

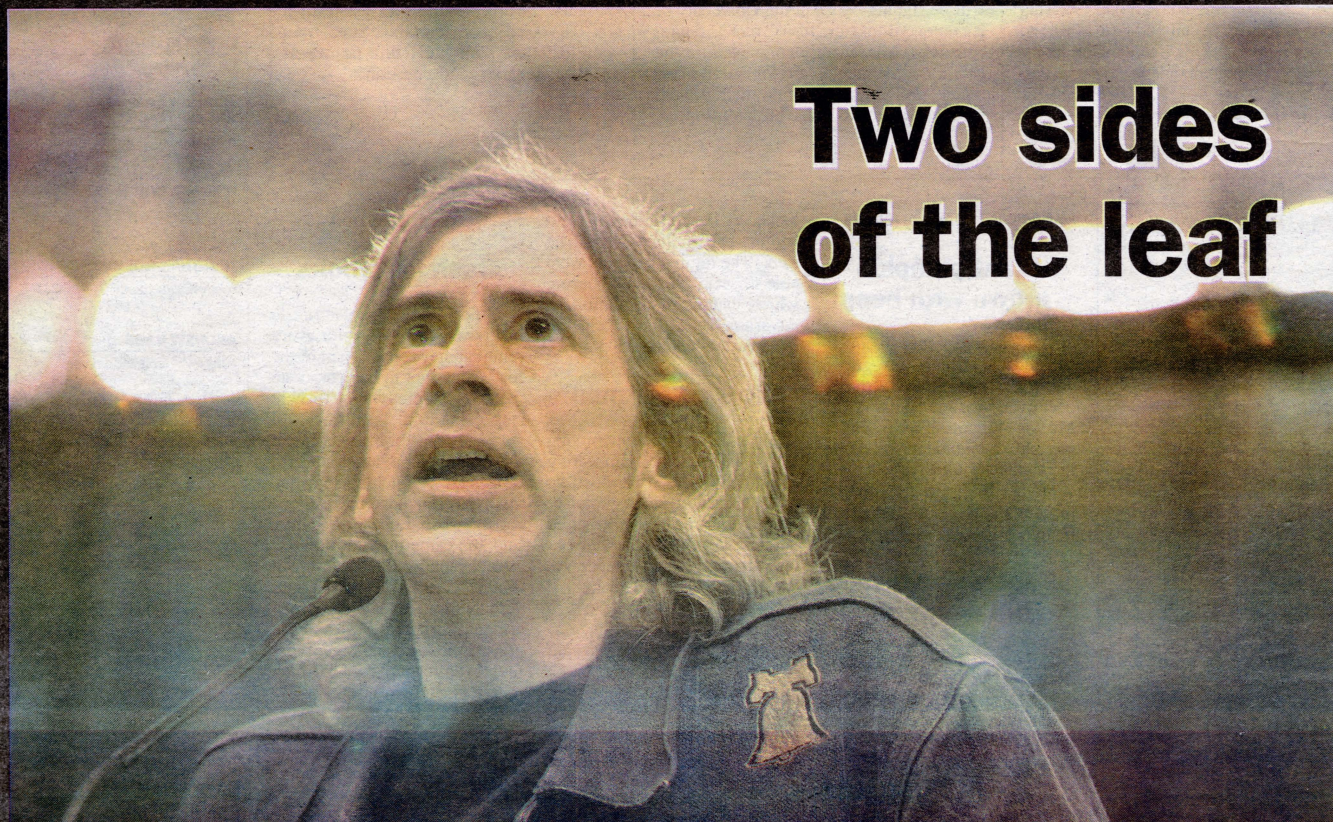
The Commonwealth Times

Free

The Independent Student Press of Virginia Commonwealth University Vol. 41 No. 13 Thursday, October 14, 2004

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(804) 828-1058

Two sides of the leaf



**Former DEA agent, High Times
editor argue legality of marijuana**

Page 3

Spectrum

"The Producers" comes
to Richmond's Landmark
Theater. / **Page 12**



Editorials & Letters

Terry Burton laments the death of Superman. / **Page 14**

Sports

It's Madness! VCU Athletics to give away
several prizes Friday night, including free
tuition . . . again. / **Page 9**

IN BRIEF

CALENDAR

OCT. 14 THROUGH OCT. 16

Thursday, Oct. 14	Friday, Oct. 15	Saturday, Oct. 16
As a part of VCU's new Short Courses for Dummies, students and faculty can get some cooking tips today at noon. Cooking 101 will be in Richmond Salons III and IV of the University Student Commons. There is a \$5 materials fee and pre-registration is required. Call 828-4554 for more information.	Brewster Milton Robertson, a graduate of VCU and author of "Grail Mystique," will be signing books at the University of Richmond Bookstore from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Robertson was recently nominated for the Library of Virginia Award for "Grail Mystique." Call Sharon Crumley at 289-8496 for directions and more information.	Students will serve music, food and fun at the Grace Street Festival , designed to recognize the diversity at VCU. The festival is on the 900 block of West Grace Street from noon to 5 p.m. Call McKenna Brown at 828-1026 for more information.

CAMPUS FORECAST



Thursday
68/51



Friday
66/42



Saturday
65/40



Sunday
67/41

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For recycling information, visit:
www.vcu.edu/recycling

Compiled from wire reports

Giant pumpkin grown with beer

A 13-year-old English boy attributed his successfully grown 700-pound pumpkin to feeding it beer everyday. Joe Hallam from Morton, Lincolnshire, feeds his pumpkin a pint a day and it's so large that he transports it with a crane. Joe said he thought the pumpkin was the largest in Britain.

Inmates make rope to break out of jail

Nearly 50 prisoners escaped from a jail in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil using a rope made of sheets and towels in the city's second largest break out in four days. The 48 prisoners of Benfica jail made a hole in the ceiling of the cellblock and used a rope to climb the jail wall before dawn. A duty official at the state penitentiary secretariat said authorities suspected some guards were paid to turn a blind eye, as a turret on the wall was unmanned during the escape. Those guards have been arrested.

Crocodile granny

A 60-year-old woman jumped on the back of a crocodile as it dragged a man from his tent in Australia only to be dragged by the same crocodile until it was shot dead. The woman and the 34-year-old man she was trying to protect suffered broken limbs, cuts and bruises as a result of the attack by the 12.6-foot crocodile, said wildlife and rescue officials. Stephen Pemberthy, a worker from the Royal Flying Doctor Service, said the crocodile crawled up to a tent and pulled the man out. When the woman in the adjacent

tent heard the noise she came out and jumped on the crocodile, he said. The injured campers were able to set off a rescue beacon, which caught the attention of government wildlife officials in the area eradicating wild pigs.

He's no Batman

An Oklahoma man attempting to save his marriage by appearing like a hero to his wife ended up in policy custody on suspicion of staging a crime where he hired burglars and foiled their fake robbery attempt. Trent Spencer was charged with the misdemeanor of filing a false report, said police spokeswoman Glynda Chu. According to police, Spencer paid two students \$100 each to break into his house and attempt to steal a stereo. The masked students secured his wife to a chair with duct tape and her husband attacked the two in a choreographed fight, even hitting one with a board that had been sawed in half to make it easier to break, police said. The fight was going well until Spencer's wife freed herself and called the police, who then rushed to the scene and tracked down the fake burglars.

I hope he has a good dentist

A tiger named Awang Relak could help save his species from extinction, San Diego Zoo officials said, but first he needs a little dental work. The 240-pound Indochinese tiger was anesthetized so a dentist could clean out pockets of infection and pry smaller teeth away from larger ones while a veterinarian probed the 3-year-old's private parts checking his sperm count to ensure his ability to procreate. In about a year he could be ready to court Mek Degong, a female tiger brought to San Diego from

Malaysia's Melaka Zoo.

Cash for crooks

Officers in Lodz, Poland are to be given a cash bonus for every criminal they catch as part of the force's attempt to use corporate methods of motivation to help stop rising crime. Officers will get one bonus for every criminal they catch and a larger sum for every case of catching someone involved in a major crime. Aldona Kostorzewa, Lodz police chief, said she came up with the idea after checking police records and finding at least 90 crimes reported daily but only an average of six criminals caught. Officers have praised the idea, and one officer said a colleague caught three people attempting to rob an elderly woman – a few days later he was called into the finance department and received his money. However, not everyone is happy, one Lodz citizen questioned the ability to solve so few crimes one day and so many the next.

'@' still not a name

Officials recently turned down a Chinese father's request to name his son "@." The man said that the symbol was now in common usage because it's used in e-mail addresses. However, government officials in Zhengzhou, Henan would not register the symbol as a name because Chinese names have to be able to translate into Mandarin.

Cover photo by
Pat Kane.
Spectrum cover
teaser cutout by Pat
Kane.

The Commonwealth TIMES

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NEWS

Marijuana debate sparks student involvement

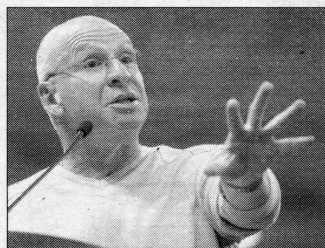
MELISSA LYNCH
News Co-Editor

Prior to a debate about the legalization of marijuana Tuesday night, Roy Scherer walked down the staircase of the Stuart C. Siegel Center asking "Who wants a free copy of Cannabis Magazine?"

Scherer, 62, began lobbying to change the drug laws in 1972 at the Virginia General Assembly.

"By what f----- right does the government say that a plant made by God is illegal?" asked Scherer, who wore a shirt that read "Cannabis in Medicine/ The Gov't is Lying."

He attended the debate between Steve Hagar, editor of *High Times* magazine, and Robert Stutman, a former Drug Enforcement Administration agent, to "ask them embarrassing questions."



Pat Kane

Robert Stutman (above), a former Drug Enforcement Administration agent, debated with Steve Hagar, *High Times* magazine editor.

"If either of them tries to b----- the public I will not hesitate to hold their feet to the fire," he said.

A majority of the roughly 540-person audience was vocally supportive of Hagar and the legalization of marijuana. At Hagar's invitation a number of students stayed after the debate to sign up to form an organization dedicated to the legalization of marijuana on campus.

Hagar began the debate arguing that marijuana was a useful substance for more diseases and disorders than any other substance. He added that the DEA classifies marijuana as a schedule I substance, which it defines as a dangerous substance.

"That's like standing in a raging hurricane and having the United States government telling you the wind ain't blowing," Hagar said.

He said pharmaceutical companies run America's health care system and because the companies don't have a monopoly on marijuana they don't want it legalized.

While he named five, the most important reason to legalize marijuana, Hagar said, was because "it's part of my culture."

"I come from a good culture. We created

the environmental movement. ... We've done good things for America."

Stutman, who worked with the DEA for 25 years and at one point was in charge of New York's DEA office, said while he disagrees with Hagar, "you will never see Steve or I attack each other or personally denigrate each other."

However, quoting Patrick Henry, he said, "In America everybody is entitled to their own opinion but everyone is not entitled to their own facts," adding that Hagar was using his own facts in his argument.

The real issue behind Hagar's argument was that marijuana is currently a drug of choice, Stutman said explaining that users "want to smoke grass when (they) want to smoke it and not get locked up by the cops."

Addressing Hagar's statement about marijuana's medicinal value, he said that doctors may prove that one chemical in the drug has health benefits but "smoking 434 other chemicals does not seem to be good medicine. It seems like witchcraft."

"Any doctor that tells you to smoke something for your health is a fool as far as I'm concerned."

He said there was substantial evidence that cannabis is five times more carcinogenic than cigarettes.

"If it is correct than there are going to be a whole bunch of 20 year olds in this audience that 20 years from now are going to find themselves fighting a terrible disease," Stutman said.

If the public, courts or science decided that marijuana should be legal, Stutman said he would fully support it.

"If the law is on your side, argue the law. If the facts are on your side, argue the facts. If nothing is on your side, just keep arguing," he said about people who support the legalization of marijuana.

Hagar said that Stutman was "playing lawyerly tricks with the facts," and invited him to the Cannabis Cup in Amsterdam to try marijuana for the first time.

"I'm looking forward to getting high with you," Hagar said, adding that he would play a Bob Marley CD and give Stutman a napoleon pastry.

"You eat great. You

sleep great. You have the best sex of your life with marijuana," Hagar said.

Stutman refused Hagar's offer.

"The thought of hanging around Amsterdam in December with a whole bunch of middle-aged hippies who can't get it on

On the Web:

Drug Enforcement Administration:

<http://www.usdoj.gov/dea/>

High Times:

<http://www.hightimes.com/ht/home/index.php>

without smoking a joint isn't appealing."

Replying to a question from an audience member, Stutman said alcohol and cigarettes cause a half million deaths each year, but "how does making marijuana legal make that problem any better? ... It compounds the problem."

He attributed the fact that alcohol, not marijuana, is legal in America to culture.

"It's a historical happenstance," Stutman said. "Middle Eastern cultures accept hashish, America historically doesn't."

Hagar responded to this saying Americans "have a right to your own culture as long as it's Judeo-Christian. That's not right."

Hagar said he didn't agree with the misuse of marijuana, and that a number of people who claim to support the legalization of the drug hurt the movement.

Danny Rosen, a first-year history major, said that while he came in agreeing with Stutman, Hagar's statement about the misuse of marijuana changed his mind.

"That (Hagar's statement) was profound and I really respect him for that," Rosen said. "It should be encouraged to be used responsibly."

First-year student George Herman, who is undeclared, was not swayed by the debate.

"I came in thinking that marijuana shouldn't be legalized, but it should be

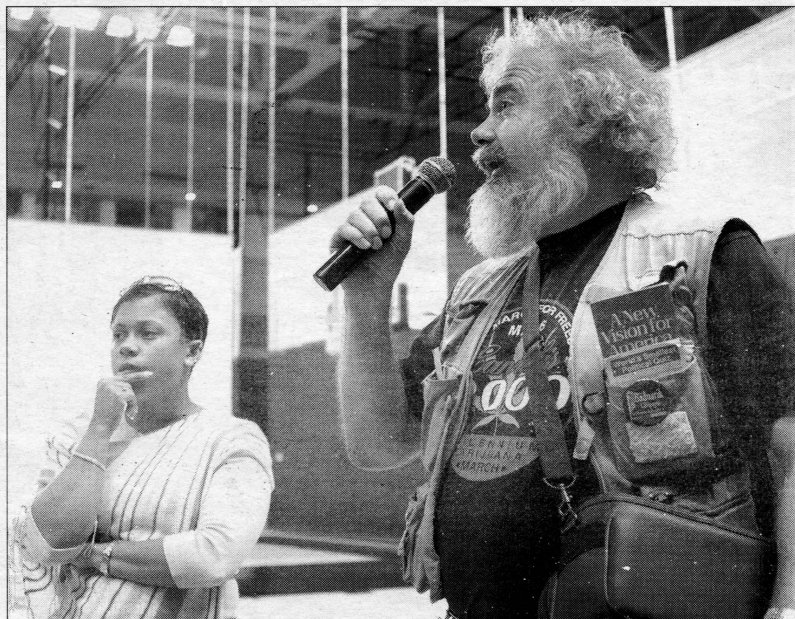
allowed to be more freely tested. I pretty much left the way I came in," he said.

Scherer, who lobbies for the legalization of marijuana, told Stutman that marijuana helped many of his friends who suffered with diseases such as cancer. But he said serving jail time for marijuana possession prohibited many of them from taking proper medications and some of them died.

"My friends are dead," he shouted.

Stutman replied, "I understand how angry you are and I'm very sorry for your anger. (But) we both have people who've died on this issue."

After he answered Scherer's final question, Stutman told the audience: "Those of you who are b----- like this man, if you don't vote you should sit down and shut up."



Pat Kane

Kelli Lemon stands next to an audience member who asked Robert Stutman, "What about our constitutional right to make our own decisions?"

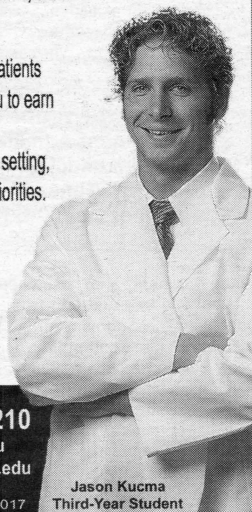
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News

Caplan delves into stem-cell research

KIM BUCH
Staff Writer

Doctors, nurses, students and others interested in stem-cell research flocked into the Kontos Auditorium on the VCU Medical Campus to hear Arthur L. Caplan speak about the ethical and moral issues involved with stem-cell research.

Caplan, director of the Center for Bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania, told the audience where stem-cells come from and how they can be obtained for research.

"Unused embryos get destroyed everyday. New ones are made and put aside daily while thousands are put aside monthly," Caplan said.

Freezing embryos is another way they can be preserved but he said these can be used only after being frozen a certain amount of time.

"There are 400,000 frozen embryos from couples trying to have a baby and 200,000 of those have been frozen for more than seven years," he said. "At this point the fertility is diminished and it is useless to make a baby from these embryos."

Although Caplan never sided with either presidential candidate, he said people, including President George W. Bush, take such a complicated stand on the issue that it is difficult to determine where they stand.

"Most religions believe that life can't start in a tray, and so they have no moral dilemma with this type of research," Caplan said. "Although it seems like a lot of people are for it, there isn't clear data yet to say how a majority feels about stem-cell research."

Caplan also discussed the effects of cloning embryos for stem-cell research and explained how that differs from cloning people. He said he came to the conclusion that cloning people may not be so safe.

"Nobody has cloned a monkey, a baboon or even a dog. If we can't clone them what makes anyone so sure humans are even cloneable?" he asked. "Cloned embryos solve the problem of rejection when someone has an illness."

After the lecture, which the MCV Foundation's Sanger Fund and Grayson Fund supported, members of the audience talked about what they viewed as the most important point of the lecture.

Jaime Brown, a second-year medical student, said she was compelled to attend the Caplan lecture because stem-cell research not only ranks as a hot topic in the upcoming election, but it also remains important in medical research.

"I was already in agreement with him as far as the need for embryonic-stem-cell

research goes, but he better explained Bush's policy and how that may seem like a compromise to the public. It's totally not useful for research," Brown said. "I still plan to vote for Bush, but there is a lot of controversy surrounding this topic and his policy, and he can actually change that if he listened to what the people want."

Erica Valdome, a nurse at the MCV Hospital, said she agrees with Caplan about more money being needed for this type of research.

"If there was more funding for stem-cell research, there would be so many more cures made available," she said. "And it would be easier to advance in medicine and understand humans better."

"Cloning is another issue I feel is important, but as Caplan said this idea that most Americans have about clones is unrealistic. People need to be more aware of the positive things that can result from this research."

Robert Wells, a Virginia Department of Transportation employee, attended the lecture on his day off.

"I was very surprised at how much I know now about stem-cell research. I have a better idea of what the current policy includes and limits us to as far as the research goes. I now better understand why it's not so immoral to do certain things needed for research."

Arthur Caplan

Arthur Caplan has been the director of the Center for Bioethics and trustee professor of bioethics at the University of Pennsylvania for 10 years. He has taught at the University of Minnesota, the University of Pittsburgh and Columbia University.

Caplan has written or edited 25 books and writes a regular column about bioethics for MSNBC.com. He was titled person of the year by USA Today in 2001 and Modern Health Care magazine named him one of the 50 most influential people in American health care.

Caplan has also chaired a number of committees including the Advisory Committee to the United Nations on Human Cloning and the Advisory Committee to the Department of Health and Human Services on Blood Safety and Availability.

CRIME LOG



Oct. 1
Female advised that a known person sexually assaulted her in North Hospital.

Oct. 3
Male arrested for possession of heroin, possession of drug paraphernalia and trespassing in Main Hospital.

Oct. 4
Male student arrested for underage possession of alcohol on the 20 block of Harrison Street.

Oct. 7
Male arrested at the Gateway Building for trespassing.
Female arrested for possession of marijuana on Belvidere and Marshall streets.

Oct. 8
Male and female students arrested for underage possession of alcohol on West Main and South Cherry streets.
Male arrested for felony domestic assault on the 100 block of West Main Street.
Female student advised that harassment occurred by an unknown person in the Bowe Street Deck.
Female student arrested for driving under the influence on the 1000 block

of West Avenue.

Oct. 9
Female advised that an unknown person removed property valued at \$600 from the Franklin Street Gym.
Female student advised that an unknown person removed personal property valued at \$30 from Gladding Residence Center.

Oct. 10
Male student advised that an unknown person removed property valued at \$250 from the Stuart C. Siegel Center.

Oct. 11
Male arrested for drinking in public and being drunk in public at 7-Eleven on West Grace Street.
Male and two females arrested for possession of an open container of alcohol and urinating in public.
Female advised of sexual assault in the University Student Commons.
Female advised of sexual assault by an unknown male at the Wood Memorial Building.
Female student advised that an unknown person removed her vehicle from its location in the E & S deck.
Male arrested for being drunk in public at Lafayette Hall.

Professor: Honor pledge important, flawed

KARA GLASCOE
Staff Writer

Students, faculty and staff are responsible for acting in accordance with the honor code policy, according to the Virginia Commonwealth University Honor System.

The honor code describes its pledge as an integral part of the VCU Honor System.

"A pledge is a statement of agreement to abide by a particular set of rules," said J. Donelson Forsyth, a professor of psychology.

Forsyth said people and organizations establish pledges for various reasons, the goal being to make the person follow through with the pledge.

"It only works if the person believes in what the pledge stands for—the statement," Forsyth said.

In 1999, VCU's Board of Visitors, the governing body of the university, mandated that students sign the pledge at least once—in the first class that student takes.

The code deems all work pledged unless otherwise specified by the instructor. The instructor has the option to include the pledge or not.

It also calls for professors to encourage all students to sign the official Honor Pledge on tests and papers.

David Lehr, a first-year student, said he has

never signed the pledge. He said the existence of the honor code is important, but it is unlikely he would report violators.

Forsyth said some universities have every student sign their pledge and that signature is then published. "The public pledge is much more important than the private pledge," he said.

Many students sign the pledge when the professor makes it part of an exam or when they sign up for classes. However, those signatures usually remain in student files.

Lack of a signature, however, does not protect students from responsibility for the pledge.

"It might be better if you had a choice, but I understand why it is mandatory," Forsyth said. "One person choosing not to (pledge) and the whole system falls apart. So it's good, but kind of tricky."

Forsyth said when students pledge voluntarily they are more likely to keep their pledge.

"It's just not as psychologically powerful for people because they are coerced," he said. "Psychologically it's not their pledge, it's VCU's pledge."

Editor's Note: This is the fifth installment of an eight-part series intended to introduce and help students navigate VCU's Honor Code. The series will be published every Thursday.

VCU Honor Pledge

"On my honor, I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment."

CLASSIFIEDS

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STATE & NATION

Voter rolls increased by 64,000-plus during deadline weekend

BOB LEWIS

Associated Press Writer

RICHMOND, Va. — Over one long deadline weekend, the number of Virginians who registered to vote in the presidential election nearly matched the extraordinary surge of voter registrations for the entire preceding month.

The unprecedented last-minute crush forced voter registrars statewide to work long days and weekends, and it adds a measure of suspense in Virginia to a national campaign that has tightened in recent weeks.

From Friday, Oct. 1, through the Oct. 4 registration deadline, 64,261 people registered in Virginia, final State Board of Election figures made public Tuesday show.

That compares with 66,306 who had registered for the Nov. 2 election during the entire month of September and is nearly double the September registrations four years ago.

It brings the final count of Virginians registered for the election to slightly more than 4.5 million. That's the state's largest registered electorate ever and 11 percent larger than in 2000.

"My guess is many of these were people who got this last-minute wakeup call that it was time to register to vote in this year's election or they won't be able to," said State Board of Elections Secretary Jean Jensen.

Her agency, which coordinates statewide elections in

Virginia, and local voter registrars in cities and counties across the state were swamped as voters registered at a furious pace the final weekend at their offices, in organized registration drives and by mail.

"I stayed in here one night just to help open envelopes. It was just envelope after envelope, thousands of them of all shapes and sizes," Jensen said.

Odds are that most of the late registrations are

Democrats or people unhappy with President Bush, said Larry J. Sabato, director of the University of Virginia's Center for Politics.

"I'd bet the Democrats have the edge, but not a big edge. I think there are probably a lot of Republicans in there, too," Sabato said.

The late surge in registrations as well as Democrat John Kerry's recent boost in the polls reflects public unease about the war in Iraq, Sabato said.

"Over many years, I've learned that when people are happy with incumbents, they spend their time on subjects other than politics, but when they're unhappy, they go down and visit the registrar," he said.

Applications are also heavy for absentee ballots, another sign of high interest in this year's election.

As of Tuesday, election officials statewide had received 110,793 requests for absentee ballots, and 20,801 of them have been completed and returned to local election

boards, Jensen said.

Assuming all the ballots are returned, that puts the state on pace to top the 150,414 absentee ballots cast in 2000.

Voters have until the Oct. 28, the Thursday before the election, to apply for absentee ballots, and they have until 5 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 30, to cast absentee ballots.

The frantic pace of registration and the large number of absentee applications comes as the massive task of processing the data and preparing the voluminous poll books election workers at every voting precinct in the state use falls to the state's new consolidated data processing agency.

The Virginia Information Technology Agency, in service since July 2003, had to extend its operating hours to allow registrars who reported to work early, stayed late and worked weekends to enter data into VITA's computers, Jensen said.

The agency completed the task early this week and the SBE began the physical chore of locking the poll books into suitcase-like trunks and shipping them to localities.

Jensen said top SBE officials monitored VITA as it worked through last weekend. "It was the same people who've done this for previous elections, it was just under VITA this time," she said. "There weren't any problems."

On the Net:
State Board of Elections:
<http://www.sbe.state.va.us>

GOP lawmakers appear to support charter university

RICHMOND — Key legislative leaders appeared supportive Tuesday as the presidents of the three top state universities urged passage of legislation to give them greater control over their operations and finances.

But the leading Republican lawmakers stopped short of endorsing the charter university proposal pushed by the University of Virginia, Virginia Tech and the College of William and Mary.

"The devil's in the details," said House of Delegates Speaker William Howell, R-Stafford. "I think it's a great idea worth exploring."

Some lawmakers and Gov. Mark R. Warner want to ensure that the proposal won't hurt Virginia's other public colleges or hamper statewide higher education initiatives.

"There's no way we can address these three (universities) in a vacuum," said Sen. John Chichester, R-Stafford, who heads a legislative subcommittee studying the issue. The panel held its first meeting Tuesday.

Under the charter proposal, Tech, U.Va. and William and Mary would gain greater control over tuition

and fees, salaries, procurement and building projects. They also could keep more of the profits generated by university-affiliated enterprises.

In return, they would surrender 10 percent of future new state spending on higher education, potentially freeing up money for other four-year colleges in Virginia. The three universities would also expand their in-state enrollments by a total of 2,500 students.

The presidents insisted they are not trying to create private institutions or escape accountability. But bureaucracy and unpredictable state funding limit their ability to compete with peer research institutions in the United States and around the world, they said.

Warner, whose support is critical if the state relationship with universities is to be changed, generally has taken a position that he must be sold on the idea, or perhaps a modified version.

"He's going to be hesitant to cede centuries of public university history to save money in the short run," Ellen Qualls, his press secretary, said Tuesday.

Gas prices jump since Labor Day; may climb higher

BRETT ZONGKER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Gas prices surged more than 10 cents a gallon over the past month in the Washington region and will likely continue to climb, defying normal declines after the busy summer driving season, AAA said Wednesday.

"The speculation is probably accurate that we're going to see prices well over \$2 again in the near future," AAA Mid-Atlantic spokesman Lon Anderson said. Some stations are already at or past that mark.

Hurricane Ivan is partly to blame for interrupting oil production in the Gulf of Mexico and supply lines from coastal ports, he said. A labor strike in Nigeria and strife among Norwegian oil workers have also affected production.

Washington-area prices reached an aver-

age of \$1.96 for self-serve regular, according to the auto club's latest survey of gas prices. Just one month ago that gallon cost \$1.85.

As usual, motorists in the District of Columbia are paying the highest prices at an average of \$1.97 per gallon. Marylanders are paying a penny less, and Virginia drivers are paying \$1.90 per gallon. The national average is \$1.98.

When OPEC cut oil production last year, it was meant to stabilize prices at

\$25 to \$30 per gallon, Anderson said.

"They cut production some, and frankly we've never recovered," he said. Since then prices have reached new highs, and he warned that a cold winter could drive gas prices even higher.

"If we have a severe winter across the North American continent, that's of course going to drive up the cost of heating oil," he said. "When you have finite capacity that again could drive up gas prices."

On the Net:
AAA Mid-Atlantic:
<http://www.aaamidatlantic.com>

SPORTS

Upcoming Sports
EVENTS

NCAA

Friday, Oct. 15

Men's soccer vs. Hofstra, 7 p.m.

The injury-riddled Rams host a Hofstra team that went winless in its first two CAA games. Last season, the two teams played 105 minutes before defender Gonzalo Segares scored the game-winner. The Rams will host Drexel on Sunday.

Women's soccer at Delaware, 4 p.m.

After pounding Longwood in a nonconference matchup, the Rams will travel to play the Blue Hens, who have lost three of their past five games after winning four straight. The 22 combined goals scored by VCU's Jen Parsons and Solfrid Anderson are five more than Delaware has scored all season. The Rams travel to Towson for an 11 a.m. game on Sunday.

Volleyball at William & Mary, 7 p.m.

Losing their first two CAA matchups to Delaware and Hofstra extended the Rams losing streak to six matches. A 3-0 win over George Mason is William & Mary's only win in its past five matches.

Field Hockey at Virginia, 6 p.m.

The Rams, on a three-game skid, catch the Cavaliers on a two-game winning streak. VCU has five days to regroup before traveling to Charlottesville for the nonconference game. The Cavs have to deal with a midweek matchup with Radford.

Intramurals

Thursday, Oct. 14

Indoor Soccer Co-rec

Dentistry vs. Free Agent CR H, 6:45 p.m.
Dirty Caban Crew vs. Team Mikesell, 7:30 p.m.
Team Rodriguez vs. Team Liu Liu, 8:15 p.m.
Team Mikesell vs. Jaguars, 9 p.m.

For more information contact the VCU sports line: 828-7000. VCU sporting events are free to students with a valid student ID.

Pats sitting
on 19s, try to
stretch to 20sRAJ SETHI
Sports Writer

It's hard to say what happened last week. John Kerry said the Packers were unbeatable at Lambert Field, and I guess Hassan Rahim (3-1) was the only person that didn't believe him. We're right at .500 for the season (30-30), while you broke even at 6-6 last week to go to 27-21.

Raj Sethi

Carolina at Philadelphia

The Panthers are struggling. Deshaun Foster went down with a serious injury. Stephen Davis won't be 100 percent, either. And they're playing one of the best teams in the NFL on the road. It just gets better and better for the defending NFC champs. **Eagles**

Kansas City at Jacksonville

Fresh off a bye week after pounding the Ravens on Monday night, the Chiefs have thoughts of climbing back into the playoff race. **Chiefs**

Seattle at New England

The Patriots will be tested by a talented, but demoralized, Seahawks team. We'll find out just how mentally tough Seattle is on Sunday. **Seahawks**

Tampa Bay at St. Louis

The Rams pulled off the best comeback of the season so far, saving their chances at defending their division crown. The Bucs won't be able to keep up with a team starting to build momentum. **Rams**

Marcus Hudgins

Carolina at Philadelphia

Philly will win at home against a secondary unit to stop the McNabb/Owens Connection. **Philly**
Kansas City at Jacksonville
The Jags are for real, looking like Carolina last year, and KC won't defeat anyone with that porous defense. **Jags**

Seattle at New England

Seattle is coming off of a loss and, except for Shaun Alexander, this is not a team that rebounds from losses very well. The Pats will extend their unbeaten streak to 20 in a row.

Tampa Bay at St. Louis

Martz and company are on a roll right now, and Tampa won't be able to keep it together long enough to handle the Rams at home. **Rams**

Nicholas Arnold

Carolina at Philadelphia

Panthers are still falling. Deshaun Foster's out eight weeks. Is Davis back yet? WHO CARES! **Philly** keeps the unbeaten streak going
Kansas City v. Jacksonville
It looks like Kansas City is on the rebound. Look for Dante Hall to breakout and for the first time in a long time **Kansas City** wins with defense.

Seattle at New England

Voices are telling me the Patriots have to lose. I just refuse to listen to them. Each week they find a way, and I know it's repetitive, but they refuse to lose. **Patriots**

Tampa Bay at St. Louis

In a tight game, look for a 200-yard performance from Bucs backup QB Brian Griese plus two touchdowns from smashmouth Mike Alstott. **Bucs.**

Julian Benbow (1-3, 7-5)

Carolina at Philadelphia

Yep, at 1-3 the Panthers are back to being the Panthers. I just want to see the Eagles win their fifth straight by double digits. **Eagles**
Kansas City at Jacksonville
The Jags may need a win to stop a two-game skid, but I need to pick at least one road team and KC did bust up the Ravens on Monday night. **Chiefs.**

Seattle at New England

Why not make it 20? **Patriots**

Tampa Bay at St. Louis

The Rams have scored more points in the last three weeks (82) than the Bucs have all season (69). **Go Rams.**

Michael Kidd

Senior

Favorite team: N.Y. Giants

Eagles over Panthers

Chiefs over Jaguars

Seahawks over Patriots

Rams over Bucs

Will Berthoff

Sophomore

Favorite team: Cowboys

Eagles over Panthers

Jaguars over Chiefs

Patriots over Seahawks

Rams over Bucs

Isac Crouch

Sophomore

Redskins

Eagles over Panthers

Chiefs over Jaguars

Patriots over Seahawks

Rams over Bucs

Seattle enters this contest reeling after suffering a home loss to St. Louis last week in which the Seahawks squandered a 17-point, fourth-quarter lead. The Patriots, meanwhile, come in riding your everyday 19-game winning streak—the longest winning streak in NFL history. So you could say they have a little momentum on their side. Three things to watch for:

Two Ways to Respond...

You better believe that's the message Seattle head coach Mike Holmgren is sending to his team after last week's meltdown. The Seahawks had last week's game all but wrapped up, then the defense got soft, the offense got conservative, and before you knew it, St. Louis was kicking a game-tying field goal and sending it to OT. Either the Seahawks visit New England feeling sorry for themselves and lacking the confidence and swagger that they carried throughout the first three and three quarters games of the season, or they come in hungry to not only end the Patriots' run, but also reestablish themselves as one of the NFL's elite teams and a serious championship contender.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

New England's offense could be described as all three at one time or another in last week's victory over Miami. QB Tom Brady had an uncharacteristically poor showing, throwing for just 76 yards and averaging a paltry four yards per attempt. Yes, the Miami defense, especially their secondary, is extremely talented. Yes, the Patriots made a concerted effort to run the ball. But Seattle's defense is just as talented. The only difference? Seattle can score. So Brady and Co. will have to be sharp if they want to push their win streak to 20.

Battle of the... Coordinators? Don't be surprised if this game comes down to the chess match between New England offensive coordinator Charlie Weiss and Seattle defensive coordinator Ray Rhodes. Weiss is the most innovative offensive mind in the AFC. Rhodes is the former head coach whose defenses are always up to the task. You can bet he's kicking himself a little after loosening up on the Rams last week and allowing them to come back. Weiss' offense wasn't impressive last week, either, so both of these men are looking to get their units back on track.

The outcome of this game could hinge on which of these men gets the better of their counterpart.

E-mail your picks to ctsports04@yahoo.com

SPORTS

Team Hunsucker puts up 15 in two IM wins

MARCUS HUDGINS
Staff Writer

In last Monday's Men's A division indoor soccer, Team Hunsucker topped M2 5-1. Sambabeat Team O'Leary 7-5, and Anponsem FC pounded Team Hunsucker 10-4. Delta Chi beat MSA 8-3 in Tuesday's action in the Men's B division. Team Marcelle edged Free Agent M5-3, and Team Griggs put down The Revolution 5-4. The late game featured Team Marcelle, which won by five against the Bad News Bears 8-3. Flag football had a number of no-shows, with M 2007, M 2005 and M3 all picking up forfeit wins on Monday in the co-rec division.

Of the games that were played, none were really close.

MSA cracked open the Headbusas 24-13, while the next game put M3 against The Cadavers. M3 won 25-11. The last game was a blowout. The Free Agents overtook The Takeover 36-0. The Men's A division featured one close game and a few beatings Tuesday. FEB shut out the Hit Squad 32-0. Then, the Ravens beat the Seminoles 32-20. Major League punked the Raw Dawgs 34-6. The Good Times got by the Trojans 31-18, then lost to the Seminoles 12-0. The sixth game saw the Hit Squad and the Raw Dawgs tie things up at 16. Last and also least, The Dynasty beat Kappa Sigma by forfeit.

Six straight wins, six straight shutouts

NICHOLAS ARNOLD
Staff Writer

The VCU women's soccer team controlled every aspect of Friday night's 4-0 win over Longwood College. It was the Rams' sixth straight win in which they haven't allowed a goal.

Striker Solfrid Andersen scored her team-leading 11th goal of the season in the 14th minute of the game. Forward Jen Parsons score two goals of her own, leaving her with 11 as well.

The Rams dominated on offense, recording 11 shots in the first half. Andersen's goal from seven yards out came from an assist by midfielder Kasey Sandvig.

Parsons booted in a cross from Hedda Gardsjord in the 55th minute to start the scoring in the second half. Balanced midfielder Sandra Anger scored on a penalty kick in the 65th minute, and the rout was secured.

Parsons' final goal came off of another tightly placed cross, this time from senior forward Katie MacDougall. Parsons took the pass and put it past Longwood's Heather Storie from 12 yards out.

The Rams' defense didn't allow a shot on goal, and limited the Lancers to just one shot all game. Freshman goalkeepers Lauren Hardison and Emily Niman completed another shutout for the Rams without having to make any saves.

With another win under their belt, the balanced VCU women's soccer team has a dangerous weekend coming up. On Friday night, the Rams travel to Delaware, where

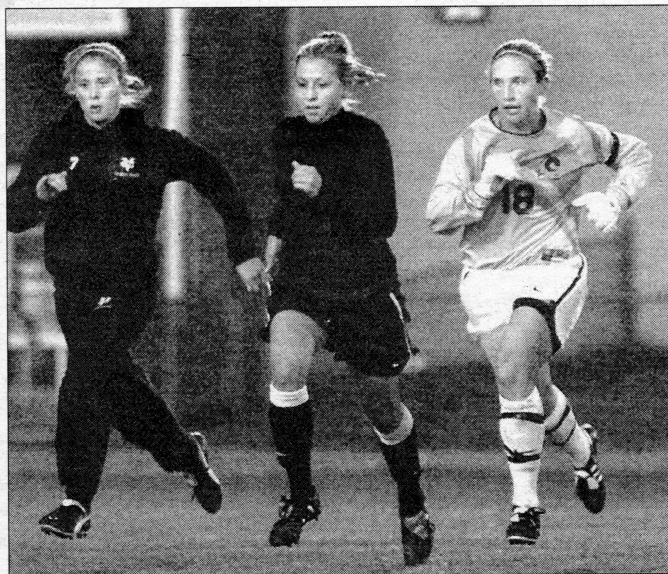
the Blue Hens are 2-1-1 this season.

Two days later the Rams have a gigantic midseason test at Towson. The Tigers are 2-1-1 in CAA play, two points behind the Rams in the standings.

In a surprise upset over the weekend, Old Dominion toughed out William &

Mary in a 2-1 overtime win on the road. The winning goal came on a controversial penalty kick in the 96th minute.

The Monarchs, with a record of 3-1-1, took over sole possession of first place in the CAA, leading VCU by one point.



Pat Kane

For her three saves in nearly three hours of work in the Rams two shutouts, freshman goalkeeper Lauren Hardison (18) won CAA rookie of the week.

Madness starts early for Rams hoops

MARCUS HUDGINS
Staff writer

If you haven't heard by now, Ram Madness is this Friday night from 10:30 p.m. to 1 a.m.

This is the yearly gathering of freaks, fans and students, all coming together to get acquainted with this season's VCU Rams men's and women's basketball teams.

"The first big prize giveaway will be at 10:30 p.m., so make sure you are there early," said Keith Rafter, assistant director for marketing, promotions and group sales for VCU Athletics, in a mass e-mail.

There will be T-shirts given away to the first 500 students to enter, as well as cash, a free semester of in-state tuition, \$500 toward books and a semester of free parking on campus.

In addition, there will be an autograph session with players and coaches and performances by the pep band and cheerleaders.

There also will be a men vs. women 3-point contest and a slam dunk contest will cap off the evening.

Kelli Lemon, assistant director for pro-

grams and events for University Student Commons & Activities, said in a telephone interview that "it is important to remember

that while it is OK to arrive late, doing so will mean you will miss out on some really good prizes."

Ram Madness Schedule

10:30 p.m.-11:40 p.m.

Countdown to Midnight

-T-shirts to the first 500 students

-Free hot dog, soda and chips

-DJ Rick Danger will be spinning all the new hits.

-Basketball Contests with VCU basketball players - Prizes from Krispy Kreme, Papa John's, Great Wraps, Piccola's and Karen's Restaurant.

-Free Semester of Parking Give-a-way!

-Free Cotton Candy and pictures with Rodney the Ram- courtesy of APB

-Lewis Black Ticket Give-a-way!

-Get autographs from the players and coaches

-20" Flat Screen TV Give-a-way!

-Performance by the VCU Cheerleaders, Dance Team and Pep Band

Team and Pep Band

11:40 p.m.

Introduction of Men's and Women's players and coaches.

Ukrops Gift Certificate Raffle
Dorm Cheer Off!

Midnight

RAM MADNESS begins

Team Warm-Ups!

\$500 Book Certificate Give-a-way!

12:10 a.m.

Men's vs. Women's Basketball 3 Point Contest

NBA Tickets Give-a-way!

12:30 a.m.

\$200 Cash Scramble

Nike Shoes and Team Practice Gear Shoot Outs!

12:45 a.m.

Dunk Contest

In-State Tuition Give-a-way!

We want to hear from you!



Send your comments and letters to
ctvcu@hotmail.com.



Group Exercise Class Schedule Stuart C. Siegel Center

Fall 2004 Session II
October 25 - December 10, 2004

Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
7:00am - 8:00am		Spin Greg G	Step Suji K	Spin Greg W	Spin Greg G	Cardio Kickboxing Suji K	
8:00am - 9:00am			Spin Greg G	Cardio Kickboxing Suji K	A.B.S. Suji K	Spin Greg G	
9:00 am - 10:00am			Yoga Rob C		Yoga Rob C		
10:00am - 11:00am							Wild Card Cardio Galen H
11:00am - 12:00pm							
12:00pm - 1:00pm		12:15-12:45 30 min A. B. S. Don S	Baby Boomers Don S	Cardio Kickboxing Makeda S	Baby Boomers Don S		
1:00pm - 2:00pm			1:00-2:15 Yoga Lori S		1:00-2:15 Yoga Lori S		
2:00pm - 3:00pm		Pilates Rachel N					
3:00pm - 4:00pm		Athletic Conditioning Bryan B		Athletic Conditioning Bryan B		Yoga Rob C	
4:00pm - 5:00pm		Tai Chi/Taiji Jonathan S		Total Body Aerobics Kim B		A. B. S. Bryan B	
5:00pm - 6:00pm		A. B. S. Don S	Pilates Makeda S		Muscle Toning Don S		
6:00pm - 7:00pm		Cardio Kickboxing Galen H	Spin Eric	Spin Greg G		Spin Greg G	
7:00pm - 8:00pm		Spin Greg G	Step Galen H	A. B. S. Eric	Xtreme Martial Arts—Advanced Berkley D		Please visit the website for the most updated schedule
8:00pm - 9:00pm		Women's Self- Defense Advanced Lindsey C	A.B.S. Suji K	Xtreme Martial Arts Berkley D	Martial Arts Berkley D		Schedule is subject to change
9:00pm - 10:00pm		Yoga Rob C	Women's Self- Defense Beginners Lindsey C	Point Sparring Berkley D			

MCV Campus Recreation and Aquatic Center



Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6:00am - 7:00am		6:30-7:15 Water Exercise Charlena Ward		6:30-7:15 Water Exercise Charlena Ward	6:30-7:30 Wake Up Call Heather G	6:30-7:30 Pilates Heather G	
7:00am - 8:00am				Step Suji K			
8:00am - 9:00am		Cardio Kickboxing Suji K					
12:00pm - 1:00pm			11:30am-12:00pm Upper Body Conditioning 12:00 - 12:30 A. B. S. Jake G		11:30am-12:00pm Lower Body Conditioning 12:00 - 12:30 A. B. S. Jake G		
1:00pm - 2:00pm				Okinawan Karate Tristan Cooper			
2:00pm - 3:00pm				Self Defense Tristan Copper			
4:00pm - 5:00pm					5:45-6:45 Water Exercise Charlena Ward		
5:00pm - 6:30pm				5:30-6:30 Step Galen H	Step Eric W	5:30-6:30 Spin Galen H	
6:00pm - 7:00pm			Self-Defense for Women Lindsey Check		Cardio Kickboxing Galen H		
7:00pm - 8:00pm				7:15-8:15 Spin Greg W			
8:00pm - 9:00pm		Kickboxing Berkley D					

Purchase a Fitness Pass for unlimited access:

	Student & Member	Non-member/ Community
7 week pass	\$30	\$60

Passes are good for all three Rec Sports facilities.
Purchase your pass at the service desk by cash or
check. Questions? Call 827-1100.

Cary Street Recreation Complex



Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4:00pm - 5:00pm		Total Body Aerobics Kim B		Tai Chi/Taiji Jonathan S			
7:00pm - 8:00pm		A.B.S. & Body Circuit Makeda S	Xtreme Martial Arts Berkley D	A.B. S. & Body Circuit Makeda S			
8:00pm - 9:00pm		Cardio Kickboxing Makeda S		Cardio Kickboxing Makeda S			

VCU rec sports

Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services
www.students.vcu.edu/recsports

• Stuart C. Siegel Center / 1200 W. Broad St. • Cary Street Recreation Complex & Outdoor Adventure Program/Outing Rental Center / 911 W. Cary St.
• MCV Campus Recreation & Aquatic Center / 10th Street at Turpin

VCU is an equal opportunity / affirmative action Institution providing access to education and employment without regard to age, race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation or disability. For more information, or if you feel you need special accommodation from Recreational Sports, please contact Dr. Eric West, 804-827-0317.

Spectrum

Guess who's back? Lewis Black!

An exclusive interview before his Siegel Center performance Oct. 28

LOUIE CORBO
Spectrum Writer

October 28, mark them calendars! Lewis Black is coming to Virginia Commonwealth University!

Yes, you probably know him from his role as the doctor in "Jacobs Ladder." Or maybe you saw him as the shock jock on a recent episode of "Law and Order SVU." Or if you want to nit pick, he's done an HBO special, and makes appearances on Comedy Central's "The Daily Show."

As part of his "Rules of Enragement" tour, Lewis Black is coming to the Stuart C. Siegel Center with his new stand up routine along with upcoming comedian John Bowman. Tickets are still on sale for \$10 with a VCU ID, \$15 for other college students with ID and \$20 for general admission. Say the phrase "Louie Corbo is a hottie," for a 70 percent discount!*

Lewis Black was kind enough to grant The Commonwealth Times an exclusive interview to promote his tour.

You are described as a New York comedian, but you grew up in Silver Spring, Md. and attended college at the University of North Carolina and Yale. How did you get your reputation as a New Yorker?

"You live in New York (long enough) you become a New Yorker." (Black said he moved to New York in 1982).

So why are you touring right now?

"It's fun because I'm playing clubs, colleges. I've finally gotten the audience, it would be crazy to lose them."

How would you contrast your on stage

persona with your real personality.

"The difference is if I was that angry all the time in real life, I'd be dead."

What do you think about the growing marriage between news and entertainment?

"I think it's crazy, we're ('The Daily Show') entertainers and we say we're entertainers. News should stick to news. I find it irritating."

How much influence do you think observational comedy and political comedy have on pop culture?

"I don't really know, I know 'The Daily Show' has an effect, Artell's show ('Insomniac') people in bars think they're doing something important (laughs)."

You have a strong following with the college youth, yet you are quite the curmudgeon. What do you think is your appeal?

"I'm emotionally stunted. I'm a 21-year-old (mentally). (What I say) is the same stuff I hear from their parents, but they're not as funny."

Did you see the VP debates?

"Yes"

Who did you think won?

"I think we lost...."

The American people?

"Yeah, we lost big."

Any good come from it?

"The end of it, (laughs). No, I don't think any thing good came from it. The (first) presidential debate had more to it."

What do you think is the biggest problem that we just don't care about?

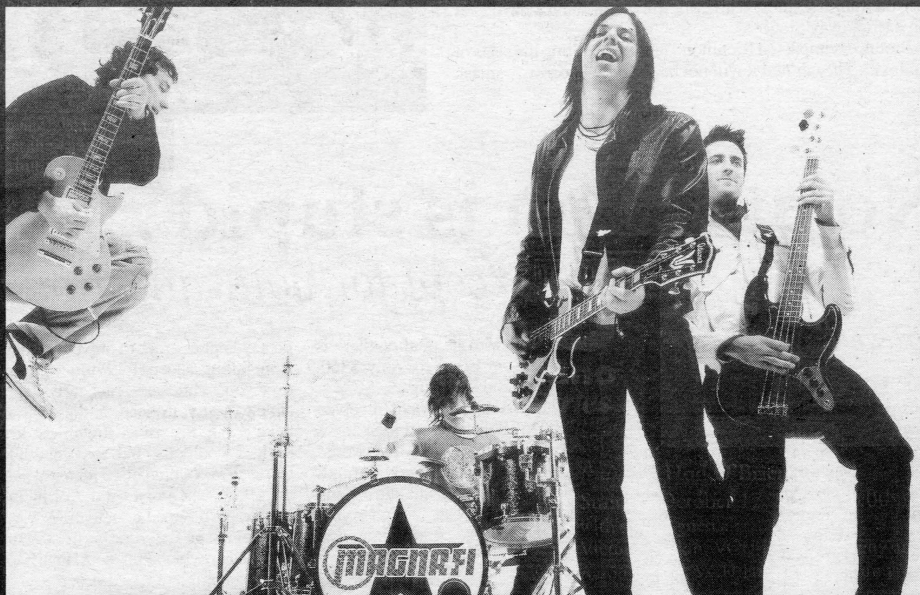
"I think education. They are not even dealing with it. No child left behind is so off the mark. Why would anyone want to teach? The pay is so low, and idiots argue over property taxes (that fund education)!"

Lewis Black is known for his trademark "finger points." How did he come up with this gimmick? Back in his earlier days of comedy he performed at a casino. Absentmindedly he started pointing his fingers, and he didn't think anything of it at the time. After the show some fans saw him and started mimicking the fingers. He didn't realize what they were doing so he asked a friend about it. His friend just said, "They're doing your finger thing." At that point he realized he had a "thing" and went with it.

You might want to save your cash for this comedy concert. CDs, DVDs and my personal favorite, the Lewis Black bobble head, will be on sale. For more on Lewis Black, visit his official Web site at www.lewisblack.com.

For more ticket information, call the Siegel Center box office at 828-4554.

*Offer not valid, but still say it. It'll be funny.



Scott Nathan

Magna-Fi members are Mike Szuter on lead vocals and guitar, C.J. Szuter on guitar and vocals, Rob Kley on bass and vocals, and Charlie Smaldino on drums.

Alt-Rockers Magna-Fi burn up the stage tonight

Magna-Fi has opened for such famous acts as Puddle of Mudd and now they are headlining a show tonight at the Canal Club in Richmond.

The rock and all male Quartet has a game plan for global domination starting with their migration from their local following in Ohio to the murky music scene of Las Vegas.

After several record label changes and suffering the fallout from a bad record label deal, the band is now on

Aezra and things are looking bright.

Influences include the likes of the Beatles, Foo Fighters, Nirvana and Quicksand.

They merged their influences together to compile a new album that's sounds alt-metal flavored with hard and heavy rips.

"Burn Out The Stars" is a collection of eleven songs containing lyrics exploring topics such as war's tragedy, loves and the twilight zone.

**Magna-Fi with
Evenout and
Memory Fade at
the Canal Club
Doors open at 8 p.m. and
Admission is \$7.00.
For more info, check out:
www.thecanalclub.com**

Spectrum

ASK THE
BARONESS

Dear Baroness,

Why is it that every girl I have a crush on seems to have a boyfriend, and the rest of the female population around here seem to be spiteful, uninteresting girls who I show no attraction for?

Sincerely,
Bitter Bob

Dear Bob,

First off, let me just clarify that I hate that name. Perhaps the fact that I, The Baroness, hate the name Bob, could be just the beginning of what is to follow.

So, every girl you have a crush on has a boyfriend. Perhaps that should tell you something right there. You are attracted to girls that are girlfriend-worthy. Obviously that is why they are in fact, not single. Girls that you find uninteresting and spiteful you are clearly unattracted to, therefore removing themselves from what you would consider dating material.

I think that you should first change your name. Girls can't really see themselves admitting to the fact that their boyfriend's name is Bob. If I'm not mistaken, Bob is short for Robert, so go by that, or Robbie, or even Bobby. You might find some girls will in fact be turned off by such a name like Bob. I personally think that when I hear the name Bob I am somehow associating it with some stupid Halloween gimmick in which heads are dunked into water and apples are retrieved. Not the best thought in the world.

Furthermore, you're assuming that the rest of the single girls around here fall into your incredulous categorization. I for one am single, but that is because I choose to be, not because I am considered spiteful, uninteresting or unattractive. All of those of course, are falsities.

Bob, I think you need to look in the mirror before you make further judgments regarding the majority of the female single population around you. You're obviously missing certain qualities within yourself that you are looking to make up with a girl. You need to make yourself more open to other activities that could broaden your horizons in the dating pool. If you're going for the same type of girl over and over, of course you will sooner or later find them uninteresting. It becomes the same conversation with every date.

So, in short here's what you need to do: 1) Change your name, 2) Find new hobbies, 3) Change your crappy attitude into something girls will want to be around and 4) realize that every girl is dating material, it's people like you that give us a bad name.

Sincerely,
The Baroness

Let The Baroness answer all your love life woes. E-mail your questions on love, life and the pursuit of a good mate to: thebaroness99@yahoo.com

Broadway comes to North Laurel

JESSICA CHAPIN
Spectrum Writer

Last week at Richmond's Landmark Theater, 10 semi-trucks holding 404 costumes, 130 wigs, 400 props, 22 Hitler mustaches and 27 actors came to perform "The Producers," a hilarious Broadway musical written by Mel Brooks.

"The Producers" is the most awarded show in Broadway history, earning 12 Tony Awards including "Best Musical," along with 22 other awards.

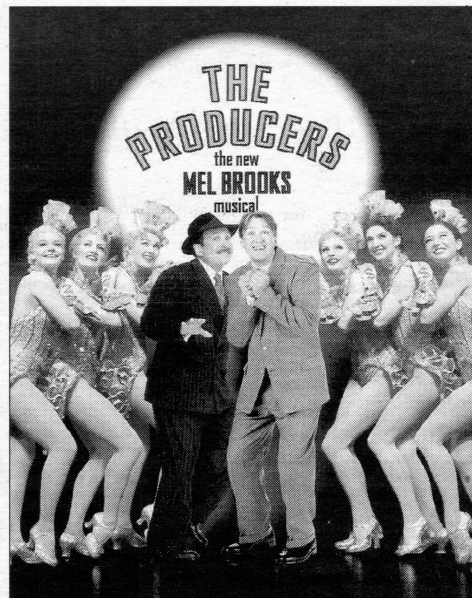
During the tour, Alan Ruck and Lewis J. Stadlen replaced Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick in the leading roles of Leo Bloom and Max Bialystock.

In the musical, Bialystock and Bloom become two Broadway producers in a scheme to make money off of a flop. In their goal to produce the most offensive musical of all-time, "Springtime for Hitler," they surprisingly put on a performance loved by all.

The show is full of clever song lyrics, hysterical jokes, playful teasing of Broadway and of course, 16 horny old ladies. USA Today, "Simply the funniest, most fearlessly irreverent thing I have ever seen on a Broadway Stage!"

The Producers impacted Richmond last week, filling the seats of the Landmark Theater and it will not be the only Broadway smash to do so.

For information on upcoming shows and productions, contact the Landmark Theater at 646-4213.

No question is stupid . . .
. . . except for your question

Q: Where did Hibbs go?

A: VCU was thinking of keeping Hibbs and modifying it to the first College Cafeteria Museum. However, the money that was to be spent on the conversion and design was instead invested in the ridiculously large letters outside Shafer Court Dining Center. In actuality, the letters were supposed to be five times larger and used as a playground area rather than an obstruction in the path to get food. The "V" was to be a giant sling shot; the "C" was going to be a skater's haven as a sort of half pipe, and the "U" was going to be the new fountain where the homeless would bathe. Water was to squirt out the top of the letter. I had the blue print, but it got lost in transition from last year's "Ask Bob" column to mine. Its purpose is now explained as interference in getting to the front doors.

In any case, the College Cafeteria Museum would have featured food from last year such as browning lettuce, collard greens and hard-boiled eggs. A special presentation on hot dogs that sat out from early afternoon to 11:30 p.m., was also scheduled. One item that was not preserved, but moved over to Shafer, was the ancient B714H toaster. If you

are impressed with its quality, there is one available on EBay for only \$360, plus shipping and handling.

Many questions have been received that relate to Hibbs' going and Shafer's coming. For example, Charlotte would like to know how VCU can provide funding for leather-covered seats and plasma TVs in the dining areas, but ignore the 50s style chair-desk contraptions that have been falling apart in classrooms for years.

Need I point out the new napkin dispensers, and salt and pepper grinders? They're not only new, they're also glass. Is this not a hazard when dropped? It's hard enough on kitchen staff to clean up after students who are trying to balance their plate without a tray, while talking on a cell phone. I'm sorry, but the napkins and condiments were also fine in past years, why must there be such a change? I do, however, appreciate the new dishes. The various colors make all the difference.

The response to Charlotte's question is quite simple. Have you ever sat in the math lab in one of the leather, high-backed, reclining swivel chairs? How easily could you fall asleep? The wood and plastic chair-desk pieces are pur-

posely kept in order to prevent students from falling asleep. Take notice the next time you're in class. It is nearly impossible to rest your head on the desk and have enough room to stretch out your back. I would also like to point out the increase in covered class material since the 1950s when history didn't include man on the moon, the Vietnam War, Watergate conspiracies, and the fight against terrorism in which President Bush hopes to bring complete world peace.

In conclusion, don't stress about Hibbs or the giant letters in front of Shafer Court Dining Center. I'm sure the money for next year's funding will be used on more important staples like moving sidewalks.

Abner

E-mail questions to askabner@yahoo.com.

Please do not take the questions and comments in this column seriously. Ask Abner is a work of fiction and humor.

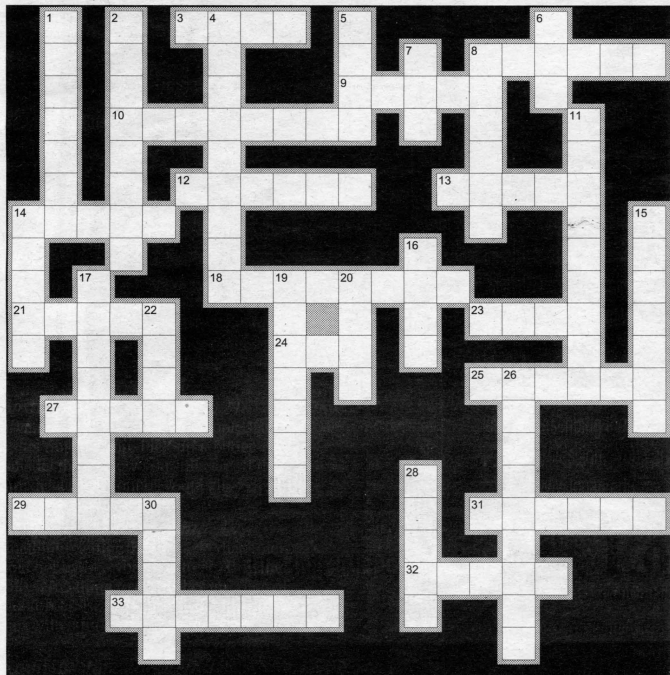
Spectrum

CT CROSSWORD SUPERHERO COMICS EDITION

What you do instead of paying attention during lectures.

Zodiac Cookies

Crack one open and find out what's in store for you.



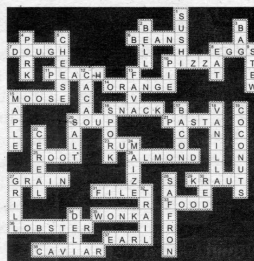
Down

1. Master of magnetism!
2. An artificial enemy of Superman's - generally attempting to increase it's knowledge no matter what the cost.
4. Marvel's Ultimate-universe version of the Avengers.
5. Relation of Sue Dibny to Ralph Dibny, the Elongated Man.
6. Peter Parker's Uncle.
7. Bruce Wayne settles on picking this animal as his theme after one crashes through his window in the original origin.
8. What does Billy Bateson need to shout to transform?
11. Lex Luthor was, until recently, in this political position in the DC universe.
14. Wonder Woman's golden "weapon."
15. Hal Jordan, originally Green Lantern, then Parallax, became this superhero. Now he's about to go back to being Green Lantern.
16. Spider-man director.
17. Selina Kyle.
19. Jean Grey's most appropriate moniker.
20. Mr. Fantastic's first name.
22. Original creator of Batman.
26. The infamous "X-Traitor" that fans had been waiting for years to find out the identity of.
28. Boy wonder.
30. Wrote the Watchmen and the League of Extraordinary Gentlemen.

Across

3. Gamma-irradiated giant.
8. Green Arrow's sidekick.
9. Also known as Wally West.
10. On how many Earths did the 1986 Crisis miniseries take place?
12. Name of a city Superman has in a bottle back in the Fortress of Solitude.
13. Jean Grey and Scott Summers' child from one of many multiple futures.
14. Wolverine's real name, but not his real real name, which was revealed in "Origin."
18. The "Man of Steel."
21. Iron Man's alter ego, recovering alcoholic.
23. Who broke Batman's back?
24. How many punches did it take Batman to knock Guy Gardner out?
25. Victor Von Doom's title.
27. Crippled Barbara Gordon, the original Batgirl.
29. Eddie Brock's alter ego.
31. In "Kingdom Come," what state gets obliterated in the first few pages?
32. Created by creators who wanted to own their creations.
33. Kal-El's home planet.

Solutions from Oct. 11



Happenings

Thursday, Oct. 14

VCU Music presents the **VCU Symphony Orchestra** in concert. This will be its first performance under VCU Music's new coordinator of strings, Dr. Jean Montes. General admission is \$5 or FREE with valid VCU ID. For tickets and information, please call the VCU Music Box Office at 828-6776.

8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 15

The **VCU Dance Center** hosts an informal showing of student works-in-progress facilitated by Washington D.C.-based performer and choreographer Laura Schandmeier. The showing provides audience members an opportunity to respond to and discuss the works with choreographers. 10 N. Brunswick St. Room 203. FREE.

2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 16

Grace Street Festival featuring food from local restaurants, musical and theatrical performances and the sponsorship of several VCU organizations. FREE. A special performance by Mezcla Que Baila at 2 p.m.

Noon-5 p.m.

Oct. 14 through Oct. 16

My Virgo Aug. 23 - Sept. 22

You've got a lot on your plate right now and this week you should spend some time by yourself or with that special person. But which one?

Libra Sept. 23 - Oct. 23

Your indecisiveness is becoming an annoyance. Make a point to stop being so stuck-up when hanging out with your friends. Sit back and laugh with them, not at them.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 21

If you've recently stabbed a friend in the back, now is the time to make amends. Then again, they may not like you anyway and couldn't be happier you're gone.

Sagittarius Nov. 22 - Dec. 21

If you've been ignoring certain people lately I think it's time to stop. Pick up a phone this week and let them know you still care. If they hang up, delete them out of your cell.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 19

Do something exciting this week. Perhaps pick up an old hobby like you used to do. Bowling is usually a fun thing to do, gather up some of your good friends, have a few drinks and hit the lanes with a fury. Gggutter ball!

Aquarius Jan. 20 - Feb. 18

Sometimes it's not always too late to rekindle old flings. Don't be scared of what he/she thinks of you, it may be better than you think! Offer cheese, and they will come!

Pisces Feb. 19 - March 20

Keep your clothes on! Things are going to start coming together for you this week. Those few extra pounds will come off or that bad haircut will finally start growing out.

Aries March 21 - April 19

Get out of the house! There's another world outside of the couch and television. Once you see the sun again, you may get an unexpected surprise: a tan.

Taurus April 20 - May 20

Your ego is getting a little inflated and you might want to make sure it doesn't get too big before someone comes along and pops it.

Gemini May 21 - June 21

Don't worry about your dry spell. Mercury must be in retrograde. People will soon come around to their senses and realize what an amazingly beautiful person you are and will be falling all over you like drunken sailors.

Cancer June 22 - July 22

A new job awaits you, where you just might happen to find that new hot, steamy romance. Keep your eyes peeled, it's time to trade the books in for some frisky fun!

Leo July 23 - Aug. 22

Stop with the "sure thing" this week. Sometimes having nothing to fall back on is better than to string along someone you care about. Sooner or later the right person will notice you, so be careful contacting old flings.

EDITORIALS & LETTERS

The Death of Superman

TERRY BURTON
Op/Ed Writer

Superman is dead.

As reported on washingtonpost.com, Christopher Reeve, best known for his role as the man of steel, "died Sunday [Oct. 10th] of complications caused by a bed sore. He went into cardiac arrest Saturday, while at his Pound Ridge home, then fell into a coma and died..."

Following an equestrian accident in 1995, Reeve was left a quadriplegic and became an active advocate for a number of important social causes such as stem cell research. He refused to let his injury dominate his life and in doing so proved that he was a super man in life as well as on the silver screen.



And now, unfortunately, Superman is dead.

If I were a man to believe in portents, I would say that this did not bode well for the future of America. You see, Superman was more than a mere comic book sensation; Superman was a symbol of America and indeed fought for "truth, justice, and the American way." Superman was a protector of the innocent, often arriving in the niche of time to avert some disaster. By and large, this is the role that America fulfilled in the world—or, rather, the role that America tried to fulfill with varying degrees of success.

Like America, Superman was not without his weaknesses, the most obvious being Kryptonite. While the most widely recognized variety, green kryptonite, was known for its ability to strip Superman of his powers and health; the lesser-known red kryptonite was far more insidious in its effects.

Instead of removing his powers, red kryptonite created intense apathy in the man of steel. It is somewhat telling then that the color of states won by the Republican Party in elections is red. Furthermore, under the leadership of our current "red" president, we have witnessed the death of truth and justice. President Bush lied about the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, our primary impetus for going to war, and he has also authorized the holding of "enemy combatants" indefinitely without the benefit of the rules of the Geneva Convention that apply to prisoners of war.

If President Bush is re-elected—or rather elected, considering that the Su-

preme Court gave Bush the presidency,—who's to say that the "American way" won't go the same way as truth and justice during his second term?

Now, I'm not saying that Sen. Kerry is a Superman figure. Kerry is just as fallible as the rest of us since he, too, is only human. President Bush has proven himself as an enemy to the "American way" rather than a protector of it. He has admittedly favored legislation that restricts, if not outright denies, the individual liberties that a Superman, and a good American president, should stand up for, those promised by the Constitution, "life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness." In favoring laws that severely limit a woman's right to reproductive freedom, and openly calling on Congress to pass an amendment to the Constitution to ban gay marriage, President Bush has proven that he represents a minority of the country.

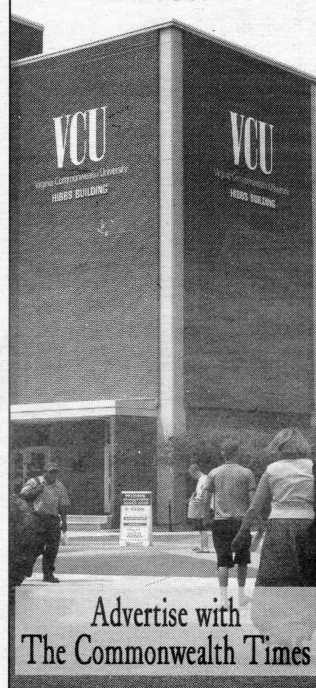
I remember when DC Comics killed Superman the first time in the 1990s and the subsequent public outcry that resulted in him being resurrected. But a side effect of that resurrection was a change in his powers. Whether this new Superman is better or worse than the original is a matter of opinion.

What is clear, however, is that the Superman that America was is dead, and it'll take a change in power to bring him back.



BY MATT MACHADO

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Op/ED

A life is a terrible thing to waste

MICHAEL DICKINSON
CT Columnist

Throughout the re-election campaign of President George W. Bush, the American public has heard countless uses of the words war, military, Saddam Hussein and soldier as Bush has sought to justify his use of American military forces in Iraq.

While the American people have been treated to a steady rhetoric of why Hussein was a threat and how great the world is without him one thing is clear: Bush has taken for granted the sacrifices of the average American soldier.

As we turn on the television and see images of the big bad American military coming into Afghanistan and Iraq to lay the law down, many get so wrapped up in celebrating our victories (that we steamrolled our way into the capitol cities) that we forget our losses (human lives).

To date, the Department of Defense reports 1,076 casualties in the war in Iraq. More telling of that is 936 of these deaths occurred after Bush declared "Mission Accomplished" in May 2003. If the mission is accomplished why are there still deaths occurring?

In war nobody wins and no mission is ever fully accomplished. Every one of those 1,076 soldiers who died in the line of duty had families and friends who cared about them. It's easy for someone like the privileged Bush to sit in a protected environment far from danger and say mission accomplished while the common soldier faces gunfire each day.

One of those who did just that and paid the ultimate price of death on the streets of Baghdad was Leslie Denise Jackson. Making it even sadder was that Jackson was 18 years old, fresh out of Richmond's George Wythe High School, and had higher aspirations than the Army. She dreamed of one day going to college.

As I sat at home one morning in May and read the obituary detailing all 18 years of her life, I became mad — mad that the efforts of this young lady to better herself resulted in her death.

My rage was aimed not at our Army, as I support our troops. But there is a distinct difference between supporting the troops of the armed forces and supporting the president, which I clearly don't.

Even to this day, when confronted with facts he doesn't like, Bush ducks accountability and responsibility for his actions and often runs for cover behind

wins. One of the greatest presidents and peace-makers of all time, John F. Kennedy, understood this notion. During the Cuban missile crisis when Fidel Castro pointed nuclear warheads straight at American cities, Kennedy did not act like a Texas hillbilly and jump at the chance for conflict. Instead, Kennedy led us like the civilized society we are by calling upon American allies to pressure Cuba and made them disarm on our terms.

The scary thing is that had Kennedy taken the path Bush prefers — war — America would have been bombarded with nuclear bombs, society as we know it would have ceased to exist and most of our parents would have been killed from radiation poisoning, meaning none of us would have ever been born.

It would be easier to swallow the death of Jackson if Iraq was indeed proven as being a threat and war only used as a last resort.

Instead, as of Oct. 12, the Department of Defense reported no findings of weapons of mass destruction and the 9/11 Commission found no link between Iraq and Osama Bin Laden. In Iraq, war was used as a first resort as Bush made no attempts to resolve differences peacefully through the diplomatic international efforts of the United Nations.

I respect the sacrifice of Jackson, and it angers me to the core of my soul that she died for nothing. Her death was a terrible waste, because Iraq has been proven to have never been a threat to us. I hold Bush responsible for this, because as a "commander in chief" he has to be responsible for everything — the good and the bad — and making soldiers put their life on the line for a trivial political vendetta is certainly as bad as it gets.



SOUNDING OFF

the military.

As witnessed in the Bush re-election campaign, the president has patented a move called the "G.W. Two-Step." When Bush is confronted with a fact he doesn't like he waves the flag, stomps his feet and tries to blur the line between himself and the military so that if you don't support him, you don't support the military.

This behavior of hiding behind the troops to provide a better public image is despicable and an outright slap in the face to the courageous sacrifice made by Jackson — and countless others like her.

People like Bush don't understand that in war, nobody

Living in an emotional whirlwind

LYZ HOLDER
CT Columnist

My last article dealt with the questionable lifestyle of vegans. Readers, hold onto your seats because this week I tackle "emo" kids. I know there has been plenty of commentary on this new alternative style. I have even seen a satirical short video on the Internet referring to the entire concept of becoming emo on the Internet. For amusement's sake, however, there is always another person's two cents on the matter. I like to keep my arguments logical and legitimate before I go on a tirade and start jumping up and down screaming, "I hate 'em! I hate 'em!" For the sake of the emo kids and for you, the reader, I will refrain from it.

But there has been something that bothers me about the "emo movement." It's not just the studded belts, the thick-rimmed glasses, the tight shirts or the black dyed hair. It's the fact that they actually called it emo — "emo," as in short for "emotional." This three-lettered word seems very chic and hip until you come to the realization that all music is emotional. That's why it is music. If music were unemotional, why would you listen to it?

Additionally, the word "emo" gives me the impression

of a really contractible disease, like mono. I can imagine two people talking to one another and one has a really throaty cough. Person No. 1 asks the sick individual what is wrong with them. The coughing student says, "I have emo." Then the first person says, "Oh, I am so sorry to hear that. I hope you feel better soon."

Given that visual image, emo loses some of its appeal. For an entire fashion and music style founded on a contractible disease, I wonder what drives a person to think it is cool.

Then I hear talk about a minority of people who are designated as "scenesters." For those of you who are unfamiliar with this term, it signifies those who wish they could be as cool as the people who are keeping up with the times. Or, to put it in another phrase, they are the followers.

It boggles my mind to think there are people who wish they were emo and fall short of the goal. What exactly makes you emo? I could devote an entire article on how to be emo, but that is not what I am really interested in at the moment. Besides, that has already been done. So, in my futile attempt to sum up the essence of being emo in one sentence — you have to be frequently tormented with unhappy mental anguish over relationships.

I think about all the fashion trends and the music that fueled them, and I cannot think of one fashion that is founded on such an abstract and unattainable idea. In recent history, there have been discussions about punk and whether or not it really existed, but that has proven to develop its own culture. Initially, the same could be said for jazz. At the turn of the 20th century, the resurgence of "alternative" music and fashion trends (note: non-white mainstream America) brought up a lot of discussion about whether it was a legitimate culture or not. Of course, over the years, jazz has blossomed into the largest most influential genre in today's music. To think it was anything different would prove you have been living in a hole for 100 years.

How much staying power does emo have? Will it still be around in 10 to 20 years? Will it die out like "new wave" or "grunge"? I have noticed that the most successful lifestyles are the ones that are founded on concrete ideals and practices. How else could the hippies survive? How concrete can emo be if even its name is misleading? Of course, there will be those who swear on their heart that they're die-hard emo and their very existence is built on the great emo-machine. But if you ask me, the only qualifications for being emo is to be hyper-sensitive and dress in post-Brit-rock clothes.



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