



Monday, November 26, 2007 Vol. 47 No. 25

# the ct

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

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# Hollingsworth sparks Rams victory

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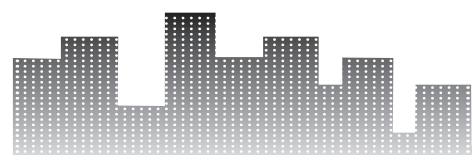






# Briefs

## Weather



Monday

67/54



Tuesday

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## WORLD

PUNTA ARENAS, Chile – A rare calm in Antarctic seas and the swift response by a passing ship helped save all aboard a Canadian cruise liner that struck an iceberg in the night and sank, rescued passengers and experienced sailors said Saturday.

The MS Explorer, a Canadian-operated cruiser built in 1969 as a pioneer among rugged go-anywhere tourist ships that plied waters from the Amazon to the Arctic and Antarctic circles, struck ice Friday, took on water and dipped beneath the waves

more than 15 hours later.

All 154 passengers and crew spent hours bobbing in life rafts on chilly seas before a Norwegian cruise ship plucked them up shivering but safe and took them to two military bases on King George Island for flights out.

American Ely Chang of Urban, Calif., was among the first to get out of a Chilean Hercules C-130 in Punta Arenas, clutching his life jacket like a precious souvenir and reminder of anxious hours spent adrift.

“It was very cold, but I’m so happy

because we all survived this, and everyone’s all right. Now I’m going home,” he said.

Others in Antarctica counted the survivors lucky.

“They were fortunate because other ships just happened to be in the area and came to their aid rapidly,” said Lt. Col. Waldemar Fontes, chief of the small Uruguayan base where the rescued tourists and crew took shelter overnight. “The seas were calm and there weren’t any storms. That doesn’t happen often in Antarctica.”

## NATION

MALIBU, Calif. – Fire crews hoped mild temperatures and gentle winds Sunday would help them solidify gains against the sprawling wildfire that destroyed dozens of homes in this upscale coastal community.

Hot, powerful winds that fanned the blaze across 4,720 acres starting early Saturday were not expected Sunday, Los Angeles County Fire Inspector Ron Haralson said.

The fire was about 40 percent

contained, with few flames visible to the three water-dropping helicopters deployed over the fire zone, Haralson said.

Forty-nine homes were destroyed Saturday by the fast-moving wildfire pushed by Santa Ana winds. Twenty-seven other homes were damaged and 10,000 to 14,000 people were evacuated.

Some residents whose property made it through last month’s fire un-

scathed weren’t so lucky this time.

“This time I lost,” said a soot-covered Glen Sunyich, who watched his stucco and tile house he built in 1990 slowly burn to the ground. “It means that I didn’t build it well enough.”

Investigators had determined that the fire, which broke out along a dirt road off a paved highway, was caused by humans, but had not determined if it was started intentionally, said county fire inspector Rick Dominguez.

## LOCAL

ALEXANDRIA – Its most virulent critics have dubbed it “Terror High,” and 12 U.S. senators and a federal commission want to shut it down.

The teachers, administrators and some 900 students at the Islamic Saudi Academy in Fairfax County have heard the allegations for years – after the Sept. 11 attacks and then a few years later when a class valedictorian admitted he had joined al-Qaida.

Abdalla al-Shabnan, the school’s director general, said criticism of the school is based not on evidence, but on preconceived notions of the Saudi

educational system.

The school, serving grades K-12 on campuses in Fairfax and Alexandria, receives financial support from the Saudi government, and its textbooks are based on Saudi curriculum. Critics say the Saudis propagate a severe version of Islam in their schools.

But al-Shabnan said the school significantly modified those textbooks to remove passages deemed intolerant of other religions.

Most recently, the Religious Freedom Commission – an independent federal agency created by Congress

– issued its report, saying it was rebuffed in its efforts to obtain textbooks to verify claims they had been reformed.

The commission recommended that the academy be shut down until it could review the textbooks to ensure they do not promote intolerance.

Since the commission’s report, the academy has given copies of its books to the Saudi Embassy, which then provided them to the State Department. The commission is waiting to get the books from the State Department.

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# News

*"I cannot say enough about the Rotary scholarship program – it is amazing. I highly recommend the Rotary program to the VCU community. It is not difficult to apply, and if you are a qualified candidate, your odds are quite good of being selected for a scholarship."*

—Jennifer Kuchno, VCU alumna and current Spanish major studying in Quito, Ecuador, with a Rotary Ambassadorial Cultural Scholarship



Kuchno with children in an eastern Ecuadorian village.

courtesy of Jennifer Kuchno

## Student expands passion for Spanish on full Rotary scholarship to Ecuador

BETHANY EMERSON  
News Co-Editor

In a photograph, Jennifer Kuchno sits on a thin, wooden plank in the Amazon rainforest surrounded by children from an east Ecuadorian village.

Each child looks ecstatic about the donated school supplies she's brought from the Rotary Club.

As the children pose with her, Kuchno's arms extend around them; they grin cavity-filled smiles and have protruding bellies – side effects of their impure water supplies.

"The village kids ... all had visible cavities (and) protruding bellies, which ... is characteristic of severe diarrhea caused by drinking unclean water," Kuchno states in her blog. "As I have traveled around (Ecuador) as a rotary scholar, I have seen this problem everywhere. They are in dire need of clean, safe drinking water."

Experiences with the children dur-

ing her three-month-stay in Ecuador reinforced Kuchno's passion to leave VCU to expand her fluency in Spanish and her passion for the culture and the people.

"It truly touches my heart to give, to help make a difference," Kuchno stated in an email. "I wish I could do more."

Since her first trip, during which she invested much of her time at non profit organizations, Kuchno has received a full scholarship from the Central and Eastern Virginia Rotary Club.

Kuchno, a Spanish major at VCU, currently lives in Quito, Ecuador, and studies seven hours a day at the Academia de Espanol Quito, as well as volunteers at ABEI, a foundation for handicapped children, and at the Refugio de los Sueños, which means "the shelter of dreams."

At both of these non profit organizations, Kuchno serves as a translator, disperses donated materials and plans children's activities, among other

responsibilities.

Kuchno is a VCU alumna who received her master's degree in teaching and a bachelor's degree in both sociology and anthropology in 1993. Kuchno said that after she taught elementary school for seven years, she discovered her passion for Spanish as she began to volunteer as a teacher for English as a Second Language classes.

Kuchno said this love for Spanish led her to complete Old Dominion University's applied linguistics, or Teachers of English as a Second Language, program, as well as to pursue her undergraduate degree in Spanish at VCU.

"Now, my plan is to teach ESL to Latinos in my community and to finish my Spanish degree at VCU before applying to a doctorate program in education," Kuchno stated. "My professional goal is to be a university professor."

Kuchno's passion for Spanish led her to look beyond the classroom and apply for the Rotary Ambassadorial Cultural

Scholarship. Kuchno went through a rigorous application process and was selected by District 7600 of the Rotary Club, which includes the Richmond Rotary clubs, for her scholarship. The scholarship covered her travel, tuition, room and board.

"The purpose of the Rotary Cultural Scholarship is to support world understanding and peace," Kuchno said. "I have two objectives: to study Spanish and to serve as an ambassador of goodwill to support the Rotary ideal of 'service above self.'"

In addition to her volunteer work at the nonprofits and her academic focus, Kuchno said, she has fought to improve the living conditions in Ecuador. Kuchno said her main focus of improvement has been to act as a liaison between the Club Rotario de Quito Norte – the Quito Rotary club – and Bon Air Rotary, her sponsor club.

KUCHNO PROFILE continued to CT6

commonwealthtimes.com · CT3

Monday, November 26, 2007





## Proposed coal-fired power plant highlights conflicting environmental, economic interests



Karen Sagun illustration

**CHRISTEN DUXBURY**  
*News Co-Editor*

Dominion Virginia Power plans to build a coal-fired power plant in Wise County, but as construction plans move ahead, some Wise County residents have joined with environmentalists to try to halt the construction.

The proposed Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center, slated for completion in 2012, is a 585-megawatt coal-fired power plant that Dominion said is needed to meet Virginia's growing energy needs.

"Our number of customers grows by 20,000 to 30,000 each year ... (while) existing customers are using more energy with plasma screen TV's (and other high-energy devices)," said Karl Neddenien from his office telephone at the Dominion headquarters in Richmond.

Dominion must get its coal from Virginia, and the plant has yet to develop contracts with area mines. Residents of Wise County, a coal-mining region, who oppose the plant fear new mining methods that blast off the tops of mountains will scar the region forever, while the pollution from the plant will compound pre-existing environmental problems.

The Department of Environmental Quality rates the technology used in the plant as a clean coal technology, said Dan Genest, a spokesperson for Dominion, and the plant will reduce its environmental impact by burning coal waste and wood scraps.

But opponents of the plant said that its hybrid capabilities are not enough.

"Even if (the plant) is less polluting, they aren't mining in environmentally safe ways," said Glen Besa, the Appalachian regional director of the Sierra Club.

The negative impacts of the plant are numerous, Besa said, and they include acid

rain, water contamination, algae blooms in waterways and sickness and asthma caused by coal dust.

The plant will burn 2 million tons of coal each year to meet the electricity needs of 145,000 homes in Northern Virginia, Central Virginia and Hampton, Genest said.

Dominion said the plant will bring money to the low-income area in a number of different ways, including jobs and taxes the company will pay for the plant.

During construction, the plant will provide the area with 800 jobs, Genest said, and after the plant is finished, it will provide 75 permanent jobs.

Pete Ramey, a spokesperson for the Southern Appalachian Mountain Stewards, an organization that works to protect communities in Southwest Virginia from mountaintop removal mining, thinks the number of jobs created is insignificant when compared to the amount of damage caused by the plant.

"If you consider 75 jobs for all the pollution and destruction it will cause (it's not worth it)," Ramey, a resident of Wise county, said from his home telephone.

Dominion is aware of the environmental issues surrounding the plant, Genest said.

"Obviously, burned coal has ramifications for the environment ... Dominion is aware of that, but we have more coal resources than Saudi Arabia has oil," Genest said, and Dominion, along with much of the rest of the nation, plans to use it.

Coal provides the United States with more than 50 percent of its electricity, according to the U.S. Department of Energy Web site. Although companies are actively seeking out ways to balance the economic needs of the United States with its environmental needs, Genest said solutions won't come overnight.

"We don't have a balance between the economics and the environment ... all the people talk about alternatives, but alternatives still involve pollution. There is a better way," Ramey said.





# VCU credited with aiding Richmond's growth, Crupi reports

JOHNATHAN BROWN

Contributing Writer

The president of consulting firm Strategic Leadership Solutions revealed the findings of a study last Monday that attributed VCU's aggressive development with boosting Richmond's success.

The study, presented at the Stuart C. Siegel Center, looked at Richmond's strengths and weaknesses.

The president, James A. Crupi, said Richmond would not have the economic prosperity it enjoys today without VCU's dynamic growth. He listed the university as a strength in his 55-page study, which was handed out to the audience after the presentation.

Crupi, who advises Fortune 1000 companies, such as Coca-Cola and IBM, conducted a similar study about Richmond in 1993.

Crupi said Richmond must realize "shift happens," and the community must

embrace it to propel into the future.

"If your entire life's history tells you change is good, why fight it?" he asked.

The changes the city has made in recent years are positive, he said, recalling the study he conducted in 1993 that marked Richmond as a "glass half-empty." Now, he sees Richmond's progress as a "glass half-full," with emphasis on the "half" because there is still room for improvement, he said.

Richmond's growth is also a result of the diversity of its leaders, Crupi said. White leaders tend to think with their heads while black leaders think with their hearts, he said, and Richmond benefits best from a mixture of both styles of leadership.

Among Richmond's black leaders, Crupi mentioned L. Douglas Wilder, former Virginia governor and now Richmond's mayor, and Henry Rhone, VCU vice provost for student affairs.

Crupi criticized the Richmond area's

lack of vision, directing his remarks mainly toward businesses and the government. He also emphasized the importance of involvement from college students.

A vision – created with everyone's involvement – is essential to leadership, he said.

"If the vision of the task is clear, it will assume the burden of leadership," Crupi said.

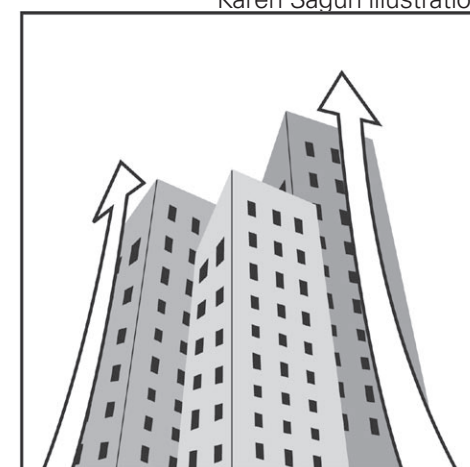
He also placed heavy emphasis on officials being more strategic than tactical.

"Making a living is tactics," he said. "Making a life is strategy."

What does all this mean for VCU students? Crupi encourages students to get more involved with organizations such as the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce, which commissioned his report. This will give students a chance to become involved in Richmond's growth while creating credibility when they finally join the workforce, he said.

It is important for young adults to

Karen Sagun illustration



become involved in the process now, he said, because many of the community's key leaders will retire in the next five years, including VCU's president, Eugene P. Trani.

Leadership waits for no one, Crupi said, and the time to become an effective leader is when the community thinks it will not need leadership.

Richmond needs leaders with vision who will stretch the community to accomplish more than it ever dreamed it could, he said.

"We who have been privileged enough to lead other people should never ... be afraid of helping them understand the cost and the price of becoming the best."



TERRELL DAVIS

Contributing Writer

Dennis Morales was diagnosed with diabetes when he was 9.

"I didn't understand the disease at all when I got it," said Morales, a 20-year-old economics major. "All I knew was that they were keeping me in a hospital for about a week."

Diabetes is a result of high levels of blood glucose, which occurs because of a lack of insulin production.

November is National Diabetes Month, and in Virginia, public health resources including Virginia Diabetes Prevention and Control Project are working to raise awareness about the fifth-deadliest disease in the United States.

"The number of people with diabetes in Virginia has grown, but the budget hasn't," said Ann Forburger,

## National Diabetes Month prompts more education, funding, awareness

director of Virginia Diabetes Prevention and Control Project. "Right now, we don't receive any money from the state. All of the money we receive comes from federal dollars."

To increase funding, Congress has to approve more funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Forburger said Virginia DCDP has to partner with other organizations or groups to try to tend to the needs of the more than 500,000 diagnosed and non-diagnosed Virginians living with diabetes.

Virginia DPCP was created in 1993 and is housed in the Division of Chronic Disease Prevention and Control within the Virginia Department of Health.

According to its Web site, the mission of the program is to reduce the number of deaths caused by diabetes, reduce the number of disabilities and complications associated with diabetes and to reduce the economic cost of diabetes.

By dividing the number of people living with diabetes in Virginia by the amount of federal money the state acquires each year, Forburger found that diabetic residents receive less than \$1 per person per year.

Proper treatment of diabetes can be very expensive.

Morales said he spends about \$115 every two months for insulin, \$60 every two months for test strips and about \$300 every three months for supplies

for his insulin pump.

"A diabetic could not properly treat their condition without insurance because there would be no way to afford all of the treatments," Morales said.

He pays the 20 percent co-pay of his insurance plan. This means that for six months he spends \$1,125 for his treatment while his insurance pays \$4,500.

Morales said diabetes changed his spending, lifestyle and eating habits.

"I had to learn to stick to a diet," he said. "It wasn't too strict, but basically everything I ate had to be in moderation, and there were some things that I just had to avoid all together. Otherwise, I would feel ill."

This month, Virginia DPCP aims to ensure people with diabetes get their flu shots, despite a common misconception that getting the flu shot makes people more likely to catch the flu, Forburger said.

"We encourage everyone with diabetes to get their flu shot," Forburger said.

But for those with diabetes, she said, the immune system is naturally weaker.

"I got my flu shot," Morales said. "I have to eat at certain times in order to keep my blood sugar at a normal level. If I got the flu, I would probably lose my appetite, and if I did eat anything, there is a good chance that it would just come right back up before

DIABETES MONTH continued to CT6

commonwealthtimes.com · CT5



## KUCHNO PROFILE continued from CT3

"I am hoping to help the Quito Club receive a ... grant for a potable water project that will enable rural Ecuadorian schools to offer clean, safe drinking water to their communities," Kuchno said. "Many children die each year as a result of drinking contaminated water."

Kuchno said her personal desire to see Ecuadorians have clean water was fueled by her realization that she personally took for granted the cleanliness of water in the United States.

"Water is a basic human need, and my trip to Ecuador made me keenly aware that sadly, clean, safe drinking water is a luxury that not everyone in the world can afford," Kuchno said. "As an American, I have taken potable, safe water for granted. But now, I know that it's not like that everywhere."

Kuchno encourages all students to apply for the Rotary scholarships.

"I cannot say enough about the Rotary scholarship program – it is amazing. I highly recommend the Rotary program to the VCU community," Kuchno said. "It is not difficult to apply, and if you are a qualified candidate, your odds are quite good of being selected for a scholarship."

Kuchno said she would be happy to talk with and assist anyone interested in applying.

"I am proud to be a VCU alumna, and I want people to know what a truly great school VCU is," Kuchno said. "There are excellent students at VCU who can not only compete in major scholarship competitions but can win. I think they just need to be shown the way."

For more information on scholarships and how to apply, go to [rotary.org](http://rotary.org) and select "Students and Youth" and "Ambassadorial Scholarships." Or, for the local Rotary club, visit [rotary7600.org](http://rotary7600.org).

## DIABETES MONTH continued from CT5

I could digest it."

There are still many misconceptions when it comes to understanding diabetes, Forburger said.

"There is still a need for lots of education," she said.

Diabetes is associated with a number of other serious complications: heart disease and stroke, high blood pressure, blindness, kidney disease, nervous system disease, amputations and many others. According to the American Diabetes Association, most people aren't diagnosed with diabetes until other complications occur.

The ADA predicts one in three Americans and one in two minorities born after 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime.

VCU student Karey Morgan is a medical assistant at a hospital that specializes in treating patients with diabetes. At Diabetes, Endocrine and Internal Medicine Associates, Morgan said, she has seen patients struggling to control the disease.

"We've had patients who have had blood sugars so low that they have passed out in our office and had to be taken to the hospital," Morgan said.

Patients with high blood sugars are usually treated with insulin and diet control, Morgan said.

"Before I started working here I didn't think diabetes was a really serious disease, but now that I've been around it and seen what it does to a person's body, it really is scary," Morgan said.

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# Sports

## Rams pull away in second half, top Mountaineers

JONATHAN HOWARD  
*Sports Editor*

Quanitra Hollingsworth (Chesapeake/Great Bridge) scored 22 points – 16 in the second half – and grabbed 12 rebounds to lead VCU to its fourth victory in as many games, 72-53 over Appalachian State Sunday afternoon at the Stuart C. Siegel Center.

The double-double gives Hollingsworth 28 for her career, putting her in a tie for second all time with Kristine Austgulen and two behind leader Beth Mollerup.

VCU never trailed in the game and got out to a hot start, as the Rams led by 10 with nine minutes to play in the first half and by as many as 14 three times throughout the first 20 minutes.

“When we came out, we knew it was payback for last year,” Hollingsworth said, referring to Appalachian State’s 79-68 win last season in Boone, N.C.

Senior Krsytal Vaughn (Baltimore/Lake Clifton-Eastern) and junior transfer Radoslava Bachvarova (Varna, Bulgaria/Dayton Beach C.C.) led the offensive effort. Vaughn used her size and post moves to accumulate 12 points and five rebounds, while Bachvarova made 4 of 6 shots from the floor, including a three-pointer to score all 11 of her points.

Vaughn finished with 18 points and seven rebounds. However, the Mountaineers would make the Rams work toward the end of the first half. Appalachian State closed the half with a 17-8 run, including 11 points from leading scorer GiGi Thomas to close down a 14-point VCU lead to just five, 39-34. Thomas played only nine minutes in the first half and scored all 11 points in the 7-minute stretch that ended the first half. She finished with 20 points.

VCU made two straight baskets to start the second half, one from Vaughn and one from Hollingsworth, to



Krystal Vaughn fights for possession of the ball under the basket during the Rams’ victory.

Rachel Larue photo

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL continued to CT12

### THIS WEEK

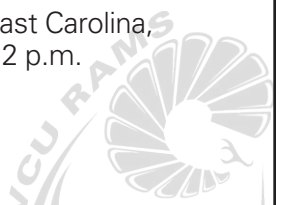
VCU sporting events are free to students with a valid student ID. For more information, visit [vcuathletics.com](http://vcuathletics.com) or call the VCU Sports Line at 828-3440.

#### Men’s Basketball

Thu., Nov. 29, @ Hampton, Hampton, 8 p.m.  
Sun., Dec. 2, vs. Maryland in BB&T Classic, Washington, D.C., 7:30 p.m.

#### Women’s Basketball

Sat., Dec. 1, @ East Carolina, Greenville, N.C., 2 p.m.





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# The CT sports editor sounds off



## JONATHAN SAYS

### COLLEGE FOOTBALL

What a crazy season this has been. A No. 1 one has been crowned – again – after another upset. Arkansas' 52-50 victory in triple overtime over LSU was a classic, but it makes me wonder if anyone really wants to win the national championship this year. Missouri is the new No. 1 after holding off a fourth quarter rally by then No. 2 Kansas in a 36-28 win. Speaking of which, with basketball season warming up, doesn't it sound weird that we're talking about the gridiron Jayhawks? Getting back on point, Missouri has its chance to blow a chance at the national title on Saturday when it faces Oklahoma in Saturday's Big 12 championship. Oklahoma is in a perfect situation for this one. Sooners' coach Bob Stoops is a Big 12 title game veteran, and his team is far enough back in the BCS standings that the pressure will lie mostly on Missouri.

### COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Dick Vitale and the ESPN crew did a good job of making it sound like the ankle injury sustained by North Carolina

point guard Tywon Lawson during the Tar Heels' victory over BYU on Saturday would cause problems for the top-ranked team in America; not just during the game, but during the season if it was serious. To this I say – prove it. Backup point guard Bobby Frasor didn't play much last season because of a stress fracture in his foot, but the junior was also the starting point guard on the surprising 2006 team that finished with 23 wins despite losing Rashad McCants, Raymond Felton, Sean May and Marvin Williams to the NBA, and Jawad Williams, Jackie Manuel and Melvin Scott to graduation. Frasor averaged 4.38 assists that season. In short – Frasor is qualified and more than ready to lead the Tar Heels if Lawson's injury becomes a problem.

Elsewhere ... looking for a team that is overhyped? Try Clemson. The Tigers are 3-0 and ranked No. 24 in the AP Top 25. However, with the exception of an early match-up with Mississippi State (an 84-82 victory), Clemson doesn't have a true test on the schedule until Jan. 1, when the Tigers travel to Alabama to face the Crimson Tide.

Looking for a team that needs more hype? Try Duke. The one thing the Blue

Devils truly missed last season was a reliable shooter to take the pressure off of Josh McRoberts in the paint. This year, freshman Kyle Singler (15.8 ppg) has stepped up to be the presence that Duke needed. Duke teams that have reliable shooters (see Trajan Langdon, Shane Battier, J.J. Redick) tend to be very dangerous.

### NFL

Anyone who thinks Brett Favre no longer "has it" can stop doubting after his performance on Thanksgiving. Twenty straight completions is not an easy task and takes a little more than luck to accomplish. The veteran is still crafty and still plays with the same reckless abandon that made him great. Maybe he's got another year left since the Packers are playing so well?

It was good to see Cincinnati put together a complete game in a 35-6 stomping of the Tennessee Titans. After picking the Bengals to win the AFC North, I've felt like an idiot watching them stumble to a 4-7 record. It will be interesting to see if Marvin Lewis can rally his team to come up with four or five wins to close out the season and perhaps make the playoffs.

## SPORTS BRIEFS

### MEN'S BASKETBALL

The Rams got back on track Saturday with a 79-61 home victory over Elon. VCU shot a red hot 59.2 percent from the field. Senior shooting guard Jamal Shuler (Jacksonville, N.C./Jacksonville) led all scorers with 17 points and also added five rebounds. Forward Wil Fameni (Douala, Cameroon/Amelia Academy) notched 12 points, while point guard Eric Maynor (Raeford, N.C./Westover) added 10 points and seven assists. The Rams' record is now 3-2.

In other news ...

Coach Anthony Grant signed two players during the NCAA early signing period. Bradford Burgess (Midlothian/Benedictine) is a 6'5 guard who helped lead Benedictine to a 29-3 record and a state championship last year. The second signee, Terrance Saintil (Opa Locka, Fla./Monsignor Pace) is a 6'7, 225-pound forward who helped his team to the state championship last year and to the state semifinals the two previous years.

### WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY

Senior Danielle Williams (Virginia Beach/Salem) closed out her career with a 39th-place finish at the NCAA Regionals meet in Louisville, Ky. Williams finished with a time of 21:35:80. Also competing for the Rams was Melissa Douglas (Spotsylvania/Spotsylvania) and Libby Little (Spotsylvania/Courtland), who stopped the clock at 23:11.75 and 24:21.85 respectively.

### VOLLEYBALL

The Rams closed out the season with a 1-2 showing at the VCU Thanksgiving Tournament held at the Stuart C. Siegel Center last weekend. VCU dropped Friday's match against Albany 3-1. The Rams fought hard in the fourth and final game, but suffered a 33-31 defeat. The black and gold bounced back on Saturday to defeat Georgetown 3-2 behind the play of Ariel Newman (Greensboro, N.C./Southern Guilford), who had 21 digs and 18 kills. However, the Rams would go on to lose the final match of the season, 3-2, to Long Island. Libero Laryssa Goncalves (Curitiba, Brazil/Colegio Dom Bosco) had 26 digs in the loss. Goncalves is now second in school history with 673 career digs. VCU finishes the season with a record of 12-21.



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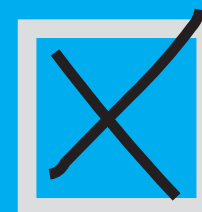
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## Vote for your editor



Your readership means a lot to us, and your participation in this year's CT elections would help determine the new leadership for spring semester. If you were published in the CT this semester, you are eligible to vote.

Voting ends Dec. 7 at 5 p.m. You may stop by the Student Media Center between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (please bring your VCU ID or driver's license).

For more information, contact Executive Editor Tad Hethcoat at [editor@commonwealthtimes.com](mailto:editor@commonwealthtimes.com).

\* Stay tuned for candidate bios at [ct.vcustudentmedia.com/blog](http://ct.vcustudentmedia.com/blog)







# Sports

## WOMEN'S BASKETBALL continued from CT7

would answer with six consecutive points to bring the score to 43-40 with 14:47

The three-point margin was as close as the Mountaineers would get the rest of the way. VCU held medium leads of five, six and seven points until the 8:11 mark, when Hollingsworth scored a basket that sparked a 17-4 run to close the game. Hollingsworth's 16 second-half points accounted for 48 percent of VCU's second-half offense. Many of her points came against 6'4 Brittany Mixon. Although Hollingsworth doesn't often match up with players her own height during games, she was not bothered by the size of her opponent.

"We have a lot of practice players that are guys, that are bigger and taller than me, so it's nothing unusual," she said.

The Rams were able to dish out 22 assists in the win, led by senior guard LaKea Jones (Fort Washington, Md./National Christian Academy), who had seven. The Rams finished the game with a shooting percentage of 50.9 percent, while Appalachian State shot only 40.4 percent and also committed 18 turnovers. However, VCU had to take the bad with the good, as it also committed 22 turnovers.

"Believe it or not, we have to run for those turnovers," Hollingsworth said. "It's good that we got those assists, but we have to take care of the ball.

VCU returns to action on Saturday when it travels to Greenville, N.C., to face East Carolina. Game time is 2 p.m.

### By the numbers:

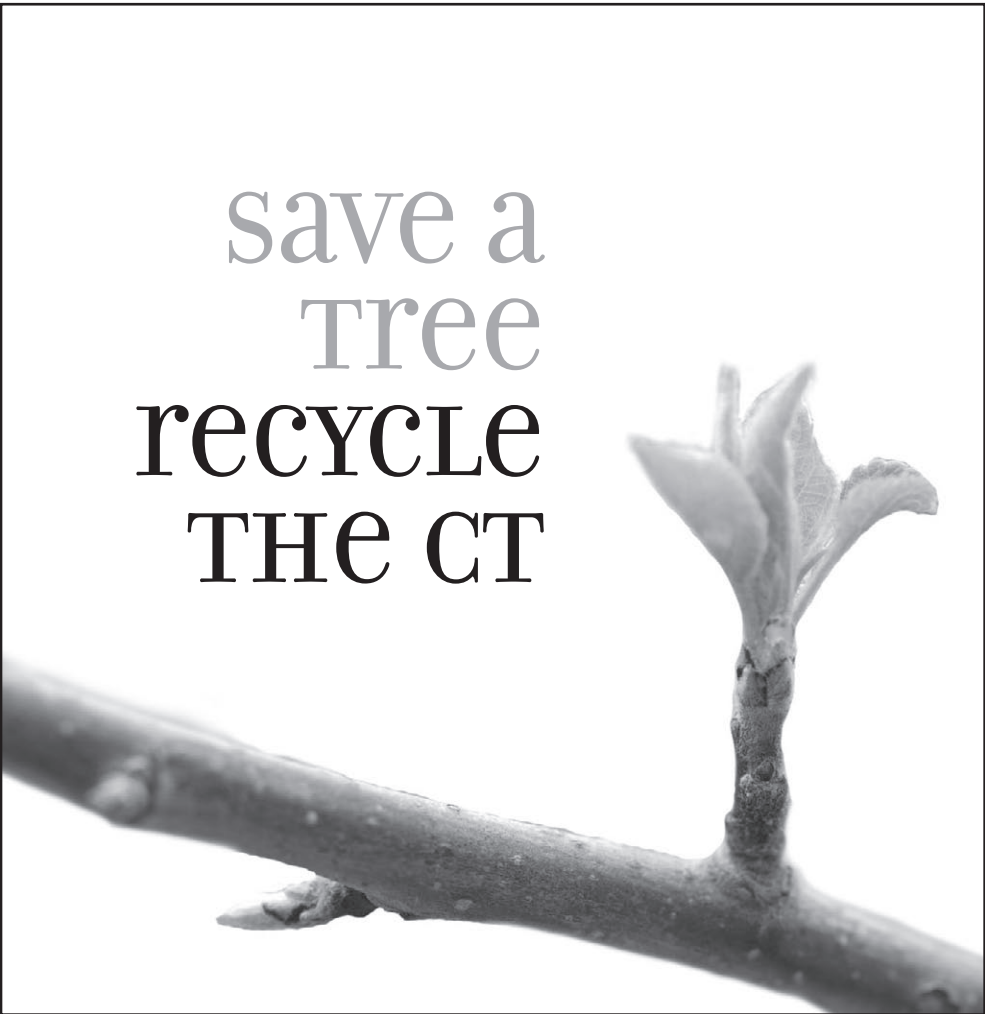
Appalachian State (1-3): Randolph 2, Mixon 9, Colbert 6, Hernandez 6, Tossie 10, Thomas 20, Ramirez 0, Cunningham 0, Lake 0. Totals: 23 6-8 53. Three pointer: Thomas.

VCU (4-0): Vaughn 18, Bachvarova 11, Hollingsworth 22, Jones 5, Rorie 8, Waller 4, Moss 4, Pinkney 0. Totals: 28 14-23 72. Three pointers: Bachvarova, Rorie.



VCU player LaKea Jones goes for a basket. Rachel Larue photo

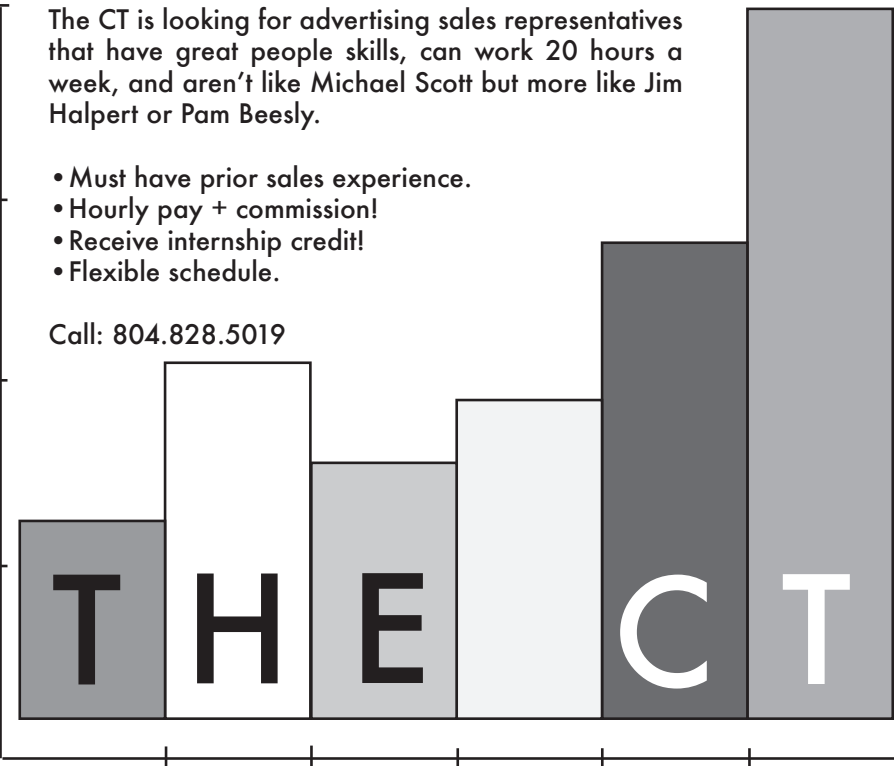
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# Spectrum

## Art Education student teachers prepare for their futures

ROBERTO CURTIS  
*Spectrum Editor*

The art education department has charged its student teachers with the task of organizing “Past, Present, Future,” an exhibition showcasing the best artists from kindergarten to 12th grade in the metro area.

Eleven student teachers from the department – Eric Bauer, Whittni Brown, Marley Dickinson, Jessica Framme, Anna Golden, Ashley Hines, Cristina Mansilla, Megan Nolde, Jamie Salyards, Corey Talbott and Ross Walenga – have been working closely with elementary, secondary and high school students from Hanover, Henrico and Chesterfield counties, in addition to Richmond, to select the best works for display in the University Student Commons.

The works were developed through lesson plans structured by the student teachers and implemented in the classrooms, resulting in a wide array of media, including painting, drawing, printmaking, collage, clay, computer-based work and weaving.

In addition to teaching and selecting the works, the student teachers also were in charge of organization, installation and publicity for the event, helping to brace them for entry into the real world.

“Past, Present, Future” is on display through Dec. 1 outside the Commonwealth Ballroom on the third floor of the Commons. The exhibition is open Monday through Sunday during regular daily hours. For more information, call the Art Education Office at (804) 828-1996.



Local students' artwork, part of the art education department's “Past, Present, Future” exhibition, is on display through Dec. 1 at the Commons.

Rachel Larue photos

## Heavy Rotations ready to wine, dine and groove just fine

ROBERTO CURTIS  
*Spectrum Editor*

Formerly The SWITCH, local jazz fusion juggernaut The Heavy Rotations will be taking Richmond's music scene by storm following line-up changes and a new artistic direction.

The group, which has been playing since 2001, has gotten a slow but steady facelift in the form of VCU jazz studies alumni Kelli Strawbridge (drums), Mark Ingraham (trumpet), Jason Gay (saxophone) and most recently, Reggie Pace (trombone).

All four musicians are staples in the jazz scene here in Richmond, playing in such bands as the Oregon Hill Funk

All-Stars, Devil's Workshop, Bungalo 6, Big Payback and Soularmy.

Founding member Nathan Goodwyn said he is grateful for the other members' musical contribution to the band.

“They're outstanding, and we're really fortunate to be playing with people who study music and make it their living,” he said.

On Friday, Nov. 30, the band will be returning to Bogart's Backroom after a long hiatus to play their first gig under the new name.

Shortly afterward, on Dec. 15, The Heavy Rotations will be performing at the Firehouse Theater. It is a date the band has been looking forward to for a long time.



photo credit Chris Buford

“We've been focusing on the cinematic elements of our music,” Goodwyn said. “We've been really influenced over the years by a group called The Cinematic Orchestra.”

The theme of the evening will be “Dinner and a Movie” and will showcase the band's improvisational skills.

“It's not just about the piece of music as a piece of music,” Goodwyn said. “It's about the piece of music as something visual and something that denotes more than just the music itself.”

Of the founding members, only two remain: Goodwyn (electric bass) and Jack Shannon (guitar, synth).

The group has quite a history since moving to Richmond from Farmville in 2002. Shortly after, Strawbridge joined

the fray with exciting results, Goodwyn said.

“Kelli ... is really influential and important in the band for his ideas,” he said.

Though the band only includes two original members, it has not lost sight of its goals.

“It's not about anything other than the music,” Goodwyn said. “There are no bells and whistles you'd expect to see in a cover band.”

Goodwyn also said he's very grateful for the jazz alumni's input.

“We just feel really lucky that these guys who are incredibly accomplished on their instruments enjoy playing music with us.”





# Campy 'Beowulf' turns up sex factor, disappoints

REBECCA LANDAU  
*Managing Editor*

Although "Beowulf" is based on an epic Old English poem of the same name, the film is hardly suited for a Western-literature class.

Gloriously campy with visually distracting animation, the movie takes many liberties with the original story, which focuses on warrior Beowulf. At the bidding of a Germanic king, Beowulf defeats a terrible beast, Grendel. In the original tale, after dispatching Grendel and his mother, Beowulf is killed in a final fight with a dragon, who also dies.

But, in the film's script, written by Neil Gaiman and Roger Avery, a sexual relationship exists between Beowulf and Grendel's mother, played by Angelina Jolie, and yet more connections exist between the king, Beowulf, Grendel, Grendel's mother and the dragon.

In her supporting (yet hyped) role, Jolie appears as the anatomical equivalent of a Barbie doll – a gold-covered demonic Barbie, anyway. In fact, "Beowulf" can probably attribute any of its box-office success not to the popularity of its source material, but instead to a heavily publicized scene featured in the theatrical trailer in which Jolie rises from the water essentially naked.

Jolie's casting as a sexy monster is just one of the film's snazzy new adjustments that aim to bring audiences to a film based on a poem.

The movie also adopts a special effects technique used in one of "Beowulf" director Robert Zemeckis' previous films, "The Polar Express."

The technique involves real actors performing in front of a blue screen; their performances are then captured and rendered into film by overlaying computer-generated imagery and viola! – digitized versions of the actors are transplanted



film  
review

into a digital world.

Although benefits abound from this animation technique – for example, real actors can be digitally modified to be skinnier, fatter, uglier or better performers – the downsides are plentiful, too. Many of the performances appear to be muddled by the digital work, and some action segments look more like bad videogame footage than film-quality animation.

Had "Beowulf" been a live-action movie, the acting and plot might have been more meaningful, yet as is, the film's animation detracts from the overall film.

Nonetheless, "Beowulf" has its moments. The film doesn't take itself too seriously until the end, and many of its scenes poke fun at testosterone-heavy epics of cinema past, such as "Conan the Barbarian," in which muscular men destroy evil monsters and bed many, many busty women.

But, maybe all the slaying and sex would have been a little more fun to watch if the film hadn't looked like a bad Saturday-morning cartoon.

Grade: C







## album review



ROBERTO CURTIS  
*Spectrum Editor*

The amorphous and angelic vocal quality of the Irish songwriter Damien Rice intrigues and captivates. The songs come pouring out of his bleeding heart in his first album in four years, titled “9.”

Almost entirely self-produced, the album’s engineers are also the same musicians performing on the album.

In keeping with his reputation, Rice’s abilities to swoon and provoke thought are present throughout. Tracks such as “The Animals Were Gone” and “Accidental Babies” show the poet’s abilities to encapsulate a lover’s torment. Whether it’s overdone is up to the

listener.

There is some light-heartedness, however, in the song, “Me, My Yoke + 1,” which tells of a young Irish Catholic boy discovering masturbation.

“Grey Room” tells of the hardships of long distance relationships but actually has a happy ending – the only one on the album.

An interesting gimmick Rice includes on this album is the continuation of musical and lyrical themes.

The song “Elephant” was originally titled “The Blower’s Daughter Part 2” but was changed at the last minute. “The Blower’s Daughter” on Rice’s first album alludes to a lost love that was too good to be true, leaving lasting emotional scars. “Elephant” continues the torture, projecting the cursed love on another relationship and suggesting how to best cope with history: by finding happiness from within.

Also harking back to the first album is “Sleep Don’t Weep.” When played with “Cold Water” from the album “O,” a four-part ray of brilliance emerges from

the speakers.

“9” also is considerably a harder album than Rice’s previous endeavor. With hard-edged tunes such as “Rootless Tree” and the song about touching oneself, the progressive developments and startling climaxes are stimulating if not a bit off-color for the rest of the album.

The award for originality, honesty and arrangement goes to “9 Crimes.” The strings are used with great effect throughout the album but especially on this track. The lovely chorus is reminiscent of old Henry Mancini arrangements of the late ‘50s.

Overall, the album is incredibly soothing – maybe a little too soothing. Nicely executed, though, with that homegrown vibe, Rice and company’s album gives their listeners a beautiful treat that warms the ears.

Grade: B

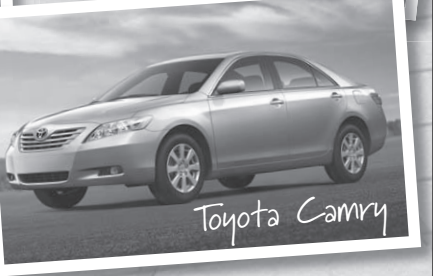


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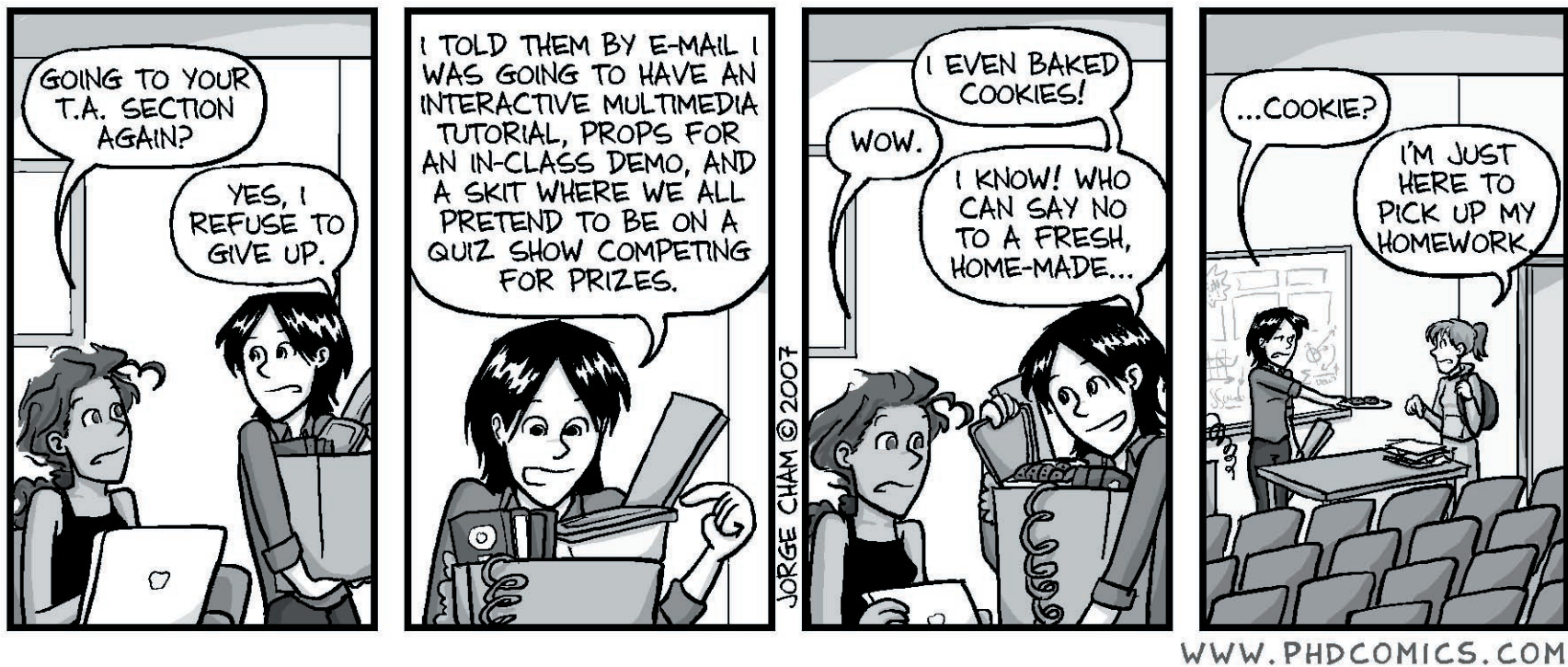




# Comics

Piled Higher and Deeper

Jorge Cham



Pizza from Scratch

Bill Lemmond



Monday, November 26, 2007

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# Opinion

It's that time again:

## What to do when Christmas comes early

RACHEL VAMENTA  
*Opinion Editor*

As the holiday season seems to come earlier every year than it did the year before, it gets harder to be more excited about Christmas.

Some stores start displaying their Christmas merchandise earlier than others. In fact, Costco started selling Christmas yard decorations as early as August.

How many people actually start buying Christmas decoration in wholesale?

And when is it too early to start playing Christmas music? I have some friends who keep Christmas music on their iPods all year round. I don't listen to the radio as much as I used to, but I remember hearing Christmas songs immediately the day after Thanksgiving.

Some radio stations start playing Christmas music on Nov. 1, which seems strange after hearing Halloween tunes the day before.

Don't forget about the holiday box office, either. This year, "Fred Claus" was released on Nov. 9 – a good two weeks before Thanksgiving.

Last but certainly not least, Santa Claus has been at Regency Square for photographs since Nov. 2.

For some people, the holiday season spans all the way

from Thanksgiving to Super Bowl Sunday. For December graduates, Christmas starts whenever senioritis sets in. But for serious shoppers, Christmas begins the minute they head to the mall on Black Friday.

Black Friday is always a big deal. The local news can't resist airing clips of holiday shoppers who frantically push people out of their way to get good deals on electronics and clothing goods.

Those of you who work in retail might already know the exact percentage of revenue that stores make on Black Friday. You also might know the truth as to whether Black Friday is the biggest shopping day of the year. Recent news reports say that although it wasn't last year, sales were strong enough.

Holiday shopping isn't really my style, especially on Black Friday. No matter how tempting it might be to save half the standard retail price – which is \$59.99 for Season Two of "The Wire" – it doesn't seem worth it to get out of bed at 3 a.m. to line up in front of Best Buy.

According to an MSNBC news story, online auction Web site eBay.com was the No. 1 Internet retailer this year, with the most web traffic at 7.5 million visitors. These visitors mostly look for electronic goods and Elmo toys.

So, if, like me, you don't feel like dealing with the crowds, you can sit in front of your computer next year with your shopping list in hand as chestnuts roast on an open fire and your Led Zeppelin mix plays in the background.



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GAYLAND  
HETHCOAT  
Executive Editor

RACHEL  
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Opinion Editor

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On Nov. 17, more than 100 people gathered for a candlelight vigil held at the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C. The vigil was a concerted effort to support victims of hate crimes across the United States and to make a peaceful stand against social injustices. According to Dr. David Stoesz, a VCU professor, vigils "bear essential witness that acts of intimidation will not be ignored." The vigil came to fruition when VCU graduate students of social work in Northern Virginia could no longer ignore the crimes of hate that have

been sweeping the country, particularly when a fellow colleague's family member found a noose hanging in their yard in Haymarket, Virginia.

Sadly, these types of hate crimes happen more frequently than the general public may think. According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Report, 2,046 agencies reported 7,649 hate crimes, involving 9,035 offenses, in 2004.

Speaking for the Student Government Association, Amy Peterson stated that as social workers, we are poised to walk hand in hand with the victims, the survivors of hate

crimes and with the perpetrators to help create healing in their lives. Dr. Elizabeth Hutchison from VCU stated in her comments that small and great efforts can whittle away at hate and fear and replace these with respect and goodwill. The vigil was a peaceful reminder that when our communities are confronted with crimes of hate, social workers have a mandate within their code of ethics to speak out against injustice.

—Jane Thatcher, Michelle Mintling,  
Aly Cooper

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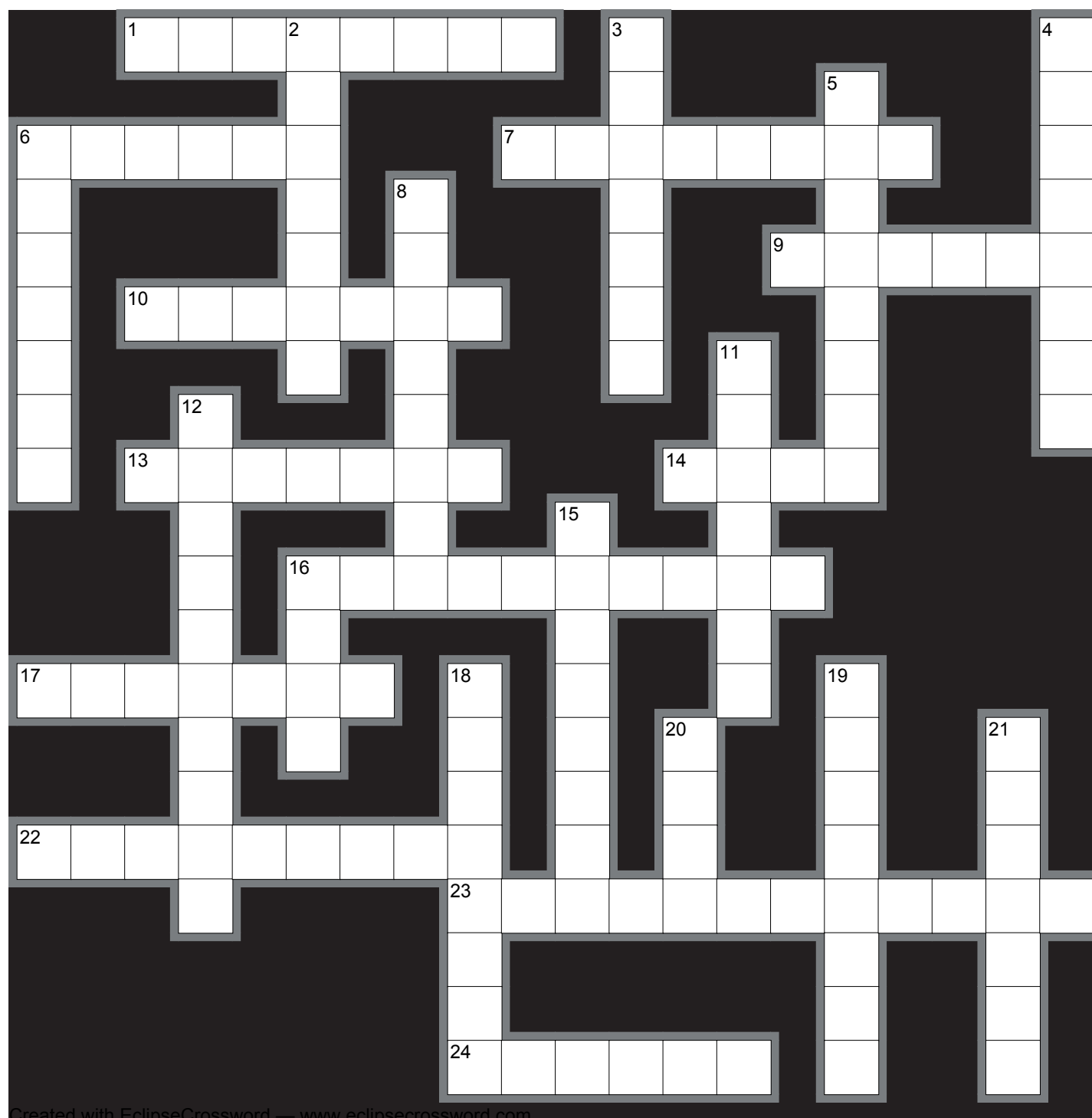
Science

## Across

4. Cuban ballroom dance resembling the rumba or cha-cha.
5. Vigorous rhythmic dance originating with Gypsies.
7. Courtly baroque dance in which the arms are interlaced.
9. Sinuous Polynesian dance with rhythmic hip movements.
13. Polish folk dance in moderate triple measure.
15. A ballroom dance of Latin-American origin, danced by couples, and having many varied steps, figures and poses.
17. Slow and seductive Cuban dance.
20. Lively Bohemian dance for a couple.
23. Fast dance done to jazz or swing music.
25. Jazz dance featuring heavy stamping of the feet.
26. Cuban ballroom dance with pronounced hip movements.
27. Lively disco dance derived from swing elements with a plus-like pattern.
28. Ballroom dance with two main steps.
29. Elaborate ballroom dance with frequent changes of partner.

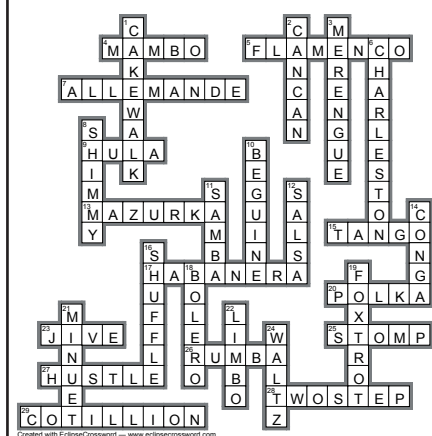
## Down

1. Prancing stage dance with backward tilt.
2. French woman's dance involving high kicks while holding up front of skirt.
3. Caribbean ballroom dance in which feet are frequently dragged.
6. Fast-paced 1920s dance characterized by energetic kicking.
8. Dance featuring rapid shaking of the body.
10. Vigorous Caribbean dance.
11. Brazilian dance of African origin.
12. Fast Latin American jazz-influenced dance.
14. Afro-Congan dance performed by a group in a single line.
16. Dance featuring sliding or scraping of the feet.
18. Spanish dance with sudden pauses and sharp turns.
19. A ballroom dance in quadruple time; combines short and long and fast and slow steps in fixed sequences.
21. Slow and stately Baroque dance in three-fourths time.
22. Dance of the West Indies in which dancers pass under horizontal pole.
24. Ballroom dance in three-fourths time.



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## Answers from Nov. 19



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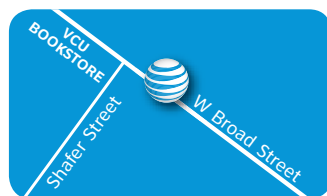
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