

# The Commonwealth Times

Is Amul the  
cause of fall  
break?  
Page 19



2003-2004 SGA senators: Complete list, Page 6.

## News

*Alpha Phi  
Omega: Doing  
nice things for  
students and  
the community*

Page 3

## Bob



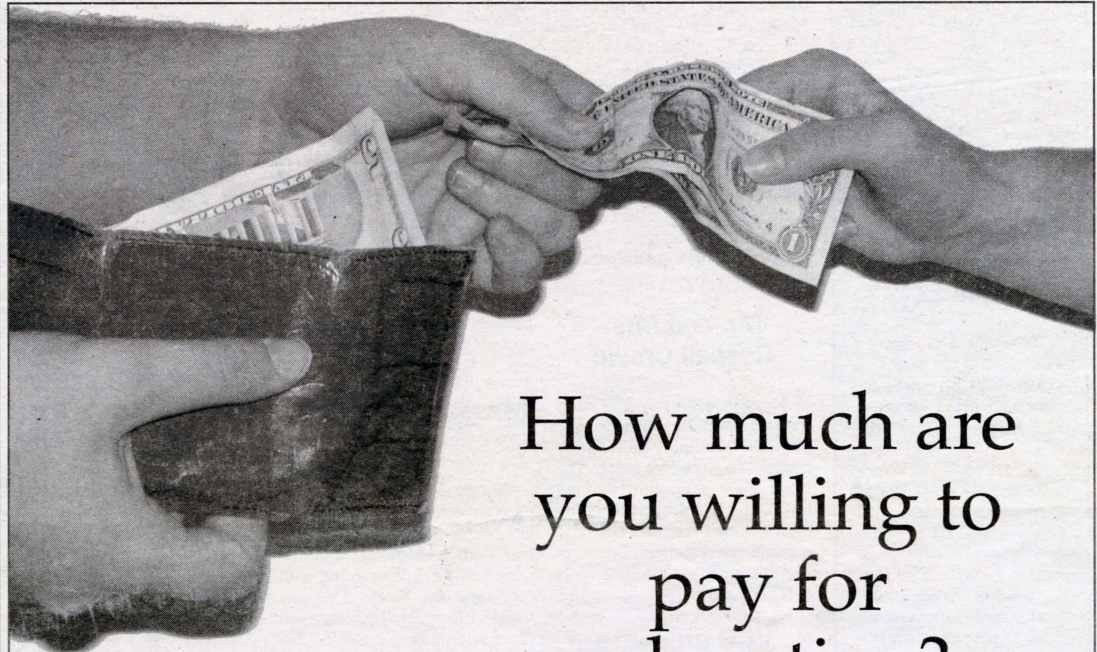
Bob's  
exclusive  
interview  
with Mr.  
Magic 8  
Ball.

Page 9

## Sports

*Is baseball truly  
the world's long-  
est season?*

Page 8



## How much are you willing to pay for education?

*In times of economic crisis, tuition at state colleges  
could be raised by more than 5 percent.*

Page 3

## Spectrum

Your guide to arts and entertainment.



VCU's  
Intercultural  
Festival  
provided  
educational  
entertainment.

Page 13

*Longwave has a little way to go.*



Page 14

*Gabe Garcia, Chris Strauser, Brian  
Borg and Rus Martin make up the  
lukewarm Hotwire.*

H  
O  
T  
W  
I  
R  
E



Page 14



# IN BRIEF

## CALENDAR

**Thursday,  
April 10**

**NASCAR Winston Cup driver Jeff Gordon** will speak at the Salvation Army Annual Dinner, which will begin at 6 p.m. at the Richmond Marriott. Tickets are \$100. 421-3304, 500 E. Broad St.

**Duke University's Anne Allison** will speak about on "Japanese Monsters in Millennial Capitalism at Randolph-Macon College at 7:30p.m. 752-3712, 306 Henry St.

**Friday,  
April 11**

Current and prospective VCU students can listen to a lecture about the various **radiation sciences** programs at VCU at 3 p.m. 828-9104, 701 W. Grace St. Room 2141

VCU's Alpha Kappa Lambda fraternity is making their own AKLtraz in the Student Commons. Everyone who donates money to Safe Harbor, which is an organization focused on fighting domestic violence, will get to imprison someone of their choice. The prisoner then has to post bail to be released. This will go on from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Saturday,  
April 12**

"Richmond Forum: U.S. Senator Fred Thompson" gives Richmonders an opportunity to discuss important issues with a person who can make a difference. It will begin at 8 p.m. in the Landmark Theater. Tickets range from \$25 to \$40. 330-3993, 6 N. Laurel St.

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## Germans protest English words

In a "peaceful linguistic protest," Armin Burkhardt and other German scientists are urging the public to stop using words derived from English and use French terms instead. The professor in the German department at Magdeburg University has about 30 French replacements for English expressions, which entered the German language after World War II. He suggests Germans buy "billets," not "tickets." He is calling for "formidable" to replace "cool." "[The protest] is meant to show that the political line of the French president and the German chancellor on Iraq have the support of the majority of the public," Burkhardt said.

## Mr. and Mrs. Russell Crowe

Monday, actor Russell Crowe married Danielle Spencer. The ceremony took place in the family chapel at his country ranch. The bride wore a Giorgio Armani gown. Crowe's birthday/wedding bash included a cricket match and musical performances. Some reports estimate the wedding costs at \$600,000.

## VCU graduate schools ranked in top 60

The U.S. News & World Report 2004 rankings of America's best graduate schools were released Friday. Twenty of VCU's graduate programs rank nationally in the top 60. Ten programs are from the academic campus and 10 are from the medical campus.

Of these top 20 programs, 13 are ranked in the top 20 and six are ranked in the top 10. Sculpture and Nurse Anesthesia ranked No. 1 in their respective categories.

The other top-10 schools and programs are the School of the Arts, sixth, up from nineteenth previously; Graphic Design, fourth; Health Services Administration, fifth, up from eighth; and Painting and Drawing, 10th. The School of Education, the School of Nursing and the School of Medicine are also in the top 60.

Three schools carry over previous rankings: the School of Social Work, 13th; the School of Dentistry, 13th; and the School of Pharmacy, 19th.

Other VCU graduate programs ranked in the top 60 are Community Health, 18th; Rehabilitative Counseling, 20th; and Teacher Preparation, top 50.

VCU graduate programs carrying over previous rankings are Physical Therapy, 15th; Occupational Therapy, 17th; Creative Writing, 50th; Clinical Psychology, 50th; and Public Affairs, 51st.

## SARS death toll rises

Severe acute respiratory syndrome has now claimed the lives of 101 people. Officials in Hong Kong fear they might see 3,000 cases in the city. In order to control the virus' spread, China's government might be forced to use Internet-linked cameras to enforce quarantine. The largest number of persons infected across the globe appears to be health-care workers.

## Massacre in Congo town

Almost 1,000 civilians were massacred in a remote Congotown last Thursday. Witnesses reported that even women and children joined in the killing spree with guns and machetes. The two Congo tribes pitted against each other in an ethnic conflict have come to severe blows in recent months as the factions from the wider war in the Democratic Republic of Congo have become involved. The killings came hours after the Congo's government and rebel leaders signed a deal to transition government in the capital city of Kinshasa. The murders are being called the worst atrocity in the country's four-and-a-half-year war.

## Epilepsy drug may cause weight loss

In recent obesity studies, an epilepsy drug, zonisamide, and a reduced-calorie diet may cause significant weight loss for obese adults. The study, which is in this week's Journal of the American Medical Association, stemmed from reports of unintentional weight loss in epilepsy patients that used the drug to prevent seizures. It is not yet known how the drug stimulates weight loss. Fatigue appears to be the only side effect associated with the drug. Roughly 30 percent of U.S. adults are obese and 60 percent are over-

weight.

## No more declawed cats in West Hollywood

Although some European nations have banned declawing, cats in the United States still undergo the procedure. West Hollywood City Council, however, has recently voted to ban the practice. Supporters of the ban said that it is unfair to declaw a cat, as it wouldn't be able to escape from predators while it is outside. The California Veterinary Medical Association opposes the bill. The film industry said a ban on declawing big cats such as tigers could make movie sets more dangerous and costly. West Hollywood officials said they are setting precedence for the rest of the country.

## Watergate papers head to University of Texas

The University of Texas is paying The Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein \$5 million to archive their Watergate papers. The 75 boxes of papers from the Nixon era will be housed and made available for study at the university. Documents naming the anonymous "Deep Throat" will be kept secure at an undisclosed location in Washington until the source dies.

## Baby falls from moving car

An 11-month-old baby in Michigan fell from a moving car recently. Paramedics traveling behind the car said they saw the car's back door open as it rounded a turn. The 26-year-old father told police the child was buckled into the car seat and the car door was locked. The parents didn't realize the baby was missing until they reached their destination. The couple is facing child endangerment charges.

## CORRECTION

In our April 7 issue, Virginia state Delegate James H. Dillard II was misidentified as a representative. The CT regrets the error.

## THE Commonwealth TIMES

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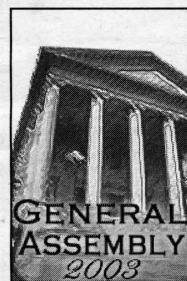


# NEWS

## Legislators approve tuition-cap exemption, reject Virginia Labor Studies Center funding

**MATT BUSSE**  
Staff Writer

When the state legislators left Richmond last week, VCU officials not only learned they could request an exemption from the



governor for the 5 percent cap on increasing tuition, but they also didn't have general funding for the Virginia Labor Studies Center in the School of Business.

Eugene Trani, VCU's president, said he wrote the governor supporting the tuition cap exemption, and the university also set aside \$750,000 for additional financial aid for the next two semesters.

"That shows that the administration is very concerned about tuition increases," he said.

This session's legislature gave the governor the authority to exempt state-sup-

ported colleges and universities from the tuition increase limitation in the event that additional appropriations reductions are needed. It did not, however, appropriate \$177,154 for the Virginia Labor Studies Center despite the governor's request.

Kevin Hall, deputy press secretary for Gov. Mark Warner, said the governor considers the tuition cap exemption a necessity in case further budget cuts are needed.

"The budget cuts that we have had to apply to colleges and universities (have) totaled more than \$300 million," he said. "Without this flexibility, more colleges and universities could be forced to implement further reductions that could significantly impact the quality of education."

John Broadway, VCU's associate director for government and community relations, said the tuition-cap exemption provides more flexibility for universities should the state's economic condition worsen.



Trani

Warner

"It gives (Warner) the ability to lift the 5 percent cap and allows a little more flexibility in setting tuition," he said.

John Hutton, program manager at the Virginia Labor Studies Center, said the organization will cut two full-time positions because of inadequate funding. It will continue to employ Robert Trumble, former dean of the business school, as director in addition to one part-time graduate assistant. Hutton said the center would continue its work with a grant from the Virginia Employment Commission.

"We're not closing our doors — we're just cutting down," Hutton said. "We will not be able to provide the educational research services that we have provided for the past 9- and-a-half years."

Broadway said he thought the legislature rejected the amendment appropriating money for the center to remain fair to other university research centers that also lost funding.

"Of all the university centers (that) had funds reduced during the regular

session, this was the only one the governor sent back an amendment for," Broadway added.

Hall said the governor requested funds specifically for the Virginia Labor Studies Center because it is "uniquely positioned to provide training and research not available in the private sector."

The center began operations in July 1993 and is committed to developing leadership for the improvement of labor-management relationships in the commonwealth, according to its Web site.

### Approved

- Governor can exempt state-supported colleges and universities from the 5 percent tuition cap
- Exemptions will be given only if the state further cuts funds for schools

### Rejected

- \$177,154 appropriated for the Virginia Labor Studies Center in the School of Business
- The center will cut positions to compensate for inadequate funding

## Giving back to the Richmond community

### Greek organization Alpha Phi Omega puts people first

**MICHAEL LIETKE**  
Staff Writer

Who wants to take time out of a busy day to help other people?

At VCU, one answer happens to be Alpha Phi Omega, a Greek organization that tries to make a difference for students and the Richmond community through such services as a blood drive scheduled April 14 and 15.

VCU chapter of the national coed service fraternity promotes three cardinal principles: leadership, friendship and service. Not only does the fraternity help with blood drives twice each semester, but it also takes phone pledges for the local PBS station and places chalk for teachers in classrooms.

"It made me feel good that I was helping someone out," said Ethan Beattie, APO's membership vice president. "That feeling — the more times you can have that feeling the better I think."

Beattie said he still remembers this feeling when he helped people while in the U.S. Navy. That desire to help others, Beattie said, led him to join APO in fall 2001.

As membership vice president, the senior history major maintains and recruits members for the organization. One of those recently recruited, Catherine Matheny, pledged the fraternity last fall.

"It's always been important to me to be able to give back," she said. "I'm majoring in urban studies and planning and am interested in nonprofit work."

So far, Matheny's favorite activity has been a service project called "A Playground for Katie" based in Chesterfield County that builds accessible playgrounds for children with disabilities.

Another APO member, Anna Ramdeo, who has the ominous sounding title of "blood chair," works with Virginia Blood Services to schedule the on-campus blood drives.

Ramdeo, a member since spring 2000, said after a friend in APO told her about the fraternity she decided to join it. A senior forensic sciences major, she said she continues to work on the fraternity's service projects.

"I like to make time for it. I feel like I've done something," she said, referring to her desire to serve the community.

Ramdeo also has her favorite APO project, but it's not the blood drive.

"I like the outdoor projects the best," Ramdeo said, discussing a place called Camp Sky Anchor, where the fraternity helped clear brush, cut down trees and paint fences.

While Matheny and Ramdeo identified campus awareness and recruiting as the two major tasks the organization needs to work on, Beattie offered another idea. He said the group should focus more on building leadership skills and uniting VCU's student organizations. Eventually, he said, he would like to see APO sponsor a motivational

speaker on campus.

"If you're not dedicated to service, it's going to be hard for anyone to maintain membership," Matheny said.

APO service requirements for new members include service projects, service hours with and without fraternity brothers, interviews with five fraternity advisers, brothers and the pledge class plus the completion of a pledge book. Continuing members must complete more service hours as well as foster a big-brother relationship with an incoming pledge.

Last semester, APO's VCU chapter sponsored a little-brother chapter at Virginia Union University. VCU's chapter helps set up VUU's ceremonies and offers its members guidance on becoming a chartered chapter.

Students can sign up this week for next week's blood drive at the University Student Commons, but walkups also are welcomed.



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# NEWS

## VCU Theater group project focuses on women's issues

**KIM BUCH**  
Staff Writer

Starting with a small group of people in 1997, the Women's Project of Theatre VCU continues to expand today throughout the campus and community. Its main focus centers around "female-engined plays," but Janet Rodgers, the group's faculty adviser, said even though these plays focus on women, many have roles for men, too.

"It's good to have new faces at our meetings," Rodgers said. "I encourage everyone to attend our meetings and audition for our plays even if (they) are not a theater major."

To involve the community in its projects, the group conducts panel discussions after their performances. One recent play concerned eating disorders. Since it was body awareness week on campus, it gave students an opportunity to become involved in the women's project.

"It was a lively discussion that brought people together," Rodgers said. "The idea is to bring together people who are interested in theater."

Students sometimes meet the playwrights of the productions they performed. For instance, author Merle Feld will be at VCU in late April when they perform "Across The Jordan."

"While on campus," Rodgers said, "Feld may give a lecture or conduct a workshop for those interested."

Anyone can attend a weekly meeting at 5 p.m. Tuesdays in the W.E. Singleton Center for Performing Arts.

During these meetings the Kernel, which is a student advisory board, decides the plays that should be performed and solicits suggestions from students who want to act or direct in any of the plays.

"I enjoy discussing what will be performed next," Valerie Schwartz, a senior said. "New ideas are always welcomed."

All VCU students can voice their opinions on upcoming events.

It's the mix of ideas that helps the group and Rodgers learn which shows the community would like to see VCU offer.

"It's fun to check out the new talent at each audition," said Kate Hinton, a senior who has been involved with the recent productions.



**Rodgers** Dan Purdee

## Coalition forces move into Baghdad

FROM NEWS SOURCES

Although Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's Minister of Information Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf denies reports that coalition forces are in Baghdad, Pentagon officials say the troops have entered the capital city. Tuesday, A-10 Warthog jets dropped bombs over Baghdad. In the southeastern portion of the city, U.S. Marines found more abandoned chemical suits and masks as well as a box of atropine injectors.

Maj. Gen. Stanley McChrystal said Iraqi Republican Guards are either ignoring Hussein's orders or are incapable of carrying them out. U.S. forces have, however, fought with the Special Republican Guard, he said. One such clash cut Iraq's fleet of 800 tanks down to 19.

When U.S. Marines captured the al Rashid military prison outside Baghdad recently, they found bloodstained uniforms but no American captives. Two of the uniforms bore the names of soldiers known to be Iraqi prisoners of war.

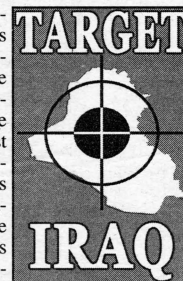
Tuesday morning, American military fire killed three journalists from Reuters, Tele 5, a Spanish TV news program and Al-Jazeera in two incidents near Baghdad. U.S. officials deny that journalists were specifically targeted, but Al-Jazeera doesn't agree.

U.S. military officials said it is possible that the Russian convoy that came under fire last weekend deviated from its planned evacuation route. The convoy's change of direction possibly led it into a deadly firefight.

President George W. Bush said it is not yet known whether Hussein survived a strike on a building Monday where the Iraqi leader was suspected to be. The president said the United States plans to host a conference with Iraqi opposition leaders in mid-April to discuss an interim Iraqi government. A local sheik is already working with the British military to chart the country's future. Also later this month, U.N. Secretary General Kofi Anna will travel to Athens to discuss the U.N.'s role in Iraq.

U.S. officials told CNN that CIA members and defense intelligence analysts will soon enter Iraq to investigate the disappearance of Capt. Scott Speicher, a Navy pilot shot down on the first day of the 1991 Persian Gulf War.

Compiled by Sarah Kite



## Admissions Ambassadors show students what the VCU community has to offer

**LISA COLLINS**  
Staff Writer

Visiting a college and trying to decide if it is right for you can seem like a tricky process, especially if it's an urban campus with a diverse student population. That's when VCU's 35 Admissions Ambassadors enter the scene.

"One of our main goals is to be very representative of VCU's population," Adam Stout, the ambassadors president, said, explaining that the ambassadors conduct campus tours for prospective students and their families as well as oversee block parties.

"One reason why I decided to attend VCU is because of a tour guide I had named Mark," Stout said. "He made me feel very welcomed."

Stout, a psychology major, joined the ambassadors more than two years ago.

"The members conduct tours during three open houses each year," he said. "We also

conduct two monthly tours. Starting the end of the spring semester and early next fall we are going to start branching out more not just for prospective students but for current students."

Planned events for late spring and early fall include ice cream socials and possibly student dinners to foster school spirit.

"The students who conduct the tours are so friendly and represent VCU from a student's perspective," said Melanie Seigenbutz, a sophomore who decided to attend VCU after attending an ambassador tour. "The tour leaders knew a lot about the history of VCU and also showed prospective students places on campus where current students hang out."

Lindsey Bryant, the lone transfer student in the ambassadors club, transferred from Hollins University in Roanoke.

"There are so many benefits of being involved in the ambassadors club," she said. "I meet so many new people when I conduct tours.

"During an open house I mentioned that I was majoring in criminal justice and thinking of going into the FBI, and this man I was giving the tour to was from the FBI. I meet people from all aspects of life."

Members recently attended a regional ambassadors conference at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, which Bryant found educational and fun.

"The conference was so much fun because I got to meet other ambassadors from many different schools along the East Coast," she said. "At the conference ambassadors from different schools learn better ways to conduct campus tours from each other and ways to improve the ambassadors program at their schools."

Thirteen members including the group's executive board attend the conference each year.

"We have fund-raisers in order to attend the conference for free," Bryant said. "Last se-

mester we sold magazine subscriptions, and later this semester we are going to have a raffle, but we haven't decided what the raffle is for."

The Student Government Association also provides funds for the ambassadors' trip.

"The (ambassadors) executive board is always looking for students who are spirited about VCU and likes to help others," Stout said, adding that he wants everyone to know the club needs more members.

Bryant, who went through the application process last semester, describes the application process as easy.

"Then there are a short series of interviews," she said. "The interviews were in front of the executive board and were basically like a series of job interviews. The process was simple and I have really learned a lot about VCU."

The ambassadors meet at VCU's Welcome Center on West Broad Street.



## NEWS

SARAH KITE

News Editor

What does it mean to be an American? Is the American spirit more than a hotdog at a baseball game?

"Being an American means freedom and enjoying the fruits of that freedom without persecution," said Lexie Keeton, a senior English major.

America's constitutional form of government allows U.S. citizens that freedom, said Bob Holsworth, a political science and public administration professor. It is also what sets the country apart from many others.

"Most Americans would say...(it) accords people certain rights and liberties," he said.

The U.S. Constitution, he said, provides Americans with basic rights and a route for legal recourse if those rights are violated.

One such right from the Constitution is the right to object to an administration's actions, such as war. These objections often lead to protests, Holsworth said.

"(However), most Americans in wartime are going to support the administration," he said, adding that most people will support U.S. troops.

Americans often show their support during a war by writing letters to the troops, making statements of support and conducting rallies on behalf of the troops. While some people experience anxiety from watching the war on television, Holsworth said, there is a tremendous interest in it.

Future tragedies might not steer the public away from the war against Iraq. Instead, Holsworth said, negative events might double a person's commitment and support.

The only thing that could cause a dramatic swing in support for the administration, he said, would be if the war became protracted with no sign of resolution.

## What it means to be



## AMERICAN

Another constitutional right Americans have is the right to religious freedom, as stated in the First Amendment. This guarantees that a person's civil rights will not be affected by their religious beliefs, or the lack thereof, said Cliff Edwards, director of the division of religious studies. The law allows a person to be a good citizen regardless of his or her background.

"That makes the United States unique," he said. "(Different) religions have been asked to work out their differences and learn to live in peace in this country."

States without religious freedom sometimes support one religion and discriminate against others, Edwards said.

Despite America's diverse religious background, Edwards said, some people are still distrustful and intolerant of other

religious beliefs. Others, he said, use their religion for political gain.

People of various religions can contribute to American society and become great resources, Edwards said. In classrooms and workplaces, open-mindedness can occur naturally.

"I think that in itself...encourages understanding and tolerance," he said.

## 2003 Student Government Association Senators

Fouzia Babar  
Neal Bhatia  
Tiffany Kao  
Denise Canonizado  
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Ali Faruk  
Rashim Gupta  
Christina Shrom  
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# SPORTS

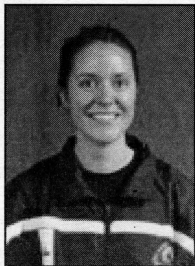
## BRIEFS

### Women's Tennis defeats Virginia Tech

VCU's Women's Tennis (No. 8) defeated Virginia Tech (No. 61) 6-1 last Sunday. VCU's top double team of Silvia Urickova and Barbora Zahnova had an 8-1 win against Carolyn Kramer and Eliss Kinard. The win put the 22nd ranked pair in the nation at a 13-1 record for the season. Also, doubles Ana Franco Lopez and Cristina Gago earned an 8-6 win against Zdenka Videnova and Felice Lam.

In the singles competition, VCU won five of the six matches. Zahnova defeated Stubbs, improving her singles record to 24-1 for the season with a 6-4, 7-5 victory. Marina Escobar Martinez also had a win for VCU, pulling her record up to 13-1 with a 6-3, 6-2 win against Kramer. Urickova, Franco Lopez and Gago also had straight-set victories for VCU. The Ram's home record is 11-0 with this latest win.

Women's Tennis faces University of Richmond at U of R next Sunday at 1 p.m.



Courtesy of Sports Information

Zahnova

### Baseball sweeps ODU series

In the final game of a three-game series against Old Dominion University, the VCU Baseball team won 6-1 to sweep the Monarchs.

Senior Michael Leishman gave up only two hits in six innings in the VCU victory.

The victory marks VCU's fifth straight victory as the team moves to 7-1 in the CAA. The Monarchs dropped to 1-4 in the CAA.

Junior third baseman Anthony Granato had two hits in four at-bats, with a set of scored runs. Senior right fielder Justin Mattison and sophomore catcher Jeff Parrish also collected two hits in four at-bats and one RBI.

Leishman kept the Monarchs scoreless for the first five innings of the game, earning his fourth consecutive win. Junior Brian Marshall and freshman Jon Link closed out the game for Leishman allowing only one hit in the final innings. Pitching for VCU allowed only six runs in the series against ODU and have earned a collective 1.46 ERA in CAA play so far this season.

The game was scoreless up until the fourth inning when the Rams broke away with a three-run inning. The Rams earned another run in the fifth, to put the score at 4-0. ODU scored their only run in the top of the sixth. In the seventh the Rams added two runs to their lead to reach the final 6-1 score.

## FACE OFF

### World's longest season

ANDREW HALE

Sports Editor



Is it just me or has baseball season gotten a little too long?

Don't get me wrong, it's my second favorite sport, but any sport that overlaps another's season on both sides might be getting a little big for its britches. Now, I know it's America's pastime but please, let's be reasonable. It starts and ends in hockey season.

I'm sorry league, but if you're a sport not meant to be played in inclement weather, don't start the season when it's snowing outside. It seems like a no-brainer to me, but then again, what do I know? Having regular season games in March is asking for trouble.

And it's not like the long season hurts attendance or anything. Sports fans are becoming more and more disinterested in

baseball but I'm sure that it has nothing to do with the length of a season. Plus, everyone knows we love sitting outside when it's cold and raining. Just look at football.

But in all seriousness, everyone knows that attendance (in some areas more than others) is dropping. I don't know if increasing the length of the season is a really in the best interest of the league.

Think about it, if you were looking to do something one night, going to a game or going to a party, if you have another 150 games to catch, it doesn't matter if you miss one or two. You're going to go to the party, and so will everyone else who enjoys the sport of baseball.

With more than 160 games in a season, and games practically every day of the week for six months straight, following a team becomes less fun and more work.

That's why you're seeing more people who follow less regularly. And I'm getting to that point as well. I mean, why bother watching

the first 50 games? They really won't have too much of an impact on the season. If I can pick up the scores on Baseball Tonight or SportsCenter it really saves a lot of time.

Fans have become overexposed to baseball. Games are no longer giant events that fans look forward to, they are everyday occurrences that don't seem to matter much. They have lost the appeal and excitement that they used to have. They aren't as important so they don't feel as important.

Baseball is really hurting itself with the long schedules. If the teams want more revenue, play fewer games and fill the seats. Adding more games for nobody to come see isn't going to help out much. Baseball has been in trouble these last couple of seasons, alienating fans on a regular basis. Hopefully, for the sake of America's pastime, the league will pull its act together soon.

## CALENDAR

Thursday,  
April 10

Friday,  
April 11

Saturday,  
April 12

Sunday,  
April 13

Monday,  
April 14

Tuesday,  
April 15

Wednesday,  
April 16

**Baseball**  
William & Mary  
Williamsburg, Va.  
7 p.m.

**Men's Tennis**  
Louisville,  
Richmond, Va.  
3 p.m.

**Baseball**  
William & Mary  
Williamsburg, Va.  
4 p.m.

**Men's Track**  
University of Virginia  
Invitational

**Golf**  
The Intercollegiate  
Raleigh, N.C.

**Baseball**  
William & Mary  
Williamsburg, Va.  
1 p.m.

**Men's Tennis**  
Virginia Tech  
Richmond, Va.  
1 p.m.

**Golf**  
The Intercollegiate  
Raleigh, N.C.

**Baseball**  
North Carolina  
Chapel Hill, N. C.  
6 p.m.





BOB KNOWS, DO YOU?

# ASK BOB



IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT BOB KNOWS, E-MAIL HIM AT [CTVCU@HOTMAIL.COM](mailto:CTVCU@HOTMAIL.COM), USE "ASK BOB" AS THE SUBJECT.

## Mr. 8 Ball speaks for the first time and SARS-carrying cockroaches

# ASK BOB

EXCLUSIVE

Interview with Mr. 8 Ball

For the first time ever, Mr. 8 Ball has agreed to give an interview about what it's like being asked to answer questions all the time and being turned over constantly.

Life is not easy as an 8 Ball, especially a magic one that is asked to tell the future. I am pleased to bring you an uncut look inside the dark, dank world of fortune telling.

**Ask Bob: Mr. 8 Ball, I am glad you could join us tonight.**

**Mr. 8 Ball:** Yes, definitely. **Bob:** Glad to see you are in such high spirits.

**8 Ball:** Reply hazy, try again.

**Bob:** Are you not happy to be here with me tonight?

**8 Ball:** My reply is no.

**Bob:** Well, you are the one who agreed to this interview, are you not?

**8 Ball:** My reply is no.

**Bob:** Didn't you set this interview up?

**8 Ball:** Yes.

**Bob:** OK then, let's get to it. Do you enjoy being a fortune teller?

**8 Ball:** Don't count on it.

**Bob:** Life must be hard as a fortune telling 8 Ball. Is it the box you are sold in that gets you down?

**8 Ball:** Yes, definitely.

**Bob:** OK, do you want a bigger box? Would that make you happy?

**8 Ball:** Signs point to yes.

**Bob:** Well, I will see what I can do about that. Do you think we should be fighting in Iraq?

**8 Ball:** Outlook not so good.

**Bob:** Does Saddam have biological weapons?

**8 Ball:** Signs point to yes.

**Bob:** Will he use these weapons during the war on American troops?

**8 Ball:** Cannot predict now.

**Bob:** Why not?

**8 Ball:** Better not tell you now.

**Bob:** That does not sound good. Maybe we should leave Iraq before it's too late.

**8 Ball:** Without a doubt.

**Bob:** Is it a good idea to go after North Korea after Iraq?

**8 Ball:** Most likely.

**Bob:** I see. Do you support President Bush?

**8 Ball:** Yes, definitely.

**Bob:** So you think he is doing a good job?

**8 Ball:** Without a doubt.

**Bob:** Let's move to issues closer to home, shall we?

**8 Ball:** Signs point to yes.

**Bob:** Do you know who has won the SGA election?

**8 Ball:** It is certain.

**Bob:** Will you tell us all, since the results are now being contested?

**8 Ball:** Yes.

**Bob:** Will the winner be a good leader?

**8 Ball:** It is decidedly so.

**Bob:** That's good. I was getting worried. So, are Rodney Ram and Carmen Sandiego dating?

**8 Ball:** My sources say no.

**Bob:** Do you trust your sources?

**8 Ball:** My sources say no.

**Bob:** Hey, that's cheating! Do you, Mr. 8 Ball, trust your sources?

**8 Ball:** Outlook not so good.

**Bob:** So, I saw Rodney dressed in Carmen's clothing, does Rodney cross dress often?

**8 Ball:** Yes, definitely.

**Bob:** Only on the weekend?

**8 Ball:** Don't count on it.

**Bob:** I see, well we are out of time for today. Thank you for joining us Mr. 8 Ball. I know you have a busy schedule.

**8 Ball:** Very doubtful.

**Bob:** OK, so you sit around all day and do nothing and were thrilled when I called and asked to interview you, is that correct?

**8 Ball:** Better not tell you now.

**Bob:** OK then. Till next time, have a good day.

**8 Ball:** Without a doubt.

## Link of the Day!

### SARS and cockroaches

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/2927695.stm>

Cockroaches can not only withstand nuclear war, now they are spreading the SARS virus to rub it in.

## Cockroaches trying to kill off human race with SARS virus

It seems cockroaches are the spreaders of the SARS virus, at least at the origin. In China, where the virus is thought to have originated, cockroaches are being blamed for carrying the disease from home to home.

The roaches are plotting to take this world for their own. They can already withstand a nuclear blast, now they are attacking us with disease.

How the cockroaches concocted such a disease is still unknown, however, scientists have found links to the common cold virus. Could this be the next evolution of the common cold?

If so, what are the roaches planning to do with us? It seems their plan is to exterminate us, as we have tried to do to them. Once the human race is gone, the roaches will remain to rule the Earth.

This apocalyptic vision is frightening and may be very real in the near future. The roaches have no reason to fear us, now that they can let a disease loose among us, and just wait.

Before, they had to hope for nuclear war, but now, their virus is doing the work for them. In only a matter of months, the roaches are sure to step-up their plan to Phase II.

What this phase entails is still a mystery. I just hope we find out before it is too late.

If the cockroaches take this world, what is to stop them from taking over the solar system and then the universe? What if they plan to enslave our race, and not kill us all off?

Will we all be reduced to roach slaves, working and toiling for their benefit? Only time will tell.

## Soap Box

### VCU SGA Elections

Well, it seems that my prediction was correct. There is a recount. In a move paralleling the presidential election of 2000, our own SGA's presidency has been contested. So it will be that much longer before we know who won.

This move strengthens my claim to the presidency. MercuryZero and I still maintain we are the rightful elected officials, and the SGA seems to agree with us. Since it was contested, the SGA has posted this information.

This marks the third thing our glorious SGA has done in the past year. For your convenience, here is a quick rundown of all the important things the SGA has brought us this year, as stated on their Web site:

#### 1. Proclamation Honoring Dr. John Bennett Fenn.

Good call. Fenn deserves it!

#### 2. Constitutional amendment Granting SGA right to deem traditions at Virginia Commonwealth University.

So, the SGA can deem traditions. Yeah, I'm impressed, too.

#### 3. Constitutional amendment Abolishing the elections committee and establishing an elections Officer.

This results in a contested election. You see the election committee, which has the task of deciding who won the election, was unfortunately abolished by the SGA. Who thought that one out?

As you can tell, the SGA has done many vastly important things for us, the students. I am glad they are working so hard to help us out.

I don't know what I would do without the SGA, that secret band of people who apparently meet for the sole purpose to plan events, and beg for our votes. I voted, did you?

**Bob is supposed to be funny, please do not take it completely seriously. This is meant as a work of fiction and humor.**



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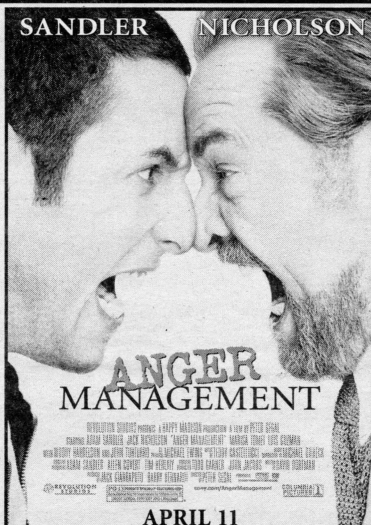
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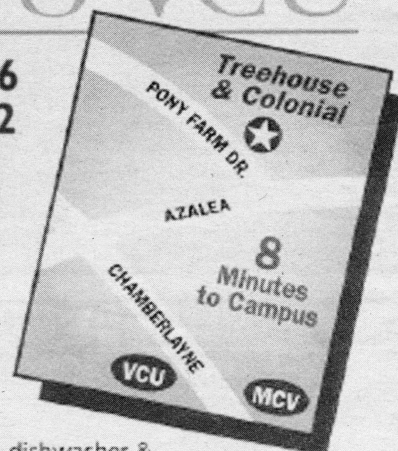
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# Intercultural Festival showcases diversity

**CHRISTY DUDLEY**

*Spectrum Writer*

How can you get more than 1,500 people out to VCU on a bright and sunny Sunday afternoon? Offer a good gimmick, games and plenty of food and entertainment. Which is exactly what VCU's Intercultural Festival did with its "Where in the World is Rodney the Ram?" theme.

—Students and community members were invited to share in the same mission as they searched for the elusive mascot of VCU throughout Park Plaza. The plaza was divided into minidisplays of cultural diversity. Armed with passports, the guests traveled through Europe, Africa, South Asia, Latin America and Asia.

William Boshier, dean of the School of Education, said he thought the festival was a wonderful display of the diversity found at VCU.

"The attendees represent the same diversity that is being showcased, which is our strength," he said. "That strength comes through a better understanding of other cultures."

At each stop was the chance to earn a stamp on your passport, which was one step closer to finding Rodney and earning one of the grand prizes being offered, such as Palm Pilots and DVD players. Exotic crafts, garments, music, games, foods also greeted the travelers.

If you were feeling limber, you could partake in the "World Religions Twister," which asked such questions as "What are three parts of the Trinity?" Other events offered were face painting, origami and a chance to draw "What God Means 2?"

Samantha Mash, in charge of games, said the festival was important because of current world events.

"I think it is extremely important because we have so many cultures represented here and with the state the world finds itself in, it is refreshing to gather together and celebrate our differences," Marsh said.

Showcasing the theme of diversity was apparent in the organizations that set up booths. The Latin Student Association, African Student Union, Muslim Student Association, Indian Cultural Organization and Vietnamese Student Association were just a few of the groups participating.

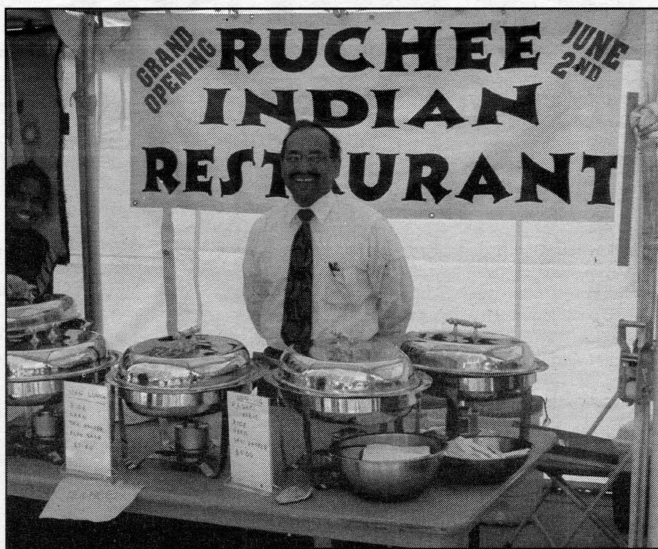
The Geographical Society offered traditional garments and crafts from Uganda with prices ranging from \$3 to \$15. Helen Ruth Aspaas, assistant professor in the department of urban studies and planning, said all proceeds will go to the women's group of Uganda who crafted the items.

"We made about \$112 from sales," Aspass said, adding that the group did drawings throughout the day to give away crafts.

Aspaas said the turnout of the crowd reflected on their willingness to learn about other cultures.

"They didn't look at the booths and leave; they stayed for the entire event," she said.

Mireille Truong, co-director of the festival and SGA vice president, said the



The Intercultural Festival provided a good opportunity for vendors such as the Ruchee Indian Restaurant.

Saida Durkee

festival served several purposes.

"It gives students the opportunity to discover other cultures and share theirs with others," she said. It also gives (students) the chance to meet other organizations and members of the Richmond community." It was also a day for fun and relaxation.

Relaxing was easily accomplished by first stopping by any of the vendors and sampling foods from the Mediterranean, Caribbean or India and then finding a spot to sit and watch the performances of dance and song.

Rosanna Amato, VCU Homecoming Queen 2003, said the festival is one of her favorite things about springtime at the campus.

"The diversity of the university is amazing. There are so many talented people among us," Amato said. "I think it is wonderful that the festival lets us share each other's company and talent for a day and integrates different people into one student body."

Performers were not only from VCU but also from as far away as New York, which sent Potsdam Pointercounts New York AcaPELLa Group. The University of Richmond sent Ngoma, a dance troupe, to perform at the festival. Ngoma celebrated traditional African dances such as the "Econne-conne," which depicts workers in the rice fields.

The Chinese Student Association was a crowd pleaser with its rendition of the "Lion Dance." Here the Delung (lion) and Ong Dia (man) are in a battle of the wills as the man tries to get the lion to dance.

Some onlookers of the performances were from outside of Richmond. Uloma Onyegubla drove from Washington, D.C. to cheer her friend, May Nnonah.

"I just came to support my friend," Onyegubla said, referring to Nnonah's performance with the Rejoyce in Jesus

Campus Fellowship. "They did a good job." Onyegubla praised the groups' performance.

Truong said participation was open to everyone and she hopes VCU will continue to look to the community to aid in upcoming events. "We hope in the future more groups from other states, universities and from the Richmond community will participate in the festival," Truong said.

The event closed with a fashion show followed by an awards ceremony. Awards were given to performers, booth participants and vendors. Performers were judged in categories such as: most creative, best outfits, most crowd pleasing and most traditional. The vendors won awards depending on culinary skills and the booths received awards based on best spirit, organization and participation.

## Awards:

### Performances

**Most creative:** Vietnamese Student Association

**Most energetic:** Ngoma (University of Richmond)

**Best outfits:** Hamad Alquadhi and Friends

**Most crowd pleasing:** African Student Union

**Best technical performance:** Ebony Quest

**Most cultured/traditional:** Chinese Student Association

### Booths & Organizations

**Best booth:** Hillel

**Best participation:** Hindu Student Council

**Best organization in service:** Sigma Sigma Sigma

**Best spirited:** Filippo Mazzei Italian-American Club

### Best All-Around Organization

**First:** Chinese Student Association

**Second:** Vietnamese Student Association

**Third:** Latinos Unidos

### Other

**Best vendor:** Mediterranean Grill

**Best art production:**

**First place:** Erin Byun (etching)

**Second place:** Kristen Rose (abstract 3-D)

**Third place:** Katherine Hinshaw (screenprint)



Students perform the traditional Chinese "Lion Dance."

Saida Durkee

# Spectrum

## Hotwire's album is good but nothing new

**RESHMA SIDDIK**  
*Spectrum Writer*

You know how all bands sound the same these days? Well, Hotwire seems to be following that trend. But they're not so bad either.

Hotwire is a band of five from the suburbs of L.A., the same place that bred Linkin Park and Incubus. They have just signed on to perform in Ozzfest 2003, playing with Korn, Cradle of Filth, Marilyn Manson, Disturbed, and of course, Ozzy himself. Their RCA Records debut CD, "The Routine," is scheduled to release on May 6.

One critic described it as the, "...debut of a young band with old souls and a fresh sound." Well, to me it sounded like fresh souls with an old sound.

Hotwire's sound is definitely hard and heavy. Plus it has a solid melody that keeps each track from sounding the same. Maggie Wang from RCA Records describes their sound as, "at once cohesive and intense, melodic and metallic, punk and provocative, hardcore and heavy..." I couldn't have said it better myself.

I don't see the punk influence, but I'm sure it's in there somewhere. The CD definitely has musical appeal; I found my feet tapping and head nodding.

So what are the minuses? Well, although the sound is pretty good, I didn't hear too much creativity. They

don't really have a style that sets them apart from other bands. They just blend in with the rest. And that's a big minus.

At any rate, these guys are a talented bunch. The vocalist, Rus Martin, has a nice voice and it can be really soothing at times. It can be pretty scary at times too, but scary in a good way. His screaming is pretty powerful, but the best part is that you can understand what he's saying. In fact, he'll make you want to scream along with him.

The drums, played by Brian Borg, are pretty nice. I was impressed because the songs had some creative beats. Unfortunately, the bass is barely heard in this CD, but it's not that bad. The guitar, my favorite part, is awesome as well. Good guitar is essential to rock, and this band is not lacking here.

Overall, they are a pretty good band. I think they have a lot of potential, and they could get pretty big. I could see them appealing to the masses. They don't stand out too much from other bands, but they're still OK in my book.

I heard a lot of Deftones influence in the CD. This can be good and bad: good because the Deftones rock, and bad because they need to have their own style. Hotwire is heavy music with melody. I would love to see them in concert: the energy I felt in their CD would hopefully be magnified in person, and that would be one hell of a show.



The boys of Hotwire.

Marina Chavez



Longwave gets festive.

LEGO

## Longwave is not a 'diet Stroke'

**MELISSA LYNCH**  
*Associate Spectrum Editor*

They are four scruffy boys, but their sound is not completely garage-rock driven. New York-based Longwave has toured with The Strokes so the comparison would be easy, however it doesn't quite fit them.

"The Strangest Things" has a rough around the edges appeal that is irresistible. Haunting and melancholy, certain songs sound more like Coldplay than any posh New York band.

"Everywhere you turn" and "Pool song" are upbeat but singer Steve Schiltz's voice never lets a song become poppy. Schiltz's vocals are strange in a good way. He has an almost undetectable lisp at times and stretches certain words out in the most interesting way.

Certain artistic statements that Longwave tries to make fall flat. Opening their CD with a 1:19 minute introduction seems more pretentious than artistic, especially considering that it is the longest introduction on the entire album. Track 5, "Meet me at the Bottom" is almost as obnoxious. It begins

with a lone noise that drove me mad, and continues with Schiltz mumbling some words with no music for another minute.

"Tidal Wave" makes up for these slight setbacks. It is one of the best songs on the album, and has a great repetitive chorus. Schiltz's voice, which stretches to some beautiful high notes, accompanied with an interesting high-pitched bass creates a great sound.

Another song that I was particularly struck with was "All Sewn Up." It opens with the line, "when I'm all sewn up/I feel like giving up," which was the first time one of their lyrics interested me.

Longwave is still young, only having released two CDs, and they have time to work out some of the kinks in their music. "The Strangest Things" is a good CD, but it would be better if they didn't try so hard to be innovative with odd sound affects and distorted instruments that don't fit with their sound.

Rating: 3 stars



## Spectrum

## Richmond to host jam session with Motet

MELISSA LYNCH

Associate Spectrum Editor

The Motet's drummer, Dave Watts, wants you to sweat.

"(Our audience can expect) lots of dancing and sweating. If we can satisfy our desire for playing music...and have our audience come out of it drenched with sweat then we're happy," he said.

To prove their love for the audience having a blast at their show, one of The Motet's shirt designs proudly states, "Dance Your A-s Off."

It is no wonder why these good ol' boys are colloquially called a jam band, their influences are a mouthful. They draw from funk, jazz, Afro-Cuban, Brazilian, and West African according to Watts.

"We spent a lot of time in Cuba.... (The music is) what drew us down there," he said.

Watts isn't totally content with their jam band label, although it seems to fit them.

"I think there are more jam audiences than jam bands. (Jam bands are) loud jazz bands that can go deeper into the groove," he said.

Watts had a great deal of musical experience before The Motet got together. He had played with Keller Williams, Tony Furtado, Shockra, and The Theory of Everything. With a number of Boulder, Colo. musicians he formed The Motet to capture what was going on musically at the moment. They continue to hold onto their roots as they expand and evolve.

"It started out as a collection of music from the Boulder scene and we've branched out.... It's pretty far reaching at this point," Watts said. "But Boulder has



Grown men horsing around, that's what The Motet is all about.

Courtesy of the Home Grown Music Network

been our strong home base."

Their current east coast tour is coming to a head in New Orleans with Jazzfest. Watts and The Motet have an affinity for

the city made famous by Mardi Gras. When we spoke about music he began with, "we love the music of New Orleans."

He went on to speak about the festival itself, which he was also fond of. They played for four hours, slept for two, and then got up to watch all of the other great jazz bands play for the rest of the day until they had to play again. Although it was a hectic schedule, it sounded like he loved it.

While the wild and crazy festivals have their appeal, Watts also has an appreciation for the audiences at shows that specifically came to see The Motet.

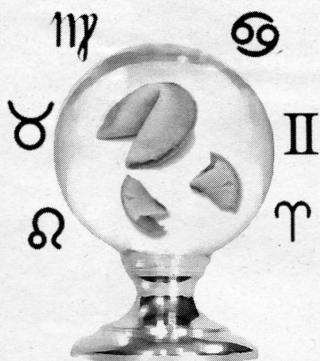
"I love festivals because it's outdoors and there are so many great bands to watch, and I love intimate concerts too... the focus is great," he said.

Hopefully Richmond will have enough energy to satisfy this 'lust for life' band. There is no doubt that The Motet's show will be unpredictable and fun, and who knows who might show up.

"We're good friends with The String Cheese Incident so they usually come out and play with us," Watts said.

Be sure to catch The Motet next Wednesday April 16 at The Canal Club (1545 E. Cary St.), playing the Post String Cheese Party. Call 643-2583 for more information and get tickets through SCI Ticketing and Music Today. The show is for all ages.

## Zodiac Cookies



## Zodiac Cookies

**Aries:** Imitation is no longer the sincerest form of flattery, try something different.

**Taurus:** If the best things in life are free then that would explain why VCU's tuition keeps going up.

**Gemini:** When one door closes, another door isn't just going to open, you have to find the key.

**Cancer:** You are going to form an extreme connection with another Cancer.

**Leo:** Love does not make the world go 'round, ice cream does.

**Virgo:** The hot summer months will set your love life aflame.

**Libra:** A long journey will bring uncertain victories your way, so get walking.

**Scorpio:** Whether you know it or not, you've won an important award, start practicing your humble look.

**Sagittarius:** Telling your better half that their birthday is just another day will bring certain doom.

**Capricorn:** Much like flypaper, once you become attached to someone, you never want to let go.

**Aquarius:** You might be the only person in existence that actually finds success with email chain letters, expand your buddy list to reap ultimate rewards.

**Pisces:** You'll be leaving your friends soon, but never say goodbye, just say toodles.

# Spectrum

## 'Six Feet Under'

This week Claire and Russell get much more serious as they share their first kiss and she devirginizes him all in one episode. Arthur, who is interning under Federico, seems to be growing closer to Ruth. The scenes where they are together are quite disturbing. Lisa and Nate go camping with Maya and another couple and after a few bitter fights let's just say they make amends ... on a rock. The most ridiculous scene in the episode is when a body falls out of the casket and Arthur has to enlist Ruth, Claire and Russell to help him get it back inside. Next week Brenda will reek more havoc on Lisa and Nate's relationship and it looks like Federico has some health concerns concerning his wife, Vanessa.

## 'Punk'd'

The 8-year-old master of harassment is back with some even more obnoxious comments and a megaphone. This time he calls Pauly Shore on his long lost career and tells "Lord of the Rings" hobbits Dominic Monaghan and Billy Boyd, "good luck with your career, you're going to need it." The burn of the night was Justin Timberlake's attack on Kelly Osbourne. Dax and Al came in as a stylist and choreographer in an attempt to make Kelly more appealing. Needless to say she threw a fit and Justin was enjoying every minute of it. The last prank centered around a few hapless locksmiths. These guys opened up a store for Dax, who then proceeded to rob the place with three guys in orange jump suits. While the locksmith was waiting for some paperwork they escaped and Al came in as the owner of the store. One of the best moments was when Al enlisted a locksmith to help him find his precious cat by jingling some keys and saying "tender vitals" repeatedly. Upcoming punks include Nick Lachey being hoodwinked into thinking white trash Dax is Jessica Simpson's distant relative and Seth Green getting caught up in a gambling controversy.

## 'American Idol'

Hugs for Simon and boos for Randy! Randy didn't see much of anything that he enjoyed Tuesday night on "American Idol" when the theme was top 40. Oh, but wait, he adored Ruben, as did everyone. Don't get me wrong, he is extremely talented, but it's almost as though the show is over. With the judges laying opulent praise on Ruben every week, where is the surprise ending? Clay for instance has been getting some heat from the judges for the last couple weeks for not spicing up his performances and to me, that makes him a more interesting character. Joshua Gracin has really been coming into his own lately and blew everyone away with his performance. My admiration goes to Kimberly Caldwell who gets up on stage each week almost knowing that the judges are going to give her the "you're really pretty but ..." talk.

# WHILE You Were Out

Are you constantly missing your favorite shows? Let us know what they are and we'll fill in the gaps for you. E-mail Melissa at [lynchmd@vcu.edu](mailto:lynchmd@vcu.edu) with any suggestions.



# Spectrum

## A day in the life of a VCU art major: Thomas Simmons

**JOANNAH NWOKEABIA**  
Spectrum Writer

Thomas Simmons made a splash in VCU's presentation of "Playboy of West Indies" this past February. He is a staple of the VCU theater department and has a bright future at VCU and beyond.

**The Commonwealth Times: What is your hometown?**

**Thomas Simmons:** Richmond, Virginia born and raised.

**CT: What attracted you to VCU's Theater performance program?**

**TS:** Being from Richmond, I have siblings that went to VCU. I heard about auditions for a play...and I had such a good time that I came over to theater. They have an awesome violence choreography program. Their stage voice and speech professor, Janet Rogers, is world renown. David Leong, one of the best grand fighting masters in the country, is our dean. Learning under these people is amazing and I feel that's my calling.

**CT: What was your most embarrassing onstage moment?**

**TS:** This was embarrassing and cute. I was doing "You're a Good Man Charlie Brown" and I was Charlie Brown. I have two nieces and two nephews and one of my nieces ran onstage crying, "T.J., T.J.!" I took her to the end of the stage where my sister was sitting.

**CT: In your last play, you bared your chest for a few scenes. Do you have any objections to nudity if the script calls for it?**

**TS:** In any kind of performance, there is a level of vulnerability that you portray. [As an actor], you take on the responsibility of being a role model. In one play, I was a slave and had to run across the stage naked and I thought that was tasteful. If it's distasteful, I will not do it. If it's a soft porn piece, then no.

**CT: How do you feel VCU's theatre program has shaped you as a performer?**

**TS:** They've given me structure, introduced me to a lot of different techniques and because of that, I'm a well-rounded actor.

**CT: Once you graduate, do you expect it to be hard to achieve recognition and find challenging roles in an industry that often overlooks or stereotypes black actors?**

**TS:** There are 100,000 actors in New York and 95 percent of them will not have work. I think it is important to keep yourself marketable. I act, sing, dance, write and play music...so I'm not worried about that.

**CT: If there was a chick-fight, who would win: Jennifer Garner or Jennifer Lopez?**

**TS:** Lopez. J.Lo's from the block!

**CT: Broadway or Hollywood?**

**TS:** Both

**CT: What is your favorite movie?**

**TS:** "Love Jones"

**CT: What is something about you that VCU student don't know?**

**TS:** I'm the bomb chef. I cook like nobody's business!

**CT: If you could act alongside someone famous, who would it be?**

**TS:** Will Smith

**CT: What do you enjoy most about performing?**

**TS:** Opening the mind and perspective of the audience. Having someone gain something from the performance I'm involved in, that is the most rewarding thing ever.

**CT: What advice would you give to kids who want to be actors?**

**TS:** Read everything you can get your hands on, make a friend everywhere you go, always listen to people and be kind. My mother always said, "If you're too big to listen, then you're too small to be listened to."

**CT: What annoys you the most about acting or theater performance?**

**TS:** I love theater—I love it all. I guess it would be how underrated [theater] is. It's a very hellacious job. People underrate that.

**JN: Do you have any hidden talents?**

**TS:** I can break dance.

**JN: What do you never leave home without?**

**TS:** My cell phone...and change.

**CT: Where do you see yourself in five years?**

**TS:** In somebody's movie. I will have completed my book, dropped a CD and I'll be preparing to have a family.

**CT: What do you sing?**

**TS:** I sing gospel, R&B, jazz and classical music.

**CT: Complete this sentence: Happiness is—**

**TS:** What you make it.

**CT: Do you have any words that you live by?**

**TS:** Never interest yourself in the possibility of failure.

**CT: What is success?**

**TS:** A fulfilling journey, a never-ending journey; obstacles, trials and joy that will hopefully lead to prosperity.

## Happenings

**Thursday,  
April 10**

**Terror with Ramallah, RingWorm** and **Victim** perform at Alley Katz at 6 p.m. The show is all ages and you can get tickets at Plan 9. 643-2816, 10 Walnut Alley

**Zetamale, Crooked Fingers** and **Gregor Samsa** play a show in the University of Richmond's Student Commons at 9 p.m. It is a free show sponsored by U of R's radio station WDCE 90.1 FM. 700-1662, 28 Westhampton Way

**Friday,  
April 11**

**Jackie Frost Trio** rocks Ashland Coffee & Tea at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$5. 798-1702, 100 N. Railroad Ave.

"**Proposals**," which follows a group of friends and family on an interesting vacation to the Poconos, will be playing at the Barksdale Theater. Call 282-2620 for specific times and ticket information. 1601 Willow Lawn Drive, Suite 301-E.

**Comedy night at Matt's Village Pub & Comedy Club.** 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. Call 644-0848 for details. 109 S. 12th St.

Get advice from "**Trading Spaces**" designer Vern Yip at the Southern Women's Show. Pamper yourself with health tips, a makeover and new clothes. 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. \$7 at the door. Richmond Raceway Complex, 602 E. Laburnum Ave.

**Saturday,  
April 12**

"**Flowers for Spring**" is an exhibit at Old World Prints Ltd., which focuses on floral images in art. The gallery is open Monday through Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. 213-0600, 2601 Floyd Ave.

**Blandfest** is a free concert with a wide range of music, including bands like **Classic Monkey Shine, Black Sky Affair** and **Another Nameless Face**. The all day concert is from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at Richard Bland College. 862-6100, 11301 Johnson Road.

The VCU dance students let loose for the **Informal Dance Concert**, which is this night only at 7 p.m. in the Grace St. Theater. Free. 828-2020, 934 W. Grace St.

**Sunday,  
April 13**

VCU presents two operas, "**Little Red Riding Hood**," followed by "**The Medium**" beginning at 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 4 p.m. Sunday at the W. E. Singleton Center for Performing Arts. 828-6776, 922 Park Ave.

**Carrion** performs at Holy Chow at 10:30 p.m. 225-7103, 309 N. Laurel St.

**Butterbean** performs live jazz at Bottoms Up Pizza. 9 p.m. Call 644-4400 for details. 1700 Dock St.

# Op/Ed

## Letter to the Editor

In the OP/ED article, "U.N.-productive?" published March 31, Terry Burton questions the United Nation's ability to govern effectively.

Mr. Burton also challenges France and its intractable stance on the United States' decision for war, going as far as stating its political posture as an, "I can't hear you" mentality.

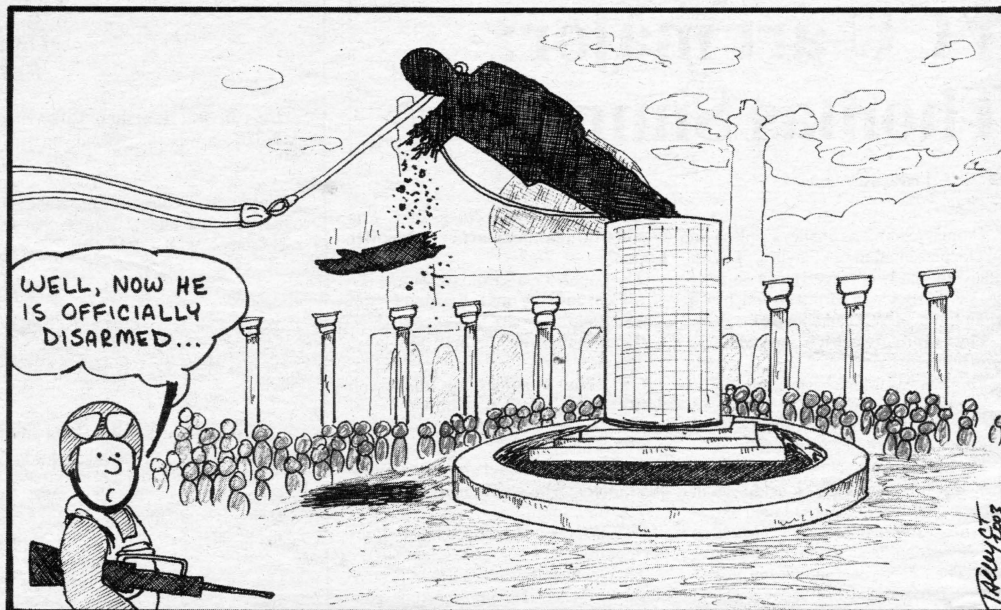
The unambiguous truth is that France does hear us, in point of fact rather loudly and clearly. They, along with the vast majority of nation-states however, choose not to align themselves with the United States.

With less than a handful of nations supporting the United States in combat deployment (others opting instead to aid in reconstruction), the administration affirms that many do so quietly. This indicates an important quandary that must be recognized. Nations partaking in this silent support do so in fear of future political isolation from the United States, however opt to refrain visibly in concern of public reprisal at home. At this time across the world, to side with the United States has become politically hazardous. In elections over the past year in South Korea, Pakistan and Germany, anti-American sentiments were campaign platforms. We are the ones choosing to cover our ears, not France.

At large, to dismiss international concerns would be a horrific mistake to our foreign policy. The war on terrorism should be our No. 1 concern, not Iraq. If we continue to isolate ourselves while brushing aside other nations, a grave degradation needed within international support would occur. We will beat Iraq standing alone, however that clearly won't be the case with the war on terrorism sans multilateral cooperation and shared intelligence.

Mr. Burton also questions the productiveness of the United Nations. He states that the U.N.'s power in effect disappeared with its unwillingness to back its own resolutions. Although for 12 years Saddam Hussein has disobeyed the U.N., this act of defiance did not justify (legally, not morally) a pre-emptive, unilateral strike without U.N. support.

If we hold Hussein accountable to U.N. laws and regulations, should we ourselves not abide by the interna-



BY MIKE TALLEY

tional governing body and rules we created? If the war on Iraq was one of necessity and self-defense, the variables concerning this war are obviously altered. However, it is clearly one of regime change, and thus, a war of choice. As U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan stated in a news conference at The Hague, "the war without U.N. authorization would be illegal."

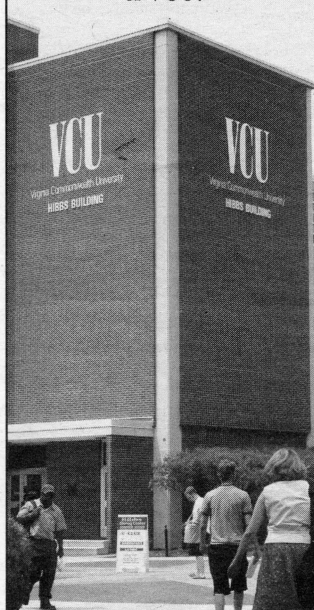
The U.N. remains at the forefront on many issues, ranging in creating a permanent international criminal court, peace operations, protecting the environment, supporting human rights and positive governing among others.

The war on Iraq isn't challenging the U.N.'s productivity in any manner. In reality it question's the United States' legitimacy. The United States months ago, clearly indicated that it would abide by the U.N. and international law, however as the governing body and international community began to question our motives, we no longer felt compelled to follow them.

Our hegemony clearly permeates through our actions – actions of dismissing the U. N. because it does not agree with our decisions. The U.N. was never in question, however our agenda was and will be.

Lu Duong  
Political Science

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We reserve the right to edit all letters for grammar, style and space. Letters should not exceed one single-spaced typed page. Letters must be signed and must include daytime and evening phone numbers.

Please send letters to CTimesEditor@aol.com. Mailing address: P. O. Box 842010, Richmond, VA 23284-2010. Drop box location: Room 1149, T. Edward Temple Building.



# Op/Ed

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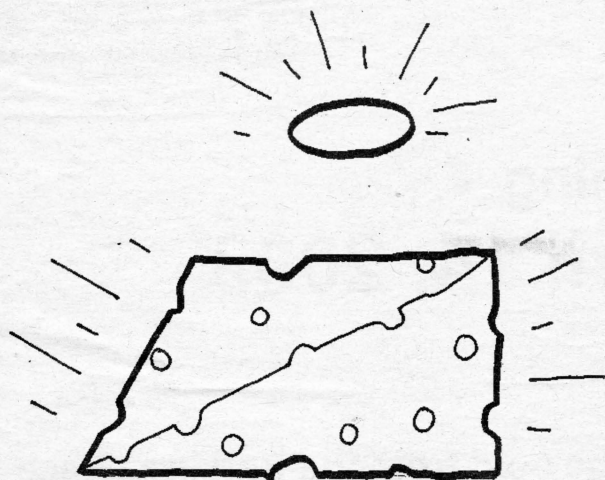
By Lyz Holder

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**HOLY CHEESE!**  
Behold the power of thee!

*Carolyn Belefski*

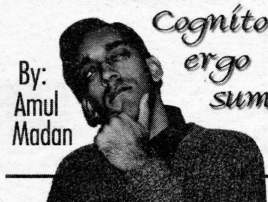
By Carolyn Belefski

**Think you have what it takes to be a great Op/Ed editor?**

The Commonwealth Times is currently accepting applications the Op/Ed editor position for the fall 2003 semester. If interested, stop by Temple Building, Room 1149 to pick up an application or contact Olivia at [CTimesEditor@aol.com](mailto:CTimesEditor@aol.com) for more information.



**SGA votes on stance for war with Iraq, Fall Break appreciation**



Amid the war and confusion, as well as the protesters for both the pro-war and anti-war stance around campus, the Student Government Association did something a few weeks ago that many can say should have been done a few months ago: they unanimously passed a "proclamation for peace," which states that no matter how intense the fighting gets abroad, the SGA "advocates peace for all people involved in conflict throughout the world."

Now before anyone goes and says "wait a second, that doesn't say much about the SGA's stance in the matter" let me say this: the proclamation for peace allows for both pro-war and anti-war supporters to voice their opinion freely, whereas if the SGA's position was either pro-war or anti-war, I'm sure there would be students knocking on the SGA's office door asking "what about an anti-war proclamation?" (if a pro-war proclamation was passed) or "what about a pro-war proclamation?" (if an anti-war proclamation was passed).

In short, by passing the proclamation of peace, those taking either pro-war or anti-war are appeased, to some extent. Last I checked everyone was in favor for peace. Those that are saying "well, it doesn't really say much" obviously didn't read between the lines of legislation to determine what the proclamation *really* means. Otherwise, if they had, they won't have that opinion.

On a lighter note, I'd like to thank the administration for reading my articles on having a fall break and the SGA taking action to approve something just like what UVa currently has. I do realize that this thank you is well overdue but I believe that some appreciation for what was passed and approved needs to be shown. For all of those wondering when the fall break is, I believe it is October 16 and 17 of next semester (but don't quote me).

Hopefully, in accordance with the proclamation for peace, the war we are currently in will end soon otherwise anxiety and fear will result, and everyone knows that in today's times, none of that is needed.

*Editor's Note:* Amul Madan recently was elected to serve as a senator for the SGA.

# Attention Students!



## 2003 Fall Semester Parking Decals

will be sold via the VCU PARKING WEBSITE

<http://www.bsv.vcu.edu/vcupark>

(Students are required to have a VCUCARD or VCUCARD number to purchase parking decals.)

beginning  
**Monday, April 14, 2003**

Spring semester decals will not be sold from the Parking Office  
locations until:

**Monday, May 12, 2003**

For more information call the Parking Office at 828-8726, Monday-Friday, 8:00am – 4:30pm.