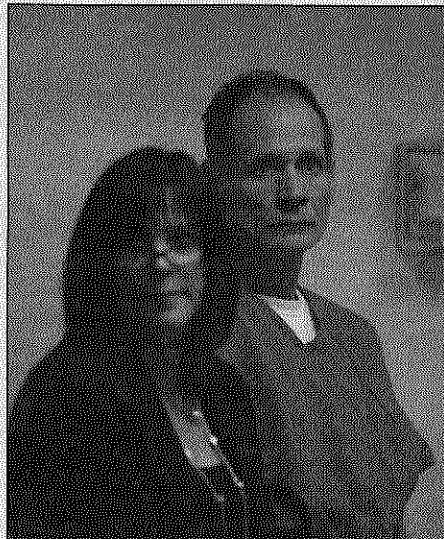


Photo Courtesy of Jose Luis Villegas/Sacramento Bee/MCT

Jaycee Lee Dugard's kidnapper Phillip Garrido and his wife Nancy Garrido both face jail time for their numerous offenses for kidnapping and rape.

a string of murders, including those of multiple prostitutes. Is it right that Garrido was released?

"I don't trust the system to ever be able to keep him in jail for the rest of his life. I want him gone; I don't want to ever think about him again," said Katherine Calloway, who was raped by Garrido, to the *Daily News* in 1976.

Students at West Potomac chimed in as well.

Junior Jeyna Diallo stated, "I think it's despicable that [Garrido] was able to get out of jail and continue

Delegate Race Heats Up

Continued from page 1

concerned about our ability to maintain the high quality of our education system given the challenges that we face in Mt. Vernon."

McConville went on to say that, "Mt. Vernon is a diverse community of wonderful people. People often ask me why I am running for delegate. I tell them honestly that there is really only one reason. I love this community and want to serve it. I know I have the right experience and right perspective to keep our community strong now and into the future, and I look forward to serving all the people of Mt. Vernon. I will put people above politics."

Surovell lists similar sentiments on his website, stating he believes there should be a focus on transportation, education, energy, support of seniors, providing affordable healthcare, criminal justice enforcement, cutting spending, and preserving Virginian's right to hunt and fish. Surovell was unable to be contacted.

While the Delegate position may seem very menial, in reality, it is not. Delegates serve a vital role in the state government.

A Delegate in Virginia, after he or she is elected, serves

in the Virginia General Assembly, or legislature, which is the state version of Congress. They work in the House of Delegates, similar to the national House of Representatives, while state senators work separately in the state senate, similar to national senators in the national senate. They are the voice of their particular region as they vote during legislative sessions on behalf of their district. Candidates are elected based on whether or not voters think they will support their opinions and vote accordingly.

Every year, there is one legislative session lasting 60 days and 45 days on odd years. Delegates serve in Richmond voting and debating on issues. Also, each April delegates serve in a veto session where any bills vetoed by the governor are reconsidered. For the remainder of each year delegates work home at their districts working with committees or on long term projects to improve the area.

Candidates have been campaigning since July and on November 3 the election will be held, the culmination of all their hard work.

Line Blurred on Student-Teacher Relationships

Continued from page 1

Julianne Bigler, who enjoys being close with social studies teacher and cross country coach Don Beeby, because "He can really help us by keeping us on top of our school work, as well as our running." Building a close relationship with a teacher you respect can be helpful, so long as the adult is acting like a mentor and not a pal. Bigler said about Beeby, "He is strict about keeping our priorities, in and out of school, straight."

Some teachers may feel they need to increase accessibility in order to enrich a student's learning experience. But in doing

so, they could place themselves in situations for misinterpretation, thus overstepping invisible boundaries and potentially damaging the dynamics of the classroom. Although trusting teachers, and other adults, is an important part of creating a healthy learning environment, there is a delicate balance between this trust and a respect for authority which is also necessary. In our informal culture, it is more important than ever to make these distinctions, and the best way to do so is to secure relationships within the realm of the classroom.

Heavy Morning Traffic Causes Problems

Continued from page 1

little extra time in the morning, but it also comes with its many hassles. Being stuck at the intersection of Quander and Beacon Hill Road is a major inconvenience. All the traffic also shows that many students are not taking the buses, which is not very eco-friendly. I personally think that should be carpooling mandates if the situation gets any worse."

As Pearce waits in her car during the early morning

traffic, she has much more important things to do. The time is 7:18, thoughts of her United States history project, planning homecoming, and first period passes through her mind until a text message lights up her dashboard. The message is from her friend, junior Erica Sucher. "Are you at school yet?" she asks. Pearce texts back "No, traffic. You know the drill." Sucher replies, "Oh, right."

Fanhood Continues for Washington Capitals

TOMMY FRIEDERICH
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

After seeing about 100 Facebook statuses saying "GOAL," during last year's playoff series against the Pittsburgh Penguins, one could see that Washington, D.C. had jumped onto the band wagon of the area's new favorite team, the Washington Capitals. By the end of the 2008-2009 hockey season, the hockey scene in the nation's capital had a resurrection.

The Capitals were the new sport to watch last year and hopefully the phenomenon has not died down. This hockey outburst was largely due to the team's and National Hockey League (NHL)'s best player Alexander Ovechkin, who is much loved by fans. "I've been playing hockey for my whole life, and I've never seen anyone play as hard as Ove does," said sophomore David Simpson.

Ovechkin is a native of Russia and has been one of hockey's best players in the NHL recently, especially as a member of the Washington Capitals. Before the 2008 season started, Ovechkin signed a 13-year contract that proved to be worth the money in the 2008 season. Fans agree wholeheartedly, especially at our school. Sophomore Casey Hagan said, "God, Ove is the man, that's half the reason I watch the Caps."

Ovechkin did not carry the season for the team though. The rookie goal tender Simeon Varlamov stepped up in several ways at the end of the regular season and the playoffs. "I didn't expect great play out of Varlamov, but he really came alive for the Caps at the end of last season," said sophomore Patrick Murphy. Varlamov will continue to goal keep this year along with Jose Theodore.

There are two real questions that students have about the Capitals: Will they be as good as last year? and Does Washington, D.C. have the enthusiasm for the Capitals that they had at the end of last season? "Are you kidding me? Everyone is pumped for the Caps this season. Hopefully Ovechkin, Blacstorm, and the other Caps [will] feed off of last season and win the cup," said sophomore Davis Beveridge. Winning the Stanley Cup for the East is a difficult goal as the Capitals are part of a tough division including the powerhouse Pittsburgh Penguins.

Bandwagon fans always seem to join in support when a team is doing its best, but it seems that enthusiasm, especially school wide is still strong. "No matter how the team plays I will always root for them. It is good to hear everyone's high hopes for this season, despite the bad finish in last year's playoff. [This] shows how

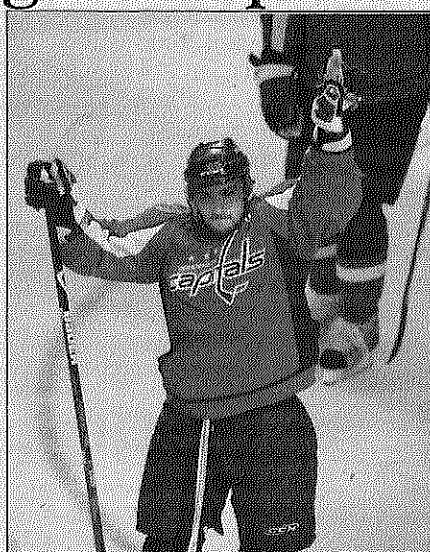


Photo Courtesy of George Bridges/MCT

Ovechkin celebrates a goal in the 2008-2009 season. Fans look forward to another season of Ovechkin's consistent scoring.

people are truly rooting for the Caps and not hopping on and off the bandwagon," said senior Frankie Gerow.

It is still unknown whether fans have as much support as they did for last year's Capitals team but fanhood continues at our school, apparent through the widespread following of the team.

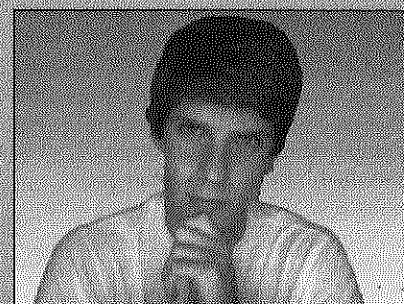


Photo by Karla Cruz

Coffey Talk

PETER COFFEY

SPORTS EDITOR

Sports are defined as an athletic activity requiring skill or physical prowess, often of a competitive nature. Or at least that is what dictionary.com says. But what really defines a sport? Through much of my life I have heard debates and gotten into arguments about what is a sport and what it is not, so I am going to try to the best of my ability and list what is needed to make something a sport.

1. There needs to be more than one person participating. So sorry all you solitaire fanatics- what you are doing is in no way a sport.
2. Time and/or a ball has to be incorporated in some way. That knocks out fishing and hunting...sorry guys, but at least you have the cool camouflage gear, and no one can take that away.

3. The participants must be moving around, no sitting or standing around. So goodbye poker and chess- you will never be more than just a hobby.

4. Uniforms or some dress code (just because of golf) must be worn during the competition and that gets rid of speed cup stacking but who really cares if that is not a sport?

5. There has to be some sort of scoring system that is not made up by a panel of judges. So theater sports, please change your name to theater games.

6. A broom cannot be involved. Yes, I am calling out curling, and, no, it is not a sport. Honestly, I really do not know what it is.

7. Make-up cannot be worn at any time, which gets rid of figure skating. Sure it takes tremendous skill and glittery outfits but when it comes down to it, it is really not a sport.

8. Driving a car or motorcycle in a circle is not a sport. It requires no athleticism what so ever, so yes that means NASCAR is not a sport. Please do not throw your beer and corn dog at me.

9. If you are cheering on another sport, you are not a sport. You are merely a group of people in cute outfits and pom-poms supporting a team. Sorry cheerleaders.

10. If it involves spelling words given by a judge, it is not a sport. Sorry to all you sixth grade spelling bee winners. At least your mom can still be proud.

11. Finally, if it involves blowing into an instrument, it is not a sport. Yes that means band is not a sport, so that varsity letter you got is not real. I am sorry.

Is this list perfect? Probably not. Will some people get angry? Sure. Do I really care? No. Someone had to draw the line somewhere. I mean things are really getting out of hand; there are marathons of poker on ESPN. Come on! This is ridiculous. There are children celebrating after they stack cups faster than their friends; now that is just sad. God only knows what could be next. That is why I have created this list of 11 simple rules that help define a sport. If you think I should add anything to this list or take anything away or you simply want to call me a big idiot who knows nothing about what a sport is please email me at, pcoffey@wpwire.com.

Rugby Players Forced to Play on Club Teams

EMILY GRIFFIN
NEWS EDITOR

There are many popular sports that students participate outside of school because there is no school sports team for them to join.

Many students at our school participate in sports such as rugby, ice hockey and bowling, but there is no team for it at our school. Ken Tilley, Executive Director Virginia High School League (VHSL), said that the process in which a sport is approved differs from county to county and from school to school. However, there are a required set of conditions that must be met, regardless of what sport is being approved. Tilley said "the (VHSL) committee determined that schools could petition to request that specific sports or activities be added to the VHSL membership application, subject to Executive Committee approval."

Also according to Tilley to sum the conditions up, there have to be a certain number of students interested in the sport; the request must have the support of the superintendent, school board and the VHSL region. Then there needs to be a proposed contest limitation, playing rules that govern the sport that has to be specified and there must be facilities to practice the sport. In addition to the information stated above, cost has to be considered into the request. This means the costs that are associated with the activity such as VHSL costs for catastrophic insurance and whether or not to charge admission for the sport. If a student wanted to petition VHSL to approve a sport, director of student activities, Aaron Helmick said that he "would always support students speaking about something they believe in, but I am not sure if a petition would be the best way to express your opinions or enthusiasm for your belief. This is not a local school decision it would start at FCPS level. Boys Volleyball, Boys Gymnastics and Ice Hockey have been granted club status in [the] past."

Helmick said that new sports at our school are always wanted and

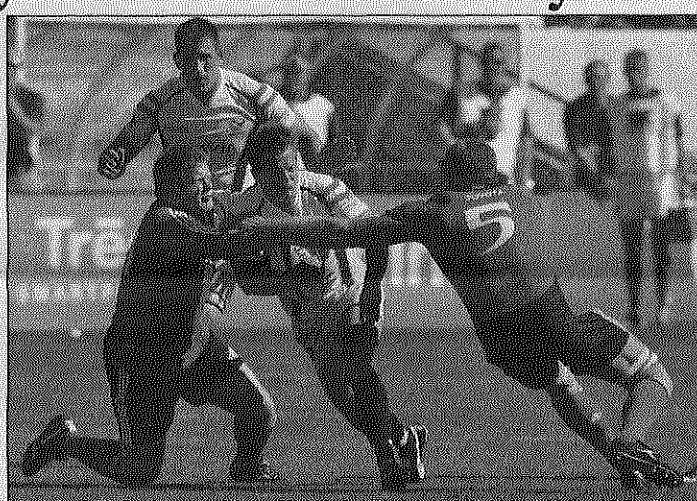


Photo Courtesy of Kamil Krzaczyński/MCT

Students are not able to participate in school-sponsored rugby (pictured above), because the Virginia High School League (VHSL) has not approved sports such as rugby and ice hockey.

activity, but no one to date has submitted a formal request using the conditions required above." Helmick agreed with Tilley stating that "with rugby and ice hockey there are logistics with those sports such rental fees, practice space and funding for team equipment, officials and transportation."

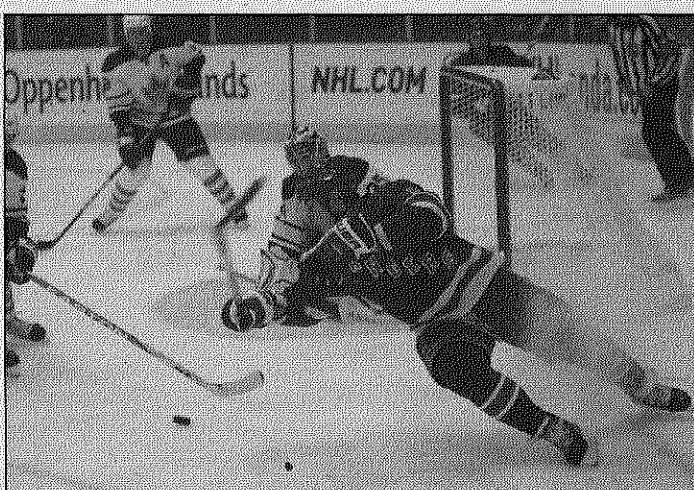


Photo Courtesy of Jason DeCrow/MCT

Ice hockey is another sport not offered at our school and other schools throughout Fairfax County. Often participating in outside clubs is costly and located far away.

Know any school athletes that should be featured in *The Wire*?

Should **YOU** be featured?

If so, please contact Laura Zitnik at lazitnik@fcps.edu or visit Room 418.

MUST WATCH

Game one of the MLB World Series previews on October 28, date is subject to change.

SOUND BITE

"You wore those shoes in Portugal so you still have some of that South American grit on them."

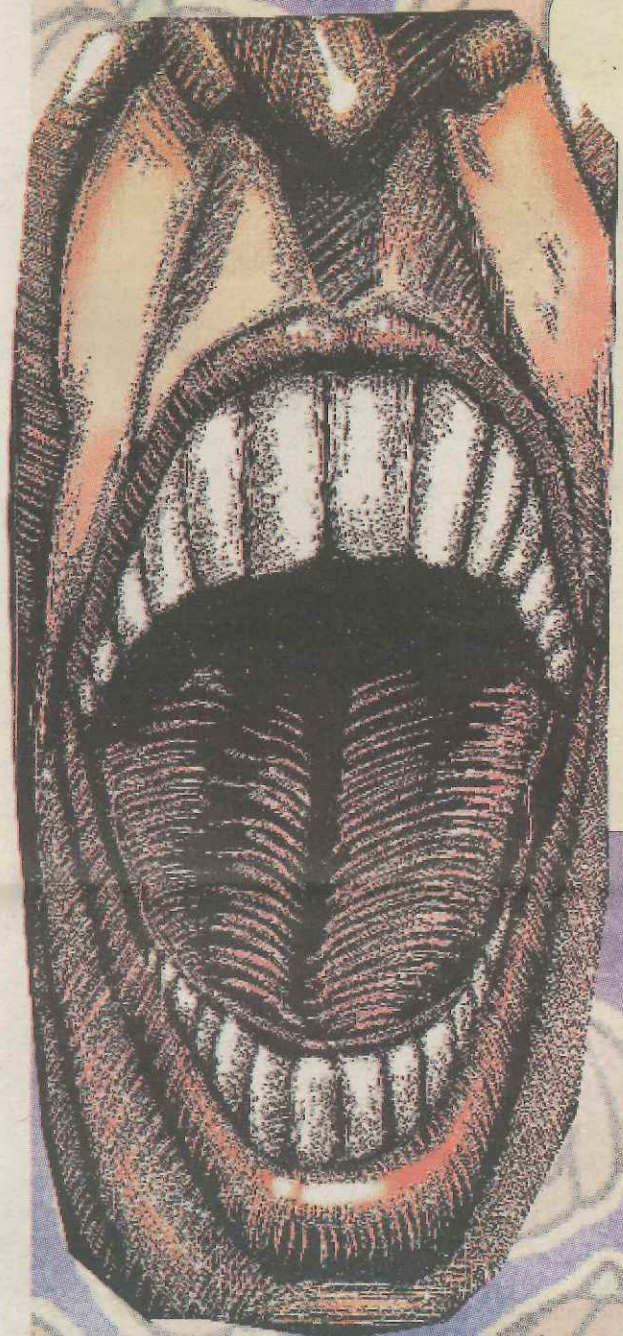
-Peter Stebbins, cross country varsity captain

are you at

generally frightening

LAURA REYNOLDS
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

With the beginning of school, and the cold and flu season, many students and teachers have demonstrated that they are mysophobic in their persistent attempts to evade sickness. Mysophobia, the fear of germs and dirt, is just one of many common phobias that pervade everyday life. The idea that phobias are only debilitating, senseless fears is put to rest by examining some frequent terrors that many may not have considered to be actual phobias. They range from a fear of spiders (arachnophobia) and the fear of snakes (ophidiophobia) to acrophobia (a fear of heights) and trypanophobia (the fear of injections). Society has an obsession with discovering and testing fears on shows such as *Fear Factor*, where contestants are pushed to the limits of their composure. However, situations depicted in these shows are only magnified examples of what those with common phobias go through regularly. Whether it is claustrophobia (a fear of enclosed spaces) or astraphobia (the fear of thunder and lightning), widely held fears occupy an important and unique part of life.



please go away

EMILY SMITH
COPY EDITOR

Agoraphobia is defined as an abnormal fear of being in crowds, crowded places, and public places. Although this fear is often trivialized in today's popular culture, it is a very real and serious psychiatric illness. Many agoraphobics avoid crowded areas such as shopping malls, and public transportation, as the close contact with other people can set off panic attacks. Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys famously suffered from Agoraphobia and other mental illnesses, and he is not the only one. "Boo" Radley from the famous *To Kill A Mockingbird*, would be diagnosed with agoraphobia, because he rarely left the house.

Xenophobes, though more common than agoraphobics, suffer from a similar psychiatric problem. Xenophobia is fear of the unknown, or the unfamiliar. Xenophobes are frightened of and intimidated by people of different cultures. However, this does not mean that xenophobia is a fancy name for racism. Xenophobes must believe that the person or group of people are "foreign." Many ancient societies were classified as xenophobic, simply because they rejected all "foreign" cultures and religions.

Although these illnesses have been popularized by the media, they are two different, yet very real fears that can impede their lives.

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TOMMY FRIEDERICH
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

There are many weird phobias, but here is one that a lot of people know and live with. Coulrophobia is the abnormal or exaggerated fear of clowns. This phobia is found all around the world, but most commonly found in

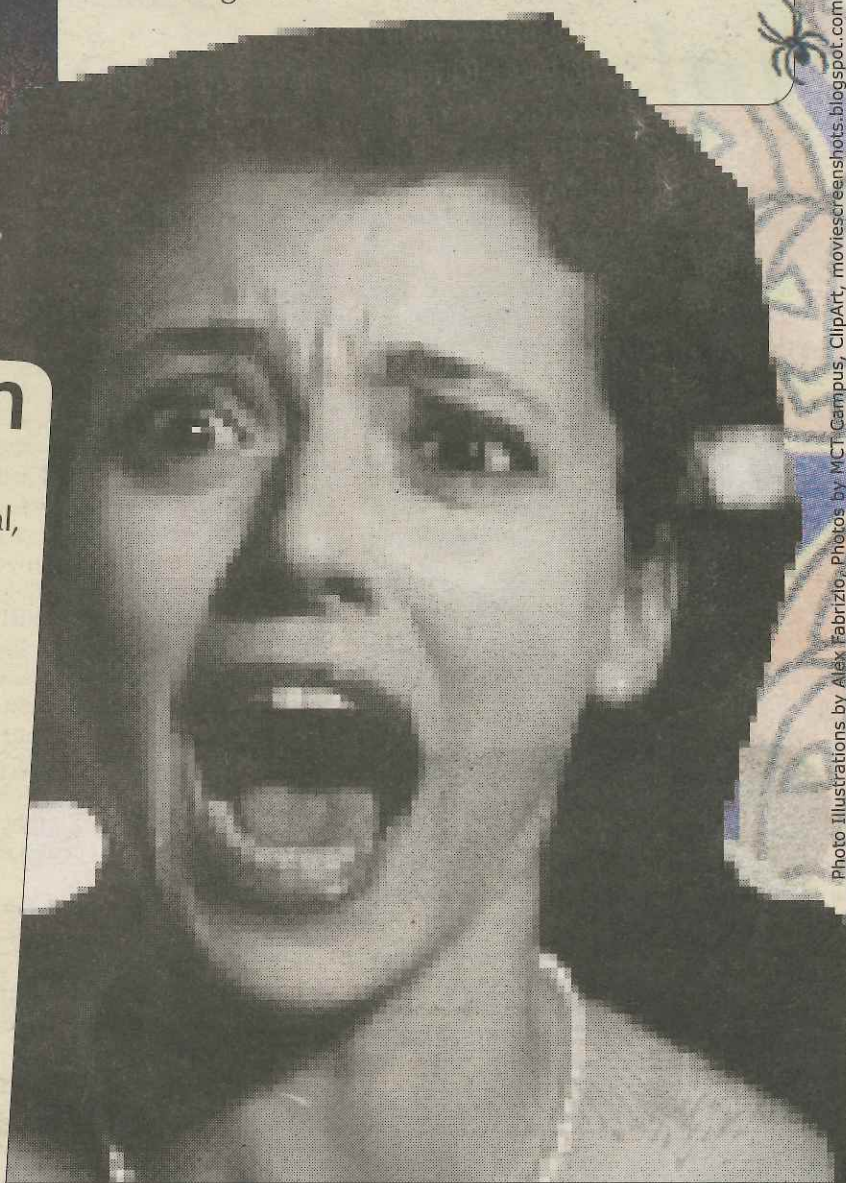
not very funny

children but also some teenagers and adults, according to "The Phobia List." People who have coulrophobia sometimes acquire a fear of clowns after having a bad experience with one personally, or after seeing a sinister portrayal in the media. Clowns have many scary features to some: big red nose and lips, colorful, almost creepy hair, and an odd voice that can stay in the mind forever. For young children, Bozo the clown is frightening; for adults the classics are *It* and *Chucky*. Many people live with this phobia, but manage to lead normal lives.

EXANDER
EF

It is the fear of sharks, thunderstorms, going outside, or of body smells, everyone knows that makes them cringe. Phobias range from basic fears to miniscule, irrational, fears. For what seems like an eternity, phobias have been used to explain these things. What is exactly is a phobia, and where did they come from? According to the answers.com definition, phobias are intense, sometimes unrealistic fears, that interfere with someone's ability to go about everyday life. Clinically, phobias are a type of anxiety disorder brought on by some event or situation in someone's life that causes a natural and irrational fear of things that actually pose little or no danger. According to release.com states that phobias arose during the time of philosophy. Due to a lack of modern medicine, people were diagnosed with phobias when in reality they had an anxiety disorder. For example, a paranoia victim may have been diagnosed with a phobia of snakes. Nothing along those lines. It used to be that rational fears, like the fear of death, were considered on this because they were fears that most people experience. In modern times, people with more menial fears came to the forefront, the clinical form of phobia has taken a backseat. People want to come up with some sort of psychological explanation for their fears. Give it a long intelligent-sounding name. Nowadays, real phobias are being replaced by the many random fears people have made up over the years. Here are some common kinds.

introduction



Whippin' It Around

GWEN FISHEL
COPY EDITOR

The skates are officially off. In Drew Barrymore's directorial debut film *Whip It*, Ellen Page, star of the hit Diablo Cody film *Juno*, stars as Bliss Cavendar, a teenager who is trying to find her niche in a small town in Texas. Looking for a spark of anything interesting, she follows her instinct to Austin, with her best friend, Pash (Alia Shawkat), along for the ride to a roller derby exposition. Now completely enthralled with the sport, Cavendar decides to try out for the local team, the Hurl Scouts. After making the team and becoming friends with some of the incredible women on the team, her life takes a 360 degree turn and she finds herself enjoying life, which she never thought possible; all her life she had been searching for a way out, and she finally found it. In roller derby, she is happy that she can do something for herself and not have to worry about pleasing somebody else. For the majority of Bliss' life leading up to joining the team, her mother Brooke Cavendar (Marcia Gay Harden), a former beauty queen herself, was hell bent on making her daughters a vision of her former self, by forcing Bliss and her sister to participate in beauty pageants.

However, what seemed to be this simple and straightforward plot, focused around a girl finding an object or some objects of affection, was deeply involved. The interactions of the characters in this film lead the viewer to see all the intensity that is plugged into the plot below the surface level. Bliss' parents intermingle on an uneven plane that make the viewer understand that there is more than meets the eye. Bliss' father, Earl Cavendar (Robert



Photo Courtesy of MCT

Stern), is a hardworking man, who feels as though he is lacking personal freedom, while Bliss' mother is stuck in the past. All of the women on the roller derby team all lead complicated lives, although they may seem effortless at first glance. Through the women, especially Maggie Mayhem (Kristen Wiig), Bliss learns many life lessons about family, love, and everything in between.

The all star cast of this movie includes everyone from SNL comedians Kristen Wiig and Jimmy Fallon, to Alia Shawkat of the former TV hit *Arrested Development*. Page once again does not fail to impress, as she shows the viewer that she completely understands the "ins and outs" of her character. Her offhanded comments and naiveté seem to help her connect with the audience. Carlo Alban, who stars as Birdman, a coworker of Bliss', plays his part to a tee. While his character seems inconsequential at the beginning of the movie, his spontaneity and interesting disposition, make the viewer wonder just what he

will do next. However, the best actor in this movie by far is Marcia Gay Harden. She became every inch of her character and showcased her ability to expressively portray the many facets of her character. Her line delivery was flawless and she really opened up the emotional barriers for many characters in the film. Her poignant interactions with Bliss and her family helped strengthen the screenplay, which was written by Shauna Cross, who based it off her book *Derby Girl*. Very well written and possibly cliché at times, the screenplay was still incredibly strong.

Overall, this movie is enjoyable and worth seeing, because it is easy to connect with the characters, which render an incredible diversity. So, "Whip It" to theaters!

New Paramore Album Ends on a Good Note

MAGGIE GRADY
BUSINESS MANAGER/ASST. FOCUS EDITOR

The band that caused a "riot" in the music industry with their second album is back again. After releasing the albums *All That We Know is Falling* and *Riot!*, Paramore has produced their third album, *Brand New Eyes*, which was released in the United States on Tuesday, September 29, 2009. Originally from Nashville, Tennessee, Paramore has five members: Hayley Williams (lead vocals and the only woman), Josh Farro (back-up vocals/lead guitarist), Jeremy Davis (bass guitarist), Zac Farro (drums), and Taylor York (rhythm guitarist).

The first single on Paramore's new album, "Ignorance," has a good beat mixed in with honest lyrics. The song is about people who are rude and unaware of it. Another song, "Careful," is like "Ignorance" because they both have background music and deliver similar messages. "Careful" is more fulfilling, however, because it shows a wider range of vocals by Williams. "Misguided Ghosts" is dissimilar to the other songs on the album because it has a softer and slower beat, but it showcases Williams' talent and the background melody illustrates Farro and York's talents as guitarists. The song portrays the hardships of what it feels like to be a ghost and invisible to others.

One song that proves to be one of my favorites on the album is "Where the Lines Overlap," which has a catchy chorus. The drums and guitars provide a good beat to the song and the bridge too. *Brand New Eyes* has a wide variety of song rhythms and lyrics

and has lived up to their expectation after their previous album's success in the music industry.

Paramore released their first album in 2005 and it reached to the eight spot on the UK Rock Chart but none of the singles reached the Billboard 200 here in the U.S. Their second album was released in 2007 and went platinum here in the US. The album had four singles, "Misery Business," "Crushcrushcrush," "That's What You Get," and "Hallelujah." Their first hit, "Misery Business," reached #31 on the Billboard 100 Chart, went platinum, sold over one million copies and it has been used in several video games including Rock Band 2, Guitar Hero World Tour, and Saints Row 2. I wonder what songs from *Brand New Eyes* will be on the next Rock Band?

Paramore means "love," and most people will love this album. So, take a second look at *Brand New Eyes*.

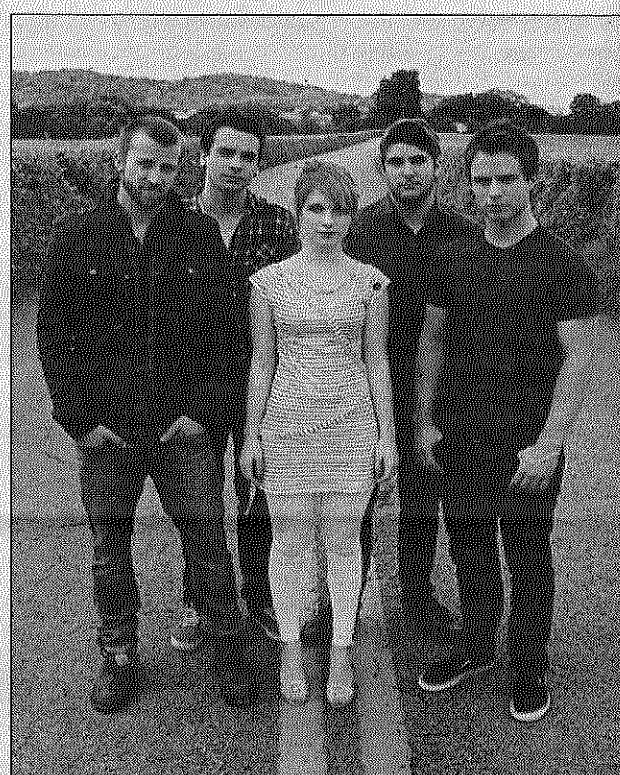


Photo Courtesy of www.paramore.net

The band Paramore is back with a new album, *Brand New Eyes*, has been well received by fans.

Pink Flamingos, Fraught With Filth

ALEX FABRIZIO
FOCUS EDITOR

"Kill everyone now! Condone first degree murder! Advocate cannibalism! Eat s---! Filth is my politics! Filth is my life!" cries Babs Johnson (Divine) at one point in 1972's *Pink Flamingos*.

Before continuing, this is not something for the faint-hearted. This film is rated NC-17 for a reason. It has been banned and dubbed controversial for a reason (or one million). It is so horrendous that a written discussion of it could even be considered offensive.

With all of that said, *Pink Flamingos* was written, directed, produced, and narrated by John Waters. As I basically said earlier, it could easily be the most disgusting and mesmerizing film ever made—probably because it is almost entirely a competition for the title, "Filthiest Person Alive." The title-holder, none other than Babs/Divine herself, is challenged on multiple occasions by Connie (Mink Stole) and Raymond (David Lochary) Marble. The Marbles, a couple made for each other, run a seedy adoption agency that sells babies to child-less couples. The really seedy part about it is that they kidnap girls from the side of the road, and have their employee Channing (Channing Wilroy) impregnate them. They keep these girls in a small room under their house/adoption agency in extremely unfit conditions, and shoot the girls after the babies are born. (That is, by the way, a very vanilla aspect of *Pink Flamingos*.)

It is astonishing how many grotesque activities are fit into one-and-a-half-hours. There is everything from incest

to bestiality to eggs (lots and lots of eggs), to the consumption of feces. There were no smoke-and-mirrors tricks in the production of *Pink Flamingos*. All activities were actually done by the cast. The cast, also known as the Dreamlanders, is comprised solely of Waters' friends. He did not hire professional actors (it is abundantly apparent when noting the subpar acting), but they definitely put meaning into what they were doing. Divine, who is most famous for her part as Edna Turnblad in Waters' other film *Hairspray*, is somewhat controversial on her own (she is, after all, a transvestite). Regardless, as Babs Johnson she is believably the "filthiest person alive." Every single aspect of her reeks. The viewer can feel the grime dripping through the television screen. Waters must enjoy creating this mood because not only does he revisit offensive plots in a number of his other films but he even released an "odorama" version of his film *Polyester* in 1982.

All of that can really be considered a preface though, because with an extremely open mind and in retrospect, *Pink Flamingos* is a masterpiece and openly-acknowledged cult classic.

It is the kind of film that turns boys into men. Surviving through every single revolting second counts as an accomplishment, akin to a rite of passage. Upon reexamination,

each detail that was previously loathsome becomes overly fitting and justified by the idiosyncrasies of Waters and the Dreamlanders. The poor acting grows on you like a beard would, and the homemade/amateur feel is endearing. Sometimes it can even trick you into thinking it is an inside joke. Sometimes, it can even trick you into thinking that you are in on it. Honestly.

It undoubtedly brought transgressive art to the public's attention and has made a mark in American Popular Culture.

So much so that a British television program from 2006 put *Pink Flamingos* as 29 on a list of "50 Films to See before You Die" and it is discussed thoroughly on VH1's "I Love the 70's."

Its reputation and recognition are more than deserved. Trust me.

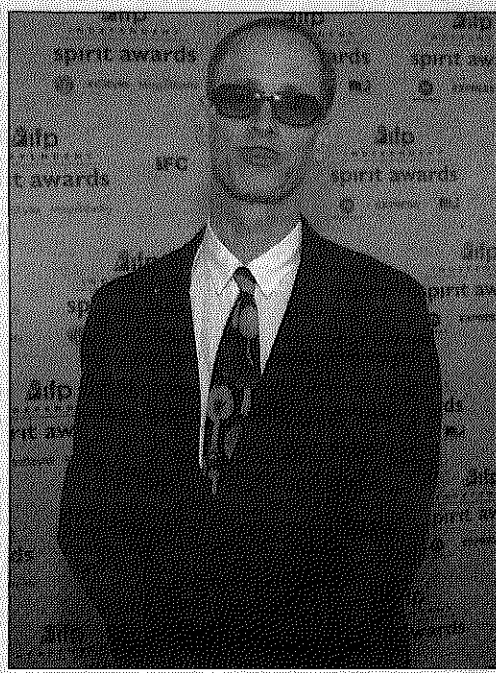


Photo by Lionel Hahn/MCT

John Waters is known for his unique sense of humor, which is portrayed in movies that he was written.

Fame Does Not Meet Its High Expectations

ANNA DREYFUSS
REPORTER

"Re-mem-bah! Re-mem-bah! Re-mem-bah!" is the famous chant that made the trailer of the highly anticipated movie "Fame" so famous.

A remake of popular 1980s movie "Fame" has attracted a new generation of teens. Shot in documentary style, it is mostly about six students at New York City High School for Performing Arts, over the course of all four years at the school.

New York City High School for Performing Arts is a school for teens wanting to become professionals in dancing, singing, acting, producing or musical arts. Jenny Garrison (Kay Panabaker) is a shy, timid girl, who has trouble coming out of her shell. Denise Dupree (Naturi Naughton) has been playing piano all her life. Although, pretty depressed, because of her controlling father, she has an incredible voice under her shy and meek exterior. Marco (Asher Book) is a happy-go-lucky kid, with a very high pitched, but great voice.

As the main characters try to start their professional careers as performers, there is a lot of drama including a relationship between Jenny and Marco. Students had to experience obstacles, like being cheated out of \$5,000, getting rejected and even suicide. There is also a special appearance by Debbie Allen, the choreographer of the original movie, who plays Ms. Simms, the principal of the high school in the remake. And Bebe Neuwirth, who plays Ms. Kraft, the singing teacher, is a very famous Broadway actress who played Velma Kelly in the original play "Chicago." She does an impressive performance in a small club, in which she takes students to practice their singing abilities.

Kay Panabaker really does not portray her character well at all. She has no idea what she is doing throughout the

whole movie and looks like puppy. In a movie about singing, Panabaker, the main star, only sings about three verses of the movie, which she does to sing badly, and then more at the very end. The character being shy also has no charisma and doesn't take over what's on the screen ever. To her singing makes the cringe. On the other hand, Denise (Naturi Naughton) has an amazing voice great presence out the movie. captures the audience seems like a able person. plays Marco, much character does not to the other nice voice, viewer feels just kind of

The singing definitely actual act-perform the movie school all day. There is a of sophomore into junior look exactly hard to change in a movie in just the course the costume could have done a little more than curl and straighten Panabaker's hair.

This movie really lacks a good plot line. Each part of the movie goes through a different character and their life story, but once the viewer gets into the character, the movie switches to a new one. As a result, not much sympathy is created for any of the characters. Also a lot of the events, for instance Jenny and Marco's relationship start and then just abruptly end, with no feeling of closure.

Overall, this is a mediocre movie- about a two out of five rating. Even though the acting and plot definitely are lacking from these young actors. At times the dancing and singing parts almost make up for it. It is nice that the cast is assembled of people who can actually sing and dance. This is not like when famous actors who try to sing and dance (with the exception of Panabaker). Although people definitely held high expectations for this movie, it just did not meet them. The lack of acting and the plot line definitely brought this movie down. The good part is that the actors were able to sing and dance very well, however that does not make the movie

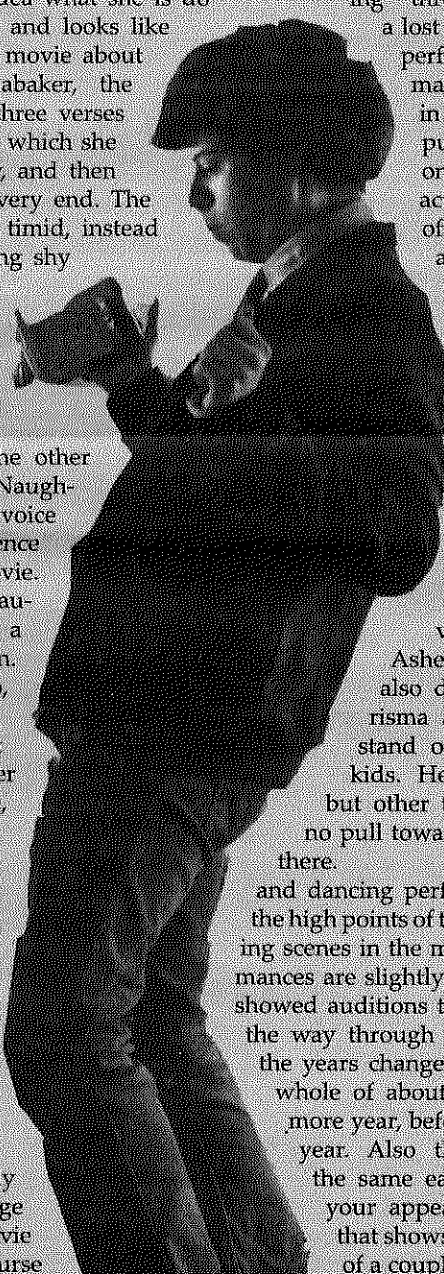


Photo Courtesy www.allmoviephoto.com

Bands that Shaped the Musical Taste of a Generation

ALEX BRITCLIFFE
ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Young people are extremely broad-tasted when it comes to music. Taste in music is something that is always changing and will continue to change as music goes on. Every generation, however, has a few select bands that serve as a gateway into the world of music. These bands tend to be the sound that everyone is attracted to when they first discover music. For our generation, there are some great sounds that I think readers will agree were truly the originals.

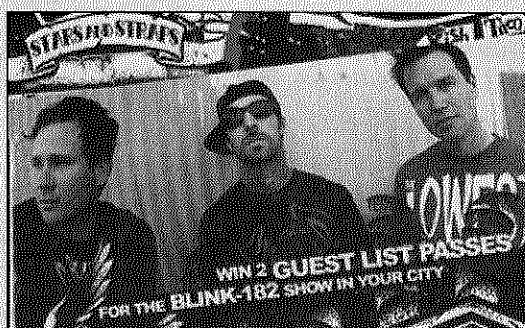


Photo Courtesy of www.blink182.com

Blink-182

Everyone who is anyone listened to the punk rock legends Blink-182. They were truly a band that served as a gateway for our generation into music. Everyone listened to their songs about chasing girls and being a teenager. They were able to take the simplest of chords and turn them into catchy punk works of art.

Sum 41

These guys were another band that hit the punk sound got our generation addicted on button. They were another group of guys straight from the garage who were able to get everyone to listen to their message on growing up and being a preteen.



Photo Courtesy of www.rankopedia.com



Photo Courtesy of www.islandrecords.com

The Offspring

These guys are another example of a band that goes way back but was hot on the rock scene when our generation was starting to listen to modern rock music. Everyone loved that unmistakable voice accompanied by fast paced guitar and drums.

Slash Creates a Solo Album

JACOB ALEXANDER
CO-OPINIONS EDITOR

Former Guns 'N Roses guitarist and current Velvet Revolver guitarist, Saul Hudson, or Slash as many know him, is in the act of recording a new solo album.

Considering this is Slash we are talking about, the man who single-handedly brought back rock and roll style music in the 80's, this could be a huge hit.

Slash was originally in the famous band, Guns 'N Roses, and was known for his style of playing. He was also well known for his guitar, the Gibson Les Paul model, which he always used. After Guns 'N Roses broke up, Slash decided he was not quite ready to give up playing music, so he joined Velvet Revolver, a much less famous band- nevertheless a good band.

Now Slash has decided to come out with a solo album of his own. There are many rumors going around about when it will come out and certain guest appearances on the album. These topics are very hot among the many fans Slash has, especially on blogs that can be easily found on MySpace or Ultimate-Guitar.com, a great sight for anyone who plays guitar.

Although Slash is in the band Velvet Revolver, his solo album has nothing to do with this band. Slash is not out of the band and working on his own now,

he simply decided it would be a fun thing to do and a good way to put his face on the news for a while. Also, Slash has had some extra time on his hands because the singer of Velvet Revolver, Scott Weiland, was dismissed in April last year, so this is a great way for him to spend his free time. Slash has a history of drugs, and he says that as long as he is working it will keep him off the drugs.

The people besides Slash that will be included in the album are Josh Freese, former drummer of Nine Inch Nails, and former bassist of Jane's Addiction, Chris Chaney. Along with these members there will be many guest vocalists. One rumor said by Slash's wife, Perla Hudson on an interview, stated that both Stacy Ann Ferguson of the Black Eyed Peas, who is also known as Fergie, and Ozzy Osbourne, lead singer of the metal bands, the Ozzy Osbourne band and Black Sabbath, will be appearing on the album.

The new songs on Slash's album will be similar in style to the other music Slash has, the rock and roll and classic rock style. The style will probably vary between classical rock and a harder more metal like style, depending on the singer.

Overall, this album is sure to make tons of money and will probably be a huge hit.



Photo by Francis Specker/MCT

Slash decides to release a solo album which excites many of his fans.

College Quidditch Takes Club Sports to New Heights

KATIE WOODWARD
REPORTER

Quidditch is now a sport for muggles. In 2007, Middlebury College hosted the first of what the majority of us would traditionally deem impossible- an intercollegiate Quidditch match.

Today, many notoriously "all-work-no-play" colleges and universities have picked up the famous sport from the Harry Potter books. Students from schools such as Princeton, Stanford, and Vassar, plus about 200 more, have expressed interest in creating their own teams. There is even an official College Quidditch web site, only further confirming society's apparently permanent state of "Harry Potter mania."

For those of us who have managed to evade the Harry Potter craze, Quidditch is a game played by 14 wizards or witches on flying brooms. The object of the game is for players called "Chasers" to score points by throwing a ball called a "Quaffle" through one of three hoops on either end of the field, which are protected by a "Keeper." This process is made more difficult by bowling-ball type "Bludgers," which attempt to knock players off their brooms, as hit by the opposing team's "Beaters."

The most highly respected position though is that of the "Seeker," who must find and catch the tiny and elusive flying "Snitch" before the other team's Seeker, thus ending the game and adding 150 points to their team's score.

While there are obvious obstacles to playing a game of Quidditch in the "Muggle" world (such

as the human inability to fly on a broomstick...), current teams have improvised the sport to make it work.

For example, instead of a golden Snitch, a runner from the school track or cross country teams sprints around, dressed in yellow, and the Seeker must chase them, like in a game of tag.

To address the broom problem, players simply run around with a broomstick between their legs. Instead of Bludgers, Beaters simply chuck balls at other players, much like in a game of dodgeball.

However, they have held on to some traditional aspects of Quidditch, such as wearing capes and goggles, and tossing the Quaffle through hoops on the end of the field, usually created by hoola-hoops. In addition, at many college games, onlookers reportedly dress in wizard attire with cloaks and witches' hats.

Despite all this fervor, college students have had mixed reactions to the addition of Quid-

ditch to club sports. There are many who consider the game childish and relatively ridiculous, considering the basic concept of the sport is to run around in capes on brooms. However, the overall response has been enthusiastic, and all of those who have given it a try have been enchanted, so to speak.

At our school, several students have expressed an interest in starting their own team. "We are planning on starting a club this year, just as soon as we can acquire some low cost broomsticks," said junior Connor Chilton. When approached about the idea, many students have made immediate recommendations for players. One recommendation was sophomore and varsity cross-country

runner Brady Corum as the Snitch, and then have excitedly asked where the club sign-up

sheet is.

While some may scoff at the concept of such a

"sport," it is evident that a school Quidditch club would generate wide support from students, and bring a new meaning to literary appreciation.

Senior Maggie Berrigan said, "Yeah, I would probably laugh at first, but I would secretly want to join."

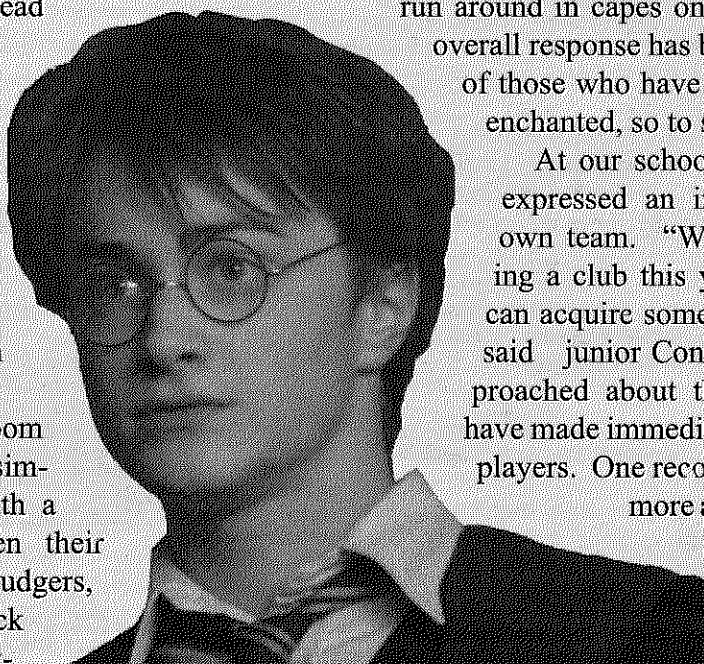


Photo by Murray Close/MCT

The Harry Potter movies made the sport of Quidditch famous. Now it has inspired various colleges to play the game as well.

The Fashion Trends of the Season

NORRIS BROOKS
REPORTER

Leaves are beginning to change, and cool weather is here, so it is time to assemble your wardrobe for the season. The fall of 2008 was filled with short dresses and tights, animal prints, and Bohemian style outfits, but fall 2009 has a whole new look.

Boots have dramatically changed this autumn and are still a must-have. Instead of the usual calf-high Uggs and leather boots, suede thigh-highs have taken over. They come in all colors from black and purple, to red and brown.

Photo Courtesy of Stacey Wescott/MCT

A popular style that may be appearing at our school at homecoming this year is the off-the-shoulder dress. Designers such as Versace, Ferragamo, and Donna Karan are presenting more off-the-shoulder dresses on the runway than you can count. Blake Lively recently showed off her shoulder when she appeared on "The Late Show with David Letterman."

Photo Courtesy of Joe Stefanik/MCT

Scarves are also fun accessories for the cool weather. From thin, long, and colorful, to short and plain, scarves are cozy and make a statement. Chunky knitted scarves are especially big this season. While these neck coverings may lack creativity in color, their texture makes up for it. With designs and fringe, any of these scarves will give the feeling of walking down the high-fashion catwalk of Milan.

Photo Courtesy of Ross Halley/MCT

Recently, model Gisele Bundchen was spotted sporting one of the latest trends: ripped denim. Remember the girl in middle school who always wore the annihilated jeans? Yes, they are back. According to many fashion magazines such as *Vogue* and *Seventeen*, not only is it big to have tiny rips, it is almost better to have the entire leg missing.

Photo Courtesy of Liang Hahn/MCT

One look making a comeback this season is the classic '80s early '90s high-waist skirt. Styles range from bright flowers to muted plaids, and can be paired with v-necks, tank tops, or colorful blouses. A bulky belt can be used to enhance the outfit.

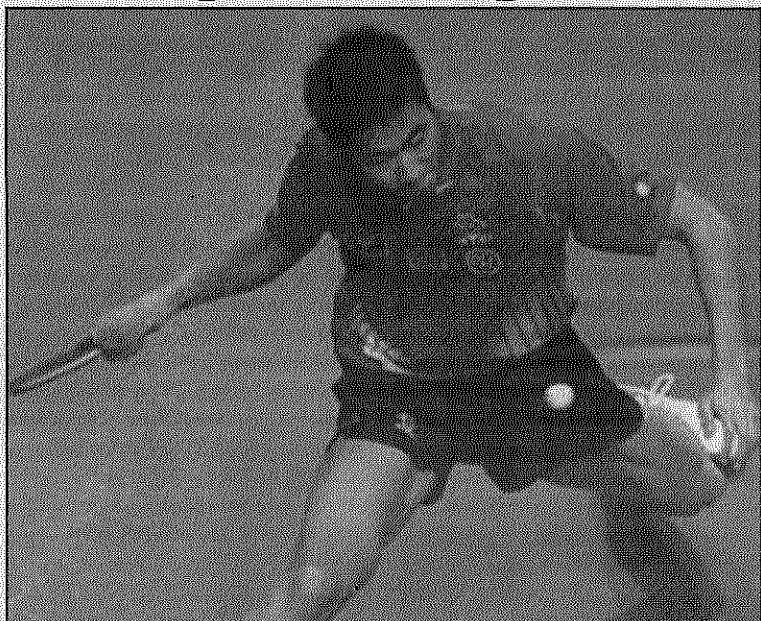
Photo Courtesy of Richard Krall/MCT

Another trend on the rise is military jackets. This rock-chic look is replacing the Bohemian or alternative style. Many celebrities, such as Mischa Barton and Alexa Chung, tend to wear military jackets with ruffled tops or dresses to soften the look.

Photo Courtesy of Ross Halley/MCT

While these are all fashion "do's" for the season, there is one big fashion "do not": double denim. Pairing a denim jacket with denim jeans is now considered a fashion emergency! Sorry, you do not want to be 2000 and late.

Ping-Pong Received with Enthusiasm



Courtesy of MTC Campus

Ping-Pong is an Olympic Sport and has been recognized for over 50 years. Sophomore Django Szilagi plans to make ping-pong a school-wide sport.

JACOB ALEXANDER
CO-OPINIONS EDITOR

This year, there are many clubs at our school. Most school clubs were publicized at the activities fair last month, representing the diverse interests and causes to which students at our school are dedicated.

All of the clubs are appealing, but there is one in particular that is especially interesting and unique. This club is the Ping-Pong Club.

Last year, sophomore Django Szilagi, one of the captains of Ping-Pong club, tried to get the Ping-Pong club "off the ground," but with little success. Lack of organization and drive left the club dormant.

He went through a long period of work, trying for almost the entire year. "We had to get gym time, and sponsor

forms all which are difficult retrieve," Szilagi said.

He had to approve forms, get equipment, including paddles, balls, and tables with nets.

More importantly, he had to get members to join the club, which also means he needed to spread the word on the creation of the Ping-Pong Club.

These events require a lot of work. Szilagi had to be able to get people to cooperate, which can often require a substantial amount of patience.

He had to talk to many teachers including physical education teacher Tyrone Strothers, English teacher Kelcy Pierre, and physical education teacher Jean Coder in order to find ways to get equipment and to get permission to run the club and get everything officially started.

Then, once he finished all of these steps, he had to get a time and place to hold club events. Finally, he had to try to get as many members as possible.

At this point last year, it was much harder to find people because they already had booked schedules and would need to plan ahead in order to be able to attend these events.

After all was finished, Django and other friends he had that were trying to help out, including sophomore Colin Boyd, the co-captain of Ping-Pong Club this year, had to find out how to make Ping-Pong Club as enjoyable and professional as possible, in order to receive more members and make it more like an important club.

These "co-captains," as they are often called, did start to get something going at the end of the year.

Ping-Pong Club got to the point where there were occasional meeting where the members of the club would get together and play.

However, it was nothing big and not many people had heard of it by this point, so there were hardly any people at these events.

Szilagi and others helping run the club were able to get

Ping-Pong Club started this year. They were also at the activities fair.

Many students noticed the club at the fair and thought it would be a fun thing to do. This gave Ping-Pong Club a surprising amount of sign-ups.

Also, Szilagi and the others running the club have managed to get enough equipment to play, and there are also rumors of t-shirts for this club.

Overall, the Ping-Pong clubs has had moderate success. Django and his peers are planning a meeting in the near future and all equipment is ready for usage.

Szilagi is ready to accept more members to the Ping-Pong club and is excited for the new year.

He hopes that this year will bounce into action.

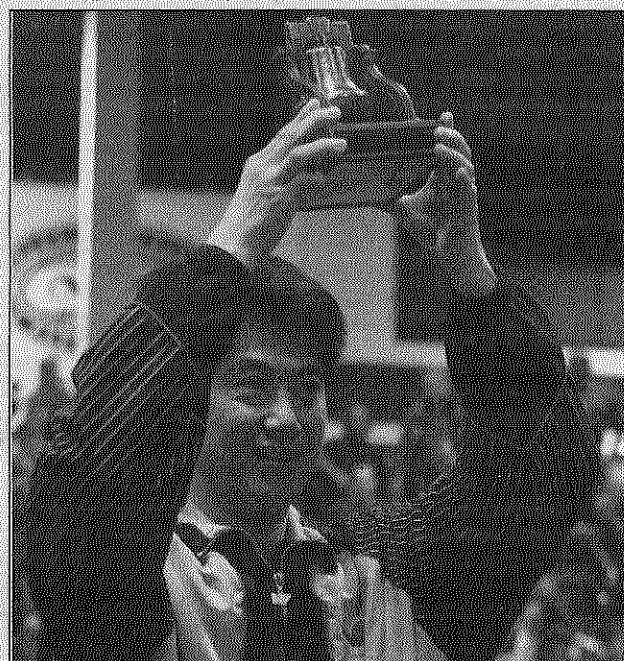


Photo Courtesy of Charles Fox/MCT

David Zhuang holds up his trophy at the Men's U.S. Olympic Table Tennis Trials. Students feel as though they can not reach this level because there is no club available at our school.

Successful Homecoming Held

Students enjoy the homecoming dance despite cancellations due to weather

WIRE STAFF
REPORTERS AND EDITORIAL BOARD

The minute that our school's Homecoming began, a gigantic flood of over 800 students rushed into the Main Gym to dance the night away.

The Student Government Association (SGA) sponsored event and was considered the biggest success of the entire Spirit Week.

Students from every grade, socioeconomic class, and race participated in the event, making Homecoming one of the most inclusive and diverse events of the year, as well as the most profitable.

Once students entered the gym, they were pounded with fast and deafening beats of songs such as "You're a Jerk," and a school favorite, "Paparazzi." Students were seen dancing from the dance floor to the bleachers, and even under the bleachers. Adminis-

trators at the dance could be seen swirling around the dancing, especially Mr. Johnson and Principal Hardison, who enforced an almost "no-grinding" rule.

Sophomore Emily Woods was a participant of Homecoming and thoroughly enjoyed the dance. Woods entered the doors of the gym and lost her breathe, amazed at the decorations of the Homecoming event.

However, at first, Woods did not want to go to the Homecoming dance. Woods's friend, sophomore Trevor Jenne, convinced her that she had an obligation as a Wolverine to go to the dance.

Woods said, "I thought it was raving fun, and very safe! I felt quite comfortable in the environment and danced with much passion! Homecoming was a swell time!"

Junior Callan Memmo also participated in the Homecoming dance. She was impressed with the dance this year, and thought it might have been her best yet.

"It was so great, probably my favorite one yet! I'm glad I went," she said, "I don't think I will ever forget it."

Homecoming was the crowning achievement after a week of failures for the Student Government Association.

The lack of school-spirit, disorganization, and leadership through the entirety of Spirit Week was a reflection on the school body.

Although the Student Government Association can be blamed for some of the failures and set-backs, such as a lack of lunchtime activities, the lack of interest from the student body severely hurt Spirit efforts too.

Overall, the Homecoming event was considered a success because of the sheer amount of enthusiasm and excitement, all which have not been seen for many years.

The deejay had mixed reviews, for he had a rather interesting music choice.

The King and Queen of the Homecoming dance were Bryan Jacobs and Camilla Sanchez; each wore their crowns with a smile.

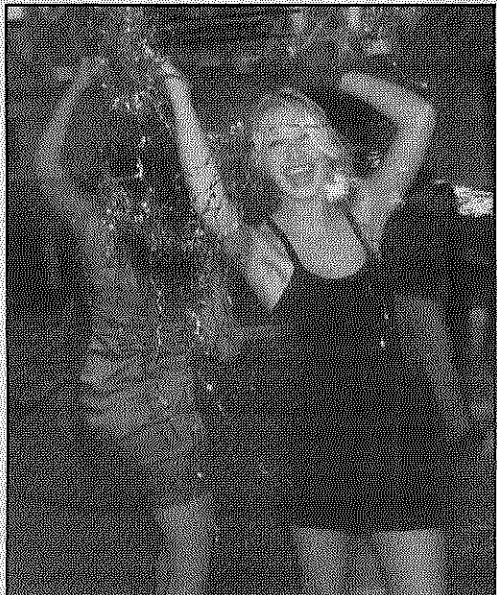


Photo by Venessa Fuentes

Seniors Lizzy Lunday and Kendell Gordon throw confetti to celebrate the Homecoming festivities.

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Welcome To America!

EMILY GRIFFIN
NEWS EDITOR

Jennet Gurbanmammedova & Rosa Sancarolo

Junior Jennet Gurbanmammedova is from Turkmenistan.

She entered herself in a competition, in which students from all over Asia take exams to compete in studying abroad for a year. "There is not a similar competition like that in Europe for students," recalled Gurbanmammedova. "I studied and took many exams in order to come to school here and I was thankfully chosen to come," she continued. The United States is the only country that she has been to.

Adjusting to a new school is always difficult, but Gurbanmammedova was simply "excited to be here" and experiencing a new culture. The first few days of school are hard on everybody, but for Gurbanmammedova it was especially hard.

She mentioned that the first few days at our school "were very hard. It was just different and I did not know anybody here." However now she feels "more comfortable. I have made great friends, I like my teachers and classes a lot and my American host family is really nice."

The schools in Turkmenistan and our school have quite a bit of differences. First of all, students are only enrolled in schools for 10 years in Turkmenistan.

This means that they go to school first grade to tenth grade and then they have completed schooling. Another difference includes that the schools are not divided up into an elementary, middle and high school in Turkmenistan.

Instead, they all go to the same school. However, there are some similarities between our school and the Turkmenistan schools. Gurbanmammedova said "people are friendly in both schools and it is very easy to make friends."

As for her favorite teachers so far, they include English teacher Kelcy Pierre and Dance teacher Courtney Betzel.

English and Turkmen are not the only language that Gurbanmammedova can speak. She is also fluent in Russian. She laughed as she said, "Sometimes my family and I mix Turkmen and Russian together when we are talking. It is just a habit."



Jennet Gurbanmammedova

CAMILLE DiFOLCO
REPORTER

Q: What country are you from and how long are you here in America?

A: I come from Trento in the northeast of Italy, and I'm going to stay here for ten months, so until the end of June.

Q: Compare West Potomac with school in Italy. How is it different, similar, better?

A: It's similar just because it has a lot of people...who join groups...mainly for the same interests.

Q: And how is it different?

A: It's different because here going to school compared to there is a pleasure, is interesting, is fun. The teachers try to involve the students, and they force us to work, but they give us all the sources we need to study. In Italy, it's all school and now I'm realizing how much I hate it, and it was a burden to go to school.

Rosa Sancarolo



Q: What activities did you enjoy in Italy?

A: I started singing and the most amazing time I found was a band with three guys who are my best friends. Every week we practiced and had concerts, and before coming here we recorded some songs.

Q: What's the name of your band?

A: Queen Between, because I was the only girl so my guitarist choose this name because I was the only girl between the three boys.

Q: Did you write your own songs or perform covers?

A: Well we began [by] taking a cover and personalizing it. Like a Beatles cover, a Rage Against the Machine cover, a Red Hot Chili Peppers cover, or other groups...then adding rhythm, guitar solos, and, like, make them more hard rock. At the end then when we recorded, I wrote a song and we made the song. But I'm here to discover new music and write new songs so when I come back [to Italy] we can have more [of] our [own] songs to work on.



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