

the ct

The **independent** student press of Virginia Commonwealth University

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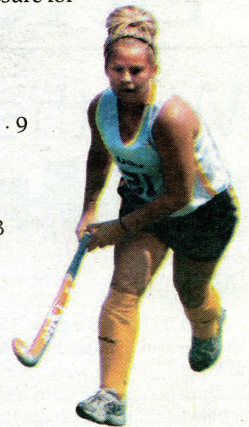
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commonwealthtimes.com

Rent instead of buy?

Rising textbook costs could lead students to renting **alternative**

—Page 3

free

The image shows a student's face peeking over the top of a newspaper. The newspaper has a large headline 'Rent instead of buy?' and a sub-headline 'Rising textbook costs could lead students to renting alternative'. The page number '—Page 3' is visible. At the bottom left, the word 'free' is printed. The background of the newspaper page shows stacks of books and some text from the article, including a formula for the present value of a floating rate bond:
$$P_{t=0} = \sum_{i=1}^n \left(\frac{L_i}{1 + r_i} \right) + \frac{L_n}{1 + r_n}$$

Briefs

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WORLD

TECOLUTLA, Mexico - Hurricane Dean strengthened into a Category 2 storm Wednesday and struck the Mexican mainland for a second time after battering oil platforms in the Gulf and forcing thousands to flee.

Dean became the third most intense Atlantic hurricane to make landfall in recorded history when it plowed into the Yucatan Peninsula on Tuesday as a ferocious Category 5 storm with maximum sustained winds reaching 100 mph. It toppled trees, power lines and houses but spared glitzy resorts on the Mayan Riviera.

Officials said they had received no reports of deaths in the Yucatan Peninsula, although driving rain, poor communications and impassable roads made it difficult to determine how isolated Mayan communities fared in the sparsely populated jungle. Earlier, Dean killed 13 people in the Caribbean. Dean's projected path is 400 miles south of Texas, where only heavy surf was expected. The space shuttle Endeavour landed Tuesday, a day early, because of the threat NASA once feared Dean would pose to Mission Control in Houston.

NATION

BLACKSBURG - Virginia Tech's internal review of the campus massacre recommended Wednesday more monitoring of troubled students, classroom locks and other security measures.

University President Charles Steger named committees to look at counseling services, security and communication following the worst mass shooting in modern U.S. history.

In calling for creation of a team of police, counselors and other university personnel to monitor students who might pose a threat to themselves or others, the counseling committee said Tech needs a better system to deal with such students.

The university also should improve security with interior locks on classroom doors and Internet-based message boards alerting the campus of emergencies, the security and communications panels said. The university's security committee recommended instructing students on what to do in emergencies, installing interior locks on 157 general assignment classrooms, removing "drop bar" door handles that can be chained, and possibly installing electronic key card access to academic and administrative buildings.

During the summer, Tech instituted a system that alerts students and staff of emergencies by text messages on cell phones, e-mail and instant message applications.

LOCAL

RICHMOND - More than 50 pit bulls seized from Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick's property face a Thursday deadline to be claimed, and if no one comes forward, they could be euthanized. Federal prosecutors filed court documents last month to condemn 53 pit bulls seized in April as part of the investigation into dogfighting on Vick's property. No one has claimed any of the dogs, which are being held at several unspecified shelters in eastern Virginia, the U.S. Attorney's office said Wednesday. The government filed three public civil forfeiture notices in a Richmond newspaper to publicize the dogs' confiscation, and the deadline for claims is 30 days after the appearance of the final notice, filed July 24.

U.S. District Judge Henry E. Hudson, who also is handling Vick's criminal case, will determine what becomes of the pit bulls. Daphna Nachminovitch, a spokeswoman for People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, said that it's likely that they will be euthanized because they're unadoptable as pets. Vick, 27, said through a lawyer this week that he will plead guilty to a federal charge of conspiracy to travel in interstate commerce in aid of unlawful activities and conspiracy to sponsor a dog in an animal fighting venture. He is scheduled to enter his plea agreement Monday and could face up to five years in prison.

Two Vick associates said Vick participated in executing at least eight underperforming dogs by various means, including drowning and hanging.

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Cover illustration by Rachel Larue

The Commonwealth Times strives to be accurate in gathering news. If you believe we have made an error, please call Executive Editor Gayland Hethcoat at 828-4770 or e-mail him at editor@commonwealthtimes.com. Corrections will appear on this page.

Book-rental site aims to capture bookstores' business

BETHANY EMERSON
News Editor

A few clicks of the mouse and a quick walk to the mailbox after finals could save students at least 50 percent on textbooks – or so says Laura Sneddon, director of marketing at BookRenter.com.

BookRenter.com launched on Aug. 20 after a year of testing, and the site offers textbooks for low-priced rental fees with free return postage, Sneddon said. Students have the option to rent brand-new books for one to four months.

“We have a quick and easy order and return process where you save an average of 50 percent off, and it is much easier than going to the college bookstore,” Sneddon said.

Colin Barceloux founded BookRenter.com after he attended college at Santa Clara University in California. Barceloux realized while in school that students overspend on textbooks and don’t get paid sufficient money for their buy-backs, Sneddon said.

BookRenter.com is making its debut as textbook prices are increasing at more than four times the inflation rate for all finished goods, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Producer Price Index. And according to the Public Interest Research Groups, while prices charged for all finished goods increased only 14 percent in the last 13 years, wholesale prices charged by textbook publishers rose 62 percent.

The net effect is that college students spend an average of \$940 a year on textbooks and supplies, according to The College Board, which tracks college pricing trends.

Despite all of the purchasing options that exist, some students still find it more convenient to visit one of the local bookstores than deal with the hassle of online shopping and shipping.

BOOKRENTAL continued to Page CT4

commonwealthtimes.com • CT3



photo illustration by Rachel Larue

BOOKRENTAL continued from Page CT3

Mona Dion, 18, a freshman in the pre-pharmacy program, said she prefers to shop at the VCU bookstores and the Virginia Book Company for her textbooks.

"I think buying (textbooks) is OK because you sell them afterwards," Dion said.

Sneddon said BookRenter.com's rental prices are lower than retail prices and will save the student the hassle of selling books back at the end of the semester.

"Even the used prices are pretty high... (and) you have to stand in line for a long time," Sneddon said.

"If you rent ... you don't have to worry about, 'Oh, am I going to get anything back for it?' even though you paid full price for it."

Students who use the site may also decide to keep the books at the end of the rental period. If students do not return their books, their account will be charged the lower-than-retail price, minus their rental fee, Sneddon said. If they do decide to return their books, a postage-paid envelope is provided with their initial order.

Books usually ship from BookRenter.com in one

business day and arrive in three to five.

Joshua Kruger, 20, business major, said BookRenter.com provides an appealing alternative.

"If it really worked, and they had the books I needed, I would ... strongly consider it," Kruger said. "There is no hassle of trying to sell the book and get that money back, and you also don't have to invest as much initially."

For more information, visit <http://bookrenter.com> or search "Tiki Man" on Facebook.com to link to BookRenter.com's mascot.

→ Online tools prove **invaluable** in study habits

While many students are spending hundreds of dollars on textbooks, a new survey funded by Houghton Mifflin Company says students actively use online tools to help with homework assignments and studying for tests.

Based on a study of 896 currently enrolled students, 56 percent of those asked said they used online tools to help with their homework assignments and test preparation, according to a press release.

"Online study tools are a new resource that today's wired students can take advantage of that past generations didn't have access to," said Katie Ross, head of research and marketing for Houghton Mifflin College division, in the press release. "We're finding that students are increasingly using online study tools in tandem with their textbooks."

Three-fourths of the sample said they use online quizzing, and more than 50 percent of students said they use video tutorials, course outlines in digital format and online study groups.

The survey found that more than one-third of the students would prefer an eBook version of a textbook rather than a hard copy. Yet, more than two-thirds are still interested in purchasing a textbook they can hold and they believe will improve their grades.

The survey also discovered these online tools aren't late-night habits. According to the press release, the majority of students said they prefer studying mid-day.

→ Shop **Smart**

Check out these Web sites for bargains and price comparison:

VCU Book Store (efollet)

Shop for new and used books at the convenient location on Broad Street or online at <http://bkstr.com>.

Virginia Book Company

New and used textbooks are available at this store one block from Shafer Food Court on Franklin Street or online at <http://vabookco.com>.

Half.com

Offers low-priced textbooks.

VCU's SGA Book-Trading Web site

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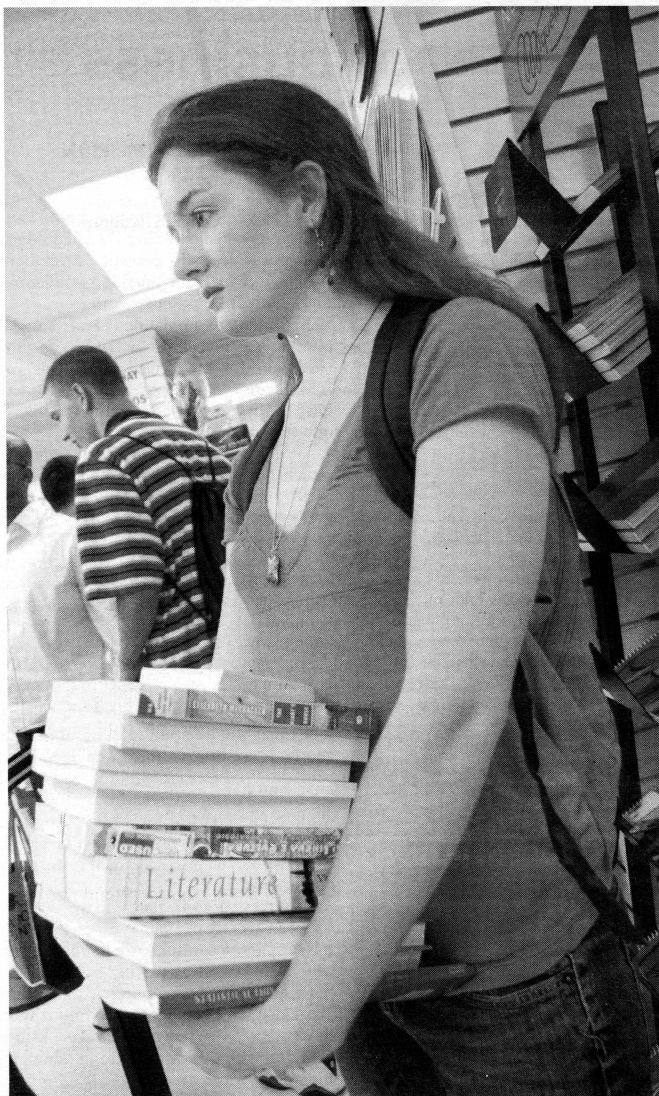


photo by Rachel Larue

Julie Quillen stands in line at the Virginia Book Company to buy textbooks.

Anti-war coalition to host panel in Commons

GAYLAND HETHCOAT
Executive Editor

Melissa Showalter illustration

Advertisement

A summer-long campaign calling for troop withdrawal from Iraq will culminate Tuesday in a series of town-hall meetings at locations in 15 states, including Virginia.

The University Student Commons is one of three sites in the commonwealth to host one of the forums, which will feature veterans, religious leaders and other activists speaking against the Iraq war.

Americans Against Escalation in Iraq, a coalition of anti-war groups, including the prominent organization MoveOn.org, is behind the effort, called the Take a Stand Campaign. With Congress set to reconvene after Labor Day, the coalition has spent millions this summer advertising, canvassing and petitioning in an attempt to pressure key Republican legislators to change their stances on the war.

"These are the people that we find to be the most important because they are close to Bush," said Lindsey Gardner, a Virginia field organizer with AAEL, which has helped organize the event at the Commons.

If Bush's supporters in the legislature abandon their support for the Iraq War under public pressure, Gardner said, Bush would be forced eventually to change his war policy.

The president and many legislators, however, said they will not reevaluate their positions until Gen. David Petraeus, the top military commander in Iraq, and U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker give Congress a much-anticipated update in September about Bush's decision earlier this year to escalate the troop presence in Iraq by 30,000 additional troops.

Influential Virginia Sen. John Warner, whom Gardner has targeted this summer, is one legislator who is not waiting for the report. After returning from a recent trip to the Middle East, the senator called for partial withdrawal of the 160,000 troops in Iraq on Thursday, saying as few as 5,000 of them could return home by Christmas.

Gardner, who has repeatedly invited Warner to attend Wednesday's meeting at the Commons, said the senator's remarks are a great start, but more needs to be done.

"He's asking for 5,000 troops withdrawn. Obviously that's not what we'd like to see," Gardner said. "We'd like to see all of them withdrawn or at least some plan of what's supposed to happen."

While AAEL spreads its anti-war message through Labor Day, another organization, Freedom's Watch, is counteracting the coalition by trying to rouse support for the Iraq war and the overall war on terrorism. The organization is spending

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anti-war coalition continued from CT5

\$15 million on radio and television advertisements that are running in 20 states, including Virginia.

"Those who want to quit while victory is possible have dominated the public debate about terror and Iraq since the 2004 election," said Bradley Blakeman, Freedom's Watch president, in a recent press release. "Freedom's Watch is going to change that."

The organization is asking the public to call an 800-number displayed in the ads and urge their representatives "not to surrender to terror," according to the release.

Earlier this month, a Gallop poll found that Americans are largely unsure of the best way to remove troops from Iraq and when to do so. According to the poll, 66 percent of the population wants all U.S. troops, except a small contingent involved in counter-terrorist operations, to leave Iraq sometime by April.

Fifty-six percent of Americans, however, do not want Congress to take action until Petraeus issues his September report. Thirty-nine percent of Americans want Congress to change the war policy now.

What: "Take a Stand" town-hall forum, sponsored by Americans Against Escalation in Iraq

Where: University Student Commons

When: 7 p.m.

Who: Speakers will include religious leaders and veterans. Author and journalist Robert Dreyfuss, who writes for Rolling Stone and is a contributing editor at The Nation, will headline the panel.

Write for the OPINION section.

E-mail opinion
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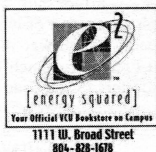
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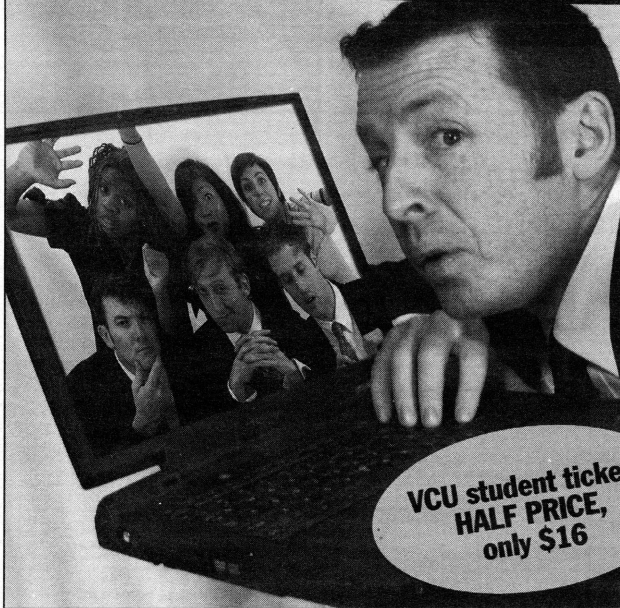


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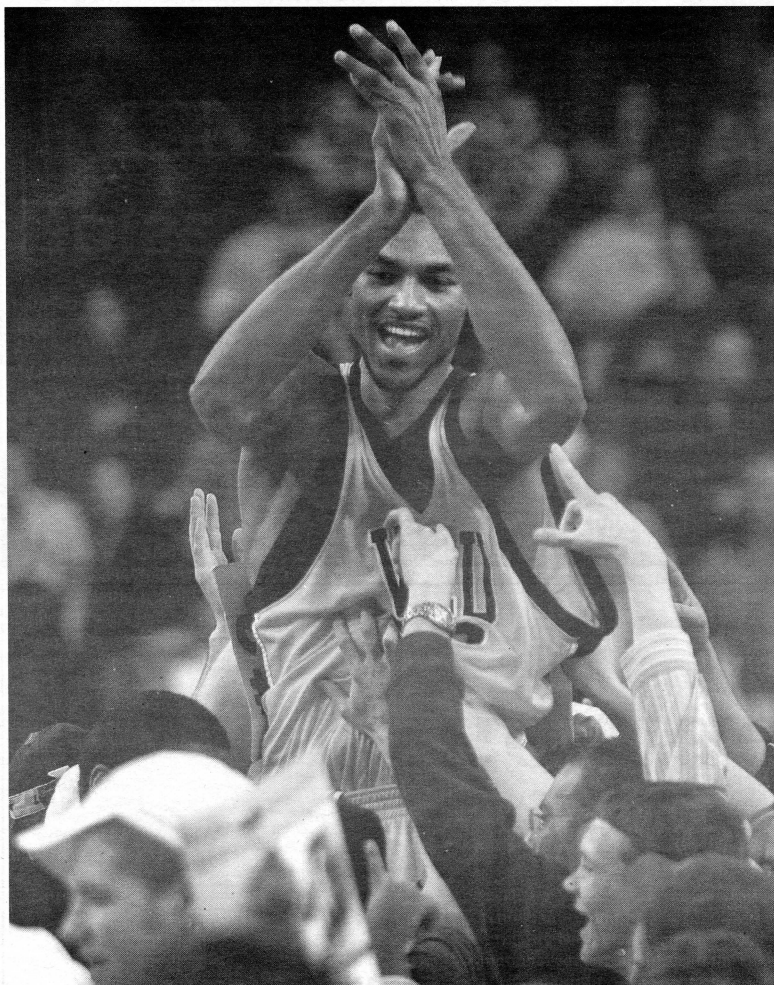
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opinion@commonwealthtimes.com

Sports



CT file photo

Sports Fact of the Day:

With 34 digs against Virginia Tech, junior libero Laryssa Goncalves topped her previous career high of 27, which she set last season.

↳ Catching up with... Michael Doles

JONATHAN HOWARD

Sports Editor

Every week the CT will catch up with a former VCU athlete. This week's subject: former All-CAA men's basketball player Michael Doles.

Two years ago Michael Doles was an important part of the VCU basketball puzzle. The Richmond native averaged 14.9 points per game for the 2004-2005 team that played in the post-season NIT and 11.2 points for the 2003-2004 team that nearly upset Wake Forest in the NCAA Tournament.

In the time since he graduated with a degree in criminal justice, not much has changed for Doles. Immediately following his 2005 graduation, Doles continued his basketball career in Ireland with the UCC Blue Demons of the Irish Superleague, where he averaged more than 24 points per game. Last season he averaged 20.8 with the Geneva Devils (Switzerland) of the LNBA. This season, the 6'6 guard/forward will suit up for Angers BC 49 in Angers, France.

Because of his solid play in Europe, Doles is unsure about a return to the United States in pursuit of a basketball career.

"To be honest, if it happens, it happens; if not, that's OK too. I play ball because I love it," he said.

Doles also noted the advantage and fun of playing overseas.

"To see different parts of the world... there's nothing like it."

Doles looks back at his experience at VCU as very positive.

"My time at VCU is something that I will always cherish for the rest of my life," he said.

Doles cherishes his time on the basketball team just as much as his time at the university.

"Being blessed to put on that VCU jersey night in and night out was such a wonderful thing for me, my family and my friends."

While the former All-CAA selection knows a thing or two about going to the NCAA Tournament, Doles showed excitement about last year's team.

"Last year's team was very special. I had the opportunity to meet coach Grant and his staff last summer, and from the moment I met them, I knew that they were special people and wanted to do whatever it would take to keep VCU as one of the top teams in the CAA. I am so proud of each and every one of the guys on the team and the staff," he said.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Field Hockey

Fri., Aug. 31, @ American, 4 p.m., Washington D.C.

Men's Soccer

Fri., Aug. 31, vs. Virginia Tech in Nike/Alltel Classic, 8 p.m., Sports Backers Stadium

Women's Soccer

Fri., Aug. 31, vs. Seton Hall in Villanova tournament, 4 p.m., Philadelphia

Volleyball

Fri., Aug 31, vs. George Washington and South Carolina in 3rd Degree Sportswear Invitational, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Siegel Center

Cross Country

Sat., Sept. 1, Richmond Invitational, Richmond

VCU sporting events are free to students with a valid student ID. For more information visit vcuams.vcu.edu or call the VCU Sports Line at 828-3440.

FIELD HOCKEY



Brian Doyle photo

Field hockey **dominates** in second half to beat Fairfield

MATT DOYON

Associate Sports Editor

Senior Jenna Harris (Aurora, Colo./Smoky Hill) scored twice in the second half to lead the way for the Rams in their season opening win, 4-1, on a hot and humid Saturday afternoon at Cary Street Field.

Fairfield took an early 1-0 lead on an assist from Molly Byrnes that set up a short goal for Emily Janis over the shoulder of senior goalkeeper Brittany LoVullo, 6:08 into the game.

Harris, who had four shots on goal, tied the game shortly after halftime on a rebound from a corner penalty shot.

VCU took the lead on another corner penalty shot, this time from junior Nikki Hollibaugh (Spotsylvania/Massaponax), assisted by fellow junior Megan Sauder (Lititz, Pa./Lancaster

Mennonite).

The Rams put the game out of reach with an onslaught of scoring late in the second half. Harris scored her second goal unassisted, followed just a minute later by a tally from sophomore Vicky Smith (Rumson, N.J./Rumson-Fair Haven).

The Stags had few answers to counter the Rams offense and were out-shot 12 to two in the second, as much of the action took place in the Rams' offensive zone.

The win was the first for Kelly McQuade, who recently took over as the Rams' head coach after being named the interim coach in December.

VCU will next take the field Friday, Aug. 31, at 4 p.m., at American University in Washington, D.C. The Eagles downed the Rams, 2-1, when the teams last met in 2001.

ABOVE: The Rams register one of their 17 shots. The Stags managed only five.

	1 st	2 nd	Final
Fairfield	1	0	1
VCU	0	4	4
Goals:			
Fairfield: Janis			
VCU: Harris (2), Hollibaugh, Smith			
Assists:			
Fairfield: Byrnes			
VCU: Sauder			

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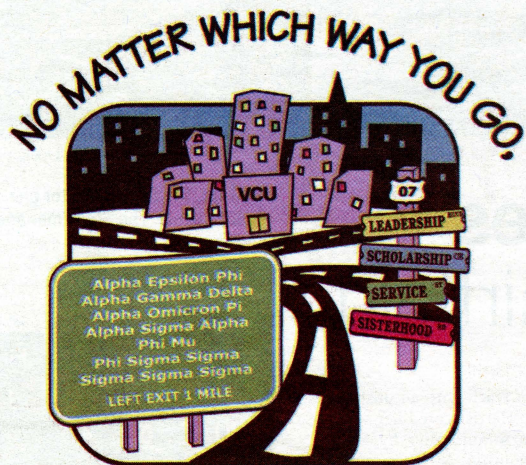
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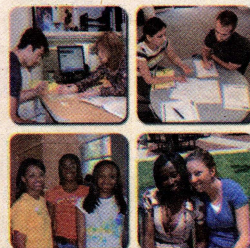
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SPORTS BRIEFS

MEN'S SOCCER

The Rams battled 9th-ranked Maryland to a 2-2 tie last Friday night in the team's final tuneup before the regular season begins this Friday. Matthijs Maruanaya (Alkmaar, Netherlands/William Blau) and Gerson Dos Santos (Sao Paulo, Brazil/E.E. Ruth Cabral Troncarelli) scored goals for VCU while Otavio De Luca (Sao Paulo, Brazil/Joao Paulo) registered an assist.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

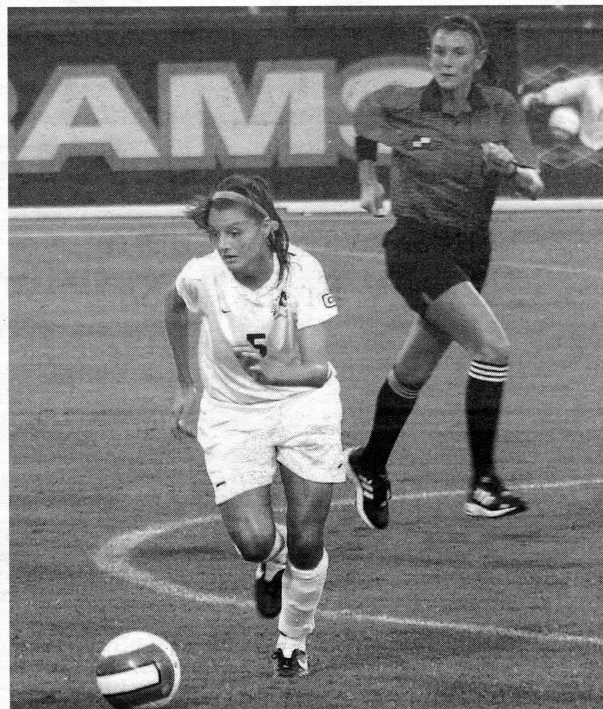
Stephanie Power (Dartmouth, Nova Scotia/Dartmouth) scored two goals, Rebecca Zimmerman (Arlington/Wakefield) had an assist, and goalie Emily Niman (Pittsburgh/Fox Chapel Area) pitched a shutout in a 2-0 win in an exhibition game with Longwood. The Rams out-shot the Lancers 20-1 in the victory. VCU starts the regular season this weekend in Philadelphia at the Villanova tournament.

IN OTHER SOCCER NEWS

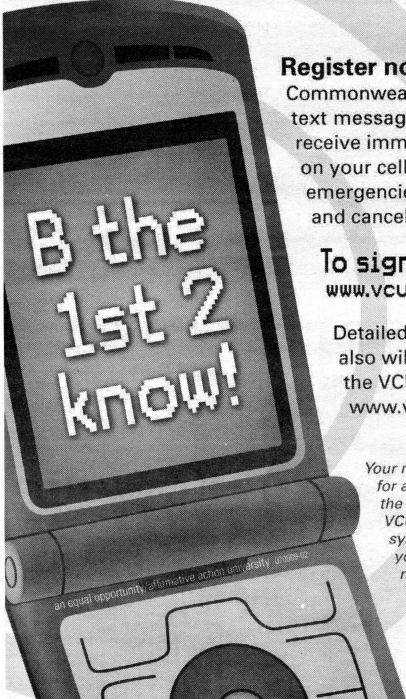
Men's and women's goaltender coach and Richmond Kickers keeper Ronnie Pascale was named USL-2 goaltender of the year. Pascale finished the season with a GAA (goals against average) of .684 while earning 12 nets and nine shutouts while in goal. Pascale helped lead the Kickers to the USL-2 championship game on Saturday night, where they fell to the Harrisburg City Islanders in penalty kicks.

VOLLEYBALL

The Rams are off to a shaky start in 2007 after dropping two games at the Virginia Tech tournament over the weekend. The Black and Gold dropped its season opener on Friday to the host team 3-1. Laryssa Goncalves (Curitiba, Brazil/Colegio Dom Bosco) starred in the loss, setting a career high with 34 digs. On Saturday, Marshall came back from a 2-1 deficit to defeat the Rams 3-2. Jessica Ojukwu (Sao Paulo, Brazil/Colegio Dourado) recorded 15 kills while Goncalves had 28 digs in the loss.



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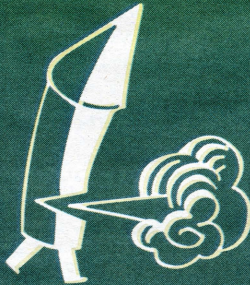
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Spectrum



Brian Jones gets ready for band practice at his house.

Rachel Larue photo

Killin' cat gets in the swing of things

ROBERTO CURTIS

Associate Spectrum Editor

Once a fixture at VCU jazz recitals, long-time local drummer and University of Richmond alum Brian Jones has diligently grooved his way into the jazz faculty.

Hailing from Pittsburgh, Jones moved to Virginia to attend UR. While working toward a degree in history, he studied music privately under former VCU drum professor Howard Curtis and familiarized himself with the local music scene.

Through these early interactions with department heavyweights, such as current trumpet professor Rex Richardson, Jones came to the attention of the VCU jazz community.

"The association with recitals and Rex really helped," Jones said. "Having worked with so many of these cats, the position feels really natural."

In addition to teaching VCU students, Jones maintains a private studio of about 30-50 students from all ages and skill levels. He also teaches at UR, The College of William and Mary and Collegiate High School.

Because of his busy schedule, Jones cannot tour like he used to. From 1995 to 2001, Jones was president and founding member of Agents of Good Roots, a national touring act that also featured current professor of jazz saxophone J.C. Kuhl.

In addition to being a singer, drummer and principal songwriter for the group, Jones managed the act's bookings,

Web sites, merchandise, accounting, payroll and operating budget. The group performed about 250 shows a year.

He still gigs regularly, however, staying true to the scene he has done so much to nurture.

"Music is an intangible," Jones said. "The things that matter are the things that have nothing to do with music. Be on time. Be prepared. Be able to do things you don't even expect to be asked to do. Be able to teach. Be able to compose on the spot. Be able to go into a studio and feel confident."

The percussion program struggled through a transitional phase after the passing of former professor Donald Bick several semesters ago. The loss resulted in the music department spreading its faculty too thin to prevent students' education from suffering.

Now, with Jones teaching alongside professor of jazz drum set Tony Martucci, the jazz majors have little to worry about, aside from finding enough time to practice.

Whether or not their teaching styles clash is not really an issue for Antonio Garcia, director of jazz studies.

"I'm not looking for clones," he said. "In this line of work, you have to be prepared to encounter different teaching styles ... At the end of the day, if the students have learned something, then (the teachers) have done their job."

As well as being able to purchase his MP3s online, one can visit <http://slangsanctuary.com> to hear about what Jones is cooking up.

coffee Campus coffee: know your joe

OLIVIA BEATTY

Spectrum Editor

While most coffee shops may have a lot of things in common - chalkboard menus, glass pastry cases, local artwork, free WiFi, local newspapers and, of course, coffee - how do all the campus coffee choices stack up when it comes to price, variety, hours and ambiance?

Four local java establishments are within a few blocks of VCU buildings: The Common Cup, 1211 W. Main St.; Crossroads Coffee and Ice Cream, 26 N. Morris St.; Harrison Street Coffee Shop, 402 N. Harrison St; and Common Groundz, 734 W. Broad St.

As for the price of a cup of joe, the cheapest of the four is The Common Cup, where a small house coffee is less than a dollar, and refills are just 60 cents. The other three shops' drip coffees are around a dollar and some change, and all sizes are less than \$2.

It is worth pointing out that the new kid on the block, Common Groundz, offers a bottomless cup of coffee for \$2.25 when eating in.

When it comes to menu variety, the widest selection is at Crossroads, with different menus for every meal of the day, extensive lists of coffee and tea varieties, a big chalkboard of daily specials and hot breakfast options served all day.

Common Cup and Common Groundz tie for second place in menu choice. Both have lots of smoothie and frozen drink options, sandwiches, wraps and breakfast pastries. The

COFFEE continued to Page CT16



ATTENTION!!! VCU STUDENTS

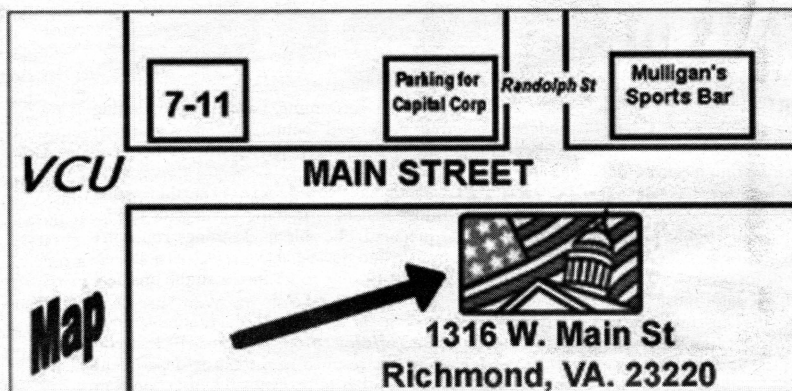
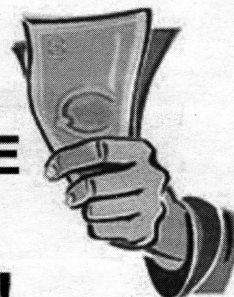


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Extra!

Student actor is back with more tales from the set

PHILLIP RANALLO

Contributing Writer

Horror movies can be scary, but being in one is exciting. I had my chance to do just that this past summer on a feature film, "For Sale by Owner." I played the extra role of a college student in four scenes filmed at the University of Virginia's Rotunda and campus lawn.

"For Sale by Owner" is directed and line produced by Bob Wilson and co-produced by Robert Duvall's Butcher's Run Films.

The low-budget independent feature is about an architect who is restoring the home of America's early colonist, John Smith. In the movie, the Virginia home was burned down and then reconstructed in the 1800s. The film is a supernatural/mystery/psychological thriller.

My day on the film consisted of about four scenes shot at U.Va's campus Rotunda. In the scenes, I played a student who is attending class lectures on the lawn.

During filming, I had to listen to lectures, take notes and walk around campus with school belongings. For each scene the filmmakers did at least 25 takes of the college students listening intently to our teacher's lecture and getting up to leave the class.

Unfortunately, the lawn had recently been watered, leaving many of the extras' clothes damp. Our costumes were what any normal college student would wear. We wore a few different outfits to make it seem as if we were attending lectures on various class days. We were advised to bring extra belongings like book bags, Frisbees, notebooks, headphones, iPods, MP3 players, books, sunglasses and sunscreen.

The day we filmed our college scenes was actually the exam week for U.Va students, but we filmed during their scheduled reading day. Many U.Va students took study breaks to come watch us filming. Tours were being given on campus, and onlookers and tourists rubbernecked as if we were Hollywood celebrities.

Occasionally, students would come by and take pictures of the filming process, and because this is a feature film, there weren't as many restrictions on outside photography. Many of the extras were U.Va theater majors, who were doing extra work for the first time.

The star of the film, Scott Cooper ("Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me," "Gods and Generals," "Broken Trail" and "The X-Files"), also wrote the script.

Other actors in this film are Kris Kristofferson, Tom Skerritt, Frankie Faison ("The Wire") and Skeet Ulrich ("Jericho"). One of the actresses is Rachel Nichols ("The Amityville Horror," "Shopgirl" and "Autumn in New York"), who plays my teacher.

The movie was filmed primarily at Magnolia Plantation near Cloutiersville, La., and in other parts of Virginia.

The production company's goal is to shoot eight movies within the next three years. The film has not secured a distributor yet, but Port Pictures hopes "For Sale by Owner" will earn a theatrical release.

Phillip Ranallo photos

COFFEE continued from Page CT13

sandwiches and wraps cost around \$5-\$7 at all the shops.

The Common Cup also has an extensive specialty pizza menu and a long list of hot tea choices. The food prices here are mostly cheaper than the other guys.

While Harrison Street has fewer options, it specializes in vegetarian and vegan choices. Most of its sandwiches are available in vegetarian or vegan versions. Hot tea selections are abundant here as well, but there's only a small choice of pastries – though they are mostly homemade and vegan.

Fairly traded organic coffee is on offer at Common Groundz and Harrison Street.

Common Groundz is the largest shop, with booths that all have Ethernet jacks and power outlets, large comfy couches, lounge chairs and a big-screen TV.

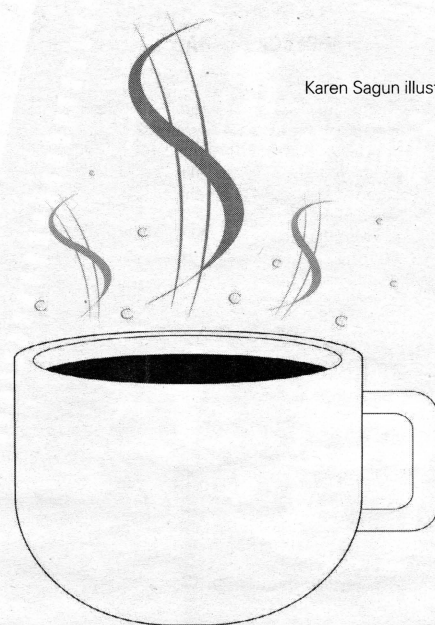
It frequently hosts live music at night on the weekends, so the hours on the door boast they are open until “?”. In a fun take on bathroom graffiti, the restroom walls are painted in chalkboard paint, and a basket full of chalk invites impermanent wall art.

Crossroads is also large and includes outdoor tables, a parking lot and plenty of sunlight. No comfy couches here, though. It is almost always busy but never too packed. The crowd adds to what can sometimes be a long wait for hot food, but it's worth it. Great music is always playing.

Every shop but Crossroads has lots of games, books and magazines for perusing and passing the time.

As for hours, on weekdays all the shops open between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. Harrison Street closes first at 9 p.m., followed by Common Cup and Crossroads at 10 p.m. and Common Groundz at 11 p.m. They all offer mid-morning hours on weekends, but Crossroads remains open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days a week.

And if you don't feel like supporting local businesses and paying reasonable prices, feel free to stop at the new Starbucks inside the library. It is open from 7:30 a.m. to midnight Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday, and 1 p.m. to 11 p.m. on Sunday.



Karen Sagun illustration

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Your Dorm Checklist

Hit the Sack

- Sheet sets, Twin or Twin XL (2)
- Comforter or quilt (1)
- Down comforter (1)
- Duvet cover (1)
- Blanket (1)
- Bed pillows (2)
- Pillow protectors (2)
- Mattress pad (1)
- Fiberbed/featherbed (1)
- Inflatable Aerobed (1)
- Window/door panels
- Area rug (1)
- Decorative pillows
- Floor cushions
- Throw (1)
- Pull an All Nighter**
- Desk lamp (1)
- Floor lamp (1)
- Bed rest (1)
- Lap desk (1)
- Munchie Makers**
- Bowls, plates, mugs (4)
- Forks, knives, spoons (4)
- Glassware set (1)

Chaos Control

- Storage trunk or tote (1)
- Under the bed containers (3)
- CD or DVD storage (1)
- Set of 4 bed risers (1)
- Over the door storage (1)
- Shoe rack (1)
- 24 hangers (1 Pkg.)
- Mesh cubes
- Bubble crates
- Modular storage shelves
- Drawer organizers (4)
- Storage set (1)
- Duffel bag (1)
- Space bags

Chopware set (1)

- Set kitchen utensils (1)
- Bottle/can opener (1)
- Water filtration pitcher (1)
- Replacement filters
- Chip clips/magnetic clips (5)
- Dorm-size microwave (1)
- Dorm-size refrigerator (1)
- Blender (1)
- Toaster oven (1)
- Coffeemaker (1)
- George Foreman grill (1)
- Snack table (1)
- Dish rack
- Travel mugs
- Neat n Tidy**
- Hand or stick vacuum (1)
- Dish cloths & towels (5)
- Cylinder hamper (1)
- Compact iron (1)
- Drying rack (1)
- Laundry bags (2)
- Lint roller

Dorm Pre-Reg's

- Clock radio (1)
- Night light
- Fan (1)
- Storage boxes (2)
- Extension cords (2)
- Squid multi outlets (2)
- Surge protector
- Batteries
- Door mirror (1)
- Wall hooks
- Frames
- Storage ottoman
- Trash can

Student Body Needs

- Towel sets (6)
- Towel bar (1)
- Bath towel tower (1)
- Tub mat (1)
- Bath rug (1)
- Shower curtain (1)
- Shower liner (1)
- Shower ring set (1)
- Shower caddy (1)
- Soap holder (1)
- Bath brush and pail
- Electric toothbrush (1)
- Replacement heads
- Over the door hook (1)
- Magnifying mirror (1)
- Blow dryer (1)
- Body wash & lotion
- Cosmetic organizer (1)
- Twine
- Curling iron (1)
- Hair straightener (1)
- Electric razor (1)
- Robe & slippers (1)
- Hair towel & shower wrap
- Shower radio (1)
- Scale
- Electric fragrance diffuser

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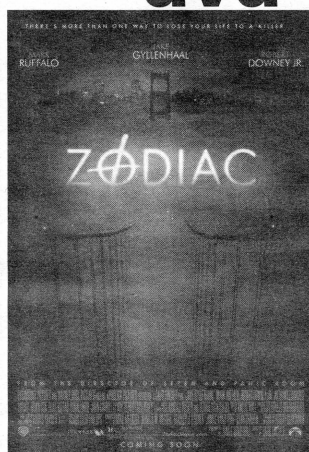
REBECCA LANDAU
Managing Editor

The first scene in "Zodiac" follows a car drifting slowly down an angelic suburban street, its homes shadowed by a beautiful array of colorful fireworks exploding in the dark, night sky.

Everything is perfectly safe and inviting, the kind of picturesque setting that epitomizes stereotypical Americana. What follows, however, is neither safe nor inviting, and this drastic, shocking perversion of serenity is the theme that drives "Zodiac."

dvd

review



The plot, based on a true story, brings into focus the events surrounding the five harrowing Zodiac murders, which took place in the late 1960s in northern California.

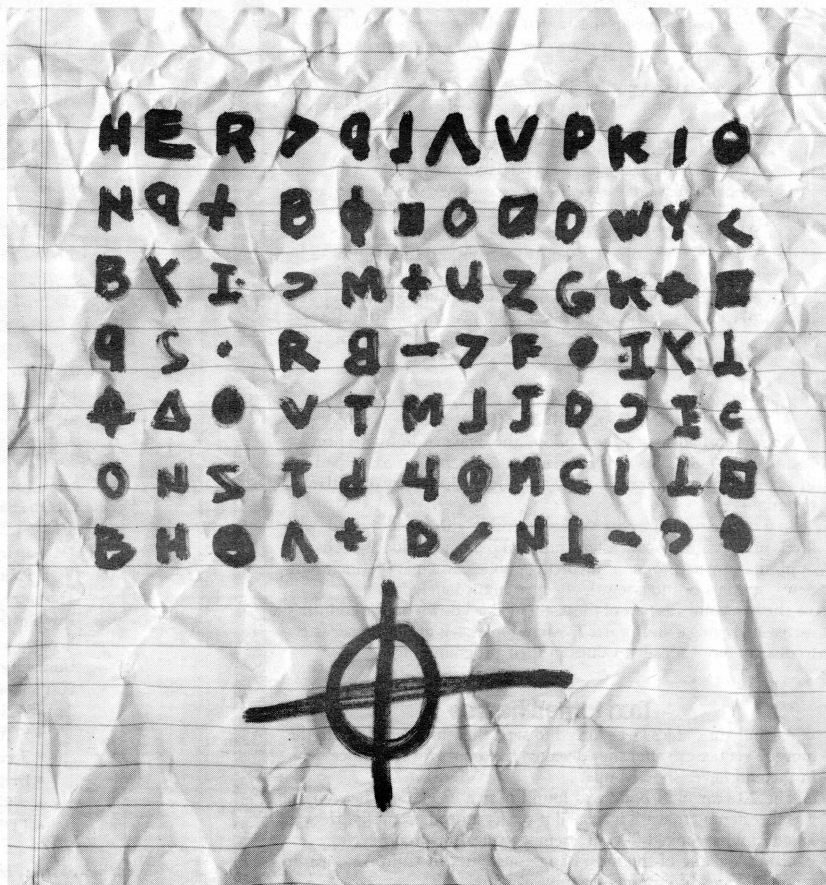
Mark Ruffalo stars as the detective trying to crack the case. Robert Downey Jr. plays a journalist whose newspaper is one of many in San Francisco receiving cryptic codes and taunting letters from the killer. Jake Gyllenhaal rounds out the cast as a cartoonist working at the same paper who slowly becomes obsessed with solving the Zodiac's riddles and, eventually, discovering and publishing his identity.

"Zodiac" is the latest thriller from director David Fincher ("Fight Club"), whose signature style relies on architectural special-effects shots that segue scene into scene. Fincher's overall visual style is cold and clinical, and this reinforces his control over his films' often dark subject matter.

Where the movie fails is in its middle act, which drags as the characters stumble toward discovering the killer, only to be discouraged repeatedly by a lack of evidence or false leads. Often, one resolution seems near, only to be trounced by coincidence or misdirection.

As the film progresses, the characters suffer personally and professionally

'Zodiac' delivers chills, just slowly



Karen Sagun illustration

for their determination to catch the Zodiac killer. Although at times the obsessive decay of personal identity works as the movie's central theme, the sheer length and complexity of the mystery can be trying.

Yet Fincher's technically brilliant direction makes the film worthwhile by perfectly expressing harrowing scenes of picturesque sweethearts destroyed by a killer's insanity and the ominous progression of its characters' obsession to find the truth. In the end, "Zodiac" is a haunting peek into how the Zodiac killer not only destroyed the lives of his victims but also created a wave of fear and obsession that affected the lives of many.

Grade: B-

WEIRD NEWS

For the man who has everything

An unidentified wealthy Russian man attempted to purchase a U.S. B-52 bomber plane from a U.S. delegation of American pilots at an airshow near Moscow.

A Russian newspaper said the man, who was surrounded by bodyguards, asked the pilots if he could buy the plane, to which the pilots replied it was not for sale.

The American went on to say that if the bomber were for sale it would cost at least \$500 million. The Russian said this would not be a problem.

The Americans did not sell the bomber.

Dead mother left in chair

A German man who said he could not face the prospect of organizing her funeral instead left his deceased mother in an armchair at their shared home for two years.

The man's mother died of natural causes while sitting in the chair in July 2005. She was 92. The son was given a death certificate by a doctor but never registered the death.

The man's neighbors reported the corpse to police. When questioned, the man said he didn't want to move the body and never entered the room where she was sitting. He is under investigation for violation of German burial law.

Chinese ban surgery TV

China's broadcasting watchdog, the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television, recently added "public participation" in sex-change operations and plastic surgery to its list of outlawed material.

In a notice posted on its Web site Friday, the agency stated, "All levels of television broadcasters must not plan or produce sex change or plastic surgery programs involving public participation (including news, specials or interviews), effective immediately."

The ban comes as part of the agency's crackdown on the country's increasingly vulgar and bizarre TV show topics. It is urging broadcasters to display more socialist values in their programming.

Taxi turned hearse

A family in Caracas was forced to send their murdered son to the morgue via taxicab after they'd waited five hours for the police, who in the end never showed up.

The 20 year old's body was found near a creek, and heavy rain was threatening to wash it away if it wasn't moved promptly. He was killed in what looked like an attempt to steal his motorcycle.

Caracas is one of the most dangerous cities in Latin America. It reports dozens of murders every week.

Man sets 100-child goal

A one-legged Emirati man, who is already the father of 78 children, is attempting to reach his goal of 100 children by 2015 with the help of at least three more wives. The 60 year old already boasts 15 previous brides. He has to divorce some of them when he remarries so as to stay within the legal maximum of four wives at a time.

His oldest child is 36, his youngest 20 days. Two of his three current wives are pregnant. The family has lived in 15 houses, and the disabled man supports them with his military pension and government aid.

Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services

Dear VCU Students,

Creating and maintaining a safe campus requires our continuous individual and collective efforts. We each have a responsibility regarding personal safety as well as a collective responsibility to sustain a safe and healthy campus environment for all. Although these efforts do not make us immune from crime, they draw us toward a common goal of preventing crime while strengthening our university community.

The practical steps we can all take for our individual and collective safety include:

- ⇒ Become familiar with the campus environment.
- ⇒ Pay attention to what is going on around you and who is around you.
- ⇒ Memorize the emergency phone number for VCU Police: 828-1234.
- ⇒ Bookmark the VCU Alert page (www.vcu.edu/alert/) and pay attention to communications from VCU Police and other University officials.
- ⇒ Sign up for security and other alert text messages from the university by going to www.vcu.edu/alert/notify.
- ⇒ If you see something suspicious or unusual, contact VCU Police immediately.
- ⇒ Make a habit of locking doors and securing personal belongings; never leave possessions unattended.
- ⇒ Use well-traveled, well-lit routes avoiding shortcuts.
- ⇒ Develop a personal safety plan rather than assume "it won't happen to me."
- ⇒ Enlist friends as travel companions; do not travel alone late at night.
- ⇒ Avoid alcohol and other substances which impair judgment and increase crime vulnerability.
- ⇒ Look for yellow Emergency Reporting Telephones (ERTS) around campus and utilize them for assistance.
- ⇒ Use the Security Escort Service by calling 828-WALK or using an ERTS phone.
- ⇒ Develop relationships with other students, faculty, staff and VCU Police. Ask others for assistance when needed.
- ⇒ Treat others with respect, care and civility.
- ⇒ Participate in university safety programs and presentations.
- ⇒ If you or someone you know is a victim of crime, contact University Counseling Services at 828-6200.
- ⇒ Post important phone contact numbers including
 - » VCU Police, Emergency, 828-1234
 - » VCU Police, Non-Emergency, 828-1196
 - » Security Escort Service, 828-9255 (WALK)
 - » Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services, 828-1244
 - » TDD 1-800-552-7917

Additional safety information can be found at www.vcu.edu/police/ and from offices within the Division of Student Affairs & Enrollment Services at www.students.vcu.edu.

We wish you safety and great success for the 2007 - 08 academic year.

Henry G. Rhone
Vice Provost for Student Affairs
& Enrollment Services

Willie B. Fuller
Chief of Police

VCU

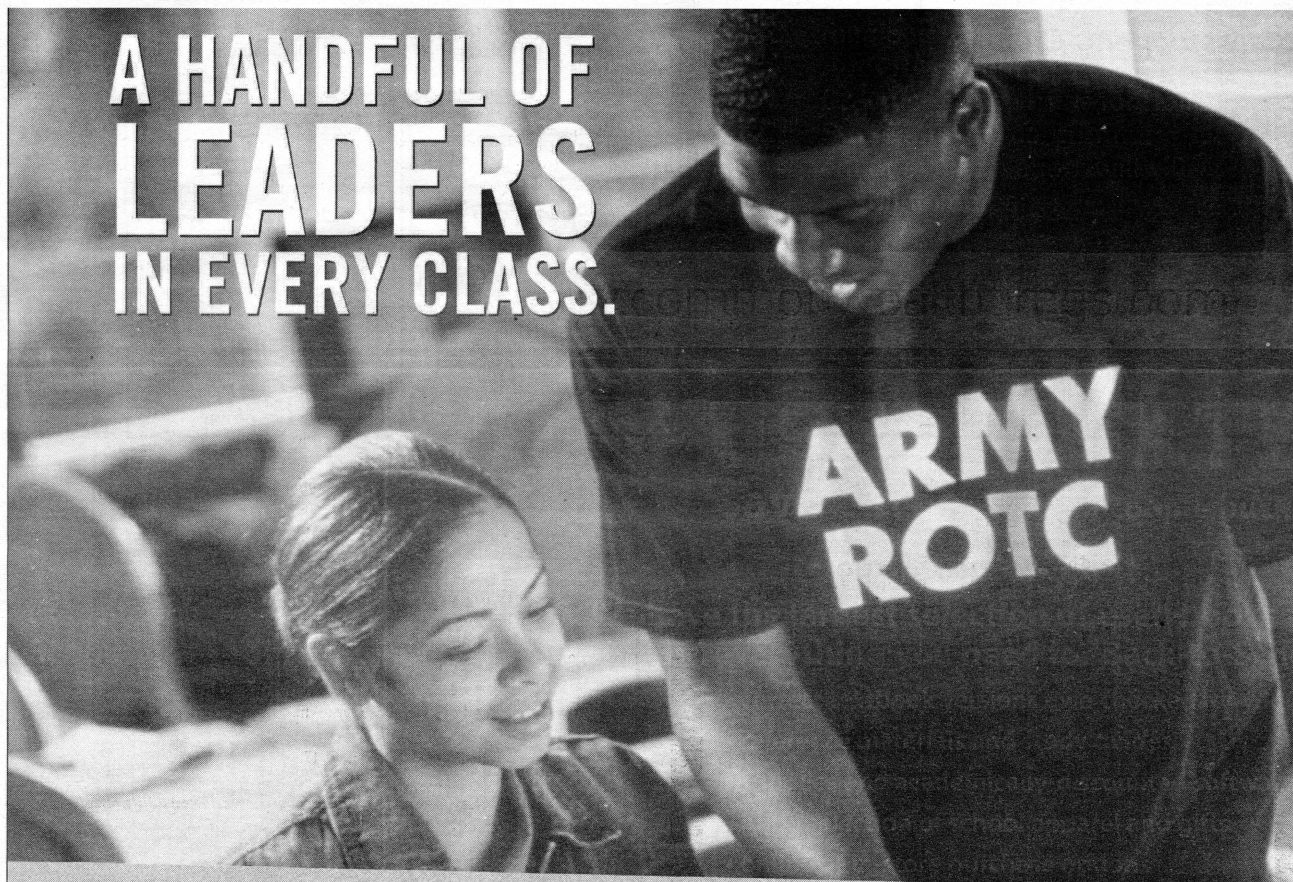
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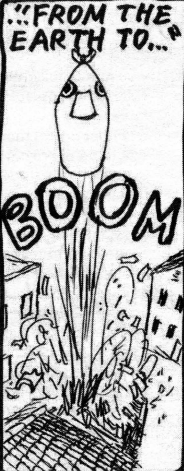
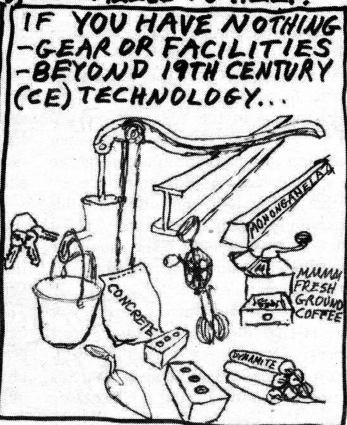
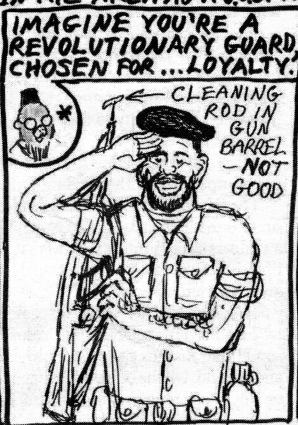


WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

Comics

Pizza from Scratch, Bill Lemmond

REAL NEWS ITEM: 14 SQUIRRELS SEIZED IN IRAN AS SPIES. A RESCUE IS PLANNED. BUT IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK. LOOK UP "THE RANSOM OF RED CHIEF". SPARKY & THE ASTRO-CATS IN THE AREA AS A U.S. ACT ("DYSLEXIC BORG PETS") ARE CALLED TO HELP.



* MOROCCO MOLE, NOW KNOWN AS ADMINISTRATOR 'M'. 10-26 AUG 2007

Opinion

College students: axis of ego

RACHEL VAMENTA

Opinion Editor

You've heard it somewhere at some point, perhaps from a disgruntled family member, a friend, classmate, a teacher, a coworker or even your ex.

"You're so self-involved," they'll say. "You only care about yourself."

They might not have used these exact words. In any case, don't start looking up therapists in the Yellow Pages just yet. It's only natural for people in their teens and early twenties (college age) to be self-involved. At this point, we are all that and a bag of chips. But with this generation all about "me, me, me," it was only a matter of time before someone came out with a study that proved college students' narcissism.

San Diego State University professor Jean Twenge did exactly that this past February. For 24 years, Twenge evaluated more than 16,000 college students around the country using a Narcissistic

Personality Inventory, or NPI. Today's students scored above average compared with students in the 1980s. Twenge has even written a book, "Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled—and More Miserable Than Ever Before."

Twenge is quoted as saying that modern technology "fuels the increase in narcissism." In all honesty, she's not entirely wrong. There certainly is a see-and-be-seen mentality behind Web sites like YouTube and MySpace. This same mentality could well be what makes these sites so popular.

"Entitlement" also made the news this summer, though not in the political sense of the word. In July, a Wall Street Journal headline read, "Blame It on Mr. Rogers: Why Young Adults Feel So Entitled." The article began describing how Don Chance, a Louisiana State University professor, arrived at the conclusion that PBS staple "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" influenced his students' demands for extra

credit at the end of the semester.

Oh, come on. College professors should know that no matter how many times they say they won't offer extra credit, students will ask for it anyway. It's a given.

Besides, Mr. Rogers has nothing to do with it. He was simply trying to foster a sense of self-esteem, not entitlement. Admittedly, "you're special" might not have been the best phrase choice. But it's the context that matters. Mr. Rogers meant for this quality to help us be more tolerant and accepting of others, not something that enables us to automatically get bumped up on the grading scale.

The Wall Street Journal article also addresses the first-name basis issue: "When a child calls an adult Mr. or Ms., it helps him recognize that status is earned by age and experience."

This is how I was raised. It speaks well when children are polite and respectful, something that may carry on into college and beyond. On the other hand, depending on your academic program or concentra-

tion, you might have some professors or superiors who prefer to be called by their first names, something that originally took me a little while to get used to. (Anyway, prefixes like "Ms.," "Mr.," or "Dr.," are only used in a newsroom when addressing experts or special guests.)

Putting personal goals and ambitions before anything or anyone else might suggest narcissistic tendencies. I don't think this is necessarily true. It works for some people, as does asking for extra credit. (You can, only don't be obnoxious.) In the end, perhaps better parenting is the only real solution.

Having said all this, check out my Facebook profile for pictures of my Hollywood adventures. (Comment if you know which house on Wisteria Lane belongs to which housewife, because I don't.) While you're there, see if we share similar friends or interests. Compare my favorite books and TV shows with yours. And, of course, don't forget to write on my wall.

Letters to the editor:

Dear CT,

Remembering advice my mother gave me before I left for VCU, I decided to pick up the student paper. My mom had said that it is the best way to tell what is going on around campus, and I am very glad I took that advice.

I was really impressed by your paper's articles, my favorites being "Weird news is good news" by Rachel Vamenta and "Shameful court decision strikes down student speech" by Rebecca Landau. I also found the new student guide really helpful, especially the listing \$10 and under. College students aren't known to be rich, and I am no exception.

Though I am a freshman, I would love to know how to get involved in the paper.

Thank you for your time,
Rebekah Jones

Editor's Note:

Thanks, Rebekah! We're always looking for contributors at the CT. All you have to do is stop

by the Student Media Center at 817 W. Broad St. and fill out an application.

Thanks for the coverage of the two VCU music-based articles in Spectrum this past week — well done! I am pleased that the CT has hired Roberto Curtis, who I'm sure has a stack of potential topics to explore.

Best,
Professor Antonio J. Garcia
Director of Jazz Studies
Coordinator of Music Business

I was surprised and more than a little disgusted to learn that Ward Churchill has been invited for a speaking engagement at VCU. As a student (albeit in the Northern Virginia program), I am deeply concerned that my tuition will help to pay an honorarium for a professor who was fired from the University of Colorado at Boulder for academic misconduct less than one month ago. His facile and sophomoric political commentary aside, Churchill

was found guilty by his colleagues of plagiarism and fabrication.

Either one of these offenses would rightly result in the expulsion of a student and the dismissal of a professor from this institution. So what message does it send to the academic community to allow someone who has been found guilty on seven counts of these and similar misdeeds to speak on campus? Are there no other academics of indigenous descent (beyond Churchill's alleged one-sixteenth Cherokee bloodline) qualified to speak about the issues of Native Americans?

Inviting Churchill to speak at VCU reinforces the stereotype that professional academics and students will embrace any idea and the person who presents it if the idea is controversial and "subversive," regardless of the inherent absurdity of said idea.

I am not contesting Churchill's First Amendment rights to say what he wishes to say; I am pleading with VCU to protect its academic

reputation by not providing a forum for a fraud with an at best questionable standing. I strongly encourage the leadership of the University Student Commons and Activities to reconsider their invitation.

Mike Miller

Corrections from Aug. 23 CT:

On the front page, Norwood Teague was described erroneously as the new athletic director. He has held the position since July 1, 2006.

The story "Sirens, text messages among security measures to be tested" said VCU will test its new security plan Sept. 14. The actual test date is Sept. 19.

The story "Tom Remembered" said Thomas Keller took his own life. The circumstances surrounding his death are still under investigation. Detectives have not officially determined whether it was a homicide or suicide.

the
commonwealthtimes

The independent student press of VCU

GAYLAND HETHCOAT

Executive Editor

RACHEL VAMENTA

Opinion Editor

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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.

Crossword

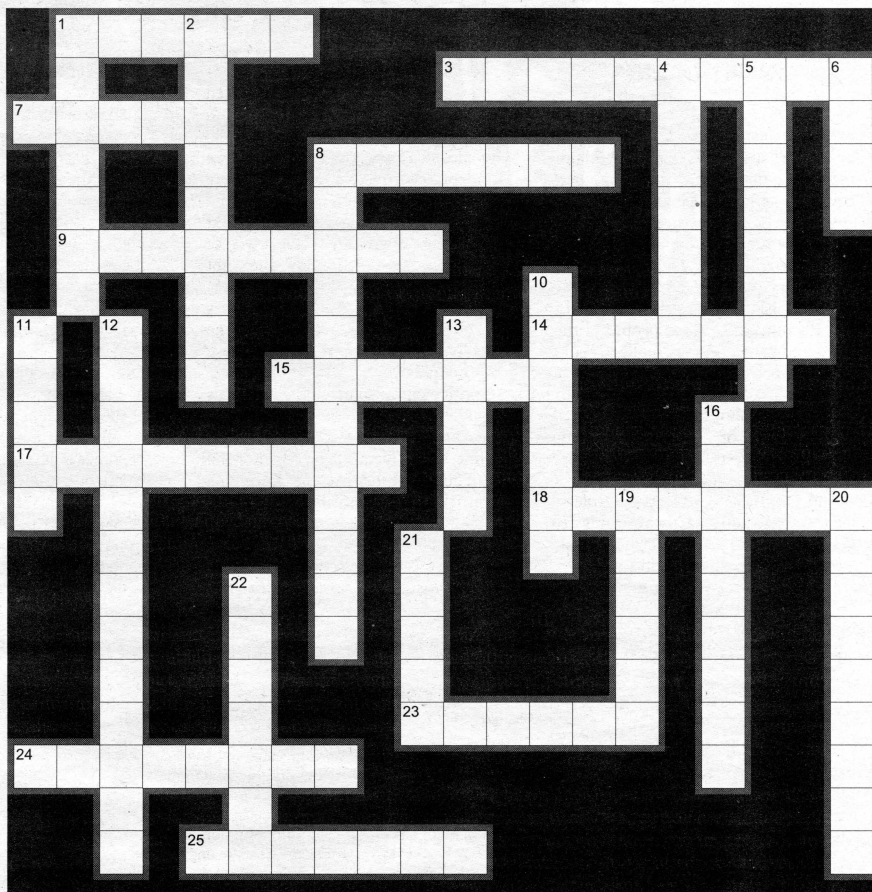
VCU course titles

Across

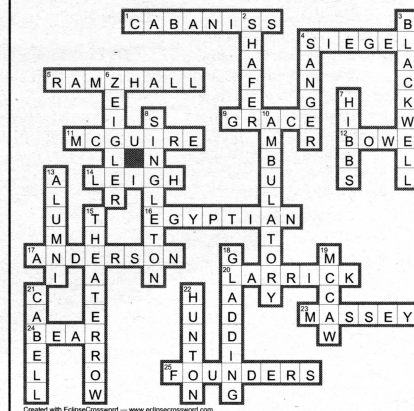
1. Effective _____. SPCH 121.
3. _____ Concepts. Also known as BIOL 101.
7. Introduction to _____. HUMS 291.
8. _____ with Applications. MATH 141.
9. Introductory _____. CHEM 100.
14. Elementary _____. ITAL 101.
15. _____ of Technology. PHYS 107.
17. Art _____. COAR 312.
18. Writing and _____ Workshop I. Known as ENGL 101.
23. Design _____. GDES 491.
24. Statistical _____. STAT 208.
25. Microscopic _____. Also known as ANAT 302.

Down

1. Engineering _____. ENGR 102.
2. Introduction to _____. ECON 203.
4. _____ Sociology. SOCY 101.
5. _____ Law. CRJS 260.
6. Introduction to _____ Science. LFSC 101.
8. Introduction To _____. Also known as ANTH 103.
10. Survey of American _____. HIST 103.
11. Foreign Language: Introduction to _____. FRLG 101.
12. Known as DANC 105.
13. _____ Graphics. MASC 300.
16. Introduction to Human _____. GEOG 102.
19. History of _____. PHIL 211.
20. _____ Sedation. PERI 512.
21. _____ Behavior. MKTG 373.
22. Computers for _____. I. Known as FASH 145.



Answers from Aug. 23 edition



A wooden speaker with two drivers. The left side of the speaker is a reddish-brown wood panel with white text. The right side is a darker wood panel with two silver-colored drivers. The speaker is on four small black feet.

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