

Sept. 24
2004

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THE WEST POTOMAC WIRE

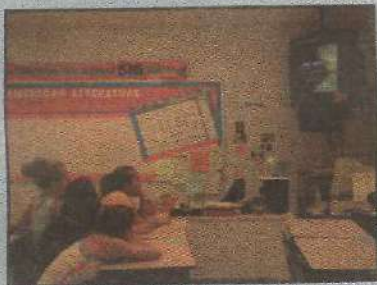
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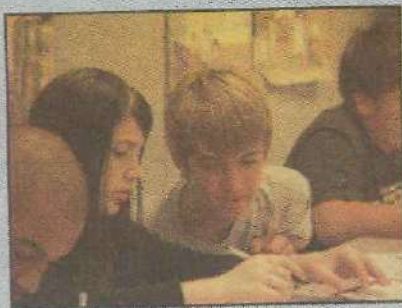
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New Staff Makes Its Mark

Ansley LaBarre
Editor-In-Chief

The revolving door of principals has rotated once again. Rima Vesilind, the school board's latest appointment, is hoping to accomplish the promises each departing principal broke.

Vesilind's extensive career in education makes her quite eligible for the position, contrary to some of the community's concern of her being "just" an elementary administrator. "In all honesty I didn't know what I was doing in elementary school," said Vesilind. "I didn't know how to teach someone to read, I wanted to come back to high school."

Vesilind began her career as a high school band director, and the course of many geographical moves has brought her experience in high, middle, and elementary schools alike. While working her way up in the community, Vesilind

has struggled with serious health disadvantages. Before the start of the new school year, she was diagnosed with Colpitis, causing the poisons in her colon to burst



New Principal Rima Vesilind awaits an eager student body at West Potomac.

Photo by Houston Murphy

throughout her body. Without an emergency surgery, Vesilind's life would have been at stake. Due to the severity of the issue, she was not expected to be seen the first day of school. However,

she made an appearance the first day, continuously throughout the week, and disregarded her recommended half days to work hard to impress the community.

Vesilind aims high for West Potomac achievement. She is depending on ideas from students and the community to create success. This active approach has proven more than satisfactory among students. "She [Vesilind] is very helpful when you're struggling to do things. She's not like a principal who's strict, rude, and too intimidating to approach. She's easy to approach, like a friend," said junior Brad Dalton. The "open-door" policy is an adjustment from the starch-shirted, unavailable principals of the past.

Recently, the new security system imposed extremes on old rules, limiting the privileges of the student body. When students became frustrated with their lack of rights, they found Vesilind willing to accept their petitions, and hear their

complaints in order to make a positive change. Vesilind has aided dilemmas with class fundraisers, allowing students to focus on benefits rather than prohibiting the fundraiser due to a mishap with paperwork.

Vesilind is active with the SGA as well, working with and for the students. "Vesilind's hands-on style is pleasing to students and the community as they get to know her," said English teacher Joan Renyolds.

For the next six years, Vesilind plans to reign over West Potomac. She has no desires for further career advances, wanting only to work with the young people at our school. Her hero principal, Harry Potter's Albus Dumbledore, echoes Vesilind's objectives for a model high school. "I hope to develop a school where students want to learn and are excited to come in everyday, where they can practice skills for the real world, and leave as perceptive, determined, self-respecting, and confident individuals," said Vesilind. ♦

Frantic Floridans

Jeff Snyder
News Editor

This year, the Hurricanes haven't brought Florida a winning football season thus far, but instead, destruction and disarray.

Florida has recently suffered complete devastation of homes and property worth billions of dollars by Hurricane Frances. The

Day travelers going into and out of Florida to seek alternative plans. Major airlines canceled hundreds of flights as a result of heavy rain and strong winds. The storm's march across the Atlantic and Caribbean prompted Florida emergency officials to take action as the center track of the hurricane watch predicted that Frances

Another spokesman for the Emergency Management Agency said that the focus on Frances would not delay Florida's recovery from Hurricane Charley, which slammed ashore on the state's west coast last month as a Category Four storm. Hurricane Charley killed 25 people and left thousands homeless.

During the following days, news and weather reports warning residents of at least 20 inches of rain and winds "worse than Charley" were broadcasted over the country. These warnings prompted approximately 2.5 million Florida residents boarded up their homes and evacuated their area to escape the storm, jamming up highways and overcrowding airports. This was the largest evacuation in Florida's history. Although the severity of Hurricane Frances

Miami Herald/KRTS



Hurricane Frances caused severe flooding in many southern states, especially Florida.

hurricane originated in the southeast Atlantic Ocean in late August. It started its destructive path over the Bahamas, Turks, and Caicos Islands at the beginning of September. Also, with the storm approaching Florida, many Labor would hit central Florida by September 4. On September 1, a spokesman for Florida's Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) initiated a level-one evacuation which went into effect on the state's east coast.

Sophomore Class Steps Up Performance

Marissa D'Orazio
Focus Editor

Although the SGA has been rumored in the past to have a laid-back attitude, the sophomore class is taking charge.

After the old sophomore president left, the sophomores were looking at an gaping lack of leadership—merely three sophomores filling six positions. President Sujin Yoo, vice



Sophomore vice president Emily Chilton and president Sujin Yoo discuss plans for their classmates.

president Emily Chilton, and class representative Kristin McCarthy were left alone to each do the work of two people.

The current SGA sophomores and SGA sponsor Mrs. Reynolds asked those applying for positions creative questions, and gave the positions to those who demonstrated spirit and the sincere desire to help the sophomore class.

The new SGA members are Robin Burton as treasurer, Molly Weisblatt as secretary, and Rachel Lear as class historian.

The major goals of the sophomore leadership are to increase money through fundraisers, and to reduce suspensions and expulsions in the sophomore class through peer mediation and meetings.

When asked for her outlook on SGA this year, sophomore Class President Sujin Yoo said, "I'm ambitious about it. I think everything will come out nicely this year." ♦

Continued on Page 4

The Idiot's Guide to Freshman Year

Taurin Barrera
Special to the Wire

Slowly, the young freshman approached the front of the school bus. He saw the yellow carcass of this mechanical death trap as an ominous indication of warning; nevertheless, he crawled inside and let it take him to his asphalt cemetery at the intersection of Ashwood and Neal. He could foresee what was to happen, and he begged the bus driver to drop him off closer to his house, away from the stop. She knew he deserved the punishment and she kindly told him "Get off my bus!" He crept down the steps in a running stance; he thought maybe he could outrun his fate. No such luck, there were too many of them.

There was a short struggle. It was like a sick and demented game of Twister, but games are for kids. It was a tornado of hands, teeth, and undergarments. Before long, he was under their control. Slowly, they hoisted him towards the heavens by his boxer shorts, despite the terrible ripping sound, despite his groans. Every one of the other people at the bus stop, including the freshman girls, stood around in a circle, watched in horror, and saw the agony on his flush red face. They saw the vengeance in the faces of the boys who were performing the initiation. They all laughed their heads off. This was my first day of school.

Welcome to high school boys and girls. On behalf of the entire student body I would like to extend an oh-so-warm welcome. Welcome to the worst four years of your life. I am your president Taurin Barrera, and I also can do nothing about the intense physical, intellectual, and psychological torment you will undergo over the next four years. Welcome to West Potomac High School.

Over the past 3 years I have learned a lot at this school, inside and outside of the classrooms. I feel it is my duty, as President and as a fellow student, to impart some of this considerably obvious information to you.

P.S. High school isn't really that bad, it's what you make of it. West Potomac is definitely the best place to go to High School, so you can consider yourself lucky!

Make friends with the smart kids – If you hang out with smart kids, people will think you too are smart. Better yet, you might become smarter! These kids are the ones who are going to be going to great colleges, so do yourself a favor and talk to them to find out how cool they actually are. They are also the ones who will help you get through your classes, because they took them two years ago.

Be nice to your teachers – There is a special place in heaven for all teachers, even the ones who you think you hate. Teachers devote almost as much to you as your parents do, so there is no need to be a jerk to them (or your parents for that matter). Teachers can help you, especially the friendly ones, when you need something as mundane as a place to store your sports equipment to something as important as a college recommendation.

Don't be a moron – This sounds like an easy one but a lot of kids have a lot of trouble with this one. For example: don't get into fights. If there is a moron thing to do, that is it. You think you're hard? Everyone knows you are really just insecure about your unconditional love for snuggly stuffed animals. Also, don't throw lunch food, because people will hate you, and worse, I will hate you. Don't do blatantly stupid things like steal from the lunch line. Who in the world would want two BBQ sandwiches instead of one? Oh and please, keep the screaming in the hallways to a minimum. Screamers, as you will come to learn, are possibly the most annoying people at West Potomac.

Do your homework – I know, it's easier said than done. (In actuality, I don't think I've done honest homework since the 5th grade.) However, as I've learned the hard way, homework makes up the majority of your grade. Plus, if it is math homework, you had better get it done or you might as well just save the worksheets for next year when you'll be in the same class! Get it done in class, between classes, wherever. I must admit, despite my habits, that the best place to do homework is at home.

Read Books – I know, I used to dislike reading too, but take my advice. This is how you make yourself smart. Reading will help you as a writer and as a human being. You can figure this out junior year when everyone is smarter than you, or you can ask your English teacher or a friend to name a good book today.

Get involved – Join a club, play a sport, go to concerts, go to plays, join the musical groups, whatever. These groups

Rants and Raves

A Rave for the new ice cream machine. Thank goodness we've got one more way to get through a long day.

A Rant for the extremes of new parking and security. What happened to walking in the hall with a smile instead of a demand for passes?

A Rave to Principal Vesiland for working so diligently after her surgery. The rest of us would use it as a fine excuse to miss class!



A Rant to the vandalism on the first day of school. Can you be that frustrated already?

A Rave for the school's new-found cleanliness. Who knew there was fresh air behind all those flying milk cartons?

A Rant for the loss of cafeteria help. Sure, wheeling trash cans around may not smell great, but West Potomac students sincerely appreciated it. Now all we get are reprimands for forgetting.

make your life as a high school student more fun; they also look good on the ol' college app. They are great places to meet people, especially girls (boys never join clubs; they think they can make the basketball team). From the Key Club to the International Club, they all have something to offer you, so join them!

Start thinking about the future – By sophomore year you should have taken the SAT's at least once, should have started your college applications, and should have an internship with a U.S. senator... But seriously folks, don't screw up freshman year, because it is like kindergarten looking back on it. You are fully capable of getting all A's and B's freshman year. If you screw yourself freshman year, you will hate yourself senior year. It's your choice.

Bring your lunch – I wish I brought my lunch. I watch in envy as my friends eat gourmet sandwiches and I have five rock hard nuggets on my pink tray. When all of your friends are eating their puddings and brownies, you'll be stuck with raisins and dried dates for dessert. Sadly I still buy my lunch. P.S. Cherry apple sauce tastes just like it smells...deeeelicious

Purchase Self Matters: Creating Your Life from the Inside Out by Dr. Phil. For supplemental reading purchase *The Self Matters Companion* also by this author.

Other tips:

- Give random seniors some money every week or so
- Don't wear jean shorts....
- Stay out of the locker rooms as much as possible, they are war zones.
- Get an A in PE, if you don't, that classifies you as a moron, unless of course you really did try hard and have

grasped the concept that the whole grading scale is rigged.

- Take a language.
- Talk to upperclassmen.
- Go to the football games.
- Go to the dances.
- Boys: Don't wear whitey-tighties, they don't rip easily during the wedge process.
- Girls: Purchase *Tell Me Now: The Self-Esteem and Wellness Guide for Girls* by Donna Ternes Wanner M.Ed.- Remember, "It's only because they love you" when your parents tell you to be home by 10:30 when your friends supposedly stay out till 12. (They really don't, the party ends when you leave).
- Have fun, but don't have too much fun. You are only a freshman, so you have three years left to make mistakes, and freshman year is the worst year to make them.
- Remember: High school is not the end of your life.
- If you have to go to the bathroom, the cleanest facilities are in Spring Bank.
- Never make skin contact with bathroom paraphernalia. Use either the hovering or toilet paper seat cover methods, or both.
- Freshman girls (sorry guys) – stay away from the upperclassmen guys, there is nothing worse than to make mistakes as a freshman that will haunt you the rest of your life. (This one was suggested by a girl)
- Buy warm cookies from the Pulley Center. They are warm and delicious.
- Make friends, as opposed to doing things that your friends will hate you for.
- "Hakuna Matata" – It means no worries, for the rest of your days. ♦

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Volume # 20 Issue 1

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The Politics of the Past

Drew Macklin

Opinions Editor

So this is modern politics at work.

In an age when the political halves of our nation are constantly at odds, this Presidential election has been defined not by a particular ideological idea or policy, but rather by the inconsequential issue of military service that was completed over 30 years ago. In a heated battle of mostly empty rhetoric, each candidate has come under fire for his time in the military and has responded with both guns blazing. In this election the old adage, "The best defense is a good offense," has proved itself alive and well.

When did this start? When did the clash of ideas that usually marks memorable elections get swept under the rug? Remarkably, it began the day John Kerry became the de facto Democratic candidate for President. In a year when liberals across America so abhor George W. Bush that our bookstores are literally littered with assorted "1001 reasons to kick Bush out" (which actually seem to number

about 5 when you get past the pompous, angry language), John Kerry decided that his best bet for election was to plant his platform firmly on an already-shaky military career.

Sure, the cuddly photo-ops of Wesley Clark succumbing to Kerry with a salute and of Kerry "reporting for duty" at his Convention were so perfect as to be scripted, but the question is, how can a man who threw "his" medals over the White House fence so suddenly come to idolize his experience in Vietnam? On an even more general level, why does John Kerry assume that four years of service in the Navy are the only prerequisite to being Commander-in-Chief? Something that happened 30 years ago should play the most minor part in a Presidential campaign. Americans instead should have a right to hear the candidates debate the real issues that will actually tell something about each candidate as a person and not just as a politician.

Alas, this is not to be. John Kerry has continued to emphasize his acts of courage during wartime and not the

cowardly way he condemned his fellow soldiers as war criminals after.

Then, a new development in the already-heated debate arose. A memo was leaked to CBS and Dan Rather promptly took it on the air in a special 60 Minutes. The memo was

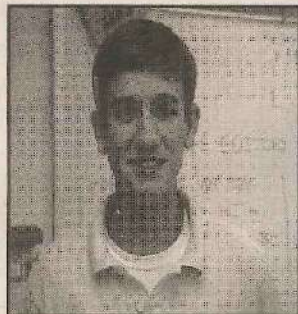


Photo by Evan Dobbs

purportedly written in 1971 by Bush's immediate superior in the Texas Air National Guard. It implies that he was resisting pressure from his boss to lie on Bush's officer evaluations. If true, these papers would prove devastating to the Republican candidate. However, almost immediately after it was released, forgery experts around the country claimed the typeface used came from a computer word processor, not a Vietnam-era typewriter. The secretary

who should have written it denied ever writing such a memo and insisted the language was unlike that used in the office it supposedly originated from.

The fiasco once again gave pundits the opportunity to plead that both candidates move beyond the past and focus instead on the real issues. Instead, DNC Chairman Terry McAuliffe refused to drop the matter and insisted that it was Bush advisor Karl Rove who originally leaked the memo. That's right all you conspiracy theorists. In case you missed it, we've been told that Bush's head advisor decided to bring questions about his boss's service back to the surface. Really, McAuliffe was kidding, right?

Who knows what the outcome of this election will be. The truth is, however, that I would much prefer a contest where the battle is fought in the trenches of policy, where there is a definable right and wrong. In my mind, the past is dead. Refusing to let it stay that way does a great disservice every American. ♦

The LaBarrometer

Measuring the Pressures of Daily Life



Photo by Kim Wagner

Promoting Pounds

Ansley LaBarre

Editor-in-Chief

America is fat.

Over and over again, people of the United States hear about the overwhelming obesity of our country, as compared to the rest of the world. Studies and reports show that horizontally, America is steadily growing.

Teenagers are accused of making up the majority of the overweight population. Researchers are concerned that children will continuously gain weight as junk food grows more popular, and gym class doesn't.

With all the emphasis on America being chunky, you'd think we would want to erase this image. That is, going beyond all the diet fads and plastic surgery to create a withstanding routine to stay healthy.

Because of this assumption, perhaps too idealistic of me, I was dumbfounded walking into the cafeteria on the first day of school.

On the far side of the cafeteria, assisted by a luminescent yellow glow, stood the new ice cream machine, surrounded by drooling students. With selections like Oreo cookie bars and Choco Tacos, everyone can find the taste, and calories, to suite them.

I'm all for the occasional sweet to get through a long day, but, cannot comprehend how this figures into our weight concern. Logic is yelling that if we want kids to lose weight, it is not exactly in their best interest to taunt them with an accessible ice cream dispenser. In fact, school food in general seems to contradict the worries of our overpaid health officials, feeding kids with grease and

If we want kids to lose weight, it is not exactly in their best interest to taunt them with an accessible ice cream dispenser.

mystery meat instead of nutrients. Without implementing change in nutritional values, their goal may be to hinder our self esteem instead of our fat cell content.

If the food association wants to provide us with ice cream and french fries, that's fine, as most of us do not enjoy peas. But they should not then claim the right to call us fat. If they change menus, and provide us with healthier choices of nourishment, they wouldn't have to worry about us being rolly pollies anyway. ♦

A Gold Medal Disappointment

Ashlee Newcomb

Features Editor

Like my fellow Americans, during the last two weeks of August I was glued in front of the TV on pleasant sunny days watching the 2004 Athens Summer Olympics. I was addicted to the competition, the energy of the players, and the hotties, of course. However, I was quite disappointed with the lack of or the biased coverage of certain sports presented by NBC.

There is no doubt I religiously followed Michael Phelps' journey during the Olympics. His goal of beating Mark Spitz's record for the most medals during a single Olympics, and his rivalry against fellow cutie Ian Thorpe was captivating. Even though Phelps did not end up beating the record or Thorpe, he will always be a winner in most teenaged girls' books.

The gymnastic meets were also one of my favorites to catch. My heart always raced while watching Carly Patterson, who debuted as a senior gymnast this year. She was able to pull-off earning the all-around gold medal for Women's Gymnastics.

But my all-time favorite was the Badminton competitions. These matches seem to hold the most serious players, for such a non-seriously taken sport. If I knew it was an Olympic sport, I would have put in more effort in gym class! Nevertheless, I did come in second place for our class period's

tournaments.

Even so, something was definitely missing from the Olympic coverage. Having an Iowan ex-championship wrestler as a stepfather, we both were greatly anticipating the Freestyle Wrestling Competitions. But, in our search to watch the matches, there



Photo illustration by Evan Dobbs

wasn't even coverage for us to watch. We searched the guides and there was no written documentation of the matches.

A couple of days after the matches that we never even saw, we were informed with tiny print scrolling across the screen that Cael Sanderson, one of our favorite wrestlers, was awarded a gold medal in his weight-class of 84kg (185lbs).

Sanderson was a student at Iowa State, where he was a four-time NCAA Champion with a record of 159-0. He was a three-time World Team Trials Champion and three-time

Dan Hodge Award recipient. You would think a person with such a great record and achievements would at least be able to tape a profile to air during Olympic coverage.

Highly disappointed, I lost my interest in the rest of the Olympic coverage. I was done wasting my time with a biased station, who only reported the "mainstream" sporting events.

Maybe my expectations were too high for this year's Games, considering they were held in Greece, where they originally began. However, the fact that NBC couldn't take ten minutes out of its 20 hours of gymnastics and swimming is a little ridiculous. I like gymnastics and swimming as much as the next girl, however, NBC could have broadcast a larger variety of sports to please the interests of all viewers, and not restrict us to the same faces every hour of their coverage.

Basically, after waiting with great anticipation for the Summer Games, I concluded the summer with a feeling of resentment. Resentment for wasting my tanning time by watching pointless hours of sporting events, awaiting matches that wouldn't be covered. Now all I can do is try to guess what sporting events are going to be left out during the 2006 Winter Olympic Games. I'm hoping it's curling. ♦

Questions for Thought

Where do forest rangers go to "get away from it all?"

Do bald people get dandruff?

Why do people super-size everything at McDonald's and then order a Diet Coke?



Senior Privileges M.I.A.

Rob Jones
Wire Reporter

With the arrival of Rima Vesalind, the fourth new principal this school has had in five years, one question crosses the minds of many upperclassmen: will the new administration bring back the tradition of granting special privileges to seniors?

Few current students remember a time in the rapidly fading past when seniors were allowed to leave class early, go to their cars during the school day and take over a class for a day. During former principal Henry Johnson's first year, the 2001-2002 school year, the majority of the standing senior privileges were phased out. The graduating class of 2003 had virtually no senior privileges under Johnson's strict administrative policies.

After Johnson left the school, rumors abounded that the new principal, Eric Brent, would reinstate privileges. However, Brent left the issue of preferential

treatment for seniors alone during his first and only year here at this school.

Now, with another new principal in office, many students and teachers are curious about whether this will be the year that seniors

student morale."

However, there are several parties at this school, primarily members of the faculty and administration, who have somewhat mixed feelings about senior privileges. Many of these



Senior Tommy Bennett prepares to leave after students were asked to leave the parking lot after school.

Photo by Houston Murphy

get their former privileges back. "I really hope they at least let us out of class early, or give us off-campus lunch," said senior Brent Hawkins. Long-time English teacher Paul Russell agreed, saying, "I think senior privileges are a good way to keep up

feel that special treatment disrupts the learning environment. "It's nice to recognize seniors," said mat teacher Bill Dobson. "However, I would hope privileges would not interfere with our academic environment."

There is one instance in which a student has taken measures against what she saw as unnecessary restriction. Senior Marissa D'Orazio circulated a petition among many seniors to secure the right to stand in the senior parking lot in the mornings. Before the petition was made, students were accosted when sitting in their cars or standing in groups talking to friends. D'Orazio's petition to Vesalind successfully granted students the right to be in the parking lot until 7:20 every morning.

The success of this effort leaves many students wondering if more are to come. "I'm optimistic about the new principal's attitude," said Russell.

Whatever one's stance on the idea of privileges, if regained, they will undoubtedly have a great impact on the daily lives of students and teachers at this school for years to come. ♦

NEWS BRIEFS

HAIR EXPERT

In Redwood City, California, two strands of dark hair were found on Scott Peterson's boat. They could not have come from him and are consistent with strands of hair taken from Laci's hairbrush. This is key sought to be used as evidence in proving that Scott's boat was used in the disposal of Laci's body. There is some controversy about whether this evidence will be admissible in court due to police logging one strand of hair as evidence and now there is two in the envelope.

ATARI

In Los Angeles, California, video game company ATARI, is in the process of bringing '80s games out of retirement. ATARI told The Associated Press that it is planning on reissuing its classic titles from the past on discs for today's game systems, Xbox and PlayStation2. *Atari Anthology* containing such games as "Centipede",

"Asteroid", and "Pong", is to come out this November and cost around \$20. *Atari Flashback* will be similar to the old ATARI 7800 from the '80s but will have 20 games built in. *Flashback*, containing games such as "Breakout", "Battlezone," and "Solaris," will sell for \$45.

FRATERNITY SUSPENDED

College sophomore, Samantha Spady, 19, was found dead in a fraternity house of a Colorado State University. Police suspect alcohol may have been a contributing factor in her death but that has yet to be confirmed. The Sigma Pi frat house was the location where her dead body was found which has lead to the suspension of Sigma Pi. The members can continue living there but no activities can take place at the house. Spady was an honor student, cheerleading captain, homecoming queen and president of her high school in Nebraska. It is under review whether Sigma Pi will be allowed to remain on school property.

KUDOS TO...

The staff of the 2003-2004 *Predator*, West Potomac's yearbook for winning national awards for last year's yearbook. Your integrity and professionalism is an inspiration to us all.

Mr. Luke Fennel for coming out of retirement to help with the opening of school. Mr. Fennel's dedication and commitment to education motivated him to "return from retirement" to help us.

Principal Rima Vesalind for her leadership and determination, in spite of the adversities posed by her health problems.

Lauren Curtis for being an exceptional ASL student who used her skills to serve as a teacher assistant to a kindergarten class of deaf children.

The West Potomac Field Hockey teams for showing dramatic improvements from last year. Keep up the good work ladies.

The new West Potomac Football coaching staff for all of their hard work and dedication to guiding and improving its players. You guys are clearly golden.

Science teacher Ms. Susan Piskor for working so hard to keep Ms. Danielle Schoolcraft's classes under control while she is recovering from emergency gall bladder surgery.

WEST POTOMAC UPCOMING EVENTS

September 27

- Senior class meeting (8:00-8:55am in auditorium & 2:00-2:30pm)

September 28

- Freshmen class elections
- Class ring sales (in cafeteria during all lunches)

September 29

- Class ring sales (in cafeteria during all lunches)
- Junior PSAT Presentations (Guidance)

September 30

- Junior PSAT Presentations (Guidance)

October 5

- Underclass Picture Make-ups (Auditorium)
- Academy Parents Open House (6:30-7:30pm)

October 6

- Interims distributed in 7th period
- Pulley Center Back to School Night (6:30-8:30pm)

October 9

- SAT Test (Cafeteria 7:30-2:00pm)

October 10

- No School - Columbus Day

October 13

- PSAT Test (7:30-11:00am)
- PTSA Meeting (7:00-9:00pm Library)

October 15

- Latino College Fair (10:00-1:00pm GMU)

October 17

- College Fair (7:30-9:30pm Fair Oaks Mall)

October 18

- College Night (Hayfield 7:00-9:00pm)
- Powder Puff Football Game (7:00-9:30pm)

October 22

- Homecoming football game vs. Hayfield (7:30pm)

October 23

- Homecoming dance (8:30-11:59pm)

October 26

- Underclassmen picture retakes

October 27

- Choral concert (Auditorium 7:30-10:00)

October 29

- First grading period ends

Continued from Front Page

was downgraded, officials still warned against its danger. Frances finally unleashed the pinnacle of its fury on Florida's southern and central parts September 4.

The destruction of Hurricane Frances resulted in ripped roofs off stores and homes, flattened gas station canopies and slammed moored boats against one another. Palm trees bent virtually horizontal in the wind. Fallen trees blocked roads and knocked out power lines, leaving 1.8 million customers without electricity. The storm also caused surge flooding up to five feet along Florida's coast. Florida's economy is also going to be hurt as a result of ravaged citrus groves and the damage turning away tourists from its beaches and theme parks.

To help with the damage, President Bush signed a bill allocating two billion dollars in emergency money to deliver disaster relief to areas reeling from the two hurricanes. The Red Cross also set up shelters in Florida after the wrath of Frances which housed more than 90,000 people in 349 shelters. FEMA Director Michael Brown led 70 men and woman, mostly from Virginia, to some of Florida's hardest hit areas. He and his coalition pitched tents and rolled out sleeping bags to help save lives.

Just as Frances' rage settled and Florida was able to start to clean up and move on, another storm was already causing chaos and destruction in the Cayman Islands and Grenada. Hurricane Ivan, a Category 5 tempest, made its way over the Caribbean, taking houses and 15 lives. The Hurricane seemed to be moving towards Florida, causing much grief and worry amongst the population. But instead, Ivan passed the western tip of Cuba and made its way into the Gulf of Mexico. Gulf coast residents boarded up their houses and braced for impact. Early Thursday, September 16, Ivan hit land in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. With the end of Hurricane season closing in on us, Florida residents return to their state and have no where to move but forward. ♦

Fall for These Shows

Adele Hampton
Asst. Business Manager

TV is one of the world's greatest inventions, and September is one of the year's greatest months. Because, that's right folks, now is the time we've all been waiting for, the season premiers of some of our favorite TV shows, and the series premier of new shows too.

One of those long awaited new shows is *Joey*, starring *Friends*' Matt LeBlanc. This spin-off of *Friends* follows the story of Joey Tribbiani as he goes off to Los Angeles to pursue acting. Joey joins up with his sister Gina and moves in with his 20-year-old rocket scientist nephew. In his new home Joey faces many personal and professional challenges making this show exciting and entertaining to watch. If you liked *Friends*, then I'm sure you'll like *Joey*. The season air on Thursdays at 8 pm on NBC.

The boss of all reality shows, *The Apprentice* is back again. Yes, the one and

only Donald Trump is "fired" up for a brand new season. There are eighteen new contestants from different backgrounds, including an Ivy League graduate and a contestant who has no college

background at all. At the beginning of the first show, Trump split the eighteen contestants into two teams of nine, men against women. Each team will not only have to live

together, but, will also have to compete against each other in painstaking tasks. Unlike last year, the tasks more rigorous and the stakes will be much higher. The second season of *The Apprentice* will air Thursdays at 9 pm.



Sophomores JJ Conway, Jana DeCoster, Sara Mathewson, and Mimi Conway watching TV.

Photo illustration by Houston Murphy

Anyone know where Vanuatu is? That's where the new eighteen new contestants for the mother of all reality TV shows are living for the next 39 days. Yes, *Survivor* is back surviving it's new season! Now

with eighteen new tribesmen to cheat, deceive, and conquer, the season promises to be intense. There can be only one ultimate survivor and with one million dollars up for grabs, there's no telling who will win. *Survivor Vanuatu: The Island of Fire* will air Thursdays at 8 pm.

There you have it, your new fall lineup, guaranteed to have you cringing, biting your nails, and screaming at the TV all at the same time because of its irresistible ability to pull you in and never let go. Don't miss it. ♦

A "Flippin' Sweet" Movie

Mark Peterman
Wire Reporter

Napoleon Dynamite is a delusional high school nerd who lives in his own fantasy world in a small town in Idaho. Napoleon has no friends and no skills, as well as no conception of just how much of a nerd he is. In fact, he actually thinks he is normal and at times even cool. He is so out of touch that in many cases the bullies and jocks don't know what to make of him, but of course this doesn't stop him from being randomly slammed into lockers.

This is a great film that people of all ages will enjoy. With Jon Heder playing Napoleon, Efrén Ramirez as Pedro, and Aaron Ruell as Kip this film promises to be an addicting comedy that you will watch again and again. Written and directed by Jared Hess, who also directed *Peluca*; another geek imitation film, and his wife Jerusha Hess.

Napoleon's 32-year-old brother Kip is a stay-at-home geek who spends most of his time chatting online with potential soul mates. Solely wearing golf shirts buttoned to the top with a matted down haircut, he sports a full set of braces and a pair of really big glasses. Kip is the textbook definition of a nerd.

When Napoleon meets Pedro, a new student at his high school,

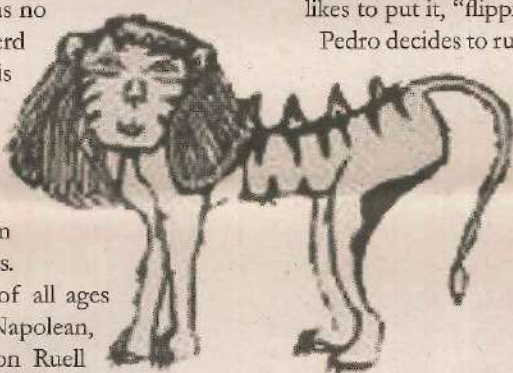


Photo credit by Katie Staples

it is a perfect match, for no two greater loners have existed. The film takes off as the two of them, as well as a fellow nerd named Deb, revel in the boring events of their lives. Through the eyes of Napoleon, even mundane things like Pedro's bike are, as he likes to put it, "flippin' sweet."

Pedro decides to run for President of the high school, and with Napoleon's advice and special brand of support the film climaxes in traditional revenge of the nerds fashion. Honestly, I couldn't even begin to say enough good things about this film. Just seeing Napoleon's name will have you laughing hysterically. When asked about his point of view, sophomore Michael Casey said he would "pay two times as much to see it again and I will

buy it the day it comes out." Frankly, explaining anything else would be an insanely pointless gesture, as you have to see the movie to believe it. The story is all about the characters and their trials and tribulations through one hilarious and trying portion of high school. Viewers get to live a day in the life of a nerd who doesn't realize that he's a nerd, as well as learn new things such as what a "liger" is. A cross between a lion and a tiger and "bred for it's magic," it's quite possibly Napoleon's favorite animal. You'll love this film, which is destined to be a classic for years to come. ♦

A Pleasant Little Place Called Peasant

Robin Harry
Business Manager

If you are into Italian food, from eggplant parmesan and fettuccini carbonara, to calamari and fresh subs, Pasta Peasant is the place to be.

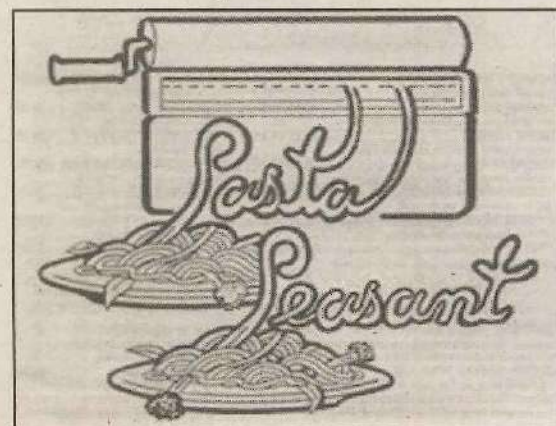


Photo by Evan Dobbs

This quaint little Italian restaurant, located in Old Town on 1024 Cameron Street, has been around for ten years. It began as a popular lunch spot but four

years after opening, added a dinner menu.

Lunch is served Monday through Friday from eleven to three. For lunch, most people order a sub, which you choose from a list of meats, breads, cheeses, and spreads. If you want some of their delicious pasta, they will be happy to make a lunch portion for you, which is only \$6.99.

Over the years, dinner has become the prime time to come grab a bite. On Tuesday through Thursday they are open for dinner from five to nine. On Friday and Saturday you can enjoy it from five to ten o'clock. Beware, this small place with only eight tables and six booths can fill up fast.

Like any true Italian restaurant, dinner starts with fresh bread that you can dip

in olive oil and parmesan cheese. It's hard to choose from the many delicious-sounding items on the menu. From pasta dishes such as stuffed ravioli, and chicken scaloppini, to pork tenderloin that smells delicious, there is something for everyone. There is even a section of the menu dedicated to vegetarians.

This place is so good you can even see a celebrity if you are lucky. Last year, actor Brendan Fraser, from *George of the Jungle*, was spotted in Pasta Peasant eating dinner with his family.

Regular Courtney Johnson said, "This place is my absolute favorite. Every birthday dinner I have, we eat here."

Overall, Pasta Peasant is a great family restaurant that has quality food at a great price. Whether you are looking for a reasonable place to eat before homecoming or just somewhere to fulfill your craving for Italian, this is the place to go. ♦

Brown Soars with Angels

Houston Murphy
Photo Editor

Rarely does an author, much less a very young author, hold two spots on the prestigious New York Times best-selling list. Dan Brown, author of *The Da Vinci Code* and *Angels and Demons*, has accomplished this, with the *Da Vinci Code* on the list for an impressive 77 weeks. *The Da Vinci Code*, as excellent as it is, shouldn't take anything away from its thrilling prequel, *Angels and Demons*.

Angels and Demons is a chilling story in which the main character, Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon, pairs up with the bold and mysterious scientist Vittoria Vetra in an attempt to save the world

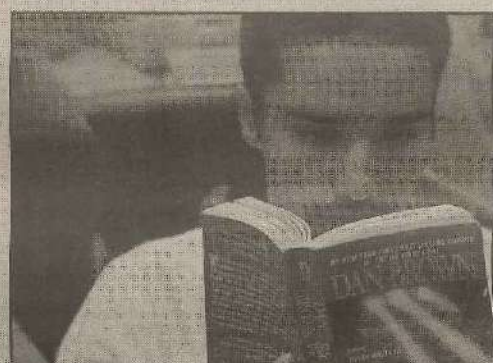


Photo illustration by Evan Dobbs

Photo Editor junior Houston Murphy enjoying his favorite book.

from potential disaster. The religious faith of many suddenly becomes threatened to be crippled at the hands of one of the most mysterious rebel groups in the history of the Catholic Church, the Illuminati. If Langdon and Vetra fail to solve the long cookie trail of clues left behind by the Illuminati, tragedy will dawn upon the public in unthinkable fashion.

This story is a magnificent adventure told through different characters' perspectives that will leave you wondering what possibly could happen next, as Brown writes an exciting and extremely intelligent story that is sure to keep you thinking. The imagery in this book can restore anyone's imagination, as it creates intense scenes that could keep someone with the slightest attention span captivated in the exhilarating story. With the use of conspiracy theories about the long-lost Illuminati and the Catholic Church integrated beautifully into the story, most of which have never been completely discounted, the reader is certain to speculate about whether there is truth to some of the plots in this fictitious adventure.

Dan Brown is quickly making history in the literature world, and is one of the most popular authors writing today. Not only are Brown and his stories popular for leisure reading, his books are already being assigned for students to read in school. Students at this school taking AP Literature had to choose between reading *The Da Vinci Code* and *Angels and Demons* as their books for their summer reading assignments. Most students welcomed the options of choosing these books to read, as opposed to the occasionally tedious reading required in school. Alison Arberg, a senior at this school taking AP Literature who has read both of the books for, said "It [*Angels and Demons*] was nice because it was fun and interesting compared to the dull books that are hard to get through."

Although *The Da Vinci Code* has received more publicity, *Angels and Demons* is clearly in the same class and will provide just as good of a read as its sequel. Patricia Clay, another senior taking AP Literature at this school said, "I read *The Da Vinci Code* first and I liked it so much that I decided to read *Angels and Demons*. I liked *Angels and Demons* more because I feel it contained more action." Anyone who enjoyed reading *The Da Vinci Code* absolutely should read *Angels and Demons* as well, as it is an underrated novel compared to *The Da Vinci Code* and all of its publicity. As Dan Brown creates his legacy early, he is clearly not a one-hit wonder. ♦

SUMMER GAMES ATHENS 2004

Phelps and great U.S. swimmers

American Michael Phelps will compete in as many as eight events at the Athens Games; the U.S. men's swimming medal leaders:

| Swimmer | Years | Gold | Silver | Bronze | Total |
|-----------------|------------------|------|--------|--------|-------|
| Mark Spitz | 1968, 1972 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 11 |
| Matt Biondi | 1984, 1988, 1992 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 11 |
| Gary Hall Jr. | 1988, 2000 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Charlie Daniels | 1904, 1908 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Tom Jager | 1984, 1988, 1992 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| Don Scholander | 1904, 1908 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 6 |

Michael Phelps

Note: Includes medals won on team and individual events.

Cover: USA Swimming, Keri Smith/USA Swimming, Graphic: Brian Lee/McCormack, Tom Hultberg

Summer School

Diana Blaszkievicz

Special to the Wire

For the few souls brave enough to wake up at 6 A.M. during break, summer school, in session from July 12-August 12, provided a way to retake classes failed during the school year or get a head start on the next year by

getting core courses out of the way. The classes, which ranged from Physics to SOL Remediation, lasted from 2 to 6 weeks. Caitlin Spangler, an 11th grader who took an SAT prep course at Edison, says, "Taking a summer school course was easy for me, because it gave me the class focus I needed without the distractions of the regular school year."

Bahama Mama!

Anum Jaffri

Special to the Wire

This summer, a fellow West Potomac sophomore, Rivers Johnson, had the opportunity to enjoy one week on a cruise to the Bahamas. There, he spent the

second week in August enjoying such luxuries as gourmet food, social events, snorkeling, kayaking, and various beachside activities while traveling on a "moving hotel." The ship takes passengers from Baltimore, MD, to the islands of Key West, Freeport,

and Cococay. When asked about the locals he met, Rivers said, "People everywhere are pretty much the same, except they drive on the other side of the road." If this kind of vacation sounds appealing to you, you can sign up at royalcaribbean.com.

Going for the Gold!

Joy Yoo

Wire Reporter

The highlight, by far, of this summer was the 2004-2005 Athens Olympics. With the opening ceremony, the seventeen days were jam-packed with inspirational races, controversial wins, and much more. Here's a little overview of what happened:

Undoubtedly, the star of all the swimming races was Michael Phelps. Even though he did not beat Spitz's record, Phelps has nothing else to prove. He won eight gold medals: six gold and two bronze. Unfortunately, the rest of the men's US team did not perform as well. Paul Hamm did win the gymnastics' all-around gold with a twist. His gold medal was due to a judging error, in which, South Korean gymnast Yang Tae Young should have won the gold instead. Then, there was the US men's "Dream Team, instead, this year, there was no dream team. The men's basketball had to finish with a bronze.

The women's basketball team, however, easily won the gold. Also, the women's softball team did not lose one game and finished with an easy gold. On another good note, the women's soccer team won a well-earned gold. Overall, the women's US teams proved to dominate, while, the men's teams had a different story.

The CD's We Bought

Beastie Boys - To The 5 Boroughs

Phish - Undermind

Lit - Lit

The Roots - The Tipping Point

The Hives - Tyrannosaurus Hives

The Killers - Hot Fuss

Modest Mouse - Good News for People Who Love Bad News

Nelly- Sweat and Suit

Taking Back Sunday - Where You Want To Be

Saliva - Survival Of The Sickest

Prodigy - Always Outnumbered...

Ashlee Simpson - Autobiography

Papa Roach - Getting Away With Murder

Bjork - Medulla

Summer in Re



Presidential Candidate John Kerry greets other Democrats with a friendly smile during the Democratic National Convention.

Marissa D'Orazio

Focus Editor

The Democratic National Convention was a major event this summer. Speakers included presidential nominee John Kerry, vice presidential candidate John Edwards, Bill Clinton, Madeline Albright, and Kerry's daughters, Alexandra and Vanessa Kerry. The Democratic Platform

for America was "Strong At Home, Respected in the World." Kerry's speech highlighted his service in the Vietnam War. There was an immense turnout of young people at the convention, and many college interns worked (and partied) there. The atmosphere of the convention was very party-like and upbeat, and an unforgettable event for all of those who attended.



English teacher Mary Mathewson overboard and sophomore Sara Mathewson with senior Caitlin Caggins' little sister fight to stay in the raft.

Photo Courtesy of the Mathewson Family

Adventures Abroad

Marissa D'Orazio

Focus Editor

Summer vacations were not simply limited to Six Flags and the beach. Senior Joy Yoo and her brother sophomore Jon Yoo traveled all the way to their parents' country of birth, South Korea. Jon Yoo said on of the trip, "Now that I



think of my two week stay in Seoul and Jeju Island in Korea, I can recall the funny looks that I got from people, the gorgeous mountains and temples, the markets selling all kinds of fake brands, and thinking that I couldn't be Korean because I was so different. Of course I had relatives who I couldn't even communicate with, but the most important thing that I learned

was how important it is to go back to your roots, and realize how important your motherland is to you."



Sophomore Jon Yoo in Korea.

Photo Courtesy of the Yoo Family

Up a Creek!

Sara Mathewson

Special to the Wire

Eleventh grade English teacher Mary Mathewson went with family and friends on a whitewater rafting trip in Harper's Ferry this summer on class 2 to 3 rapids. Halfway through the trip, at the second

rapids known as the Bull Falls, the boat she was in got stuck in the current between two rocks. The boat was being submerged in about three feet of water, with all of the passengers still in it. A guide from another boat told Mrs. Mathewson to jump out of the boat, and as she did, the boat

broke free. The boat whipped around and knocked two other passengers out of the boat.

"I haven't felt like that since I was 20 years old," said Mathewson. Overall, she says that riding the rapids was fun, and she would do it again in a heartbeat.

Learning in the Summer?

Marissa D'Orazio

Focus Editor

Who wants to go to school during the summer? Believe it or not, many people want to. Tenth and eleventh grade students all across the state of Virginia apply for positions in 3-5 week Governor's schools, completely free of charge. These positions are very competitive, and an impressive amount of West Potomac students attended this summer.

Senior Beatrice Capestany got the chance to attend Governor's School for Agriculture at Virginia Tech for three weeks in July. She said on the matter, "Governor's school was one of the most unique experiences of my life. Sticking my hand in a cow's rumen, castrating baby pigs, climbing trees, going on hikes, and propagating about 20 plants were only a few of the activities that were offered. Although to the typical person these things seem like little or no fun, it was a blast. I hope to put some of the knowledge acquired to use in the near future."

Senior Stuart Trouton stayed at Christopher Newport University in Newport News for NASA Governor's school. He worked at the NASA Langley Research Center (LaRC) in the materials and processing center. Out of all of the students across the state who applied, Trouton was one out of 14 who made the cut. He said on the experience, "I enjoyed working in the field next to real world scientists with whom I shared an interest. I worked with a mentor 90% of the time, but I also got to go to lectures and tours, including the tour of a wind tunnel. We also got to visit where they test the space shuttle tires (Aircraft Landing Dynamics Facility). The best part was spending time with the other students in the dorms. It really made me look forward to college."

Summer view



President Bush outlines a few main points of his platform to an excited crowd during the Republican National Convention.

Clive Kennedy/ASNE

Milica Wren

Special to the Wire

The Republican National Convention was also a major happening this past summer. There are always two points of view in any story, and, at this year's Republican National Convention held in New York City, one of these views was through chain-link

barbed wire. For the 250,000 protestors who flocked to Madison Square Garden the week of August 30-September 2, security crowd control were stringent. Inside the convention, Bush focused on building up the nation's economy, spreading freedom throughout the world, and the his campaign slogan of "Moving America Forward."

The Movies We Watched

Spider-Man 2

The Stepford Wives

The Terminal

White Chicks

Spider-Man 2

Anchorman

I, Robot

Catwoman

The Bourne Supremacy

The Village

Collateral

The Princess Diaries 2

Alien vs. Predator

Football Team Looks For A Boost

Struggling Team Works to Improve the Offense and Defense

Mark Peterman

Wire Reporter

Last year, this school's football team didn't do as well as they had hoped during the season, but that will all change if new head coach Eric Henderson has anything to say about it. With the addition of new freshmen and rigorous training six days a week, all three teams hope to achieve far greater



These four fans braved the below average temperatures to find a creative way of supporting the team.

heights then in previous years.

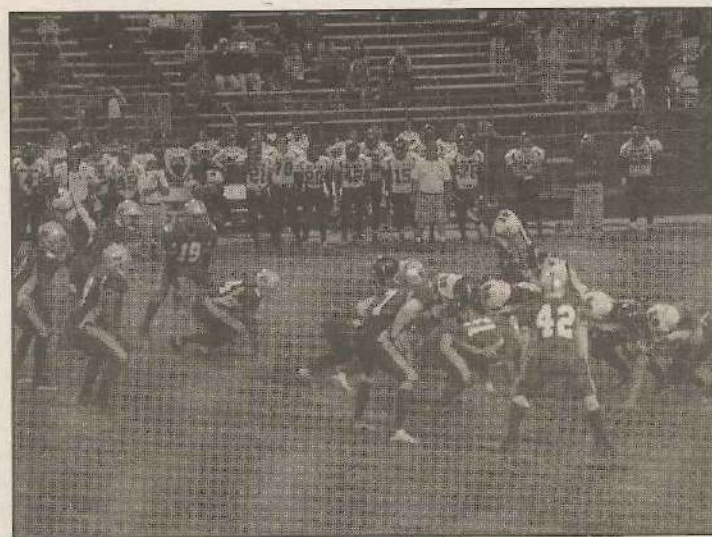
The varsity squad seems to have improved since last year, despite their recent losses to Lee and Mount Vernon. When asked about how the losses will affect the rest of the season,

junior Corey Smith said, "Well, actually, I believe this loss will give us the motivation to get better as a team." The loss of quite a few seniors this year, thirteen to be exact, didn't seem to affect them at first, and only time will tell whether it does in the end.

Every player wants to succeed as much as Henderson and his new coaches, but not all of them have had an equal opportunity. Sophomore Chris Curenton, a lineman on the JV team, broke his big toe during a drill at practice a few weeks ago. He has been in a hard cast for about five weeks and still has a week left, which will keep him out of the first few games. When asked about how he felt, Curenton responded, "I'm disappointed that I'm missing games, and I can't wait to hit someone."

On Tuesday, the JV team played T.C. Williams at George Washington middle school. They were beaten 24-14 and had fourteen penalties in the course of the whole game. There were also several injuries so there will be some personnel changes on the team. Tyrone Struthers, the new JV head coach, said that the season has "has been a struggle but we have improved and hope to continue to do so." Their next game is at home on Thursday, September 30th against Robinson.

The freshmen also have a new head coach by the name of Wayne Washington, and the team seemed to be off to a good start after beating Lee in a scrimmage. They then proceeded to lose to Lake Braddock 21-0, which was a big surprise. Washington has surrounded himself with some



The defense lines up in an all important play against Mount Vernon. Unfortunately the game resulted in a loss 14-6.

new assistants, including Wayne Washington Jr., Harold Perry and Rick Hendry.

This is not Henderson's first year involved with Wolverine football. He was an assistant coach at this school in 2001 and 2002 under former head coach John Howerton, who is now the coach at Langley. Henderson is a 1985 graduate of Fort Hunt High School and lives in Waywood with his family. He is pleased to be back at this school and so are some of the players. Junior Justin Wilson said, "He's done a great job of working hard to turn the program around and restore West Potomac's prestige."

After all the changes and adjustments to the teams, the only people that can really change anything are the players and the fans. Only time will tell if the many changes to the program will result in a more successful season than the last. ♦

SPORTS CALENDAR

Monday, September 27

Varsity Volleyball Game 7:15 p.m. At Annandale

Tuesday, September 28

Varsity Field Hockey Game 7:30 p.m. Home vs Jefferson

Wednesday, September 29

Varsity Field Hockey Game 7:30 p.m. Home vs T.C. Williams
District Golf 1st Round 9:00 a.m. Twin Lakes

Thursday, September 30

District Golf 2nd Round 9:00 a.m. Twin Lakes
Varsity Volleyball Game 7:15 p.m. At Herndon

Friday, October 1

Varsity Football Game 7:30 p.m. At Robinson

Saturday, October 2

Cross Country 9:00 a.m. The Plains, VA

Monday, October 4

Varsity Field Hockey Game 7:30 p.m. At West Springfield

Tuesday, October 5

Cross Country Meet 5:00 p.m. At South Run
Varsity Volleyball Game 7:15 p.m. Home vs Lake Braddock

Wednesday, October 6

Varsity Field Hockey Game 7:30 p.m. Home vs Hayfield



Rebuilding a Tradition

Last year was this school's first losing season for the football team in nineteen years of play. Long gone are the nationally-ranked and State Championship teams of '89 and '90. Now the team must make somewhat of a turnaround in order to compete within the district. While already off to a rocky start, there is still time to salvage the rest of the season with eight games to go.

Last Two

at Lee L, 18-20
vs Mt. Vernon L, 6-14

Upcoming Games

at Robinson 10/1/04
vs Herndon 10/8/04
at West Springfield 10/15/04

Captain's Corner



Photo by Houston Murphy

With the district tournament approaching for us we are hoping to peak at just the right time to give us a berth in the regional tournament. Our team, coached by Chris Tippins, hopes to surprise the rest of the division after inconsistent performances in our matches throughout the season.

~Senior Jason Yaworske, golf



Photo by Houston Murphy

We started out victorious against Mt. Vernon, Fairfax, and Lake Braddock. However our winning streak ended when we lost to Robinson. It's hard for my co-captains and me to keep the team motivated because we lost so many valuable players last year. Our goal for the season is to get a banner to go in the gym.

~Senior Kelly Robinson, volleyball

Field Hockey Makes The Leap

Determined team strive for early victories under senior leadership

Joy Yoo

Wire Reporter

Where can you find eighteen girls in pleated skirts? At a field hockey game. This year, with the new coaching of Betty Sixsmith, the varsity field hockey team has already surpassed last year's record of only two wins. Without a doubt, the field hockey team is off to a good start and is looking forward to a very successful season.

After their third game of the season, the varsity field hockey team is undefeated with a 4-0 record after defeating Mount Vernon, Wakefield, and Yorktown. At the season's outset, the girls were off to a good start by coming away with an easy win in their scrimmage against South Lakes. "I think that our team's going to do pretty well this season, especially since we had a good preseason and beginning of the season," said junior Emily Macklin. All of the field hockey girls are very enthusiastic about their up and coming season, especially junior Dana Wernecke. Wernecke said, "The whole team has a lot more confidence in the coaching this year. Last year, there were no high hopes. The confidence in our coaching that we have this year really helps us win more games, because it gives

us more confidence in our own playing."

The coaching staff this year consists of a mother-daughter pair. Head coach Sixsmith previously coached a team that went as far as the Regional competition. In addition, Sixsmith's daughter, Erin Sixsmith, provides the team with a lot of experience and insight as a former field hockey player at Division 3 Longwood University. Senior Carson Dougherty says of the coaches, "It's the first time, in four years, that I've ever had a coach who has actually focused and drilled us on what we need to work on. The enthusiasm from Coach Sixsmith is contagious to the entire team. During practice, the team is actually willing to work and get stuff done. That's mainly why we're doing so well this season."

Along with the qualified coaching staff, the field hockey girls are led by senior captains Megan Vlasho, Ansley LaBarre, and Crystal Duffield. Vlasho praises the team: "Our team has improved so much just in the past few weeks, which really shows how the coaches can better the weaknesses. It's really exciting to be winning all our games and be undefeated. I have high hopes for the rest of our season. I feel we have a good chance to make

it far this season, especially in Districts."

Another factor in the girls' success this year is the teamwork and friendship within the team. It is obvious that the field hockey girls are close-knit and in sync with each other, on and off the field. When walking down the halls, it is easy to notice the girls in their warm-ups and tied-eye shirts, and they are not only teammates but close friends. This is a major factor in their undefeated season.

In addition to the varsity girls, the JV field hockey team holds a winning record this season. Clearly, the JV girls have a lot to offer as a future Varsity team members. JV coach Patricia Olsen displays the same enthusiasm as both Coach Sixsmiths do. It seems the competitiveness of West Potomac field hockey has become contagious.

To close up the season, the varsity field hockey girls serve as potential playoff contenders in the Patriot District tournament. The field hockey team has a lot to offer this season besides defeating their two-game winning record from last year. It is apparent that all eighteen players are very optimistic about 2004-2005 season. ♦



Photo by Houston Murphy

Turning a Corner

The field hockey team is now off to a 4-0 start. Last year, the team only won two games and lost eleven. Transition of the coaching staff is a large part of the team's success, as well as senior leadership.

This Season's Record

| | |
|---------------|----------|
| at Mt. Vernon | 2-1 (OT) |
| at Yorktown | 1-0 |
| vs Wakefield | 4-1 |
| at Stuart | 5-1 |

Cross Country: Going the Distance

A Fast Start and Team Unity Give Positive Outlook for the Season

Katie Staples

Features Editor

This year's cross country team shows definite potential for a District Championship as a team, with many individuals going further. According to boys' team captain, junior Tyler Gray, with top runners like senior Nick Jachowski, junior Frank Devar, and himself, this year's boy runners are capable of placing as high as top three at Regionals. "Individually, we'll have a lot of runners who compete at States. The top five boys should be reaching times as low as fifteen or sixteen minutes for three miles," said Gray.

Girls' team captain, senior Laura Regensburg, is hoping to get a time below nineteen minutes,

and she believes varsity runners juniors Kristina Dahmann and Diana Burk are capable of sub-twenty minute times as well.

Every day, the team meets for two-hour practices after school, consisting of warm-up mileage and a long-distance run preceding a trip to the weight room to work out. "The training is rigorous, much harder than my previous two years," said junior Brad Dalton, adding, "we average six to eight miles per day, plus we do weight training, track workouts and bounds [form drills]." Burk said that one of her hardest workouts was a three-mile warm-up, five-mile run, and six 300-meter sprint intervals on the track. "We're working really hard this season, and hopefully our hard work will pay off. The girls' cross country team has a chance to make it out of Districts to the Regional meet this year," said Burk. This would be a giant step for the girls' team, which has struggled the past few years with competition such as Lake Braddock, Hayfield, and Robinson in the same district.

With improved runners on the varsity team, Regionals and even State meet qualifications are in reach for the boys' team.

"The boys' team has a unique connection, in the sense that everyone works together as a family," said Dalton. The girls also show a sense of togetherness

from living together ten days at Camp Leelanua Running Camp in Michigan in August. Camp helped prepare both the boys' and girls' team runners for their season with heavy pre-season training. Some athletes even ran over 60 miles in



Photo by Katie Staples

The JV boys get off to a fast start at the beginning of the race. The team fared well in the 3.1 mile event.

that week and a half. "We put in a lot of mileage and got to know our teammates really well," said junior Amara Lewis.

The team's bonding is shown by several of their out-of-practice activities. "The girls are starting yoga classes to learn new stretches," said Regensburg. "A lot of the boys on the team go to the movies together," said Gray.

With the closeness of the team and the vastly improved times, the outlook is good for the school's cross country team. ♦



Photo by Katie Staples

Varsity runners and brothers, junior Dan and senior Nick Jachowski stretch prior to their race.

In the Numbers

2

Matches lost by only one stroke by the golf team this season.

9

Place in the Monroe Parker Invitational by Frank Devar with a time of 15 minutes, 45 seconds.

14

Penalties called against the junior varsity football team in a 14-24 loss to T.C. Williams.

12

Total games won by the volleyball team in their first five games. The team only conceded 4.

24

Athletes stripped of medals at the Athens Olympics over the summer, setting a new record.

A Day in the Life of... A Freshman Survives First Three Weeks

Joy Yoo
Wire Reporter

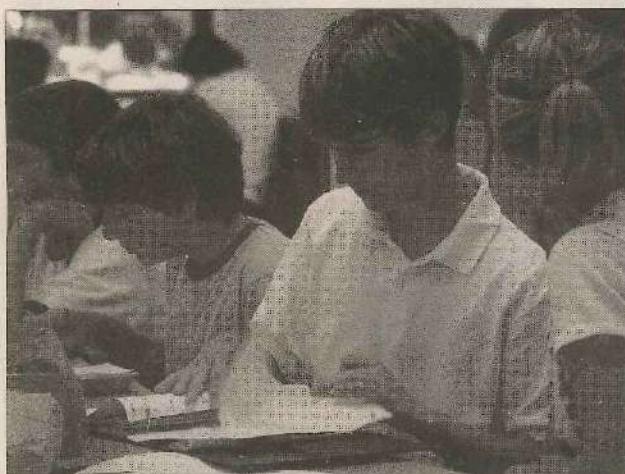


Photo by Evan Dobbs

Freshman year can cause much grief. Even though you're in high school, you're beginning at the bottom of the pyramid. Everyone is older than you; there are the snotty sophomores, jaded juniors, and those, oh so, super seniors. Imagine being a frantic freshman, who can't even find his/her way to their fourth period class and it's already the second week of school.

Let me introduce you to Derek Barrera: he is a candidate for freshman class vice president. What's a typical day like for this freshman? According to Barrera, "It's no different than my middle school days except for the crowded hallways, and all these older people. Frankly, it's sort of degrading that they treat me like an animal when they were in the same place three years ago." Freshmen have lives just like the rest of the students, at least according to Barrera.

As a brand new face, Barrera is challenging himself with many difficult courses, like Biology Honors and Debate. Even with a tough schedule, Barrera is looking forward to running for vice president of the freshmen class. Aside from school, Barrera loves skateboarding and spending time with friends.

Barrera's fellow freshman friends are enthusiastic about spending freshman year with him. Hillary Goldstein describes Derek as "an energetic, hilarious person." Even with his fun side, Meredith Maple said, "Derek is a rally great guy and would be a great class vice president. He is a hard-working guy, and he's funny and always knows how to make you smile." Barrera knows to keep his studying and leisure in balance.

A typical day of this freshman's life includes school, friends, and extracurricular activities. Barrera wakes up in the mornings, dreading school just like the majority of students. After taking the bus and arriving at school, Barrera tries to spend time with his friends at every single spare moment in between classes, at lunch, during class, or whenever. In class, Barrera is often found active in discussion. At the same time, teachers are often forced to quiet Barrera and his friends down. Barrera always looks forward to the lunch bell: a time where he can "chow down" on his lunch as well as everyone else's. Finally, when the 2:05 bell rings, he rushes out of that school as quick as his feet can take him and, once again, meets up with his friends to skateboard or just hang

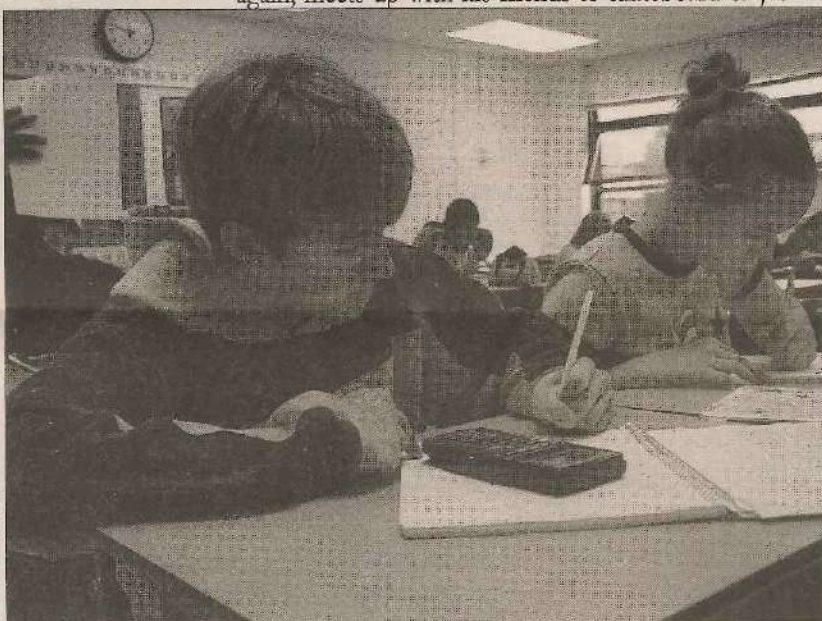


Photo by Evan Dobbs

out. After a while, Barrera returns home for dinner and tries to procrastinate doing his homework as long as possible. Like any other teenage boy, sleep is the most important to Barrera; he tries to get at least eight to nine hours of sleep

a night, if he is similar to your

For Barrera, this change during the because he will the school crew team. now, homework, and family are the main activities in his life, and, of course, sleep and food. "Being tied down

lucky. Sound schedule?

will most likely spring season, hopefully be joining. However, for friends,

with the homework is probably the worst feeling ever. You can't do

anything at all; you just have to sit at home and study. Who likes that?" said Barrera. On those rare days when math problems and English projects aren't holding him down, Barrera can usually be found at the basketball courts, being a normal fourteen-year-old.

For the most part, being a freshman is what everyone has to go through, whether you like it or not. "It definitely has its ups-and-downs," said Barrera. "The new environment and scary teachers are sometimes intimidating but easy to get used to."

Trust me, the year will eventually end. When you look back, you'll decide that your freshman year wasn't so bad; it was actually, I don't know, maybe even a little fun. As hypocritical as it sounds, the best thing about freshman year is that next year you can give the new freshmen a bit of a hard time. The cycle starts over once again, except now, you're not at the bottom of the pyramid, and instead, you're moving your way up to the top. It's just tradition. ♦

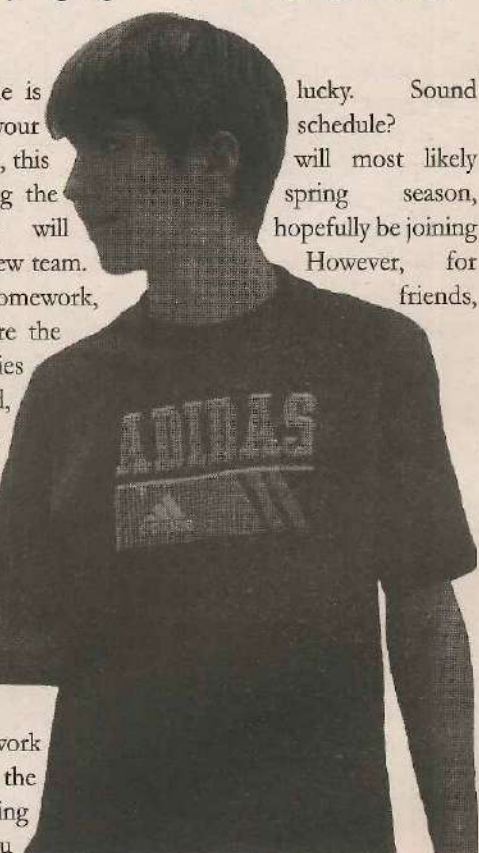


Photo edited by Katie Staples

Homecoming Events

Monday, October 18- "Beads & Boas" Day
Lunch Activity: "Find the Beads" Pie-eating Contest

Tuesday, October 19- Powder-puff Day
Lunch Activity: Hula-hoop Contest

Wednesday, October 20- College Paraphernalia Day
Lunch Activity: Freeze Dance Contest

Thursday, October 21- Twin Day
Lunch Activity: Musical Chairs

Friday, October 22- School Spirit Day
Lunch Activity: Face Painting
Homecoming Game: 7:30pm

State of the Arts

Green Day
Nation
Washington, D.C.
October 31

Incubus
Merriweather Post Pavilion
Columbia, MD
October 11

SR-71
The Recher Theatre
Towson, MD
October 10

Beastie Boys
Patriot Center
Fairfax, VA
October 8

Insane Clown Posse
Nation
Washington, D.C.
October 13

Gavin DeGraw
The Recher Theatre
Towson, MD
October 17

Brooks & Dunn
Nissan Pavilion
Bristow, VA
October 17

Social Distortion
Nation
Washington, D.C.
October 18

Metallica
MCI Center
Washington, D.C.
October 17

Vanessa Carlton
Birchmere
Alexandria, VA
November 1

Best of Both Worlds
Tour: R-Kelly & Jay-Z
MCI Center
Washington, D.C.
October 7

Local Bands Are Far From Falling Out of Reach

Evan Dobbs

Photo Editor

This school is known for its talented arts department, and many students excel musically outside of school as well as in the classroom. This school plays host to several talented bands who are on the rise in the local scene. The following groups are just a small sampling of the many musicians who walk our halls.

One group that is starting out fresh at this school is the freshman band Take No Prisoners. This band was formed nine months ago, and it has outlasted many garage bands' lifespans.

Although only freshmen, Graham Jenkins on drums/lead vocals and Kyle Marshall on lead guitar played in a group prior to Take No Prisoners. Fellow freshmen and band members, Jake McKonzle on rhythm guitar, Paul Disselkoe, also on rhythm guitar, and Joe Bradley on bass, joined soon after.

This group's major influences are old school, including the Sex Pistols and the Ramones, with a little hint of Green Day and early Blink 182. This band not only wants to get its music to the public, it also has a message. "It isn't about boyfriend-girlfriend crap," says Jenkins. "It's more about the government, and social issues. Those are the things we should really be focusing on."

One band that is quite popular in this area, The Fall of Reach, is on everybody's local A-list. The Fall of Reach can be said to have a 'dream team' of players, including West Potomac juniors Ernest Recker on the guitar and Mike Larrick

when asked about the status of his former band. He continued, "We are most likely going to make a return with a different feel, but our main focus for now is The Fall of Reach." Recker and Larrick were joined by senior Sam Besenbach on vocals and Hayfield junior Joe Coniglio on guitar to form The Fall of Reach.

With its music traveling through the local underground, the group does its best to get a point across. "Through our lyrics, we try to stray from stories of failed love and focus on things that matter, like pirates and the terror that a tiger attack would bring," said Larrick. The band's influences are not mainstream, and include groups from Deadwater Drowning to Through the Eyes of the Dead.

Students who are interested in seeing The



Photo by Chris Kelly

Members of the band The Fall of Reach, practice frequently in drummer Mike Larrick's basement.



Photo by Chris Kelly

Fall of Reach drummer junior Mike Larrick prepares for an upcoming show.

on drums. Both Recker and Larrick were previously in the band the Corridor Relapse, which enjoyed considerable popularity, as well as several names, over the past couple of years. "The Corridor Relapse was absolutely great and amazing. I miss it somewhat, there just was a very long weird hiatus," said Recker

Fall Of Reach can see them on September 25th at the Spotlight in Woodbridge. Anyone who can't make the show can purchase the band's EP from Larrick, Recker, or Besenbach.

There are many more groups at this school besides these, and any student who wished to hear local music of their preferred genre could probably find something to satisfy their tastes. It's only a matter of looking around the musically gifted student body.

The Lowdown on Low-Carbs

Marissa D'Orazio

Focus Editor

Would you rather have a hot bod or a hot flame-broiled burger on a towering sesame bun full of carbohydrates?

That's the mentality of the millions of Americans who embrace low-carb diets. But do we really know everything involved with this new fad?

For those of you who are dying to have a Barbie figure, let's just say these diets are a little...confusing. Once you adapt to one of these rigorous lifestyle changes, you'll wonder if you could pass the AP Dieting test.

It's not just as simple as cutting carbs and increasing protein intake. Strict measuring is involved, and you must follow a tight schedule of increasing and decreasing carb intake each week. Like an AP class, if you cheat, it will catch up to you (in the thighs, I've heard!).

The two most common low-carb diets at the moment are the South Beach and Atkins diets. Both diets are divided into weight-loss phases. The South Beach Diet has three phases, while the Atkins Diet has four.

In Phase 1 of the South Beach Diet, all carbs are

completely restricted; however, you can eat normal portions of meals. The recommended major source of nutrients lies within lean meat, such as chicken or shellfish. In Phase 2, carbs are slowly reintroduced into the diet. Once you lose the desired amount of weight, you move on to phase 3: the maintenance phase, where you simply eat a healthy, balanced diet.

The Atkins diet is very similar, but a bit more exact. In Phase one, the induction period, you reduce your carb intake to 20 grams a day. After a few weeks, you move on to phase 2, where you began taking in 25 grams a week, and add 5 grams each day week until weight loss stops. Then you subtract 5 grams a week to continue controlled weight loss. Once your weight loss becomes sustained, you still eat very few carbs, and mostly a well-balanced diet.

The most crucial difference between the diets is the Atkins diet actually doesn't conform to The American Heart Association's Dietary Guidelines for a healthy heart, while the South Beach diet has won the Association's support.

Low-Carb diets are targeted at losing weight fast. They're

like the get-rich-quick scheme of weight loss. And, like a get-rich-quick scheme, they fail to recognize long-term effects.

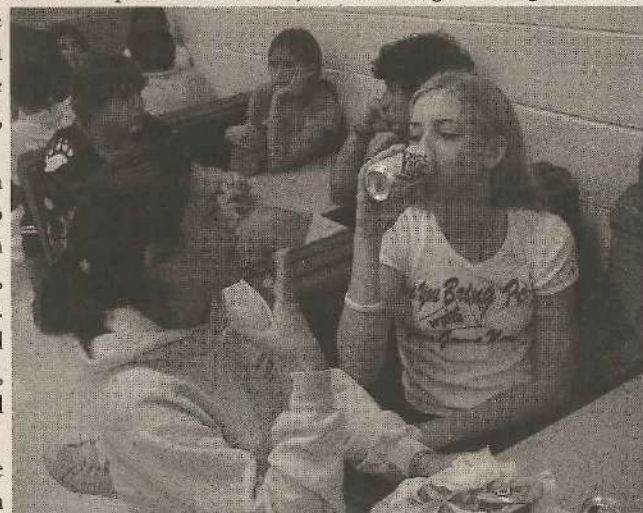


Photo by Evan Dobbs

Sophomore girls enjoy Diet Coke, during lunch to limit their carb intake.

Although a low-carb diet makes you lose more pounds after six months than a regular low calorie diet, after a year, the amount of weight loss would be the same.

One "I Love The 90's" host expressed his skepticism on the Atkins diet: "The Atkins diet was supposed to be this really great thing where you'd eat only meat and lose a lot of weight...because you'd die."

Both of Junior John Henry Williams' parents tried the Atkins Diet. When asked if they claimed to feel healthier, he said, "My stepmom does, but my dad doesn't. She forces him; he thinks it doesn't work. He doesn't like eating vegetables. Maybe it's a woman thing." He did say, though, both of his parents had lost a considerable amount of weight within months.

Low-carb diets use fat for energy instead of carbs. This can lead to kidney problems, gout, and headaches. Also, eating a large amount of red meats can cause bad level of cholesterol.

If you are planning to start a low-carb diet, you should probably check with a doctor to see if this kind of diet is right for you. It is also recommended that you check on cholesterol, insulin, blood pressure, and triglycerides often while on these diets.

FIVE GUYS
BURGERS and FRIES

Movie- "Animal House." It's a classic comedy that shows John Belushi at his finest. After a drama-filled evening, this is the perfect movie to help you relax and laugh away all your stress, especially during newspaper lagout!

TV Show- "CSI: Miami." Regular "CSI" and the new "CSI: New York" have nothing on Miami. It has the sunny beaches of Florida and much more character development compared to the other two.



CD- Autobiography. Ashlee Simpson used her sister's fame for good cause. Her CD played on my CD player all summer. The fact her name is spelled the same way as mine makes me LOVE to hate her!

Restaurants- Five Guys. Now that there is a new location close to school and home, I make any excuse to go and get some of their awesome cajun fries. Yum!!!

Book- Go Ask Alice This anonymously written novel is a real-life diary. It begins with an innocent game of "Button, Button, Where's the Button?" at a party, and ends with the main character in an institution without fingernails, broken toes, missing clamps of hair and a skull fracture.

The A-List

Newcomb Names her Number Ones

Ms. President

Sarah Raser

Wire Reporter

Vanessa Alvarez, a well known name amongst the halls of West Potomac. It is clear that she is a natural born leader, but why? How is she such a great role model to the many freshmen this year? From my interview with her, I realize why.



Photo by Houston Murphy

Senior Class President, ROTC member, working girl, and volunteer Vanessa Alvarez.

"She's a very sweet and fun person and that personality comes out in her dedication and leadership," said senior Carson Dougherty.

After taking on the role of class president, Vanessa has a very challenging role in respecting the seniors' wishes for an awesome graduation. "It's hard to organize fundraisers and raise the money needed for senior year. We have to make \$45,000 dollars this year, and currently we only have \$5,000." It is a big job for her to get the people involved and raise the money in time. "Leadership is my favorite class because I learn what is needed in order to reach our economic goals. I also get a sense of pride because we help out with the community a lot."

Along with leadership, Vanessa also takes part in different activities not school-related. "Not only is she a dedicated worker, she has a genuine and unique personality and is truly sincere in all of her efforts," said senior Alison Arberg. Vanesa is a member of the Raider Team, a part of ROTC that focuses on a cadet's physical strength and leadership skills. She works at Michael's during the week and volunteers at her church on the weekends. She inspires to be like her mom since she is the one who Vanessa has looked up to her whole life. "My mother is an amazing person.

She works two jobs, just to support my siblings and me."

Vanessa takes pride in her family and her Mexican heritage. She takes AP Spanish Language, known to be one of the most difficult AP's out there. "I want to learn more about my language and the culture behind it." Her favorite music to listen to is Spanish rap and loves the Mexican food her mother makes.

In the future, Vanessa plans to go to Marymount

"Vanesa's an extremely hard worker who has an enthusiasm that spreads to all those around her."

~ Tricia Clay

University and study medicine. She hopes one day to become a doctor to help the people who need it the most. "Vanesa's an extremely hard worker who has an enthusiasm that spreads to all those around her," said senior Tricia Clay. From this, it is apparent that we can expect great things from Vanessa Alvarez, and she will be one of the future leaders of this country. ♦

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Hot Rod Morrison

Ashlee Newcomb

Style Editor

For most high school students in Fairfax County, the school year started on September 7th. However, for senior Rodney Morrison the year began weeks before. While most students were going back-to-school shopping, Morrison was at West Potomac practicing on the 50 yard line alongside fellow varsity football Wolverines.

As a senior, Morrison has a load of weight on his shoulders. Getting good grades, finding the right college and

"He's a great kid. I'd take him on a canoeing trip."

~Coach Eric Henderson

making your senior the best of your high school career are just the beginning.

Along with being the team's middle linebacker and halfback, he is the team's co-captain along with *The Wire's* Jeff Snyder. Morrison has been in the Wolverines football program since he

first walked on campus as a freshman. He has played several different positions throughout his high school years, including fullback, offensive linebacker, halfback and defensive end for two years.

Outside of playing for this school, Morrison played in the Northern Virginia Flag Football Association (NVFFA) league, a spring and summer league, for the L.A. Sharks. On his private league he held the positions middle linebacker and free safety. However, football is not his life. "After a game, if I have enough energy I usually go chill with the boys. On Saturdays I usually make an effort to see my lady. Sundays are just unwind days where I relax, and get ready for another week," said Morrison.

Morrison's relationship with his teammates is not limited to the field. "He's a cool person to chill with, and that relationship off the field makes it that much stronger when you are on the field," said Derrick Baker.

Morrison is also taking AP Government with none other than his head football coach Eric Henderson, or, as many know him, "Hendo." When asked what he thought of his team captain, all Henderson could reply with was, "He's a great kid. I'd take him on a canoeing trip." He also said, "He is very hard working and intense. Rodney can be a great player and leader and we are look for a great season from him."

Juggling challenging courses and a hectic football schedule may be difficult for some students. However, Morrison has seemed to find some way of balancing it all out. "It's a lot more difficult than I thought at first. I come home tired and bruised from practice, and go right into studying and doing homework for my course. I'm not complaining though, it is what I chose," said Morrison.

Similar to his coach, football and history holds a place in Morrison's



Photo by Houston Murphy

Football captain, linebacker, and halfback, Rodney Morrison.

future. "If I had my choice I'd go to UVA. After graduation, saying I don't play ball, I would study to become a history professor. I've always enjoyed the class, and I would love to study as well as teach it," said Morrison.

Morrison may someday make a positive impact on future students but as of right now, he is making it on the scoreboard. ♦

Freshmen class
**Promote the
Vote**
September 28th
Freshmen Class
Officer Elections

Sensational
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