

STUDENTS DEMAND FUNDING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION — PAGE 3

The Commonwealth Times

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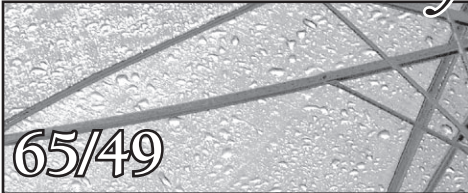
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IN THE NEWS

Compiled from wire reports

Man shot by Cheney suffers heart attack

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – The lawyer shot by Vice President Dick Cheney during a hunting accident is expected to stay in the hospital for about a week after suffering a mild heart attack when a shotgun pellet in his chest traveled to his heart.

Harry Whittington, who was moved back to the intensive-care unit Tuesday after the heart attack, will be watched to make sure more metal pellets do not reach other vital organs, hospital officials said. The 78-year-old was reported in stable condition.

Doctors at Christus Spohn Hospital Corpus Christi-Memorial said Whittington suffered a "silent heart attack" — obstructed blood flow, but without the classic heart-attack symptoms of pain and pressure.

Doctors said they decided to leave the pellet alone rather than operate to remove it. They said they are highly optimistic Whittington will recover and live a healthy life with the pellet in him.

Cartoon protests in Pakistan leave three dead

PESHAWAR, Pakistan – Gunfire and rioting erupted Wednesday as tens of thousands of people took to the streets in several Pakistani cities during the country's third consecutive day of violent protests over the Prophet Muhammad cartoons. Three people were killed, including an 8-year-old boy.

More than 70,000 people flooded the streets of the northwestern city of Peshawar, said Saeed Wazir, a senior police officer. The massive crowd went on a rampage,

torching businesses and fighting police, who struck back with tear gas and batons. A bus terminal operated by Korean conglomerate Daewoo was torched, police said.

Protesters burned a KFC restaurant, three movie theaters and the offices of the main mobile phone company in the country. A Norwegian mobile phone company's offices were also ransacked. Gunfire was heard near the burning KFC, as police tried to clear people from a main street, witnesses said.

An 8-year-old boy died after being struck in the face by a bullet fired by a protester, police officer Shahid Khan said. A 25-year-old man was killed by an electric cable snapped by gunfire, said the man's cousin, Jehangir Khan.

At least 45 people were being treated for injuries in Peshawar's two state-run hospitals, Khan and witnesses said.

New test measures your risk of dying

CHICAGO – There's a new test for baby boomers and their parents, and it's one where you definitely want a low score. The 12-question test measures risk of dying within four years, and the more points you get, the greater your risk.

Created for people older than 50 by researchers at the San Francisco Veterans Affairs Medical Center, the quiz is designed "to try to help doctors and families get a firmer sense for what the future may hold," to help plan health care accordingly, said lead author Dr. Sei Lee.

"We know that patients and families want more prognostic information from doctors," said Lee, who helped develop

the test. "It's a very natural human question of, 'What's going to happen to me?'"

The report appears in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.

Willie Nelson releases gay cowboy song

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Country music outlaw Willie Nelson sang "Mammas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowboys" and "My Heroes Have Always Been Cowboys" more than 25 years ago. He released a very different sort of cowboy anthem this Valentine's Day.

"Cowboys Are Frequently, Secretly (Fond of Each Other)" may be the first gay cowboy song by a major recording artist. But it was written long before this year's Oscar-nominated "Brokeback Mountain" made gay cowboys a hot topic.

Available exclusively through iTunes, the song features choppy Tex-Mex style guitar runs and Nelson's deadpan delivery of lines like, "What did you think all them saddles and boots was about?" and "Inside every cowboy there's a lady who'd love to slip out."

The song, which debuted Tuesday on Howard Stern's satellite radio show, was written by Texas-born singer-songwriter Ned Sublette in 1981. Sublette said he wrote it during the "Urban Cowboy" craze and always imagined Nelson singing it.

Someone passed a copy of the song to Nelson back in the late 1980s and, according to Nelson's record label, Lost Highway, he recorded it last year at his Pedernales studio in Texas.

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NEWS



Pat Kane

A student picks up boxes of petitions to deliver to legislators in the General Assembly Building Thursday, Feb 9. VA21 received 12,531 petitions on higher education funding.

Students ask legislators to mind the gap

ANNIE MCCALLUM
Capital News Service

Members of Virginia21, a student political-action group, braved cold and windy weather last week to deliver boxes of petitions to the General Assembly. The "Save \$1,246 Campaign" collected the signatures of 12,531 registered voters who want legislators to fully fund higher education.

"The General Assembly promised to fill the gap, and we're asking them to keep that promise," said David Solimini, Virginia21 communications director.

Virginia21's Student Steering Committee, which is made up of Student Government Association presidents from Virginia colleges, came up with idea to collect signatures and then deliver petitions to the General Assembly.

Each legislator will receive at least one box of signed petitions from registered voters in his or her district. Virginia21 chapters at Virginia's two-year and four-year public colleges collected the signatures.

Solimini said collecting the signatures took about three weeks, but the "Save \$1,246 Campaign" has been in the works since the first of the year, and Virginia21 participants are hopeful that legislators will take notice.

"They're really scared because we're so well organized," said Emad Maghsoudi, vice chairman of the Student Senate at Virginia Commonwealth University. He believes lawmakers will listen.

"Legislators don't look at us as one vote; they look at us as five," said Maghsoudi, a political science major. He said legislators know students will talk with their friends or discuss issues with family over dinner.

Currently, higher education in Virginia faces a \$377 million funding deficit. This means that for every student, there is a \$1,246 gap—and either the state pays or the student.

Virginia21 wants legislators to keep their commitment to "base budget adequacy," which is a formula developed by the General Assembly to ensure public colleges have money for enough professors and classes.

"While I think we can all agree that 'base budget' could, quite possibly, be the world's most boring term, we can't forget that it actually makes a difference in the world of Virginia students and their families," said Eddie O'Leary, president of the VCU Student Government Association.

Base budget adequacy makes a difference to Virginia families because if the state doesn't plug the \$1,246 gap, students and their families will. O'Leary said the funding students are asking for is "middle-of-the-pack funding."

"Our goal here is not to ask for funding greater than the average. Our goal is to ask that the state keep the promise it made to students and pay its debt to our families," said O'Leary, who addressed the crowd as petitions were unloaded.

Virginia21 leaders said they understand that lawmakers have other priorities — such as transportation — this session. But the students said higher education should be on the agenda.

"We know there are competing priorities on our lawmakers, but we strongly believe the state must commit its general fund to meeting this existing commitment," O'Leary said.

Solimini said higher education is crucial not just to students but to the state's economic health because it attracts high-paying jobs.

"Higher education is key to Virginia's economy," he said.

Textbook reform bill passes House, goes to Senate

DONNA-JO WEBSTER
Capital News Service

A bill seeking to significantly reduce textbook costs to college and university students has passed the Virginia House of Delegates and now is being considered by the state Senate.

House Bill 1478, introduced by Delegate Glenn Oder, R-Newport News, is pending before the Senate Education and Health Committee. The House unanimously approved the proposal in January.

The legislation would make the faculty at colleges and universities submit textbook lists to on-campus bookstores in a timely manner. It also would limit "bundled" sales in which textbooks are packaged with workbooks — making it hard for students to sell them back after the semester.

In addition, instructors would be required to acknowledge textbook costs upfront and limit use of new editions. Copies of textbooks must be made available to students through university libraries, and revenue from book sales would be earmarked for financial aid, improvements to university services or other on-campus activities.

"Four out of 10 students can't afford their textbooks," said Wesley Harris, student body president at Virginia Union University in Richmond. "That's especially critical in areas like nursing and biology, where textbook costs are higher."

Harris said textbook costs equal about 25 percent of tuition costs at four-year institutions and about 75 percent of tuition costs at community colleges.

Typically, students spend about \$800 a semester on textbooks. Four out of ten students surveyed by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia said they could not afford to buy all of the textbooks required by their professors.

Often, students are told to purchase a specific edition of a text and are required by professors to acquire the books quickly.

"The consumers are not in control," Harris said. "They can't control which book or which edition they need to buy."

On-campus bookstores usually supply students' book needs. Those stores, while conveniently located, can charge higher-

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NEWS

WHO's WHO

@VCU

Meet Edward Bersoff

Rector of VCU's Board of Visitors

DONNA-JO WEBSTER

Staff Writer

His appointment to the VCU Board of Visitors by former Gov. Mark Warner, said Edward Bersoff, was an honor. He now serves as rector of the board, a role his colleagues designated for him.

"The board (members) chose me to be rector," Bersoff said. "I'm always happy to get recognition for business, but to be recognized for your service is much better."

The 64-year-old previously has been acknowledged for his skills and service by the business and education communities. Once named Washington-area entrepreneur of the year, Bersoff has been a member of the boards of Virginia Economic Development, the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce and Inova Health Care Services.



Edward Bersoff

He said his previous experience serving the boards of trustees for New York University and the George Mason University Foundation, as well as his duties as past president of the Northern Virginia Community College Educational Foundation, have prepared him for his current role as rector.

Bersoff said serving on various boards was his way to return the favor to communities that had given so much to him.

"I came to the Washington metro area when I got out of the Army with the shirt on my back," he said. "I had two kids and the opportunity to go to work. I've been able to do a great deal with the tools I brought to the game."

Bersoff spent his childhood days just after World War II playing basketball with his older brother in the streets of downtown Manhattan.

In junior high, he had an English teacher who taught him how to diagram sentences, a skill he said he's still glad to possess today. He earned three math degrees from New York University and once taught math at the community college level.

Bersoff, who also minored in philosophy at New York University, said there is never a shortage of ways to give back to the community, especially in health care and education. He said his role as rector puts him in a position to be helpful to the university.

"The board is an important bond with the university," he said. "We have extraordinary challenges to put pressure on the state to get adequate funding. Our underlying challenge is to educate Virginians."

Ralph L. "Bill" Axselle Jr., a Richmond lawyer and vice-rector for the board, described Bersoff as a capable leader.

"He's a very steady guy, a very good leader," Axselle said. "I think we've had very good boards populated with good people interested in students, and Ed is an illustration of that."

In addition, he described Bersoff's extensive management experience and pleasant disposition as an asset to the board.

"Ed's a very good fit," Axselle said. "We're very pleased with his service."

Ashley Bacon-Ward, a junior political science major, serves as the Monroe Park Campus student representative to the board. She agreed that Bersoff is a good fit for the university's governing committee.

"He basically runs the meetings, tells us what we're going to discuss, what you need to know," she said. "He makes the meetings very efficient."

Bersoff said he thinks his term as rector, which ends this year, will be remembered as a transitory period for VCU, citing the university's phenomenal growth now and into the next decade.

Once his service to the board ends, he said he plans to stay active in the Virginia education system, business and health care. In ten years, he said he hopes to spend his time traveling and watching his 11 grandchildren grow up.

"There's no reason not to still be active," Bersoff said. "Hopefully, I'll still be vertical, and I look forward to the various parties to recognize former board members."

NEWS

Unauthorized software found in computer labs

KAREN BOLIPATA
News Co-Editor

If you've recently used a computer on campus to check your credit card balance online, you may want to change your password.

Twenty-one workstations in two computer labs on campus were found with software that records keystrokes, according to an e-mail sent Wednesday evening by Mark D. Willis, chief information officer for VCU Technology Services.

This unauthorized software has the ability to gather account IDs, passwords and other personal data of anyone using the machines.

The software was found in room 3307 of the T. Edward Temple Building, and in room 125 of the Eugene P. and Lois E. TraniCenter for Life Sciences. The e-mail warns anyone who used the computers in the Temple building between Nov. 23, 2005 and Jan. 26, or in the life sciences building between Jan. 17 and Feb. 2, to take security measures, such as changing account passwords.

The e-mail says the technology staff has examined all of the computer labs on campus and has not uncovered similar software.

If you used any of the computers in these labs, take the following security measures:

- Change any passwords to accounts or systems you may have accessed.
- Check any accounts or systems you may have accessed for any unusual activity or transactions.
- If you accessed any university accounts (VCU MailAnywhere, Blackboard, eServices, VCUCard), report any suspicious activity to the VCU Information Security Officer (iso@vcu.edu).
- If you used or accessed any non-University accounts (MySpace, eBay, etc.), report any suspicious activity to the organization.

For more information, visit the technology services Web site at www.ts.vcu.edu
To reach the VCU Help Desk, call 828-2227.

—Source: VCU Technology Services

Indictment against Fawley amended

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MATHEWS, Va. — The prosecutor in the case of an amateur photographer charged with killing 17-year-old Virginia Commonwealth University student Taylor Behl agreed Monday to amend the indictment against him.

Mathews County Commonwealth's Attorney Jack Gill agreed to change the language of the murder indictment against Benjamin Fawley, 38, charging him with second-degree murder in Behl's death.

In a brief hearing in Mathews Circuit Court, defense attorneys argued that, as originally worded, the indictment was flawed because it offered multiple options to how Behl died. The original indictment charged Fawley of first-degree murder while committing another felony, such as rape, sodomy or abduction.

Behl disappeared from Richmond on Sept. 5. Her remains were found a month later in a shallow ravine in rural Mathews County.

Fawley's court-appointed attorney, Bill Johnson, entered several other motions, including requests for court-appointed assistance to include a private investigator and experts in computers and sexual behavior. At Johnson's request, those motions will be heard later.

Fawley's trial is scheduled to begin May 30.



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NEWS

Senate passes immigrant tuition bill

KRISTEN GELINEAU
Associated Press Writer

The Senate on Tuesday passed a bill that would deny in-state tuition to some illegal aliens enrolling in Virginia public colleges.

Opponents of Sen. Emmett Hanger Jr.'s legislation initially argued it would unfairly punish young people — most of them longtime Virginia residents who attended the state's public schools — for their parents' decision to bring them to the United States.

In response to that criticism, Hanger, R-Augusta, worked with immigrant advocates on an amendment — approved by the Senate Education and Health Committee — that would allow in-state tuition for any illegal immigrant who:

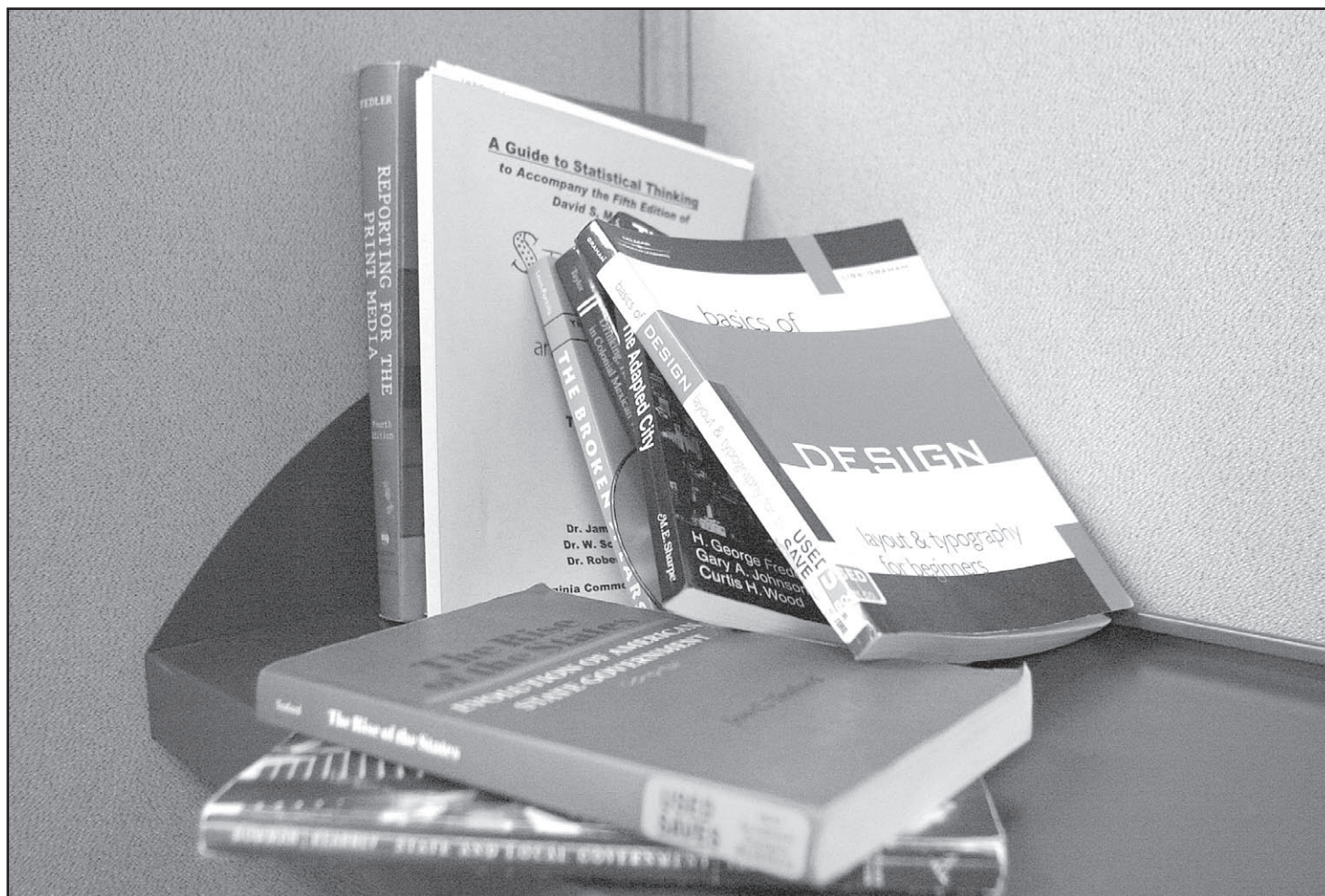
- lived with a parent while attending high school in the state;
- graduated from a Virginia high school;
- lived in the state for at least three years before graduating;
- has registered as an entering college student;
- has provided the college an affidavit stating he has filed an application to become a permanent U.S. resident and is actively pursuing permanent residency or will do so as soon as eligible; and
- has submitted evidence he or at least one parent has filed a state income tax return for at least three years if they had enough income to be required to do so.

An attempt by Sen. Jay O'Brien, R-Fairfax, to strip the bill of those exemptions failed.

"You would think that some kid crosses the border ... marches into Charlottesville and says, 'I'm here. Give me in-state tuition,'" said Sen. Richard L. Saslaw, D-Fairfax, who argued to retain Hanger's amendment. "It doesn't quite work that way. ... Some of them have been here 20-some years."

Immigrant advocates have said they were pleased with the revised bill.

The final Senate vote on Hanger's bill was 36-3. The bill will now be considered by the House of Delegates, which has passed a similar bill.



Pat Kane

TEXTBOOKS continued from Page 3

than-normal prices for their books because of the captive demand.

On-campus stores often offer textbooks packaged with supplemental materials such as workbooks, DVDs or CD-ROMs. Theoretically, such bundles save students money over individually priced products. In practice, however, many professors don't use some of the bundled items.

"You should be able to buy your books without bundling," said John Matthews, a student at Wytheville Community College. "The supplemental material is rarely used. Including these items raises the prices."

Moreover, if students buy a textbook and workbook as a bundle, they typically cannot sell just the textbook back to the bookstore after the course.

The stores buy back the books at a small fraction of the original costs, said Oder, who also introduced a textbook market fairness act in the General Assembly last year.

"Resale prices are usually 10 to 15 percent of the price paid," he said. "There's sticker shock both ways. As textbook prices continue to rise, it is critical that we bring free market forces to bear on the cost of textbook to save families money."

Oder's bill would encourage bigger textbook resale markets by requiring faculty to submit their book lists in a timely manner. This would allow bookstores to buy back more textbooks from students and make more used books available each semester at a lower price to students.

Having more used books available for purchase would also discourage textbook turnover. Oder's legislation would require universities' boards of visitors to create policies encouraging faculty to reuse older textbook editions, provided the newer ones aren't significantly different.

Matthews believes that section of the bill makes sense.

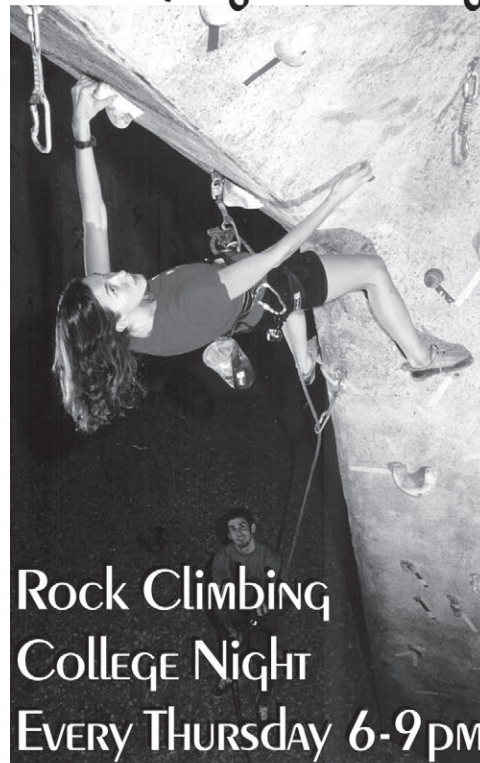
"Molecular biology may change every year, but ancient history doesn't," he said. "This would allow used books to stay on the market longer, giving consumers more choice."

Oder said he is encouraged by the number of young people who have come out in support of his legislation.

"These young adults are off at college or community college trying to change their world," he said. "Just think what they'll be able to do when they get out in the work world."

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SPORTS

NBA ALL-STAR WEEKEND 2006

Is the NBA All-Star Game king of them all?



POINT

Most entertaining weekend



PHILIP BOGENBERGER
Managing Editor

There are few things in sports as entertaining as watching Shaquille O'Neal grab a defensive rebound, sling a long outlet pass to Allen Iverson who streaks up the court, and throws a pass that LeBron James turns into a thunderous reverse alley-oop.

But that is what you may witness at the most entertaining game in the world, this weekend's NBA All-Star Game.

And it truly is a global game with Dirk Nowitzki (Germany), Yao Ming (China), Steve Nash (Canada) and Tony Parker (France) showcasing their talents on the same court.

There's assured to be a highlight-film dunk by Vince Carter, a no-look pass from Gilbert Arenas and a Kobe

Bryant driving to the hoop to make a Michael Jordan-like move in midair and flick in an awe-inspiring basket.

But the game is just the caper on a great basketball weekend.

The rookie game, which pits first and second year players against each other, gives the next generation of all-stars the chance to display their abilities. The long distance shootout showcases the top 3-point shooters in the league. Plus, one event teams an NBA, WNBA and a retired player to compete in a skills competition.

Then there is the slam dunk contest, the most exciting event of the weekend.

Sure it's not Jordan and Dominique Wilkins, and James opted to skip the competition, but it will feature some moves never exhibited on a basketball court before.

Josh Smith will defy gravity for an instant before throwing down a monster dunk, Andre Iguodala and Hakim Warrick will bring the crowd to its feet with mesmerizing slams, and Nate Robinson will prove that he can dunk with the people nearly a foot taller than his 5-9 stature.

There is a home run derby

during baseball's festivities, but every regular-season game has become a home run derby in the steroid era. I concede baseball's all-star game is worth something because the triumphant league earns home-field advantage in the World Series.

However, NBA players will dazzle and delight the audience with an array of tricks plays usually reserved for playground basketball. MLB's All-Star Game is virtually played the same as a regular-season contest.

The NFL Pro Bowl is a joke because it's played at half speed and many players go for the free vacation and schmooze with fellow athletes.

The NHL has a skills competition, but hockey games are hard to keep up with on television. The game does not feature a fight and usually lacks bone-crushing hits. Plus, I've never heard of half the players.

If I wanted to watch a sporting event that features athletes I've never heard of I can watch the Olympics, but I'd rather watch the world's best basketball players perform stunts nobody has seen on a basketball court before.

COUNTERPOINT

Show me something that matters



WESTON REEVES
Associate Sports Editor

After my commentary last week about how everyone should gather around the tube to watch the Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy, I'm now going to take an opposite approach and tell viewers to stay away from watching the NBA All-Star Game.

There is a fundamental difference between the two sporting events. Sure both showcase the best talent around, but the Olympic events actually matter. Athletes competing in the winter games are fighting to win a medal that represents a crowning achievement in their sport.

The majority of all-star games, however, don't mean a thing. I do support honoring the best in the sport by naming all-stars, but watching a game that doesn't affect the outcome of the sport itself just doesn't peak my interest.

Take the NFL Pro Bowl that took place this past weekend for example. I am a huge football fan, but I didn't even so much as glimpse at the game. It's a good thing too, because

it ended up being a sloppy affair filled with turnovers and poor play.

And why should the pro-bowlers play hard? They're not playing for a ring, trophy or even a contract. I'm sure Indianapolis Colts quarterback Peyton Manning couldn't care less that he threw three interceptions.

Surprisingly, of the four major professional sports, Major League Baseball has the right idea.

Viewers were upset in 2002 for being suckered into watching 11 innings of a meaningless All-Star game that ended in a tie. Managers Joe Torre from the American League and Bob Brenly from the National League were forced to end the contest when they turned to a suddenly empty bullpen.

For 2003, Selig made a great decision and moved to fix the problem and give life and intrigue for the first time to what were usually mundane and meaningless all-star games.

In hopes of making up for the previous season's fiasco, the winner of the 2003 All-Star game would be awarded home-field advantage in the World Series.

The result couldn't have been better. With something to play for, the AL team rallied from four runs down in the sixth inning and sealed the 7-6 victory when Texas Rangers third basemen Hank Blalock

hit a two-run homer in the bottom of the eighth inning.

Since the change, the American League has won the All-Star game the past three seasons, and in two of the past three seasons and AL team has won the World Series. Those two teams, the Boston Red Sox in 2004 and the Chicago White Sox in 2005, did so with sweeps over the St. Louis Cardinals and the Houston Astros, respectively.

Until the NBA gives players a similar incentive to win the All-Star game, I'm not going to be watching.

COUNTERPOINT
with Philip and Weston

When to watch

NBA All-Star Game

8:00 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 19

on TNT (Comcast Richmond 34)

Coverage all weekend on TNT. See www.tnt.tv for more information.



NBA Photo Illustration: Andrew Babb, Omar Yacoubi

SPORTS

SPORTS BRIEFS

Women’s track shows up strong in Chapel Hill

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. – The Rams had several noteworthy performances Sat. Feb. 11 at the Carolina Classic hosted by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Tanika Brown (Powhatan High School), **Sheemeca Berkely** (Madison Heights/Amherst High School), **Brandy Butler** (Charlottesville High School) and **Lauren Stewart** (Richmond/Governor’s School) lined up second through fifth respectively in their individual events.

Brown was the runner-up in high jump with a mark of 5-04, and Berkely tied for the third spot when she jumped 18-08. Butler earned fourth place in the triple jump after posting a mark of 37-01 and Steward, a junior, finished fifth in pole vault.

In distance running, **Emily Thompson** (Crozet/Western Albermarle) was in the top-five when she timed in at 10:52.02 in the 3000-meterrun, and **Danielle Williams** (Virginia Beach/ Salem High School) finished seventh in the mile run.

Former men’s basketball star to be honored

Bernard Hopkins, who led the men’s basketball team to their 1996 NCAA Tournament appearance, will be inducted into the VCU Athletics Hall of Fame when the Rams take on Albany during the ESPN Bracket Buster game Fri. Feb. 17.

Hopkins, a transfer from Hagerstown Community College in Maryland, played for the Rams between 1994-96 and was

named CAAPlayer of the Year and tournament most valuable player in 1996.

Along with remaining the VCU all-team leader in field percentage (57.1 percent), he was also the first player in CAA history to record more than 400 points, 300 rebounds, 50 assists and shoot at better than 50 percent from the free-throw line in a single season.

Hollingsworth wins rookie award – again

Quanitra Hollingsworth (Chesapeake/ Great Bridge High School), a redshirt freshman for the women’s basketball team, earned her fourth CAARookie of the Week award Mon. Feb. 13.

In the Rams’ two losses over the past weekend, Hollingsworth shot 56 percent and averaged 16.5 points and 16.0 rebounds. She also became just the second player in VCU history to record a 20-20 game, pouring in 24 points and grabbing a career-high 21 rebounds. Sixteen of those rebounds came on the defensive glass, a new school record.

She leads her Rams teammates in scoring this season, averaging 15 points a game and 10.9 rebounds. She needs only 56 more points to eclipse the school freshman scoring record.

Men’s tennis recognized in nation’s top 20

The men’s tennis team jumped 14 spots to No. 20 in the Intercollegiate Tennis Association Rankings after a pair of team

VCU’s Petr Olsak (left) and Arnaud Lecleorec defeated their Old Dominion University opponents Wednesday at the Thalhimer Tennis Center. Earlier victories propelled the men’s tennis team into the Intercollegiate Tennis Association’s top 20 rankings. (Photo credit: Pat Kane)



victories over then-ranked No. 13 Wake Forest and No. 35 Minnesota.

The VCU men’s team defeated No. 68 Old Dominion 5-2 Wednesday at the Thalhimer Tennis Center and looks to maintain their position when they head to Chapel Hill Sat. Feb. 18 to take on No. 29 North Carolina.

Rowdy Rams cause ruckus at Siegel Center

The Stuart C. Siegel Center attendance record was shattered this weekend during the Rams homecoming game victory against Old Dominion University Sat. Feb. 11 when more than 7,800 fans stuffed themselves in the building to cheer on the men’s basketball team.

The average attendance record is up to 1,350 per game this year, up 140 percent from two years ago. The record was originally set when the Siegel Center originally opened its doors against Louisville.

St. Clair drives home win for VCU

VCU’s baseball team beat Liberty University 4-2 Wednesday, improving their season to 2-0.

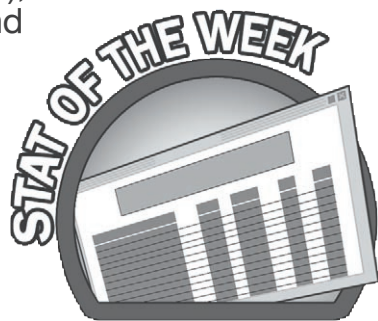
Though the Flames took an early 1-0 lead, in the seventh inning **Brad Stephenson** (Chesapeake, Va.) batted in **Jared Bolden** (Lynchburg, Va.) for the first run of the game for the Rams.

The Flames were able to score again, but in the top of ninth freshman **Chris Jackson** (Midlothian/Manchester High School) stole third base and scored the tying run on an error by Flames’ catcher Errol Hollinger.

Sophomore **Sergio Miranda** (Bayamon, Puerto Rico) then led off the 10th inning with a double. With Miranda in scoring position, senior **Tim St. Clair** (Woodbridge/Gar-Field High School) sent the ball over the fence, scoring the Rams’ first homer of the season for the victory.

DID YOU KNOW?

Recent VCU Athletics Hall of Fame inductee **Maria-Elena Calle** holds the most school records for women’s indoor track with five. She set marks for the 800-meter run (2:11.69), the 1,500 (4:23.27) and the 3,000 (9:21.7) in 1999. She also set records for the 5,000 (16:06.03) and the 10,000 (34:18.15) in 2000.



Source: vcurams.vcu.edu

UPCOMING EVENTS



Men’s Basketball

Sat. Feb. 17
ESPN Bracket Buster
vs. Albany, 7

Thurs. Feb. 23
vs. UNC Wilmington, 7:30

Women’s Basketball

Fri. Feb. 17
vs. Hofstra, 7 p.m.

Sun. Feb. 19
at George Mason, 2

Track & Field

(Men’s & Women’s)

Fri.-Sat. Feb. 17-18
Virginia Tech Invitational
Blacksburg, Va.

Women’s Tennis

Sat. Feb. 18
vs. Pennsylvania, 10 a.m.

Sun. Feb. 19
vs. Maryland, 1 p.m.

Tues. Feb. 19
vs. Brown, 10 a.m.

Men’s Tennis

Sat. Feb. 18
at North Carolina, 1 p.m.

Baseball

Fri. Feb. 17
at Northwestern, 4

Sat. Feb. 18
at Northwestern, 1

Sun. Feb. 19
at Northwestern, noon

Tues. Feb. 21
at Virginia, 3 p.m.

VCU RAMS

VCU sporting events are free to students with a valid student ID. For more information about VCU sports, contact the VCU Sports Line at 828-3440 or visit vcurams.vcu.edu.

SPORTS

STAFF PICKS

NBA ALL-STAR SLAM
DUNK CONTEST 2006**NATE ROBINSON (5)**

5-9 180 G – New York Knicks
College: Washington

Pat “Not Tim” Kane

Photo Editor
Record: 4-3 (.573)

Tom “Don’t Call Me T-Bone” Nash

Associate Spectrum Editor
Record: 4-3 (.573)

Karen “Hotti Boombati” Bolipata

News Co-Editor
Record 3-4 (.427)

Katie “The Boss” Gantt

Executive Editor
Record: 3-4 (.427)

Maggie “Murda” Souza

Op-Editor
Record: 3-4 (.427)

JOSH SMITH (3)

6-9 225 F – Atlanta Hawks
College: Oak Hill Academy
Defending Champ

Andrew “Cream of Potato” Babb

Graphic Designer
Record: 5-2 (.715)

Omar “The Guessinator” Yacoubi

Production Chief
Record: 4-3 (.573)

Philip “The Governor” Bogenberger

Managing Editor
Record: 3-4 (.427)

ANDRE IGUODALA (2)

6-6 207 F – Philadelphia 76ers
College: Arizona

Weston “The Golden Boy” Reeves

Associate Sports Editor
Record: 5-2 (.715)

Clive “The New Guy” White

Sports Reporter
Record 0-1 (.000)

HAKIM WARRICK (1)

6-9 219 F – Memphis Grizzlies
College: Syracuse

Stephen “Devilman” Pratt

News Co-Editor
Record: 4-3 (.573)

Online poll

This week’s
question:



Who do you think
will win the NBA
Slam Dunk Contest?

- a. Nate Robinson
- b. Josh Smith
- c. Andre Iguodala
- d. Hakim Warrick

Vote online at
commonwealthtimes.com

Results from last week’s question:
71% will watch the Turin winter
games when they can; **14%** said
they will follow it constantly; and
14% asked, “What Olympics?”



V i r g i n i a C o m m o n w e a l t h U n i v e r s i t y

Julian Houston
Readings and a discussion
of his novel,
“New Boy”

VCU Libraries Lecture

Sunday, Feb. 19, 2006 • 7:30 p.m.
W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts
922 Park Ave.

Free and open to the public. A book signing and reception will follow the lecture. Parking is available for a fee in the West Main Street and West Cary Street parking decks. If special accommodations are needed, please contact Kimberly Separ at (804) 828-1105 prior to Thursday, Feb. 16, 2006.

This lecture is sponsored by the VCU Friends of the Library and VCU Libraries

www.library.vcu.edu

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SPORTS

STANDINGS

CAA MEN’S BASKETBALL

	CAA		Overall
	W	L	W-L
George Mason	14	2	(20-5)
UNC Wilmington	13	3	(20-7)
Hofstra	11	4	(18-5)
Old Dominion	11	5	(18-8)
Virginia Commonwealth	10	6	(16-8)
Northeastern	10	6	(14-10)
Drexel	7	9	(13-14)
Towson	7	9	(11-14)
Delaware	4	12	(8-17)
William & Mary	3	12	(8-16)
Georgia State	3	13	(6-18)
James Madison	2	14	(5-19)

UPCOMING GAMES

Fri. Feb. 17

Albany at VCU (BracketBusters), 7 p.m.

Sat. Feb. 18

Rider at Northeastern, 1 p.m.

James Madison at Longwood, 3

Marist at Old Dominion (BracketBusters), 4

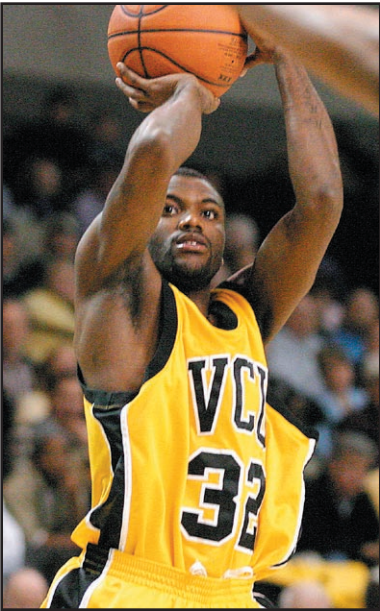
Siena at Hofstra, 4

Vermont at Drexel, 5

Delaware at Cleveland State, 5:30

Georgia State at College of Charleston, 6

George Mason at Wichita State (BracketBusters), 8



SCORES

Wed. Feb. 15

Hofstra 60
UNC Wilmington 68

James Madison 55
Northeastern 77

Delaware 57 (OT)
William & Mary 52

Drexel 48
George Mason 67

Georgia State 56
Old Dominion 75

VCU 57
Towson 59



CAA WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

	CAA		overall
	W	L	W-L
Old Dominion	12	0	(14-7)
James Madison	10	3	(18-4)
Hofstra	9	4	(14-8)
Delaware	9	4	(17-5)
William & Mary	8	5	(12-10)
UNC Wilmington	7	6	(13-9)
Drexel	5	8	(10-12)
George Mason	5	8	(9-13)
Virginia Commonwealth	4	9	(11-11)
Towson	3	10	(8-14)
Northeastern	3	10	(7-15)
Georgia State	2	10	(7-14)

UPCOMING GAMES

Fri. Feb. 17

Hofstra at VCU , 3 p.m.

Towson at Delaware, 7

Northeastern at Drexel, 7

George Mason at James Madison, 7

Georgia State at William & Mary, 7

UNC Wilmington at Old Dominion, 7

Sun. Feb. 19

Old Dominion at Delaware, 1 p.m.

VCU at George Mason, 2

Drexel at Towson, 2

James Madison at William & Mary, 2

Northeastern at Hofstra, 2

Georgia State at UNC Wilmington, 3

Spectrum



ABOVE: Irina (sitting) talks to her sister Masha during the final dress rehearsal for Theatre VCU's 'Three Sisters' Wednesday, Feb. 15

LEFT: Chebutykin harrasses Andrei about his love life.

'Dead Russian guy's' words come to life in Theatre VCU production

TOM NASH
Associate Spectrum Editor

The VCU Theatre department will premiere its production of Anton Chekov's "Three Sisters" Thursday at the Hodges Theatre after five weeks of rehearsing what is known by many as one of the most difficult and rewarding dramas ever written.

The production has been directed by Julliard-trained actor Casey Biggs, who has had a long career in stage, film and TV acting as well as directing productions in Los Angeles and New York.

After meeting theater department chair David Leong through his involvement in fight choreographing, Biggs was asked to direct after teaching a master class at VCU last year.

"I gave them a list of shows and this is the one we decided to do," Biggs said. "I think Chekov is a genius. Like Shakespeare, he teaches us how to be human beings in most of his plays. Chekov does as well, in terms of how he writes an emotional landscape. Most people said 'Oh God, Chekov. All they do is stand around and talk.' but it's hilarious stuff...and heartbreaking and shocking."

First performed in 1901, "Three Sisters" follows the lives of twenty-somethings Olga, Masha and Irina as they yearn to return from their bleak village to Moscow where they spent the idealized times of their childhood. The play has been regarded as a classic by most, but has gained a reputation as being somewhat intimidating for both actors and audiences.

Biggs' primary motivation for choosing the play was

to give the assembled cast exposure to what he feels is required material for theater majors.

"I don't think people should get out of a program like this without having had contact with Chekov, or Shakespeare or the classics," he said, "because you can't really do contemporary stuff unless you know how to do this stuff."

Megan Carboni, a senior theater major who plays middle sister Masha, agreed.

"I kind of took it for granted until we started working on it how difficult Chekov is," she said. "The humanity of the characters is really honest and requires a lot of focus to get it right. It's a tough project to work on."

Biggs has been pleased with the actors' ability to handle the material, crediting their desire to constantly improve and hone in on their delivery.

"I think that we have a terrific cast," he said. "I auditioned everybody in the department and was really pleasantly surprised at how much talent there was here, because you can't fake this stuff. You have to be good enough and brave enough to live it on the stage for the two and half hours that the show is there. Otherwise you're wasting your time."

Junior Piper Blouin, who plays youngest sister Irina, felt that Biggs' experience as an actor helped them flesh out their individual characters.

"He definitely knew going into it exactly what he wanted," Blouin said. "All throughout the process it's been a really awesome experience conveying what the characters' thoughts are."

"What really moves me is the commitment and the

passion of the actors," Biggs said. "They're willing to go wherever I'd like them to go, and if we can't get there we work on how to get there...when you direct a play there's 15 people in a show you have to speak 15 different languages. You have to figure out what language that person speaks, metaphorically, and then hook into it because the bottom line is to get what you want."

Biggs says his style of directing has matched Chekov's work especially well.

"I think the strongest point is the writing," he said. "It's like a piece of music. That's the way I direct. I usually direct in terms of thinking about music in terms of rhythm and movement. The poetry of the language is just breathtaking. I sit there and I'm astounded after working on it for weeks."

Senior Angela Shipley, who appears as eldest sister Olga, also relied on a musical analogy to describe the work.

"It's about more than watching people act the words of a dead Russian guy," she said. "This piece is about mood, ambience and the musicality of human interaction. It's like an orchestra with actors instead of musicians."

For Blouin and the other sisters, the weighty subject matter proved difficult to bring out in her acting at first.

"The thing about Chekov is that there's a lot of talking going on," she said. "It was really a challenge trying to find the deeper emotions and subtext. I think that's something that I took away from the process—that I can look at the script and know there's more to it than

SISTERS continued on Page 13

Spectrum

Crew brings Chekhov to life

COLLEEN MCDAVID

Spectrum Writer

The technical crew has been working for weeks before "Three Sisters" premieres on creating the setting for "Three Sisters."

"I wanted the set to transport [the audience] to another place," director Casey Biggs said. "The set makes magic in the theater but I wanted the set to support the play, not be the play."

The set designer, Andrew Wallace, worked to make sure that the set accurately reflects early 20th century Russia. Building the set was a bit of a struggle for the production due to time and budget constraints. Every piece of wood available was used and the set design was kept simple.

Master carpenter Tim Jones oversaw the building of the set, often working on weekends to ensure that it would be ready. In a class called "stagecraft," freshmen built much of the set, with Jones advising their work.

"One of the things I do for my job is to make sure that anything that breaks during rehearsal gets fixed by the next one," Jones said. "Projects need to go well, and not be done twice. There is no time and nature for that."

Biggs has been pleased with the results.

"I thought I was going to have to come up here and do a rough and tumble production," he said, "When I came up to meet everybody, I was blown away at how thoroughly thought through the elements of the production were and that's thrilling that people will come in here and have a true theatrical experience."

SISTERS continued from Page 12

just the text."

"I found it even more challenging than Shakespeare because there's so much subtext," Shipley said. "Chekov is such a stylized writer and different from most of the western modern drama. It's important for actors to work on a piece like this that has so many emotional layers. It's hard work but it's also an incredible learning experience."

Despite the fact that Chekov's work tends to seem unapproachable to many, Carboni believes VCU students will be able to connect with the play despite the gap in period and setting.

"It's a classic for a reason," she said. "We can relate to it today and it's something you can laugh at and cry at. I'm definitely excited about opening night. The energy that the audience gives you is awesome. It'll defeat the stigma that Chekov is boring and slow."

Biggs, who will be leaving after opening night to shoot a TV pilot in L.A., believes the cast will be more than ready to unveil their work on Thursday.

"I'm really excited, and I think we will really achieve the play," he said. "It won't

be an exercise. It will be as professional a production as can be done here that can stand up to any theater anywhere."

Overall, the actor-turned-director who has spent his career running the gamut from stage to film to television feels that this production will show VCU students how relevant theater can still be.

"I'm always fascinated with an empty space with actors and words," Biggs said. "I'm always fascinated with how a 21st century theater company tells a story, because we can't compete with Spielberg. But there's nothing more thrilling when you connect with a story being told in a live space like this. You can go see a movie (it) doesn't matter whether you're there or not. Here, the intercourse between an audience and the actors is a sublime thing, especially when it works."


Most importantly, Biggs believes that the audience will connect with "Three Sisters," with the amount of effort required to "achieve" it only adding to its importance.

"I think they will come in and they will leave changed," he said. "That's the reason to do theater."

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PRODUCED BY WILLIAM ELLIOTT DIRECTED BY SHAWN MAUDER COSTUME DESIGNER ARNON MILCHAN EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS PAUL SCHIFF JASON FRIEDBERG EDITOR JASON FRIEDBERG & AARON SELTZER DIRECTED BY AARON SELTZER

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Spectrum

Movie Review 'The Matador'

TEDDY BLANKS

Spectrum Writer

Since making his fame in TV's "Remington Steele" in the early 1980s, Pierce Brosnan has played only slight variations of the same character: a suited spy, thief, or gentleman with a quick wit and a way with the ladies. He is a sort of upperclass British John Wayne, very good at what he does but never giving us any reason to think he has anything else in him.

A single image in "The Matador" shatters this conception: Brosnan, in only boots and a Speedo, dirty and unshaven, walks through a hotel lobby, oblivious to onlookers, taking long drags from a cigarette and sipping beer from a can.

Brosnan is Julian Noble, in his words a "facilitator of fatalities" working mostly on "corporate gigs." No deviation there, and Noble as a hitman may well have been textbook Brosnan, say, a decade ago, but now he's all washed up. Years on a steady diet of booze, cigarettes, and

cheap prostitutes are beginning to get to him, and boy is it funny.

Noble meets Danny (Greg Kinnear), a white-bread salesman, in a hotel bar in Mexico City. Danny, who has had business trouble himself, starts a conversation with Noble, who insults him, either because he has forgotten how to be friendly, or he never learned in the first place. The next day, Noble tries to apologize to Danny and invites him to a bullfight, where he tells him what he does for a living. The two become friends. It's a friendship of envy: Danny envies the danger and spontaneity in Noble's life, and Julian envies the happiness, love, and stability in Danny's.

The script is written by the film's director, Richard Shephard, who has made nothing else worth mentioning, and frankly it's pretty stupid. Shephard shoves too much sentimentality into "The Matador" and asks obvious moral questions like, "Does success necessarily include getting blood on your hands?"

without ever bothering to answer them. By embracing the clichés built into a story like this one (when Noble stays over at Danny's house, his sheltered wife asks to see Noble's gun), he never allows the picture to become the gritty black comedy its potential suggests.

Luckily, most of the plot is beside the point. Pierce Brosnan plays against his typecast so enthusiastically it's surprising nobody thought of it before. He is crass, badly dressed and constantly embarrassing himself in social situations. He's so much in his role that it really is a shame the script doesn't give him too many good lines or things to do. And the scenes with Brosnan and Kinnear interacting are so natural they feel like the work of a great comic duo reunited after a long hiatus. The two are perfect foils for one another, with Kinnear of course as the straight man.

Also, the movie looks great. There are big, inexplicable monochromatic backdrops in many of the shots: bright primary colors like the red capes of a matador,

making Mexico City in this film a great big sleek modern interior. The credit sequence is remarkable as well, the screen is split between white-on-black type and shots of a matador with particular attention paid to his tight-panted crotch. And in a move that evokes Godard, (the only such evocation in "The Matador") the filmmakers signify which city we're in by slapping on the name of it in big, bold, capital letters. They figure, why guide the audience with tiny white letters at the bottom when you can fill the screen with the word TUSCON in bright purple?

It is my hope that this role is a step for Brosnan in the way of more diverse characters, because he has it in him. He's a gifted actor that has taken two decades to break away from the guy he played on television. But if "The Matador" is only a brief pit stop in Brosnan's career, and he goes back to what he does most, you'll probably hear me laughing in his next film, remembering what he looks like in a Speedo.

Weird News

Gay penguins refuse to be paired with females

Swedish female penguins have failed to seduce gay male Humboldt penguins in a German zoo.

The Bremerhaven Zoo introduced the female penguins to establish more breeding pairs in its penguin pens.

The zoo has an overabundance of male penguins, while Kolmarden Zoo in Sweden has too many females.

At Bremerhaven, the birds, which find new mates every year, form all-male pairs and adopt pebbles as if they were eggs.

Last year, zoo officials said the females had arrived too late for pairing. And this year, the birds arrived in time, but were too shy.

"The Swedes are rather stand-offish," zoo chief executive Heike Kueck said.

Four local females were quickly snapped up but the rest of the 22 penguins ignored the newcomers and formed broody male couples.

Last year, gay activists flooded the zoo with e-mails and protest letters, claiming it was interfering in the penguins' freedom of sexual orientation.



Man calls daughter during his funeral

A Serbian funeral director is facing legal action after arranging the burial of a man who was still alive.

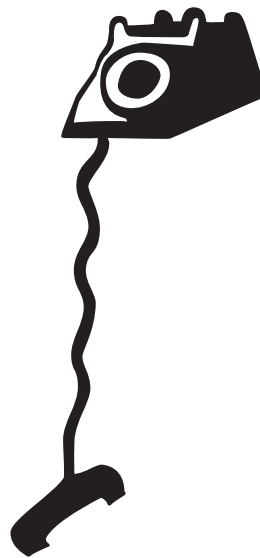
The mistake was noticed only as the coffin was being lowered into the ground, prompting angry scenes from relatives who had flown in from as far as America.

The Topalovic family rang relatives to inform them of the death of the head of their family, Bogoljub Topalovic, 84, who they were told had passed away in hospital.

But they realized a mistake had been made when Bogoljub rang his daughter on her cell phone during the funeral service to ask why no one had been to visit him lately.

An investigation into the mistake exposed a system where nurses tipped off funeral staff about deaths.

A nurse noted down the wrong name as she hur-



ried to be the first to inform the funeral parlor and claim a cash bonus.

Slobodan Curic, head of the haematology clinic in Novi Sad, said: "We are extremely sorry for the mix-up and are taking the matter very seriously."

Bread bakers shave heads to resemble their product

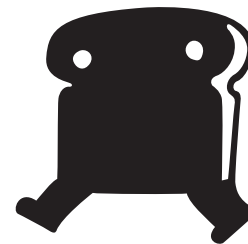
The owner of a Romanian bakery has asked his employees to shave their heads to "better resemble the bread they bake."

Vasile Presecan, wants to create a trademark for the company that would be easily recognizable.

To help convince the workers, he shaved his head first and claimed it would be good for hygienic and marketing reasons.

"I shaved my head myself and asked all of my 60 workers to do it," Presecan said, "and offered £80 each as incentive. And they all did it, both men and women."

"I thought this would be more hygienic and also the new look could be a trademark for our factory. Especially since the resemblance between their bald heads and the bread they're baking is very striking."





Spectrum

AIM Triton

JAMES APPLEBACH

Spectrum Writer

Every once in a great a while an update for an average program becomes something more than an update — it is a catalyst to change that program into something more than it was, something almost unrecognizable.

America Online's Instant Messenger is raising the bar with its new update, AIM Triton. This program generally makes life easier with more tools, features and options.



One discovers an unheard of level of ease when communicating through voice, video and file transfer. It is apparent that AIM Triton's creators have done their research on third party messaging services and on what their audience seeks.

Let's begin with the actual message windows. Each time you click a name on your buddy list the window that comes up lists their personal chatting abilities, as well as their online time and an option to view their AIM profile. Once you engage in personal chat, the window displays options for other forms of chat — including audio and video chat — across the top.

When you engage in multiple chats, at once tabs are shown along the left side of the window. This makes it much easier to chat with multiple people in the same window. Inviting particular buddies to a chat room is a cinch. Just click 'Invite,' in the top right corner of the window and all of your friends can meet you there.

The buddy list has changed firstly with the ability to search for a particular buddy for those with very long lists and an option to input a particular buddy's address and phone number. This other information is also presented when a personal chat is initiated.

However, the real stand out in the buddy list — and the program — is the radio, built in with channels and select XM radio stations. Chatting has never been more enjoyable than with XM's alternative station Ethel or completely random Shuffle channel coming out of your computer speakers.

There are still some downsides to all this greatness though. AOL's browser and My AOL windows still popup every time you run the program, besides just being annoying, these things can seriously slow down the opening of the program. This also applies to the 'toys' that, while fun, can lag your messaging experience. Sadly, there is no easy way to turn these windows and features off.

Overall this program is definitely worth the money. The best part, though, is that it's free.

CALENDAR

February 16-19

Thursday, Feb. 16

VCU Happenings

Brown Bag Luncheon – The Legacy of the Civil Rights Movement: Is Hip-Hop Blowing It?

Discussing the values of the civil rights movement and how they clash with the current trends and ideals of commercial hip-hop music. Noon to 1 p.m. Student Commons. 828-6672.

Men of Color Discussion Group

This theme-oriented group supports male students of color who are in the process of becoming responsible male adults. Focus will be placed on general discussions about men's issues, culture conflicts, academic/career goals and environmental stresses. Not a therapy group. 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Student Commons, Room 215. 828-6672.

Craft Night in the Commons

Make your own gel candles to keep or give as gifts. 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Student Commons, Metro Room. Free. E-mail garrettmn@vcu.edu for more information.

Evening Climbs at Peak Experience

VCU Recsports for College Climbing Night at Peak Experiences Climbing Gym. The price is two-for-one so bring a friend! Transportation is the only thing provided. The gym will teach you proper belaying and knots. Buses leave at 6 p.m. from the Cary Street Gym and will return at 10:30 p.m. Shoes and harness can be rented at the Outing Rental Center before you leave. Time/Location: 7:00 – 10:30 p.m. Two Students (with VCU I.D.'S): \$11 and \$3 each for shoes and harness if needed. 828-6004.

New Innertube Water Polo

Innertube Water polo is a fun team sport that gives you an all-around workout. If you're not familiar with the game, come down to one of instructional classes to learn the basics and have a great time. Teams will be randomly selected and if interest warrants, leagues will be set up for team competition. 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Franklin Street Gym. 828-6402.

Love Shouldn't Hurt

Learn the facts about domestic violence and sexual assault and what you can do to act by volunteering in your

community. A question-and-answer session will follow with people from the community who work in the field. 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Student Commons, Richmond Salons I/II. E-mail garrettmn@vcu.edu for more information.

"Three Sisters" The cultured Prozorov sisters and their brother, live in a small town and dream of one day finding freedom, fulfillment and romance by moving to faraway Moscow. Often referred to as "the best drama of the 20th century," this beautifully poignant exploration of the quest for happiness and the tragedy of unfulfilled dreams remains timely and touching even for today's audiences. 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts, Raymond Hodges Theater. VCU students with a valid I.D. \$5, general admission is \$15, and seniors and faculty are \$12. 828-2695.

Jazz Orchestra I Concert

VCU Music presents the Jazz Orchestra I, directed by the Director of VCU Jazz Studies, Antonio Garcia, in concert.

(continued)



Theatre VCU
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Directed by CASEY BIGGS

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February 19 & 26 at 2:30 pm

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Seniors, VCU Faculty & Staff: \$12

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CALENDAR

8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts, Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall. \$5 or free with a valid I.D. 828-1169.

Poetry Reading Beckian Fritz Goldberg will present a public reading from her work. 8 p.m. Student Commons, Virginia Rooms A and B. 828-6672.

Around Town

Art

Tour of the Month: S.O.S. – Secrets of Sculpture Discover the secrets behind some of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts' most well-known sculptures. 2 p.m., 200 N. Boulevard. Free. 340-1400.

Art After Hours and Silent Auction Take part in VMFA's continued series that celebrates the art with music by Sambaisis and Brazilian jazz, wines from South of France, poetry by d.l. Hopkins, an auction and more. 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 200 N. Boulevard. \$10. 21 or older. 340-1400.

Science Museum of Virginia Hosts Art Show The Richmond Academy of Medicine Alliance Foundation presents the 44th Benefit Antiques & Fine Arts Show. This prestigious event features high-quality period furniture, silver, jewelry, porcelain and fine arts. This year's loan exhibit is "On the Trail of Southern Pottery." 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Science Museum of Virginia, 2500 W. Broad St. \$12. 914-2856.

Music

More Fantastic Bands Come out to the Fan and enjoy all the music. There will be a show featuring Nobody's Favorite



Spectrum

CAL

and Searching for Timothy (all ages, \$6, 5 p.m.), followed by the Black Valentine's Day Show with Gameshow Hero, the Family Swaggards, the Rip Off, Centreline! and the Blackout Pack (18+, \$5, 9 p.m.). But it's not over yet! Then there will be the Producer's Cup and Battle as well as an open-mic night (18+, \$5, 10 p.m.). Nanci Raygun, 929 W. Grace St. 353-4263.

Rock Out As if there was any other way to spend your Thursday night. Check out Look What I Did, Covet the Knife Beneath These Words, Openwide and Aries Caress. 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Alley Katz, 10 Walnut Alley. \$7. All ages. 643-2816.

The X Come check out the best of Richmond at 102.1: The X's Local Xposure. 8 p.m. Canal Club, 1545 E. Cary St. 643-2582. For information on how to get your band exposed, go to <http://www.wrxi.com/pages/xposure.html>.

For a Bit of Class Check out the Back Room everyone is raving about for Modern Groove Syndicate. 8:30 p.m. Bogart's, 203 N. Lombardy St. \$6. 353-9280.

Events

Come Have a Laugh Check out Richmond comedy-musician Liz Marks in her Cabaret. 8 p.m. ComedySportz Improv Theatre, 7115-a Staples Mill Rd. \$10. 266-9377.

Friday, Feb. 17

VCU Happenings

Chiapas Media Project

— The second event in the VCU Spring 2006 Social Justice Film Series. Alexandra Harkin is guest speaker from 7:00 pm - 10:30 pm. Richmond Salons III-IV. Free and open to the Public. 827-3400.

Woodwind Concert - VCU's Woodwind Faculty Chamber Concert is at the Singleton Center at 8 p.m. Free. 922 Park Ave. 828-6776.

Around Town

Art

Moveable Feast - Steve Collis reads fiction and Hilty Hazzard reads poetry at 1708 Gallery as part of VCU's graduate student reading series at 6 p.m. Free. 319 W. Broad St. 643-1708.

Crossroads Art Center - An All-Media Show featuring the photography of Susan Bock opens with a reception, 6-9 p.m. The show runs through March 9. 2106 Staples Mill Rd. 278-8950.

"The American War" - Solvent Space presents Harrell Fletcher's exhibition. It opens with a reception, 6-8 p.m. Through April 15. 0 E. Fourth St. 827-0984.

Music

Griot Concert - Alhaji Papa Susso, Balla Kouyate and Hotel X perform at Fulton Hill's Neighborhood Resource Center at 9 p.m. Admission is \$5. 1519 Williamsburg Rd. 864-5797.

Wow, Owls! Finale- Wow, Owls! will be performing at Nanci Raygun with Pink Razors, The SetUp, Single Spies and Josh Small. All ages, 7 p.m., \$5. 353-4263.

Events

"Follow the Drinking

Gourd" - David Hagan presents a LiveSky planetarium program about how escaped slaves used the stars to navigate to freedom, at 6 p.m. Free. Science Museum of Virginia 2500 W. Broad St. 864-1400.

Saturday, Feb. 18

VCU Happenings

"Three Sisters" The cultured Prozorov sisters and their brother, live in a small town and dream of one day finding freedom, fulfillment and romance by moving to faraway Moscow. Often referred to as "the best drama of the 20th century," this beautifully poignant exploration of the quest for happiness and the tragedy of unfulfilled dreams remains timely and touching even for today's audiences. 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts, Raymond Hodges Theatre. VCU students with a valid I.D. \$5, general admission is \$15, and seniors and faculty are \$12. 828-2695.

DDR Tournament Get your groove on and maybe win some cash! Entry fee of \$10, open to VCU students only. Winner receives half of the tournament fees collected. Sponsored by Commons & Activities. 828-GAME.

Around Town

Art

Dreams for Sale - Lyric Ave, Richmond's most unique poetry-based variety show, continues its third season at the historic Empire Theatre, with two more shows on Feb. 18 and 19. Featuring a home-grown cast of spoken-word poets, hip-hop artists, dancers and comedians, Lyric Ave continues to bridge Richmond's multicultural arts community through the common link of poetry. This month's show, "Dreams for Sale," is Lyric Ave's tribute to Black History Month. \$10. 114 W. Broad St. 334-3390.

Soul Café - Open-Mic Poetry And Performances at the Richmond Public Library, 101 E. Franklin St., from 2 p.m. - 4 p.m. Free Admission. For more information, visit www.soulcafecentral.net.

The Gallery Art and Design

presents "Latin Ambience," - works by Elena Ehrenwald, Viviana Peretti and Lisette Solorzano, opens with a reception at 7 p.m. The show runs through March 19. 16 S. Dooley Ave. 355-0102.

Music

Stretchin at Stir Crazy

— A monthly music series at Stir Crazy Coffeeshop starts at 8 p.m. This month, BJ Kocen, Susan Greenbaum and Chris Parker perform. \$5. 4015 MacArthur Drive. 864-0264.

Bogart's Back Room -

George Melvin B-3 Organ Jazz Quartet, 9 p.m., \$7. 353-9280.

Nanci Raygun - Paint It Black, Kill Your Idols, Cloak/Dagger, Bracewar, all ages, 6 p.m. Really Good Music Night's Last Shebang with DJ sets by Drew Snyder, Josh Barker, Nathan Joyce, Paige Harbert, Tyler Worley and more, all ages, 10 p.m., free. 353-4263.

(continued)



A Story of Survival

Join us for a multi-faith experience at the
Virginia Holocaust Museum



Thursday, February 23, 2006

Leave VCU at 5:00 pm
Return by 8:00 pm

Transportation provided.
Meet in front of VCU Commons
(Cherry & Main Streets)

Trip will include dinner, a private tour of the museum and
conversations with survivors of the Holocaust.

This event is FREE and open to everyone.

For more information or **to reserve a spot**, please contact
Lisa Looney at 545-8608 or llooney@weinsteinjcc.org

*Sponsored by Hillel at VCU in cooperation with the VCU
Interfaith Campus Ministers Association

*Funding has been made possible in part by: "The Darmstaedter Holocaust
Education Program of Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life"*



Spectrum

CALENDAR

Emilio's- Copilot, a funk-rock band comprised of VCU students, will be playing at 10 p.m. 1847 W. Broad St. 359-1224.

Events

Ashland Classic Film Series
The film series presents "Gone With the Wind" at the Ashland Theater at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$5. 500 S. Center St. 798-2728.

VCU Libraries Black History Month Lecture

Judge Julian Houston lectures about the civil rights movement and his experiences. There will be a book signing and reception following. 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts, Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall. 827-1165.

Around Town

Art

VCU Memorial Art Show-

A memorial art show for former VCU student, Stephanie Jarosinski opens with a reception, 6-8p.m. Through Feb. 25. VCU Fine Arts Building 1000 W. Broad St. 342-1265.

Music

Jazz Recital- The VCU Jazz Faculty performs at the Singleton Center at 4 p.m. Free. 922 Park Ave. 828-6776.

Events

International Film Series

- The University of Richmond presents its 17th annual International Film Series, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays through April 2. This week, the film is "The Edukators," showing in Jepson Hall at 7:30 p.m. Free. 289-8980.

Project Resolution - Local filmmakers screen their work at the Firehouse Theatre at 7 p.m. Free. 1609 W. Broad St. 355-2001.

Sunday, Feb. 19

VCU Happenings

Faculty Jazz Trombone

Recital Come hear Antonio J. García, associate professor of music and director of jazz studies at Virginia Commonwealth University where he directs the Jazz Orchestra I. 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts, Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall. 828-1169.

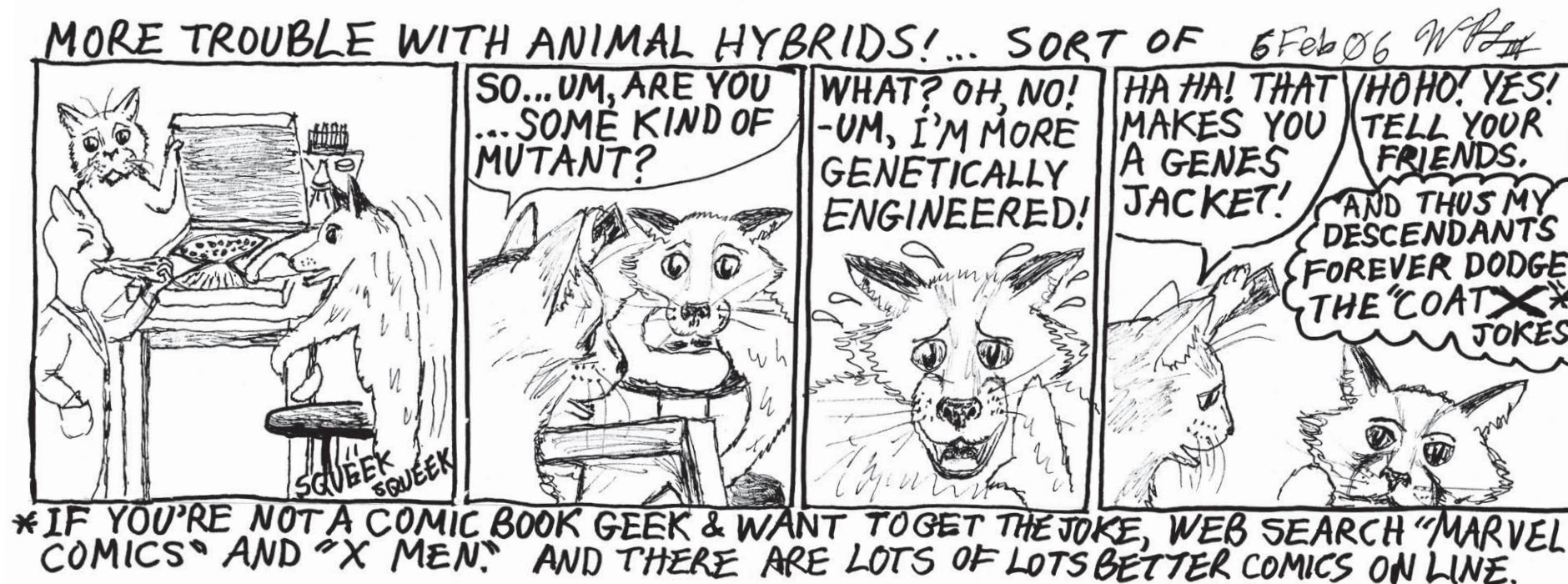
Day Downhill Skiing

Join Recsports for a day at Wintergreen Ski Resort. This trip is basically a shuttle service to the ski resort from the Cary Street Gym. Trip price is for transportation only. Lift ticket, rental and food are separate. Location: Massanutten and Wintergreen Ski Resorts Cost: Student: \$10, Faculty/Staff: \$12, S/DP/A/G: \$14. 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Wintergreen Ski Resort. 828-6004.

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Bill Lemmond



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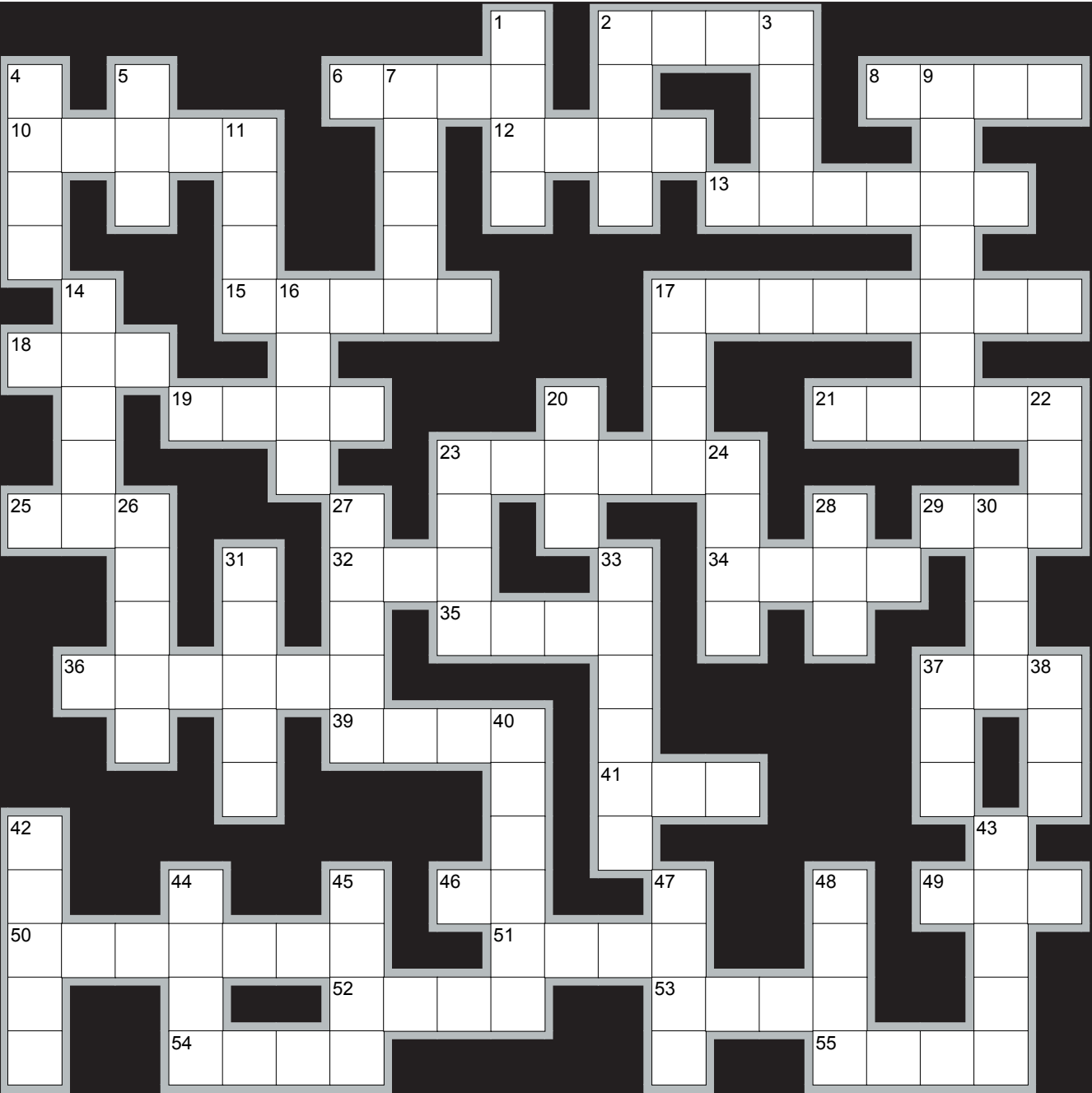
THE COMMONWEALTH TIMES CROSSWORD

Across

2. Sometimes paired with ‘turf.’
6. “Killer” whale.
8. Fish or meat usually with vegetables prepared by stewing.
10. Granny Smith, green, red.
12. Car.
13. Wreckage.
15. To melt and fuse.
17. An artifical enemy of Superman’s - generally attempting to increase it’s knowledge no matter what the cost.
18. Love interest, boyfriend or girlfriend.
19. Torture device.
21. Jargon.
23. Leader of a slave insurrection, born in Southampton Co., Va.
25. Follower of a sport.
29. You can process this to make petrol products.
32. Born Cassius Clay.
34. Our natural satellite.
35. Pale, whitish-red.
36. Which building is the Mass Comm building?
37. Hoover, water.
39. VCU mascot.
41. He’s in every Final Fantasy.
46. “Was up?”
49. Writing utensil that uses ink.
50. Writer, poet, performer and director. Born Marguerite Johnson, on April 4, 1928, in St. Louis, Miss.
51. Mature female horse.
52. Seaweed.
53. _____ & Eve.
54. Scarce, unusual.
55. Twelve points, six to an inch.

Down

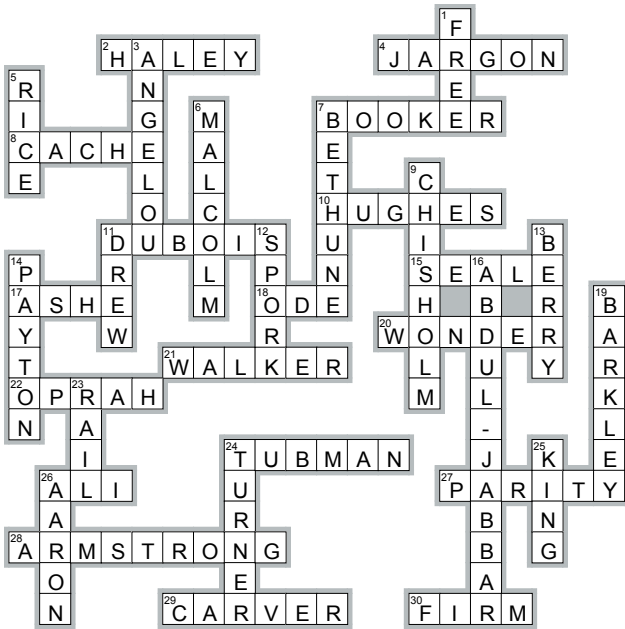
1. _____ mower.
2. Something you can do in the water.
3. “We’ll keep this info on _____, just in case.”
4. Adhesive.
5. Fit, appropriate.
7. To party.
9. Money spent on school.
11. Whipped, fried, scrambled, poached.
14. Famous candy-man.
16. Deride, laugh at.
17. Crab.
20. To be wrong, human, usually both.
22. Who? Who?
23. Vacation.



Created with EclipseCrossword — www.eclipsecrossword.com

24. A sloped surface.
26. Not ever.
27. Substance that freezes into ice, snow.
28. Bed.
30. Mote, speck, small.
31. Eros.
33. A simple, rough drawing.
37. Sometimes they pull a sled.
38. Stein.
40. Steamed, cocktail, fried, gumbo, stewed, etc.
42. Created by creators who wanted to own their creations.
43. Half-esper, half-human, and begins the game in Magitek armor.
44. Wheel, cog.
45. To microwave.
47. Rip.
48. Spring, leap.

Answers from Feb. 13 edition



Created with EclipseCrossword — www.eclipsecrossword.com



CLASSIFIEDS

SERVICES OFFERED

Foreign student from Russia wants to have **English classes in exchange for Russian**. E-mail: volodya_hanasov@mail.ru

HELP WANTED

We're growing! Do you know someone who loves working with kids and is looking for the **COOLEST** part-time job? **MadScience of Central VA** is looking for energetic and enthusiastic people to add to our team of Mad Scientists! Visit our website and click on **NOW HIRING!**

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Environmental/Political Devote a semester to environmental change. Make some friends, make some money, make a difference!! Wk. Hrs. 1:30-10:30 M-F Work 2-3 days p/wk. \$150-\$250 p/wk. 342-1498

The Dairy Bar restaurant, located at 1602 Roseneath Road, less than 2 miles from VCU, is hiring **daytime waitresses** for lunch, 11-2pm or 11-3pm shifts, earn great tips call Bill or Trisha 355-1937.

HELP WANTED

Sitters Wanted. Average \$10 per hour. Register free for jobs near campus or home. www.student-sitters.com

Atlantic Coast Athletic Club in Charlottesville, Virginia is seeking **Camp Counselors for Summer, 2006** (June 5th – August 25th). Salary range \$7.50-\$10.00/hour, depending on experience. If you are creative, energized and love kids, ACAC has an opportunity for you. Applications can be picked up at our Albemarle Square facility in Charlottesville or from our website at www.acac.com. Forward to ACAC Human Resources, 923 Gardens Blvd. Charlottesville, VA 22901.

The Commonwealth Times will hold its elections for managing editor Sunday, Feb. 19 from 1 to 4 p.m. Candidate platforms will be presented Friday, Feb. 17 at 1 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 19 at noon. Platform presentations and voting will take place at the Student Media Center at 817 W. Broad St.

The Commonwealth Times

The independent student press of Virginia Commonwealth University

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EDITORIALS & LETTERS

Opinion in Brief

The best-laid plans

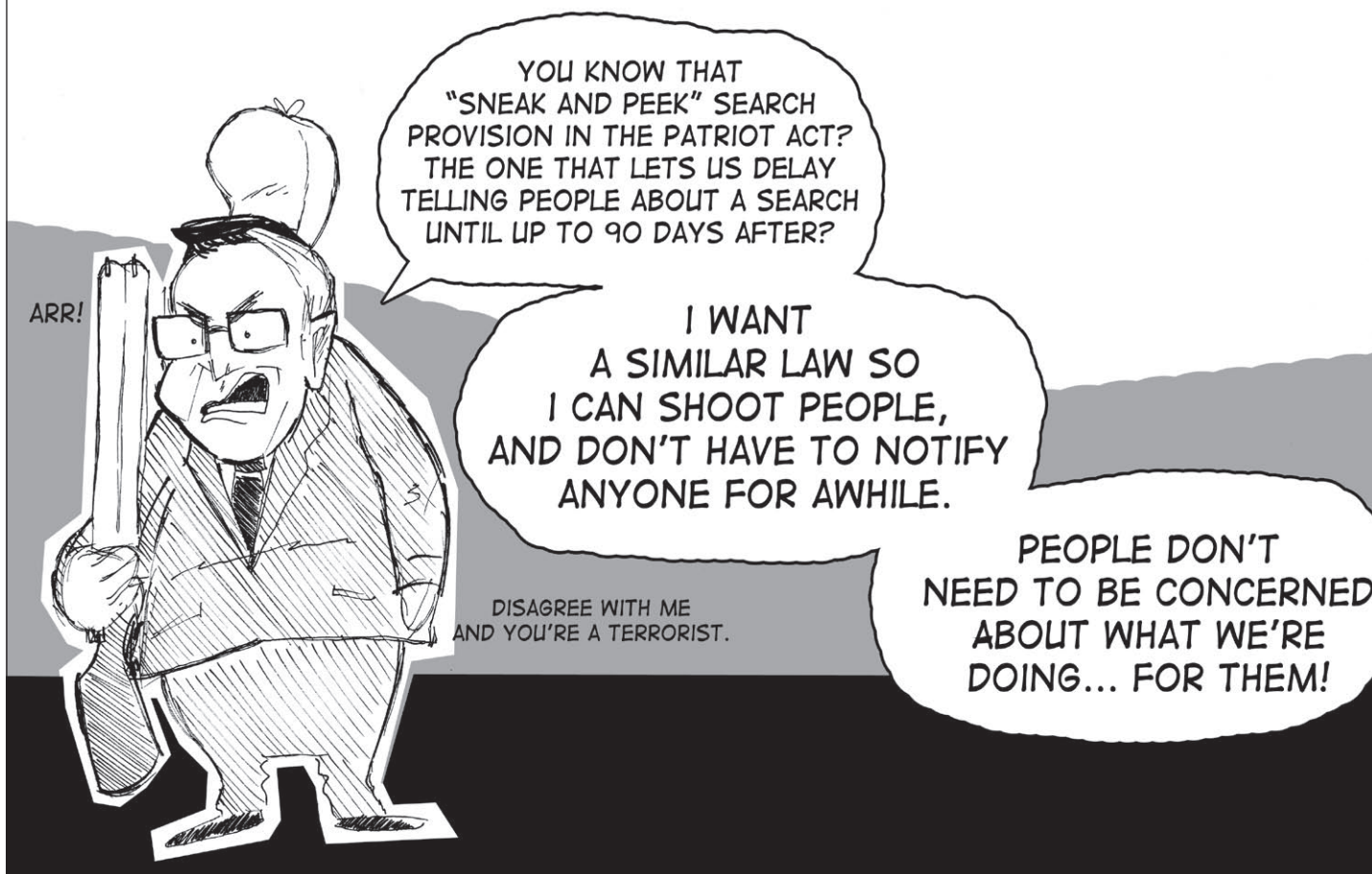
You should be glad today if you aren't one of the honors students living in West Grace Student Housing. (To those who are, that kind of sucks for you.)

Their private bathrooms aren't doing them much good, not for bathing anyway, seeing as they haven't had hot water since 7 a.m. Wednesday. Residents on the upper floors are lucky if they've had any water pressure at all since then. And at the same time, all of the building has been without heat. Granted it's only a 12-hour ordeal, and it's not exactly snowing outside, but still. Smart people probably need showers like everyone else.

This had to be done for renovations — you know, the same thing that has you and 56 other students crammed into a shoebox in the Business Building; the thing that scatters your classes across campus; the same thing that makes exams an elbows-in deal in Temple's lecture halls.

But of course all of this will pay off in the future. VCU is going to rock after it finishes all these renovations. Too bad that a good portion of the students who have to put up with the crappy part won't be here to revel the glorious aftermath.

Editorial Cartoon | Andrew Babb



Your Turn *Letters to the Editor*

A direct call for democracy

A national direct democracy is within our grasp in this glorious age of technology, and it would require no laws and no constitutional amendments. It would require nothing but the diligent work of a few generous patriots. At last our legislators would focus on writing laws that serve American citizens instead of laws that serve American corporations. At last statistics would be available on the differences between Democrats and Republicans. And at last the state and national legislators of America would truly feel the urgent need to improve our education systems.

I hereby call for some heroic patrons of democracy to immediately develop a secure, accurate, convenient, inexpensive and speedy national polling system, and an accurate, secure, convenient, inexpensive and speedy system of registering every U.S. citizen who may legally register to vote. With these systems, a poll could be taken on every citizen's yea or nay vote for all matters facing state and federal legislatures. This poll need not bear any legal weight. With enough participation per district, the legislature's role in passing the bills that it has written would naturally become a vestigial ceremony like the Electoral

College.

Any citizen capable of knowing which candidates will support their favorite laws must necessarily also be capable of knowing which laws they want passed. If the American public is so incompetent that they cannot vote for their own legislation then surely it was not competent enough to have elected the politicians who will oppose this fair and reasonable proposition.

Such a system could be built within a year, and direct democratic polls would begin quickly. When independent domestic and foreign observers declare these polls to be legitimate, and when as many citizens participate in them as participate in legal elections, what representatives or senators would dare to contradict their constituencies? The role of the legislator shall return to that of a leader and servant of the common citizen and cease to be the valet of American business!

I demand that the free press, which had no small role in creating the world I have to live in, promptly and conspicuously print this fair and reasonable proposition for every American citizen to consider. In exchange I shall defend the freedom of the press with my life.

— John Hewitt

Want to reach the student body of VCU?



The Commonwealth Times

The independent student press of Virginia Commonwealth University

KATIE GANTT

Executive Editor

MAGGIE SOUZA

Editor of the Editorial Pages

WRITERS

*Tad Hethcoat • Lyz Holder
April Kung • Alex Marra • Danielle Moss
Katherine Pugh • Derek Rinaldo*

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The opinion pages of The Commonwealth Times are a forum open to the public. Clear, concise and compelling contributions are welcome online at commonwealthtimes.com, by e-mail at cteditor05@yahoo.com or by mail and in person at 817 W. Broad St., Richmond, Va. 23220-3806.

Letters must be sent from a valid VCU e-mail address or signed with daytime and evening telephone contact. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, style and space.

Op/Ed

Of ways cardboard and human

ANDREW MOWE
Op/Ed Writer

Scientists don't want to have their hypotheses proven wrong. They want to find the right answers, but they also want to be right already. That is a good way to succeed in science, by knowing the right answers to look for.

I write in much the same detached way, looming over the facts, trying to make them fit my preconceived notions. I thought I had found an interesting metaphor in the recycling of cardboard. I thought that with all the impurities — the inks, dyes, Styrofoam, packing tape — eventually cardboard would be zero percent cardboard, and this would relate to the human condition in some profound way.

After some cursory research I learned that old cardboard is mixed with new pulp when it is recycled, after it is cleaned of impurities. This means that no matter how many times you recycle a box, it will always be at least 50 percent cardboard. I

was disappointed by the competence of the recycling industry, and rather than seeing the metaphors the facts revealed I dwelled on the fact that my intuition was wrong.

Another good way to plant your flag

I thought I had found an interesting metaphor in the recycling of cardboard...and this would relate to the human condition in some profound way.

is to arrive somewhere first. To this end, I thought to abandon current events and explore the uncharted limits of my mind. But it turned out to be far more limited than I had hoped, and the only echoes I could hear had to do with Dick Cheney hunting the most dangerous game and the white people on Ice Capades 2006.

More horrifying than not being able to transcend pop culture was to find that even my most original ideas had already been done right. All that was left for me was to be increasingly specific until I was discussing one thing I'm pretty sure no one has bothered to yet: myself.

When love and war and death and rebirth are cliché, it is wise to delve into the depths of a little boy who wonders if he is neurotic. And while wondering, he wonders if these neuroses mean he is smart. And while pretending to be unconscious of what he is doing, he arranges his life in an ironic fashion so that when it plays out, the metaphors abound, as do the personal flaws. If nothing else, turning on yourself is a great way to defeat writer's block.

I guess I did find a use for my cardboard metaphor. When you grind up old and new together in calibrated machinery, what you end up with is a mediocre mix that gets the jobs of today done. The ideas are old, the jargon is "new," and eventually it all gets turned into a gray recycled newspaper.

The digital age has just begun

ALEX JONES
Op/Ed Writer

In the movies humankind always ends up being waited on hand and foot by robots or blown up by them. What does the future hold for us? People now are temporarily attaching Bluetooth pieces to their ears so they can talk on their cell phones 24/7. Others are spending up to 11 hours of a 24-hour day on the computer communicating through AIM, MySpace.com and Facebook.com. I don't think we will need robots in the future — or even the physical earth.

I often wonder how many calls a day permit buying an \$80 Bluetooth headset for my cell phone. Only about one person calls me every week. I don't think that's enough. These people we see walking around with their headsets on must be getting like a billion calls every two minutes (500 million a minute). I am, however, an avid user of the computer. I've dabbled in all things from the not so legit to gaming that 10 years ago would have made a hard drive melt. At an increasing rate we are getting sucked into these electronics and spending less time in the actual world. Could life as or in a computer be part of

our future?

The processing power of the computer increases at a fairly constant rate while the processing power of the brain stays the same (unless increased by the slow process of evolution). Eventually the computer is going to exceed the processing power of the brain. That sparks images of a computer-dominated world from the movies like "The Matrix" or "The Terminator." This world may not actually be plausible.

When you're walking down the street talking on your overpriced headset or typing to friends on AIM, thank your computer, because one day you could be living in it.

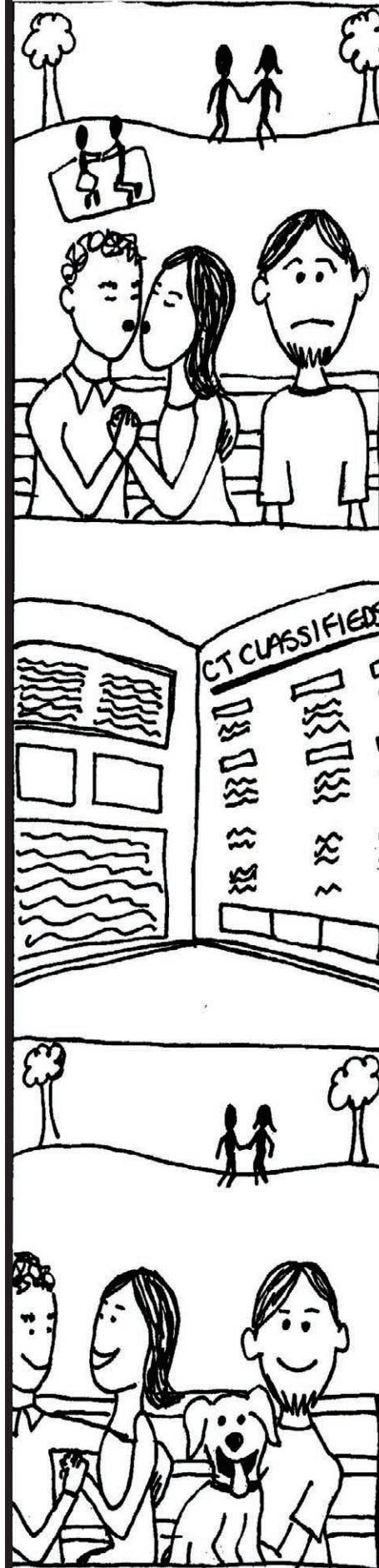
Computers may have the capability to be smarter than humans, but they'll never have the "soul" needed to be human. On the other hand, the computer may one day be able to handle storing a human brain, once scientists understand how to translate biological brain information into electronic computer information. We could download

ourselves into a computer and live in a virtual world with Super AIM. Being in a computer is one thing, but what will happen to the real world?

The real world will still be here, but we will live in it differently. Another growing technology, whether you like it or not, is genetics, and more specifically, cloning research. Picture this scenario: You wake up in the morning and instead of choosing something to wear, you have to choose which body to live in today. In the future a human body could be created without a biological brain but an electronic storage device if the right program (your consciousness) could act as a brain for that body. You could decide to live your day male, female, black, white or even in a body in another country. Instead of being defined by his or her physical forms, a human being would be defined as a thinking being.

There would no longer be discrimination of sex, race or nationality.

This is just a brief description of the theory but it's interesting to think about. When you're walking down the street talking on your overpriced headset or typing to friends on AIM, thank your computer, because one day you could be living in it.

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LAST DAY FOR APPLICATIONS TOMORROW!!

Run for this year's Student Government Elections

Important Dates:

Deadline for submission of candidate registration

February 17, 5:00 pm

Candidate Information Session

February 3, 12pm

Candidate Information Session

February 8, 4 pm

Mandatory Candidate Meeting

Feb. 19, 5pm

Mandatory Candidate Meeting II

Feb. 20. 6pm

Campaigning begins

February, 23

Elected Offices:

Student Body President

Vice President

Executive Director of University Relations

Senators

****PLEASE NOTE: Candidates must attend a Mandatory Meeting before they begin campaigning!****

For more information please contact
the Elections Committee at:
elections@vcusga.com