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the ct

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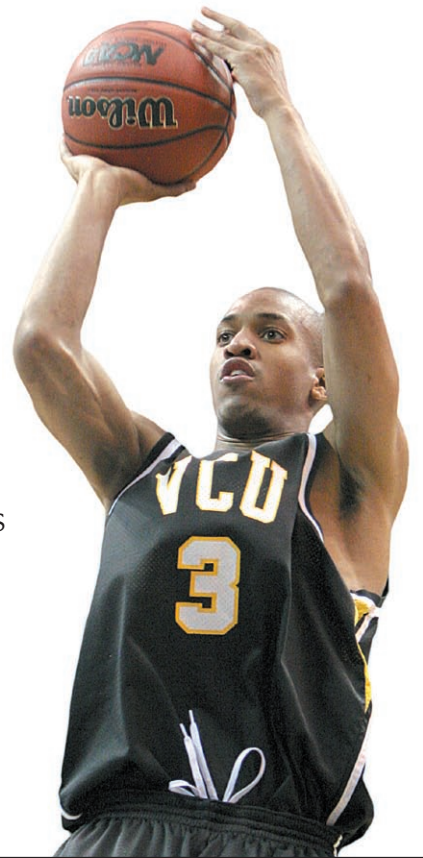
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The **independent** student press of Virginia Commonwealth University

commonwealthtimes.com

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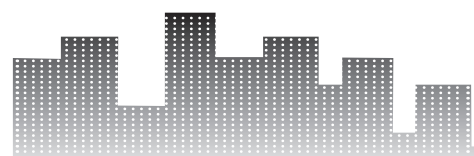
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WORLD

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa— The world must not grow complacent about AIDS because the number of new HIV infections still outpaces the number of those being treated for the disease, former South African President Nelson Mandela said at a benefit concert Saturday.

Since stepping down as South Africa's first black president in 1999, Mandela, whose son died from the disease, has championed the cause of people with AIDS.

On Saturday, he drew a crowd of about 15,000 to his fifth international

awareness concert, held this year to coincide with World AIDS Day. Recent U.N. figures estimate that the number of AIDS cases fell from almost 40 million last year to 33.2 million in 2007.

"This lower figure suggests that prevention programs have been successful in bringing down infection rates," Mandela said. "That trend is encouraging, but it is still alarming that for every person receiving treatment, four others are newly infected."

"If we are to stop the AIDS

epidemic from expanding, we need to break the cycle of new HIV infections.

"All of us working together with government, communities and civil society can make the difference that is needed. Together we have the power to change the course of destiny," he said to rapturous applause.

Of South Africa's 48 million people, about 5.5 million are infected with the AIDS virus – the highest number in the world – and about 900 people in the country die every day from the disease.

NATION

GALVESTON, Texas – The University of Texas Medical Branch might stop offering cancer care to indigent and undocumented immigrants to cut costs.

The UTMB set aside about \$12 million in this year's \$1.4 billion annual budget to treat indigent cancer patients, but that isn't enough to meet demand, said Karen Sexton, vice president and CEO of hospitals and clinics at the medical branch.

The medical branch laid off 381 employees last year as it dealt with inflation, state funding cuts and the growing number of Texans without health insurance.

"Any time there's any restriction in access to care, there's pushback from people who are concerned about that," Sexton said. "It doesn't feel right to us, either."

Even if the policy were changed, the medical branch would not stop treating cancer patients

already in its care. Once cancer treatment begins, hospitals and doctors are ethically bound to continue.

Unless Texans address the overall problems of the uninsured and funding for public hospitals, cash-strapped institutions must begin drawing lines, said Howard Brody, director of the Institute for the Medical Humanities and chair of the medical branch's ethics committee.

LOCAL

ARLINGTON – Ron Paul won an informal straw poll of Virginia Republicans Saturday at the state party's annual weekend retreat.

The Texas congressman got 182 of the 479 ballots cast, or 38 percent. Former Tennessee Sen. Fred Thompson finished second with 112 votes, with former Arkansas Gov.

Mike Huckabee third with 51.

Dozens of noisy Paul followers packed the late afternoon speeches, held in suburban Washington, D.C. hotel, and the voting afterward.

"They weren't here yesterday," said state GOP chairman John Hager.

About 700 Republican activists

registered for the Friday and Saturday event. "We had no indication until around 3 o'clock that this would happen."

Mitt Romney got 43 votes, Sen. John McCain got 23, California congressman Duncan Hunter got 19 and Colorado congressman Tom Tancredo finished with four.

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cover photo by Jason Gareau

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News

“They are balls-like, I admit,” he stated. “Testicoid. But they are not balls, because the scrotum does not divide like that. They look more like a very uncomfortable bra to me. But perhaps each gender sees what interests them.”

— Washington Post humor columnist Gene Weingarten, who frequently writes about Freudian-themed topics, weighed in after being shown photos of “Soft” by e-mail.



Abstract sculpture keeps students guessing

The sculpture, titled “Soft,” in front of the School of Business Building.

Jason Gareau

TOM NASH AND STEPHANIE POWER

Contributing Writers

An unmarked sculpture placed on the lawn in front of the School of Business Building at the beginning of the semester has some students puzzled.

Titled “Soft,” the abstract sculpture is the work of artist Craig Wedderspoon, who stated in an e-mail, the piece represents “an argument between individuals as expressed through what they have unknowingly left behind.”

The piece was chosen as part of the newly established Art on Campus program, which selects indoor and outdoor art for installation on VCU’s campuses.

“Soft” was donated by Wedderspoon, a Master of Fine Arts VCU graduate.

Depending on whom you ask, some students think Wedderspoon’s sculpture resembles genitalia.

“Basically, I see a lot of geometric figures made into one gigantic figure,” junior business major Jonathan Cummings said. “I guess it’s interesting ... that would be the best adjective to keep things positive. ... All right, I’ll come out and say it; it’s a pair of testicles. That’s what I see.

“Someone put a huge sack in front of the business building, and, being a business major, that’s kind of a slap in the face.”

Chrysany Collier, a sophomore broadcast journalism major, said she didn’t see testicles. Although she originally likened the sculpture to “a messed-up world,” she admitted the robust art form could resemble a pair of breasts.

“When I first saw it, I thought it was a wasp nest,” Collier said. “But I could see boobs.”

Collier pointed out where she saw a nipple in the structure.

Joe Seipel, senior associate dean of the School of the Arts, served on the selection committee that chose “Soft” as one of the program’s first pieces. He was unaware of the various interpretations many students have of the sculpture.

“You can find some Freudian information in anything you look at,” Seipel said. “That’s not the intention of (Wedderspoon’s) art. To me, it’s the shape of a bean or a potato. This guy’s a really top-notch sculptor. (With) all of the pieces, you’re challenged to follow the history of how it’s made.”

Wedderspoon stated the sculpture was built from a “solid line approximately 1,000 feet long, with both ends of the line existing at an arm’s reach of each other.

“The form evolves as the piece is being built,” Wedderspoon, who is the head of the sculpture department at the University of Alabama, stated.

“Soft” was last exhibited in Richmond at the 1708 Gallery in October 2006.

“Art in the public arena is indeed a curious thing,” Wedderspoon stated. “In a time where people are enveloped with headsets, iPods and cell phones, I am delighted to hear that a piece of sculpture at VCU has initiated an expressive dialogue between actual individuals. Art making people talk to each other ... sounds about right to me.”

Delle Beganie contributed to this story.



Student-led campaign supports Richmond businesses, aims to halt corporate takeovers

CHRISTEN DUXBURY
News Co-Editor

As the Starbucks espresso machines rattled loudly in the background, Derek Chamberlin explained the importance of shopping at small, local businesses and how the ShopRVA campaign and new Web site work to create a sustainable business community in Richmond.

"It is better to go to small places," said Chamberlin, a senior graphic design major. "You feel at home."

The ShopRVA campaign aims to educate people about how supporting local businesses helps Richmond's economy and culture, he said.

"All those little hole-in-the wall places are what make Richmond so diverse," said Chamberlin.

The ShopRVA campaign started as part of the VCU class "Design Rebels," in which students develop a large-scale community project. Last year's class, which ran for two semesters, designed and executed the project, but when most of its members graduated or lost interest, Chamberlin and his classmate Alex Zilberman, also a senior graphic design major, took it on as their own.

The project provides free advertising for local businesses via the ShopRVA Web site, which is set to launch this week. The site will be set up like a blog and will have two sections, a shop section and a RVA section, Chamberlin said.

The shop section will have postings for all of the local restaurants that participate in the campaign. Postings will be free, and Chamberlin and Zilberman will "interview" business representatives to ensure they are supportive of the Richmond community.

Participating businesses receive a ShopRVA logo-sticker to place on the front of their establishment. The logo

features a stylized beehive with flying bees. Businesses can pay \$25 to have pictures, bios and media featured on the site.

"Eventually there will be a Google map that has all (the businesses in) the campaign marked on it," Chamberlin said.

The RVA side of the Web site will be where businesses and community members post events and announcements, supporting events such as First Friday's Artwalk.

The campaign is making Richmonders more intelligent consumers while getting businesses to participate in the community, Chamberlin said.

The challenge is determining whether businesses that started out small but became bigger distributors, such as Legend Brewing Co., will support the community, he said.

"It is hard to draw the boundary (on what is local and what is not)," Chamberlin said.

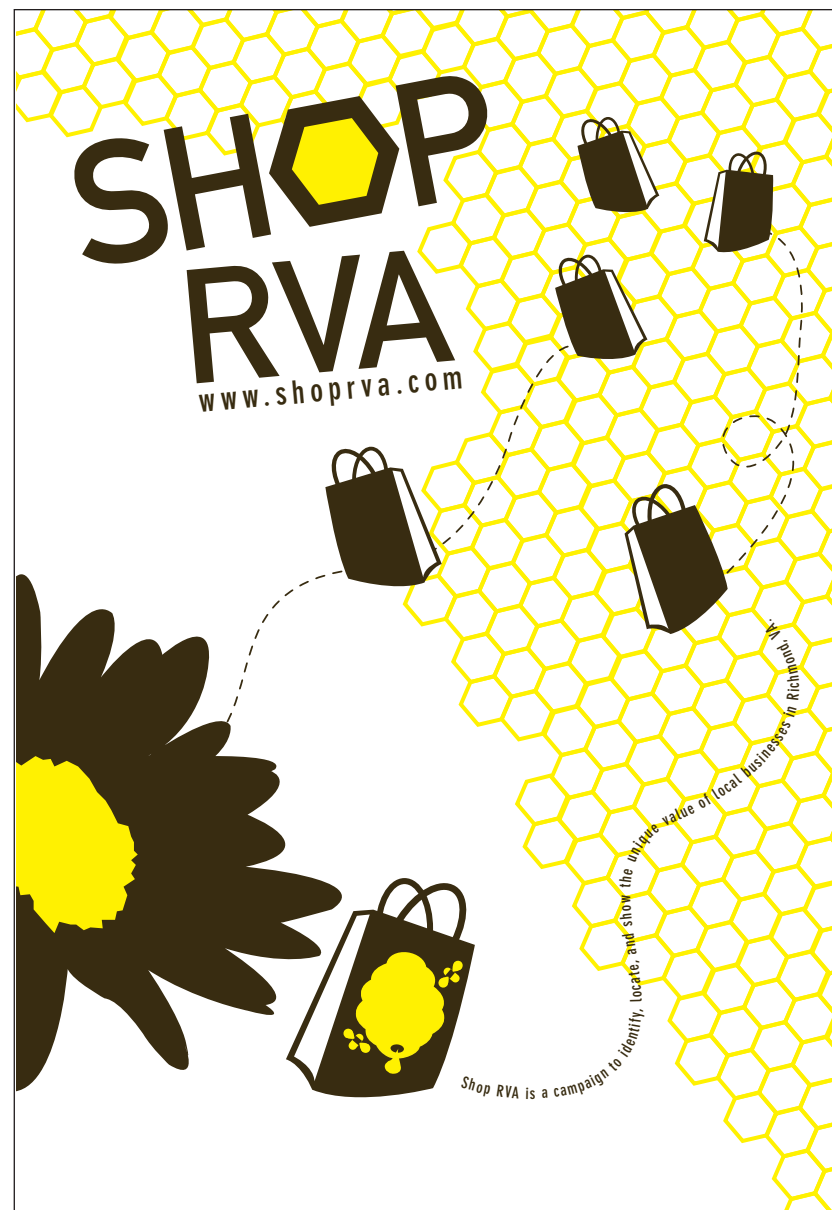
Mass production has caused large corporate businesses to lose their integrity, Chamberlin said, as he glanced around at the Starbucks art on the walls.

"When you go to local businesses you know people put (part of) themselves into it," Chamberlin said.



Christen Duxbury photo

ABOVE: Derek Chamberlin works on the ShopRVA campaign's web site that is set to launch this week.



graphic courtesy of shoprva.com

ABOVE: ShopRVA's poster, which was originally created as a part of the VCU class "Design Rebels."

ShopRVA.com

The ShopRVA Web site is set to launch the week of Dec. 2. Shoprva.com will offer information from nearly 50 local businesses. That number is expected to grow as the campaign recruits more businesses.

Want to support Richmond's economy and culture? Look for the ShopRVA logo sticker at your favorite businesses.

Join the ShopRVA Facebook.com group and see who else supports Richmond's local businesses.

Why shop local?

1. Maintains a unique community.
2. Supports your local economy.
3. Nonprofits receive more money from local business that are invested in the community.
4. Receive more personal shopping attention.
5. More accountable business practices.

Courtesy of the ShopRVA Web site: shoprva.com

Office of Health Promotion combats student stress with free massages, yoga, Tai Chi

DANIELLE WILSON
Contributing Writer

To help students monitor and cope with their levels of stress while finishing up the semester, VCU's office of Health Promotion is sponsoring "Stress Relief Week" from Dec. 3 through Dec. 8.

"Stress Relief Week" aims to give students the opportunity to take a break from studying with positive, stress-reducing activities. The events also are sponsored by VCU Recreational Sports and University Counseling Services. The free activities include tai chi, yoga, massages and a stress-relief pack giveaway.

Cassie Williams, a senior double-majoring in public relations and Spanish, said the demands of her coursework, impending exams and preparing for life after graduation are the sources of her stress.

"There's already stress from school and other things in my life, and during exam time, it's just so much added pressure. I find it difficult to manage everything without being stressed out," she said.

The office of Health Promotion defines stress as how your body reacts to taxing situations, according to their pamphlet, titled "Making Stress Work for You."

During stressful situations, chemicals are released into your system, providing your body with more energy.

This is why reasonable amounts of stress are healthy, but too much stress can be negative.

Amanda Wattenmaker, a health educator at the office of Health Promotion, said stress affects everyone differently, but the most negative effects include trouble sleeping, fatigue, irritability and poor concentration.

"Long-term stress can lead to other illnesses, dissatisfaction with relationships with family and friends and an inability to perform the way you normally would at school or work," Wattenmaker said.

Because stress is hard to avoid, the key to remaining healthy is identifying your own stress signals and finding the best way to manage them, Wattenmaker said.

Students should try to get as much sleep as possible, exercise and make time for themselves to help deal with stress.

She also recommended students eat properly, get organized and set priorities.

"Something that may be stressing you out may not be important a few years down the road, or even a few weeks down the road," Wattenmaker said. "Just keep things in perspective."

For students who need outside help with stress management, the office of Health Promotion offers one-on-one consultations about stress management. Students can call 827-0231 for information or to make an appointment.



Karen Sagun illustration

Stress Relief Week

Free Chair Massages: Dec. 4 and Dec. 5:
11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Commons
Dec. 5: 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. Siegel Center
Dec. 6: 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. Siegel Center

Free classes at the Siegel Center

Beginner Tai Chi/Taiji: Dec. 3: 1 – 2 p.m.
Intermediate Tai Chi/Taiji: Dec. 3: 2 – 3 p.m.
Yoga I (beginner): Dec. 3: 8 – 9 a.m., Dec. 4:
12 – 1 p.m. and 1 – 2 p.m., Dec. 8: 12:30 –
1:30 p.m.
Yoga II (intermediate): Dec. 6: 12 – 1 p.m., 1
– 2 p.m.

Yoga for Runners: Dec. 7: 7 – 8 a.m.

Free Stress Relief Pack Giveaway
Dec. 6: 11 – 2 p.m.

To deal with stress appropriately, students should:

Get as much sleep as possible
Exercise, Eat right
Make time for yourself
Get organized, Set priorities

—Amanda Wattenmaker, a health educator at VCU's office of Health Promotion

Monday, December 3, 2007

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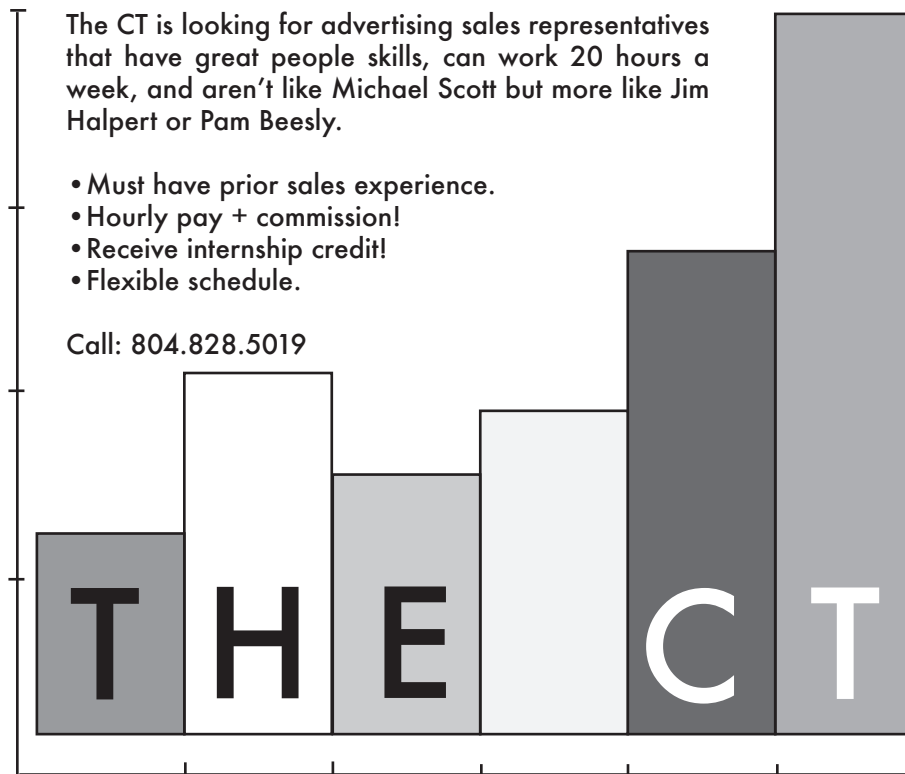
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Sports

BB&T CLASSIC

Maynor and Shuler
combine for 55 in
win over Maryland

Shuler's 30 is new career-high

MATT DOYON
Associate Sports Editor

WASHINGTON, D.C. – One thing was abundantly clear for the Rams before their match-up with the Maryland Terrapins in the 13th Annual BB&T Classic: win, or fall to a precarious 3-4 and be labeled a “struggling team.” VCU entered the game having lost three of its previous four, and although conference play has not arrived, losing is a habit.

VCU endeared itself to Maryland by knocking the Terrapins' archrival Duke out of last season's NCAA Tournament. But Sunday, it was Maryland's turn to taste defeat at the hands of the Rams, 85-76, at the Verizon Center.

Each team entered the game from extreme points of the early season. Maryland had just defeated Illinois in arguably its best performance this season, and VCU suffered its worst loss to Hampton. The game's tempo was disrupted throughout the first half by sloppy play. Neither team established a large lead in the first, but Maryland went up by four early causing the Rams to need a spark. Each time they did, Jamal Shuler (Jacksonville, N.C./Jacksonville) answered the call. The senior carried his squad with 19 first-half points on his way to 30 points, which led all scorers.

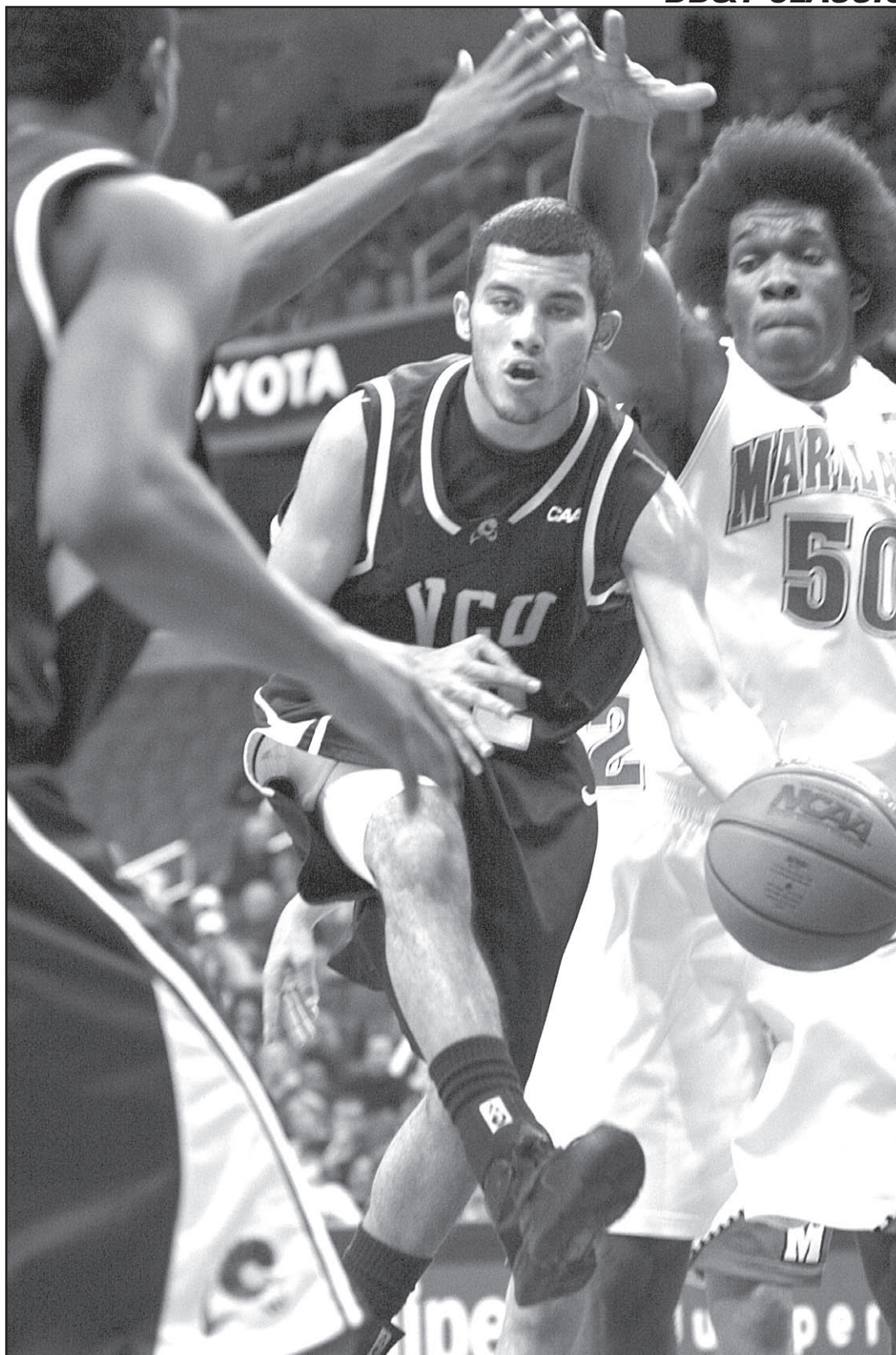
Despite Shuler's onslaught of points, the score was tied 34-34 at halftime. Eric Maynor (Raeford, N.C./Westover), who scored just two points in the first half, added 23 in the second and led the team with five assists. His scoring contributions undoubtedly helped the team, but his leadership and persistence were vital.

“For me, it's really not about points,” Maynor said. “Coach Grant just told us to keep being aggressive. I missed some shots in the first half, but he also told me that they would fall for me in the second half and to keep playing.”

Coach Grant was pleased with his team's response after a 64-55 loss at Hampton Thursday night.

The Score

VCU 85
UM 76



Point guard Joey Rodriguez looks to throw a pass inside to Lance Kears (left) while Bambale Osby defends.

Rachel Larue photo

BB&T CLASSIC continued to CT11

THIS WEEK

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

Men's Basketball

Wed., Dec. 5, vs. William and Mary,
Siegel Center, 7:30 p.m.

Sat., Dec. 8, vs. Richmond, Siegel
Center, 7:30 p.m.

Women's Basketball

Wed., Dec. 5, vs. Richmond, Siegel
Center, 5 p.m.

Sat., Dec. 8, vs. Radford, Siegel Center,
4:30 p.m.

BB&T CLASSIC

Maryland win not just a victory on the scoreboard

JONATHAN HOWARD
Sports Editor

The BB&T Classic wasn't just another basketball tournament for VCU. No, the game against Maryland wasn't just about making baskets, playing defense. This game was about confidence. This game was about getting back to Rams basketball. This game was about playing 94 feet. This game was about getting back to what earned the Rams a school record number of wins and a CAA title.

Going into Sunday's game, it was no secret the team wasn't playing up to its potential. The Rams stuttered on offense early in wins over Maryland-Eastern Shore and Houston and failed to execute in times of need in losses to Miami, Arkansas and most recently to Hampton. For the first time all season, the Rams were able to put together a complete game—40 minutes of excellent basketball on both ends of the court.

This is not to say that VCU didn't make any mistakes — it committed 12 turnovers in the first half, but went on to commit only two in the second half. The veteran backcourt of Eric Maynor and Jamal Shuler played its most complete games of the season. Maynor finished the game with the same poise he showed against George Mason and Duke last season, finishing with 25 points, eight rebounds and five assists. Shuler registered a career-high 30 points, including 19 in the first half.

However, it wasn't just the veterans who held things together. Freshmen Ed Nixon and Lance Kears combined for 12 points in 39 important minutes of action. Kears and first-year point guard Joey Rodriguez both knocked down clutch-free throws with less than a minute to play to help the Rams build a 10-point lead.

But besides the obvious improvement on offense, where the Rams shot 47.3 percent, was the intensity and effort.



Rachel Larue photo

Michael Anderson goes after a loose ball as Maryland's Eric Hayes attempts to recover.

VCU players constantly hit the floors for loose balls, battled on the boards for rebounds and didn't show fear while playing against their ACC opponent. Perhaps one of the biggest plays of the game for VCU didn't result in any points, but merely showed a renewed enthusiasm and work ethic. With about 6:30 to play in the second half, Maynor took a three that bounced hard off the back rim. It appeared that a Maryland rebound would lead to a fast-break opportunity and possibly a swing of momentum. However, Rodriguez swooped in from outside the three-point line and into the

paint and knocked the ball back outside to the friendly hands of Shuler. The play didn't result in points — but the effort and the passion were there.

Now that the Rams have played a complete 40 minutes, it will be interesting to see where the season goes from here. If the passion, intensity and offensive prowess from the Maryland victory continue, it will be hard to keep the Rams out of the NCAA tournament for the second straight season. And with the combination of youth and veteran leadership and talent contribution, VCU has nothing but time.

Coaching carousel continues to spin

JONATHAN HOWARD
Sports Editor

As another season of NCAA football is winding down, the beginning of another season is beginning: the hunt for new coaches. Many schools are looking for upgrades, and this is your guide to this year's hunt.

Nebraska

Former coach: Bill Callahan.

Why he's gone: Let's face it, Callahan wasn't a very good hire to begin with. The most successful Nebraska teams ran an option attack. Callahan's West Coast attack was nothing like it. The players he inherited didn't pick up the system very quickly, and the players he recruited weren't great at it either.

The hire: Interim Athletic Director Tom Osborne

has named himself acting head coach for recruiting purposes, but all signs point to LSU defensive coordinator Bo Pelini getting the job. University of Buffalo head coach and former Cornhuskers quarterback Turner Gill are also candidates.

The outlook: Gill has the upper hand in that he has the head coaching experience that Pelini lacks, but it appears that Osborne favors Pelini. Pelini would certainly shore up Nebraska's defense, but it will be interesting to see if he has the skills to be the head man in charge.

Michigan

Former coach: Lloyd Carr.

Why he's gone: Carr announced his retirement, effective at the end of the season, a few weeks ago. However, there aren't a lot of wet eyes in Ann Arbor over his departure. Carr's teams consistently

underachieved in the eyes of many.

The hire: It appeared that LSU head coach and Michigan graduate Les Miles was all set to head home to the Big 10, but Miles killed the rumors of his departure during a press conference before the Tigers defeated Tennessee 21-14 in the SEC championship game.

The outlook: This situation mirrors North Carolina's search for a basketball search after Bill Guthridge retired. The Tar Heels thought Roy Williams was coming and didn't have much of a back-up plan for when he said no. The same thing appears to be true here. Michigan will look for a coach that will give it instant credibility and can beat Ohio State. Look for defensive coordinator Ron English to get a look — he's long overdue.

COACHING continued to CT9

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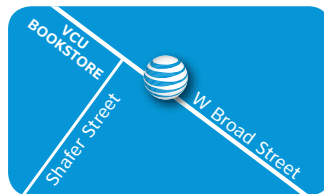
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COACHING continued from CT7

Arkansas

Former coach: Houston Nutt.

Why he's gone: While Nutt had much success at Arkansas, the fans and administration both seemed to want more. A controversy surrounding recruits from Springdale, Ark., and a strange relationship with a reporter didn't seem to help matters. Nonetheless, Nutt resigned and was quickly hired by Mississippi.

The hire: Early rumors pointed toward North Carolina's Butch Davis, a friend of a big Arkansas donor and an Arkansas native. However, Davis recently signed an extension with UNC. Auburn's Tommy Tuberville remains a hot name in the search because of contract issues. Auburn recently offered Tuberville an extension, but he has yet to agree to it, and many believe it is because of an interest in the Razorbacks. If that falls through, Oakland Raiders head coach Lane Kiffin may be interested in dropping down to the collegiate ranks, but will have big issues with getting out of his current contract.

The outlook: Tuberville would be an ideal hire. He is a big-name coach who has been around the SEC for a long time. Kiffin coached at Southern

California for six years, including time as the offensive coordinator. He has the pedigree to do great things, and at only 32 years old, he has a long career ahead of him.

Georgia Tech

Former coach: Chan Gailey.

Why he's gone: The former Dallas Cowboys coach couldn't get Georgia Tech into the upper echelon of the ACC. He led the Yellow Jackets to the ACC title game in 2006 but otherwise greatly underachieved in the eyes of the administration.

The hire: Former University of Washington head coach Rick Neuheisel is a name that has been thrown around a lot in this search, as is Georgia Southern coach Chris Hatcher and Connecticut's Randy Edsall.

The outlook: Neuheisel is a veteran coach that built Washington into a good program before his controversial dismissal. With the high school talent in the state of Georgia, he could easily do even more at Georgia Tech. Thatcher doesn't carry the name, but ran a very successful program at Valdosta State before moving to GSU. Another big plus: He tutored former first-round picks Daunte Culpepper and Tim Couch. Edsall is the

only current BCS head coach of the three and has turned UConn into a legitimate threat in a very short time.

Duke

Former coach: Ted Roof.

Why he's gone: Roof, like Carl Franks before him, just couldn't get it done. In his five years in charge, the Blue Devils won only three conference games, all in the first two years.

The hire: A dark-horse candidate could be Tommy Knotts – the head coach at Independence High School in Charlotte, N.C. Knotts served as an offensive coordinator under Roof for a year before going back to the high school game, but is a big enough name locally to perhaps draw some interest. As far as college coaches, Chan Gailey could be interested as well as Tennessee offensive coordinator Dave Cutcliffe. If Duke chooses to look at the FCS level, expect Richmond's Dave Clawson to get a look.

The outlook: Duke isn't exactly an attractive job as far as support and talent. However, there aren't a lot of expectations at this point. Whoever can get the Blue Devils 5-6 wins a year will be successful.

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In Brief

MEN'S BASKETBALL

VCU dropped a mid-week battle with Hampton, 64-55 in Hampton. Both teams shot just 30.4 percent from the field in the first half, and the score was 18-18 at the break. Both teams found their shots in the second half, but the Pirates were able to pull away thanks to a tight defense that forced 21 Rams turnovers. Eric Maynor (Raeford, N.C./Westover) led all scorers with 22 points for VCU. Jamal Shuler (Jacksonville, N.C./Jacksonville) added 15 points and seven rebounds.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

VCU improved their season record to 5-0 on Saturday afternoon with a 64-53 victory over East Carolina in Greenville, N.C. The Rams shot only 31 percent in the first half and trailed 26-24 at halftime, but were able to pick things up and outscore the Pirates 40-27 in the second half. Quanitra Hollingsworth (Chesapeake/Great Bridge) recorded her fourth double-double of the season with 24 points and 16 rebounds. The Rams were stellar on defense, forcing 25 turnovers and holding East Carolina to only 34.5 percent shooting.

BB&T CLASSIC continued from CT6

"It was really good to see our guys come out and play with the level of focus they had and play to our identity," Grant said, adding that there's no substitute for the experience that his veterans bring.

Freshman Joey Rodriguez (Oviedo, Fla./Lake Howell) scored his only second-half points on a 3-pointer to give the Rams a 56-52 lead with 9:26 remaining in the second half. Gary Williams was forced to call timeout for Maryland as momentum clearly shifted to the Rams. Shuler sent VCU to a 60-54 lead with eight minutes remaining on a 3-pointer that set a new career-high for the Rams' leading scorer. Bambale Osby missed an opportunity to cut the Rams' lead to four with less than three minutes remaining when he missed a foul shot after converting a basket.

The Rams held the lead, allowing the Terrapins to get no closer than five points for the remainder of the

game, and VCU held on for the 9-point victory. Fans chanted "C-A-A" in the game's waning seconds, just as they did in George Mason's win over Connecticut two seasons ago in the same building, in recognition of the mid-major conference's ability to compete with the majors.

Foul trouble continued to give the Rams problems. Larry Sanders (Fort Pierce, Fla./Port St. Lucie), Michael Anderson (Virginia Beach/Landstown) and Kirill Pishchalnikov (Maykop, Russia/MGGTK AGU) all fouled out. All three of the BB&T Classic's host teams – George Washington, George Mason and Maryland – were defeated by Auburn, East Carolina and VCU, respectively. The Rams' win boosts them to 4-3. The team has its first conference game Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. against William and Mary at the Stuart C. Siegel Center.

By the numbers

VCU (4-3): Sanders 0, Anderson 4, Maynor 25, Shuler 30, Nixon 5, Pishchalnikov 4, Rodriguez 10, Ndongo 0, Kearse 7, Gwynn 0. Totals: 26 24-31 85. 3-pointers: Shuler 6, Maynor, Nixon, Rodriguez.

Maryland (5-3): Milbourne 10, Dupree 3, Hayes 7, Gist 9, Vasquez 19, Bowie 2, Tucker 7, Burney 2, Osby 17. Totals: 21 30-34 76. 3-pointers: Vasquez 2, Hayes, Tucker.

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Spectrum

Rival schools set aside differences in name of art

ROBERTO CURTIS
Spectrum Editor

VCUarts and Temple University's Tyler School of Art have teamed up for a special two-part, cross-state exhibit featuring the best of crafts and sculpture from both schools.

Amy Hautt, chair of the sculpture department, emphasized the healthy rapport the two schools share.

"Tyler and VCU have a long history of students going from one institution to the other," Hautt said. "Many students do so in order to continue their education by getting a graduate degree."

The exhibition, titled "From One State to Another," will feature some of Tyler's and VCU's graduates' best works.

"The VCU leg of the project will feature seven artists with nine works, but there are about 20 (artists) who submitted work. The modes and content of the works are very varied and include works by crafts artists and sculpture artists. There's also mechanical work. There is a piece that works through solar panels. ... We even have a light work that is only visible at night. It's quite exciting."

The Philadelphia school's exhibit will feature VCU students and is scheduled to take place some time early next semester.

Adding more to the mix are two specially selected curators representing the cities of Richmond and Philadelphia who selected the best works for the showings. Hautt asked a longtime colleague of hers to assist in the curatorial process.

"My colleague at Tyler is Sharyn O'Mara, who is the associate dean there. She and I cooked up an idea to have a series of continuing exhibitions. ... We decided to have these two different curators representing a different city to select the works for the exhibit," Hautt said.

The first curator hired for the exhibit is Gregory Volk, a VCU associate professor in the School of the Arts. He also is a regular contributor to publication "Art in America" and is an independent curator.

"He and his wife put together exhibitions, and they go to different museums



Daniel Bruce's "Roundabout" (wood, metal, motor, foam, epoxy resin, lacquer fleck-paint) is part of "From One State to Another," currently on display in VCU's Fine Art Building.

Rachel Larue photo

and galleries, like the VCU Anderson Gallery and the Tanya Bonakdar Gallery in New York City," Hautt said.

The Tyler curator is Ingrid Shaffner, senior curator for the Institute of Contemporary Art, the museum associated with the University of Pennsylvania.

"(Shaffner) has a really long and interesting track record as a curator. She very generously agreed to lead the Philadelphia end of the curatorial project, Hautt said."

To avoid favoritism, precautionary measures were taken so there would be little risk of the curators recognizing the works of the students they have most likely encountered in the past.

"I taught at Tyler for 14 years before I came to VCU, and I've been here for three-and-a-half years. I understand the ethos of the two different educational systems, and I have many colleagues there whom I share students with, so it's a very natural match. The curators have no previous knowledge of the works they'll be looking at," Hautt said.

"From One State To Another" is on display to the public on the first floor of the Fine Arts Building until Dec. 7. For more information, contact Mary C. Eisendrath at (804) 828-7176.



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Numerous plots, impressive visuals make 'World's End' a satisfying conclusion

SEAN COLLINS-SMITH
Contributing Writer

Out on DVD Tuesday and once again starring Johnny Depp, Orlando Bloom and Keira Knightley, director Gore Verbinski's crazy threquel, "Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End," delivers on its promises – concluding most of the plot's loose threads – but it takes a while to get there.

No wonder. With so many dangling storylines, one contemplates how skilled writers Ted Elliot and Terry Rossio ("Shrek") even brought the story to a satisfying resolution. Somehow they did it, but the ensuing confusion – who betrays who and why – almost certainly requires a second viewing to understand.

Though they appear onscreen for a little while, many characters are underused. Captain Sao Feng (Chow Yun-Fat) is wasted, as is actor Jack Davenport's Admiral Norrington. Naomie Harris ("28 Days Later") returns as the voodoo woman, Tia Dalma, who is given a bigger role (literally), but the return of Geoffrey Rush as Captain Hector Barbossa is the most welcome homecoming. His pirate-y mannerisms and fast-paced dialogue are, along with Depp's brilliant Captain Jack Sparrow, what made the first film such a treat.

The special effects are top notch once again; where else will you see a ship clad in all black sails rising and falling on giant waves of sand? And when Lord Cutler



Beckett descends in slow motion onto the deck of a ship as it's being completely destroyed, the audience is wowed – even if the scene doesn't make much sense.

Credit should, once again, be given to writers Elliot and Rossio for taking something so one dimensional – a Disney theme-park ride – and turning it into full-blown pirate mythology filled with interesting characters and loaded to the brim with plot.

Summer fare usually consists of zero story and plenty of effects. "Pirates" is the rare action franchise that attempts to handle too much narrative. Would I rather have a comfortable median? Yes. But I would take too much story over not enough any day.

Grade: 4 bottles of rum out of 5

"Enchanted" charms new, old-school Disney fans

RACHEL VAMENTA
Opinion Editor

The Disney empire rakes in millions of dollars, so why should we give them another \$8.50 to see "Enchanted"?

There have been many movies about humans who wind up in animated worlds, including "Who Framed Roger Rabbit?" and even the infamous "Monkeybone." But "Enchanted" shows us what happens when an animated Disney princess, Giselle, arrives in our world – in modern-day New York City, to be exact.

Giselle, played by Amy Adams, disappears from the kingdom of Andalasia on the day of her wedding to Prince Edward (James Marsden). Edward's evil stepmother, Queen Narissa (Susan Sarandon), disguises herself as an old woman, lures Giselle to a magical fountain and pushes her in, wedding dress and all. The fountain is a portal from Andalasia to Times Square, where Giselle naively wanders along for the better part of an evening until jaded divorce attorney and single father Robert

Philip (Patrick Dempsey) takes her in after some persuasion from his 6-year-old daughter, Morgan (Rachel Covey). Giselle finds ways to show gratitude and share the joy of life and love with Robert, Morgan and anyone she meets – sometimes through song and dance, of course.

The movie really gets fun when Edward arrives in New York to search for his beloved. He is accompanied by Giselle's squirrel friend Pip, and then followed by Narissa's henchman, Nathaniel (Timothy Spall). Their quest and the comic pratfalls that ensue help move the plot along, but are enormously entertaining.

The movie's pace and plot are solid until the end, where it seems a little rushed. However, that is not a real problem. Those of us who grew up watching Disney movies and are watching "Enchanted" are merely going along for the ride. From a business perspective, Disney stands to profit not only from children's ticket sales, but also from those of us who are there for the ride.

The film pokes fun at the conventions

of traditional animated Disney fairy tales. For example, Giselle's "Happy Working Song" spoofs the "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" ballad "Whistle While You Work." Instead of cuddly forest animal helpers, Giselle is assisted by cockroaches, rats and even a one-legged pigeon.

"Enchanted" is a true Disney production in every way, from the use of traditional animation to the music featured in the film. The music and lyrics come from composers Alan Menken and Stephen Schwartz, who are Disney legends in their own right (Menken composed music for "The Little Mermaid" and "Beauty and the Beast," while Schwartz composed music for "Pocahontas" and "The Hunchback of Notre Dame"). The film is sprinkled with many references to classic Disney staples, such as the Bella Notti restaurant from "Lady and the Tramp." And look out for cameos by Jodi Benson and Paige O'Hara, who provided the voices for the princesses Ariel and Belle, respectively.

Adams does a phenomenal job of portraying the definitive fish out of the

water, a real life Disney princess thrust into Manhattan (bonus points for being able to dance and sing). Critics also are hailing Susan Sarandon's role as Narissa, but the real scene stealer is James Marsden, known best as Cyclops from the "X-Men" movies. There is no reason why Marsden's dashing, good-looking goof of a prince should be more appealing than Dempsey's cynical, brooding lawyer, yet Prince Edward emerges as the more engaging and sympathetic of the two men. Your level of satisfaction with the end of the movie ultimately depends on which prince you would rather spend happily ever after with. (For the record, I would rather finish Edward's duet.)

There's only one concern if you go to see "Enchanted": When you stand in the box office line, look around and estimate the number of small children that will be in the theater with you. Count on hearing, "Ew!" when true love's kiss is shown onscreen.

Grade: A



ROBERTO CURTIS
Spectrum Editor

Few in the jazz world command respect on par with pioneering pianist and composer Herbie Hancock, and his most recent release, “River: The Joni Letters,” shows why.

Though lacking in the barn-burner department, the soultry wisdom of the musician comes out in a kaleidoscopic display of timbre and rhythm. The conversational approach to the music pays homage to Hancock’s longtime friend and collaborator, Canadian-born singer/songwriter Joni Mitchell.

Hancock’s elite squadron for the album was hand picked with the help of Mitchell’s producer, Larry Klein. The incredible Wayne Shorter lends his abilities on tenor and soprano saxophones, while paramount bassist Dave Holland holds down the low end with badness and sass that is essential in a studio setting.

The newer additions, drummer Vinnie Colaiuta and guitarist Lionel Loueke, prove that to hang with Hancock, you have to groove with grace.

Also enlisted in the creative process, aside from Mitchell herself, are vocalists Norah Jones, Tina Turner, Corinne Bailey Rae, Luciana Souza and Leonard Cohen.

Tuner’s track, “Edith and the Kingpin,” features a glimpse back to Hancock’s electronic experimentalist days, while Turner’s voice pierces with maturity. A twinge of funk also is brought to the fray thanks to Holland and Loueke.

Tracks like “Court and Spark,” featuring Norah Jones, and “Both Sides Now” hit the heart hard with harmonic heartiness. Hancock’s savvy is naturally effortless yet anchors the rest of the band with conviction.

Corinne Bailey Rae sings Mitchell’s “River,” a song of the holidays and a longing to escape from the monotony

of an isolated life. The homegrown vibes set by the acoustic guitar and twinkling piano comments blend marvelously with Rae’s sexy and honest voice.

Mitchell even lends her expertise on her song, “Tea Leaf Prophecy.” Like a full-bodied red, her lines exchange with Hancock and Shorter in complex dialogue that leaves a pleasant taste in its wake.

With the exception of one or two tracks, the whole album features Colaiuta playing with brushes instead of sticks, creating a hushed, smoky sound that goes well with Hancock and Shorter’s minimalist lines, which give away no hint of backgrounds stepped in bebop.

Fans of Hancock will surely be pleased with this gem. The music is both contemplative and relaxing, giving the listener a treat for just about any mood, from the deepest funk to the most jubilant exuberance.

Grade: A+

Download (don’t steal): “Harlem in Havana” by Herbie Hancock.

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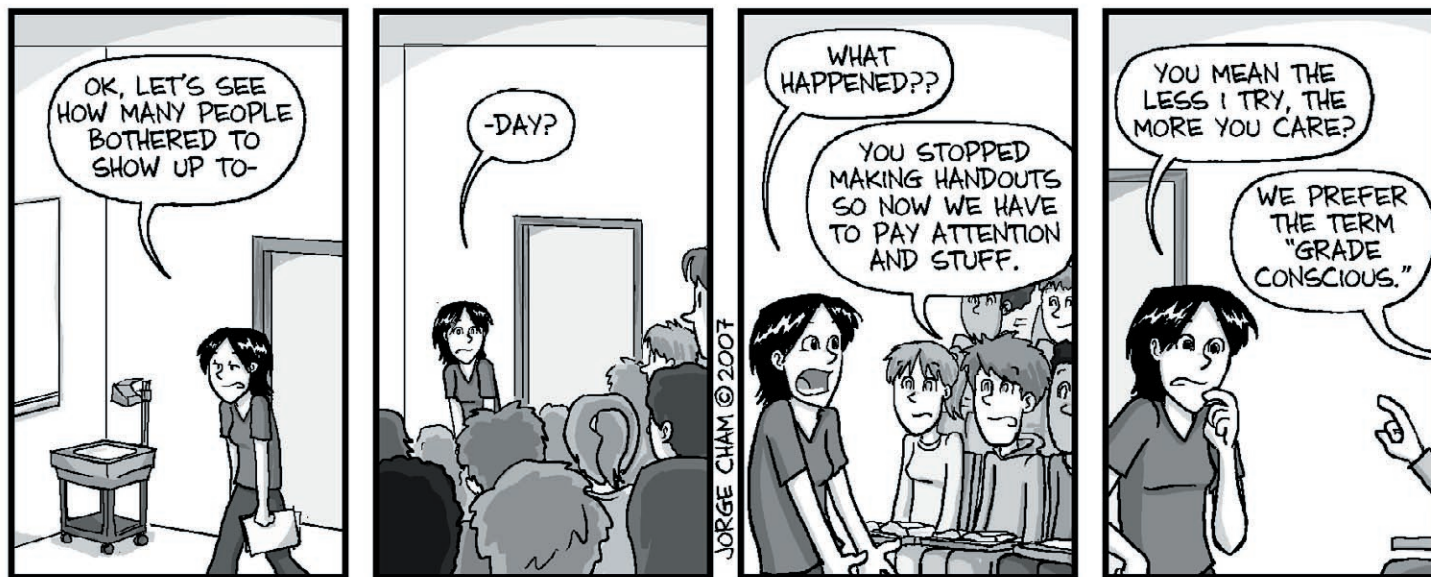
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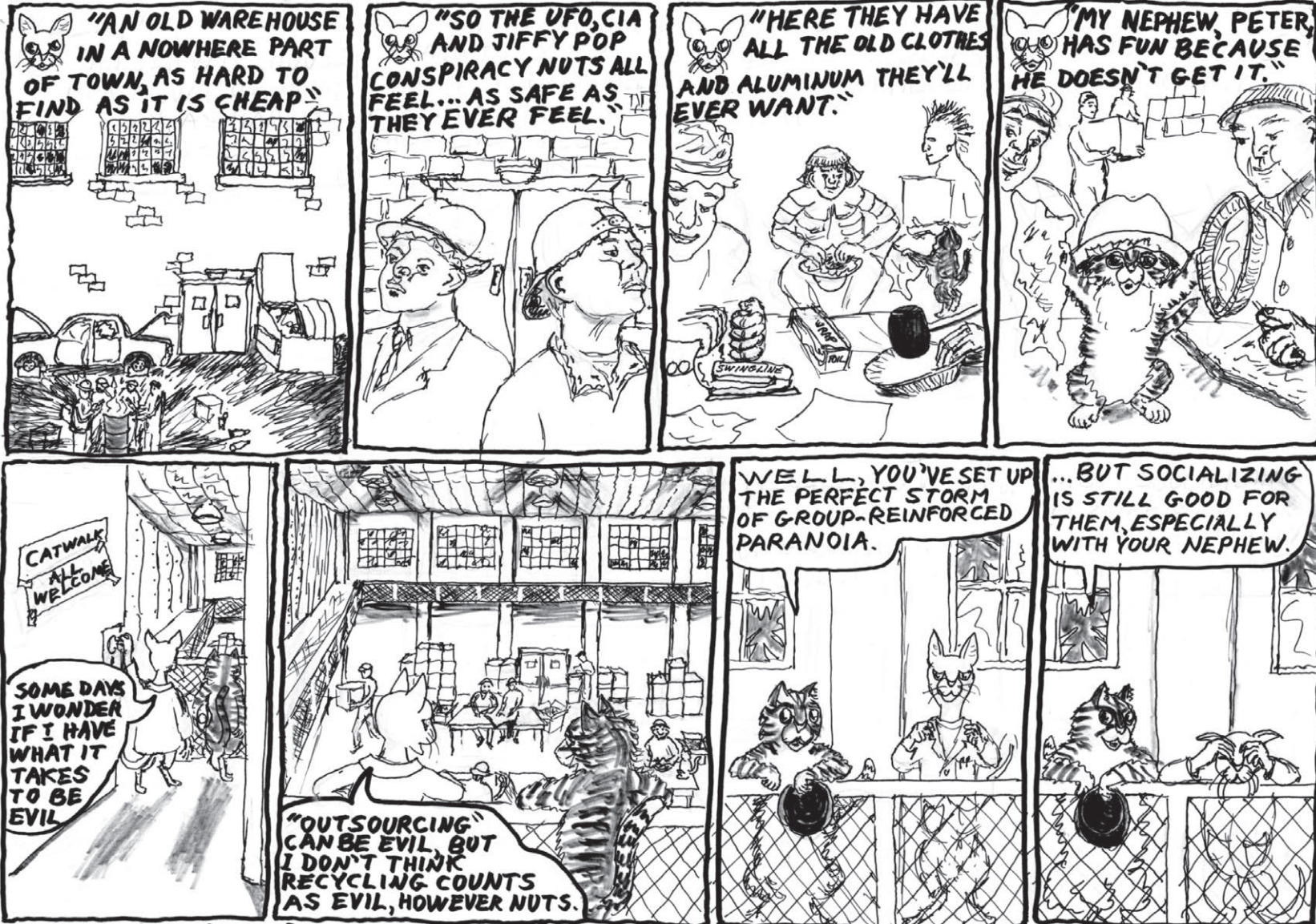


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Opinion

Corrections:

In the Grace Potter and the Nocturnals album review of “This is Somewhere,” in the Nov. 29 issue, some errors were made:

“This Is Somewhere” is not a song title. “Ain’t No Time” is the title of the song referring to the Hurricane Katrina aftermath.

Grace Potter, Scott Tournet, Brian Dondero and Matt Burr are the touring members of the group. The others listed appear only on the CD.

By 2050, robots might be programmed to love



RACHEL VAMENTA
Opinion Editor

The “Futurama” pilot premiered a long time ago – okay, so 1999 was only eight years ago – but it’s still pretty hilarious. Remember when Fry first met Bender by that suicide booth?

“You really want a robot for a friend?” Bender asked.

“Yeah, ever since I was 6!”

Bender consented with, “But I don’t want anyone to think we’re robosexuals, so if anyone asks, you’re my debugger.”

That might have been a joke, but

“robosexuality” is more plausible in the future than once thought, according to researcher David Levy. Levy had some members of the blogosphere buzzing when his book, “Love + Sex with Robots: The Evolution of Human-Robot Relationships,” was published a few weeks ago.

Levy predicts human-robot partnerships will become a reality by 2050. According to a LiveScience.com feature in October, Levy thinks these partnerships will start in the state of Massachusetts because it is at the forefront of both social issues and technology research.

The robots Levy has in mind aren’t

cartoon robots comprised of bolts and metallic boxes. Nope, instead, he is referring to robots who take on more human forms: androids. (So ... Data from “Star Trek: The Next Generation”?)

Levy basically compares the skepticism of robot-human marriages to the struggles of interracial and same-sex (human) marriages. These human matters belong in a completely different department from the affections humans have with their pets, which Levy uses to exemplify non-human love objects.

Sexpert and Wired.com blogger Regina Lynn weighs in on Levy’s book

in her Nov. 30 blog entry, titled “10 Reasons I’d Rather Marry a Robot.”

In all seriousness, Lynn does make a few good points. No. 2 is one of my favorites: “Artificial intelligence is still intelligence.” So is No. 4: “A robot will only create drama if I want it to.”

Still, I don’t know if I’d consider marrying a robot right now, let alone a human. 2050 is quite a ways away, so I might change my mind when my mental and emotional facilities become increasingly decrepit. It might not be that bad – after all, I don’t think it could be more painful than sitting through “Bicentennial Man.”

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Charlie Turner’s piece in the Nov. 29 Commonwealth Times was fascinating simply because his outrage about the “violations” of our civil liberties appears to stem from an article that was immensely popular on the Web site Digg.com. This article alerted the public to the “danger” presented to the public in the form of an academic commission that would be created by Congress, were this bill to pass into law, to study how homegrown terrorism (like the terrorists who have been active in England recently) is facilitated by new technologies, particularly the Internet. The fact that Mr. Turner doesn’t mention the bill number (HR 1955) and doesn’t seem to have quite read the bill thoroughly leads me to believe that he does not fully understand what it actually does. It is indeed sad to see that Mr. Turner feels that the definitions given for “violent radicalization,” “homegrown terrorism” and “ideologically based violence” could lead toward the creation of “thought crimes.”

While I am an enormous fan of George Orwell, I think many of the opponents of this bill are perhaps far too paranoid. Mr. Turner clearly misinterprets the basis of this bill since I fail to see the possibility that social activists, protesters and social justice crusaders and yes, even socialists themselves, could be seen as attempting to coerce or force the government

via ideologically based violence. The only social group that I could possibly see fitting into these paradigms of homegrown terrorist or violent radicals would be groups already acknowledged as domestic terrorist groups like the Environmental and Animal Liberation Fronts (ELF and ALF, respectively) or other anarchist protest groups, which are widely acknowledged as groups that de-legitimize social movements.

I applaud Mr. Turner’s concern for civil liberties, liberties that have been under constant attack under the current administration in large part because of the Republican passivity as the majority congressional party during this administration. However, attacking a bill that would create grants and funding opportunities for the academics’ study of terrorism (just as the U.S. government did during the Cold War with Russian studies programs) is absurd and misconstrues the reality of HR 1955.

I suggest that next time you read an article lambasting a bill, read the actual bill first and see what you think. Form your own opinion and test the validity of the author’s claims. Don’t just take what someone says at face value.

—Mitchell Smiley

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Crossword

Computer Terms

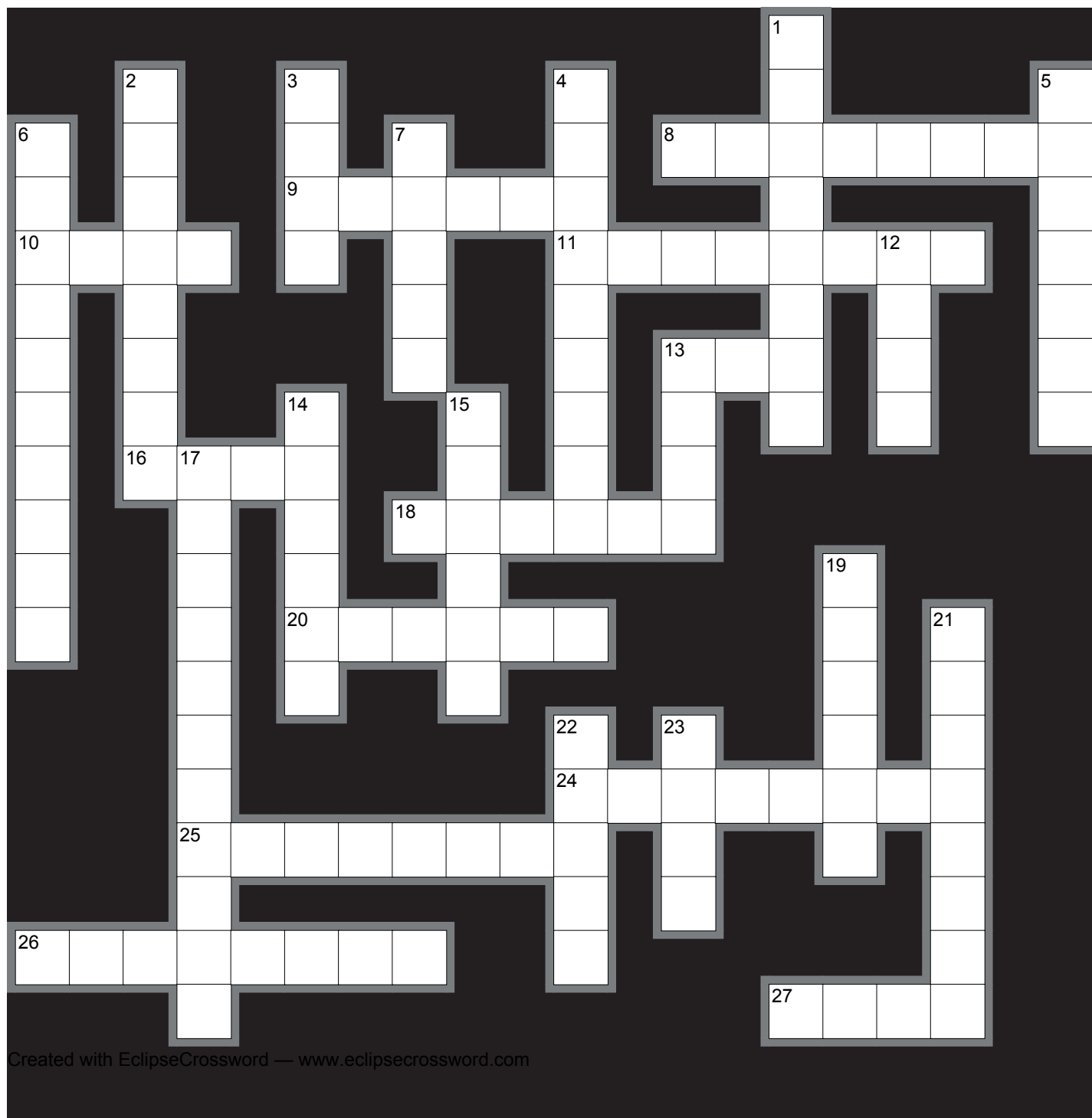
Across

8. 1,024 kilobytes.
9. A central computer dedicated to sending and receiving data from other computers (on a network).
10. A typeface that contains the characters of an alphabet or some other letterforms.
11. An electronic list of information that can be sorted and/or searched.
13. The smallest piece of information used by the computer. Derived from "binary digit." In computer language, either a one (1) or a zero (0).
16. Information processed by a computer.
18. A system error which causes the cursor to lock in place.
20. To send a file from one computer to another through a network.
24. A written file you create.
25. The horizontal bar at the top of a window which has the name of the file or folder it represents.
26. 1,024 bytes.
27. The generic word for an application, document, control panel or other computer data.

Down

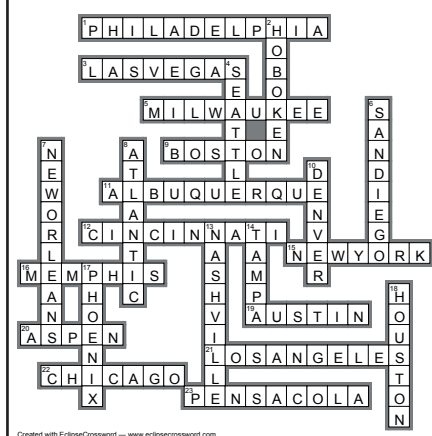
1. 1,024 megabytes.
2. To receive transferred data from one computer to another.
3. A spinning platter made of magnetic or optically etched material on which data can be stored.
4. A large-capacity storage device made of multiple disks housed in a rigid case.
5. The shaded or colored backdrop of the screen.
6. To concatenate fragments of data into contiguous blocks in memory or on a hard drive.
7. A system malfunction in which the computer stops working and must be restarted.
12. To write a file onto a disk. You do this in order to keep the file in existence.
13. A piece of computer information made up of eight bits.
14. A copy of a file or disk you make for archiving purposes.
15. The pointer, usually an arrow, which is controlled by the mouse.
17. A program in which you do your work.
19. An electronic subdirectory which contains files.
21. Files on disk that contain instructions for a computer.
22. Compact Disc Read-Only Memory.
23. A graphic symbol for an application, file or folder.

Monday, December 3, 2007



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Answers from Nov. 29



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