



Thursday, April 17, 2008 Vol. 47 No. 54

the ct

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

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commonwealthtimes.com

One year later

VCU students, faculty gather to
remember lives lost at Virginia Tech
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free





briefs

This week in the news

Muslim Student Association will host festival Thursday

Islam Awareness Week has expanded this year to include a festival that offers free food, activities, prizes and booths providing information about Islam.

Zaynah Qutubuddin, president of the VCU Muslim Student Association, says the festival will be a new feature in an already popular yearly event.

"I'm looking forward to (Thursday's) festival, because we've never done it before," she said. "We've had lectures before, and the coffee house has been going on for years. (This year) we have a lot of new people helping us out and a lot of freshmen."

Zaneera Hassan, treasurer of the Muslim Student Association, is coordinating both the festival and Islam Awareness Week.

"Our main purpose is to educate both Muslim and non-Muslim students about various aspects of Islam," Hassan said. "Many people have mixed views as to what Islam is, and we want to clear up those misconceptions, especially when it comes to more sensitive topics."

Brief by Catherine MacDonald

Student organization says 'Funk The War'

Students for a Democratic Society will host an Iraq War protest, dubbed "Funk the War," Friday at Monroe Park.

SDS members will be dancing around campus with

a mobile sound system, which group member Claire Schoen hopes will draw attention to the cause.

"A giant dance party is a lot more positive and fun than your typical protest," Schoen said.

Schoen says the group hopes to draw a few hundred people.

According to nationalpriorities.org, the Iraq War has cost Virginia taxpayers \$258 million, she says.

"We're dropping beats not bombs," Schoen said.

The protest will begin at 2 p.m.

Brief by Veronica Garabelli and Roberto Curtis

Barnes and Noble College Booksellers to manage VCU bookstores

Barnes and Noble College Booksellers has signed a five-year contract to manage VCU's bookstores beginning this summer.

Barnes and Noble will perform significant renovations at both campus locations. Once completed, these new stores will offer a greatly expanded selection of general-reading books, magazines, gifts and VCU clothing as well as textbooks, school supplies, computer software and accessories and reference materials.

A committee of students, staff and faculty representatives participated in the process to select Barnes and Noble.

Barnes and Noble will be providing a Web site that will enable students to buy books at any time, including when they register for classes.

The company will be replacing Follett Corporation, which managed the VCU Bookstores for 12 years.

Information provided by VCU News Center

Ukrop's store will close May 10

The Ukrop's grocery store adjacent to the Stuart C. Siegel Center will close on May 10, according to a letter sent to customers.

The store had been in operation since Oct. 2003. The location has been occupied by various grocery stores since 1980.

Ukrop's has a lease on the site until 2018. No replacement for the store has been announced.

Information from InRich.com

Virginia executions to proceed

In light of Wednesday's Supreme Court ruling upholding lethal injections, Gov. Timothy M. Kaine has lifted a suspension on executions in Virginia.

Kaine spokesman Gordon Hickey said executions will proceed according to the procedures that were in place before the court agreed to hear Kentucky's Baze v. Rees case in September.

The governor imposed the moratorium April 1 when he delayed the execution of Edward Nathaniel Bell from April 8 to July 24.

The U.S. Supreme Court also had stayed another Virginia execution back in October.

Brief by the Associated Press

cover photo by Rachel Larue

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The Commonwealth Times strives to be accurate in gathering news. If you think we have made an error, please call Executive Editor Rebecca Landau at 828-4770 or e-mail her at editor@commonwealthtimes.com. Corrections will appear on the Opinion page.





news



About 300 people gathered for a vigil commemorating the victims of Virginia Tech Wednesday.

Rachel Larue photo

VCU community remembers Virginia Tech victims

DAVID BAKER & ANNAYATES

Contributing Writers

A year after the Virginia Tech massacre, VCU students and faculty gathered for a vigil Wednesday evening to remember the 32 victims who died.

“Knowing that you can come together and knowing that you have others’ support helps the grieving process,” business administration major Jessica Bui said.

Nursing faculty member Kathy Baker said students are more aware of campus safety.

“It reminds us of how fragile life is and that innocent life was lost.”

The new security measures implemented at VCU this past year include sirens atop campus buildings, emergency-text messaging and LCD screens in hallways—all measures intended to inform students about emergencies quickly.

John Bennett, vice president of finance and administration, serves as the university’s incident commander. While noting VCU has the largest university

police force in Virginia and has had a full-time emergency planner since 2003, Bennett said the newer measures fix gaps in communication.

“We’re too big and too spread out for one way of communicating with everyone,” Bennett said. “We decided what we needed is a multi-channel way of communicating.”

Although Bennett said it is important to be prepared for situations such as a school shooting, he said the VCU community should be more aware of common safety issues such as theft and inclement weather.

“We don’t really have much crime. Over half of what we have is theft,” he said. “Most of those (incidents) are preventable.”

Some students at the vigil said they generally have felt safer on campus since the massacre last year.

“There is still a feeling that it could happen,” mechanical engineering major Robert Rakowski said, “but still a greater feeling of safety.”



Schools to teach about mental health

STACY TYLER
Capital News Service

Virginia's schools will begin teaching students this fall about the importance of mental health and the signs of mental illness under a new state law passed in response to last year's massacre at Virginia Tech.

The law, Senate Bill 640, will add mental-health awareness to the family-life education curricula taught in kindergarten through 12th grade.

The bill was passed unanimously by the Senate and the House in February and was signed into law by Gov. Timothy M. Kaine March 5. It will take effect July 1.

Sen. Patricia S. Ticer, D-Alexandria, was the chief sponsor of the bill. Sen. Mary Margaret Whipple, D-Arlington, was also a patron of the legislation.

The Virginia office of the National Alliance on Mental Illness came up with the idea for the bill.

"We support it, because we want to find additional ways to try to educate people about mental illness," said Mira Signer, executive director of NAMI Virginia.

"Also, stigma is a major barrier to treatment. This bill can help address lack of understanding of mental illness."

The shootings at Virginia Tech demonstrated the need for such understanding, mental-health advocates say. Last April, a student with a history of mental-health problems shot and killed 32 people at Tech before

killing himself.

"In the aftermath of the Virginia Tech tragedy of April 2007, the public needs to become more educated and aware about mental health, including mental illnesses, symptoms, treatment options, and the concept of recovery," states a fact sheet produced by NAMI Virginia.

According to the fact sheet, adding mental-health education and awareness to family life education achieves this goal.

"Family Life Education gives young people tools to use for the rest of their lives," the fact sheet states. "Educating students about mental health may assist them later in life when faced with a personal or loved one's experience with mental illness, possibly before it reaches a crisis point."

About a quarter of the U.S. population experiences a mental disorder in any given year, but almost half of these individuals do not seek treatment, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. surgeon general.

"We want to make sure people are educated so that they are able to help themselves or others if at some point they know someone dealing with mental illness," Signer said.

"Given that one in four adults will experience a mental-health disorder, and one in 17 will live with

a serious mental illness like schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or major depression, the more tools we can give young people, the better," she said.

Virginia's family-life education currently covers substance abuse, dating violence, child abuse and human reproduction.

This week, Kaine signed 31 other bills to bolster Virginia's mental-health system.

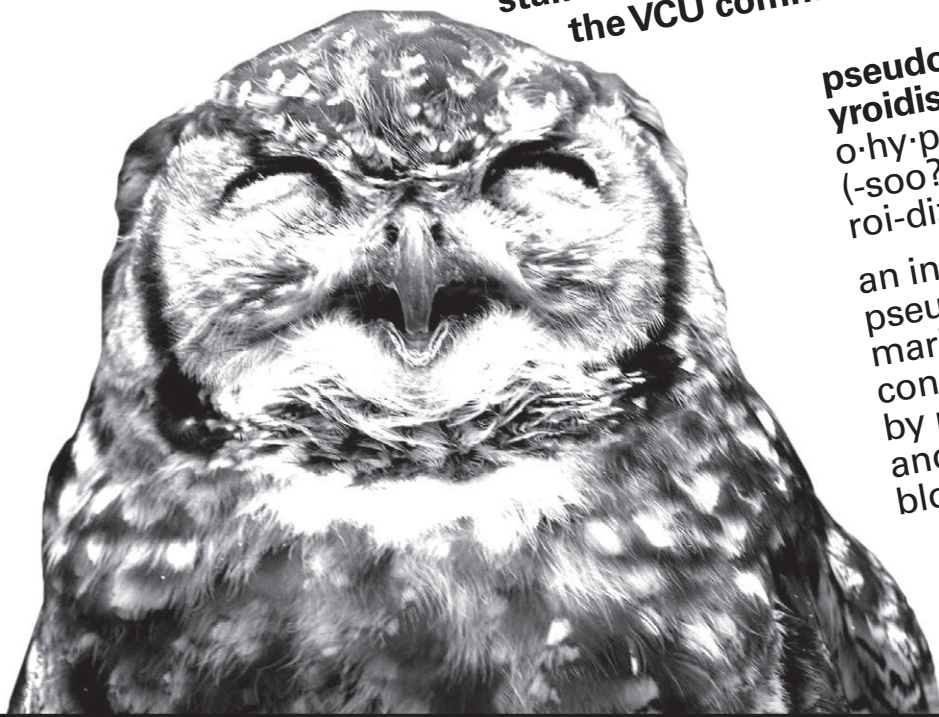
"The Virginia Tech tragedy reminded us that we must address the mental-health needs of those in our family, among our friends and in our community," the governor said.

The new laws will:

- Make it easier to commit someone involuntarily to a mental health facility.
- Allow schools, courts and other authorities to better share mental-health records.
- Require universities to establish emergency-management plans and emergency-notification systems.
- Help prevent mentally disturbed people from buying guns.

WORD OF THE DAY

brought to you by The CT staff to educate and enlighten the VCU community



pseudopseudohypoparathyroidism /pseu·do·pseu·d o·hy·po·para·thy·roid·ism/ (-soo?do-hi?po-par?ah-thi roi-dizm)

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news

VCU viewpoints:

Do you feel safer on campus now than you did one year ago?



[The Virginia Tech massacre] definitely made me think about the situation. If an emergency like that were to happen here, what would the procedure be and what precautions would the students and faculty take? And it also obviously brought up the issue of whether or not students should be able to carry firearms on campus in Virginia.

Sean McCormick, Mass Communications



I feel safer, because now people are more aware and know not to make the same mistakes.

Caitlin Bridges, Illustration



It seems like they're making an effort, but I don't know how much it will work. The alarm system, when I hear that, I just keep walking. I don't think anything about it; I just assume they're doing a check. Because you still think it's not going to happen even though it has. So they're making an effort; it depends on how people react to it. I feel the same.

Jihan Garland, Undeclared



For the most part, I still do feel very safe, because I know that VCU has great security. My friend at the dormitories – he's a resident assistant there – he tells me there's cameras all over the place anyway, so nothing really gets by without the university knowing.

Phillip To, Biology



I do feel safe, because I know where to walk and I know where all the alarms are. We have a really good VCU police (force), and they're always around, and we always have the buttons and we have the escort service. The Virginia Tech massacre did not really affect my consideration of safety here.

Sabrina Wallis, Criminal Justice

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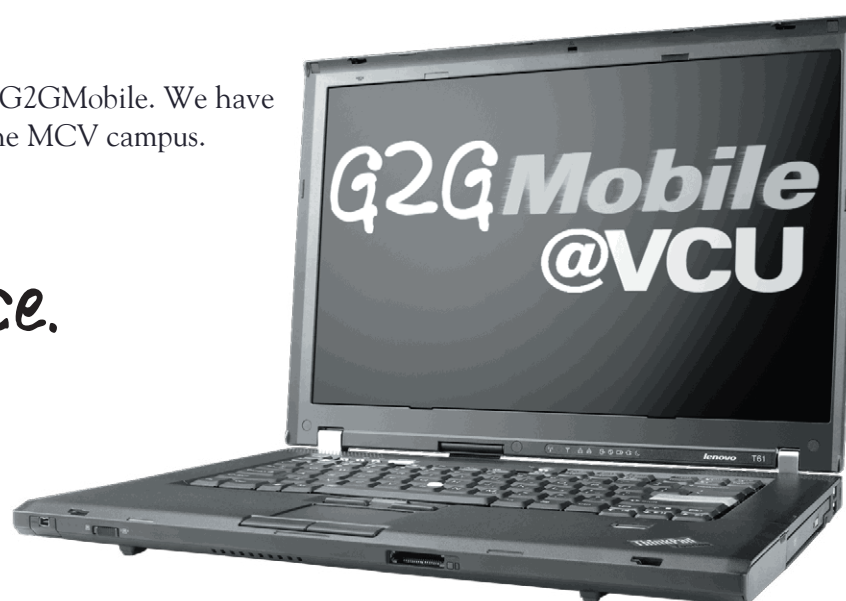
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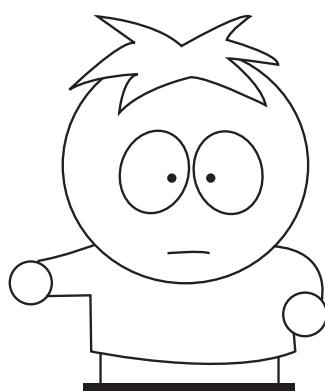
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sports

BASEBALL

Bolden's bat leads Rams past Spiders

JONATHAN HOWARD
Sports Editor

After suffering from a 1-for-28 slump going into this past weekend's series with Northeastern, VCU junior first baseman Jared Bolden (Lynchburg/E.C. Glass) was looking to make a change.

"I went to the (batting) cage Thursday and did some work and some extra things," he said.

After a successful series against the Huskies, Bolden continued to find his swing Tuesday night with a 3-for-5, 5-RBI performance that led the Rams to an 11-5 victory over cross-town rival Richmond at The Diamond.

"I think I got my swing back. I've been struggling for a long time," Bolden said.

After the teams exchanged runs in the second inning, Richmond took a 2-1 lead in the top of the third on an RBI single by catcher Ryan Grant. However, Bolden would answer in the bottom half and put the Rams in the lead for good.

Shortstop Joe Van Meter (Brooklyn, N.Y./St. Dominic) led off the inning with a bloop single over the third baseman's head. After M.L. Morgan (Petersburg/Dinwiddie) flew out to center field, Richard Gonzalez (Caguas, Puerto Rico/PRBA) singled to advance



Rachel Larue photo

Chris Jackson is safe at second base during the 11-5 win against the University of Richmond.

Van Meter to third. Bolden stepped up to bat next and turned on a pitch, which he sent down the right-field line and off an electronic sign for a three-run homer that gave the Rams a 4-2 lead.

"The hole that we're in ... we've got to hit like that," VCU head coach Paul Keyes said.

After the Spiders went down quietly in the fourth, Van Meter showed power of his own. After catcher Eric Curtis (Chesterfield/Matoaca) led off the inning with a walk, Van Meter launched a home run to left-center field to give the Rams a 6-2 advantage.

Richmond would cut the VCU lead to 6-5 in the fifth behind an RBI double from designated hitter Evan Stehle and a two-run single by Grant off VCU reliever Brett Walker (Virginia Beach/Cox). The Spiders were unable to do any damage

the rest of the way as Robbie Andrews (Covington/Alleghany) pitched the final four innings and only gave up one hit.

After three hitless innings, the Rams added five insurance runs in the eighth. Senior Kwan Evans (Hampton/Bethel)

led off the inning with a double and advanced to third on a single by Chris Jackson (Midlothian/Manchester). After a strikeout, Curtis reached on a fielder's choice while Evans beat the throw home.

Three batters later, Richard Gonzalez knocked in two runs with a single, and Bolden finished the inning with a two-run triple, brining the Rams' advantage to 11-5.

The victory marks the first time VCU has won back-to-back games since March 16 and March 18 when the Rams defeated Manhattan 5-3 and Longwood 9-8.

After the win, coach Keyes said he thinks the team sees what it must do the rest of the season.

"I think the guys have some confidence now; they know what's at stake and they've got to win."

By the numbers

UR (15-20-1) 011 030 000 5 11 3

VCU (10-21) 013 200 05x 11 11 1

Trent, Falasco (4), Horn (6), Clark (7), Barber (8), Joines (8) and Grant; Graham, Walker (4), Andrews (6) and Curtis.

W: Graham (1-3). L: Trent (1-3). S: Andrews (1).

THIS WEEK

BASEBALL

April 18-20, @ William and Mary, Williamsburg

GOLF

April 18-20, @ CAA Championships, Williamsburg, all day

MEN'S SOCCER

Fri., April 18, vs. Louisburg College (exhibition), Sports Backers Stadium, 5 p.m.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Fri., April 18, vs. Georgetown (exhibition), Sports Backers Stadium, 7:30 p.m.

MEN'S TENNIS

April 17-20, @ CAA Tournament, Newport News, TBA

WOMEN'S TENNIS

April 17-20, @ CAA Tournament, Newport News, TBA

MEN'S TRACK & FIELD

April 18-19, @ CAA Championships, Williamsburg, TBA

WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD

April 18-19, @ CAA Championships, Williamsburg, TBA



COMMENTARY

Crowning the schedule

MATT DOYON

Associate Sports Editor

Tuesday's announcement of the 2008 NFL schedule was like Christmas in April. And if you waited until the last day to file your tax return, the 2 p.m. league-wide release gave you another welcome reason to procrastinate.

I pick apart a schedule from two perspectives: the fan's and the team's.

Let's take a random franchise, say, the Washington Redskins. I, the fan, look for a schedule ideally consisting of some "easy" wins (nothing comes easy for the Redskins), but also a few intriguing opponents that might present a greater challenge. Games like that bring in more national attention.

Then there's the home games factor. Who's coming into my team's dojo? The Redskins host a few teams with star power such as New Orleans – Reggie Bush and Drew Brees – and Pittsburgh – recent Super Bowl champions – not to mention

the standard division rivalries. Those are the kinds of teams I look for when I'm deciding if I want to go to a game.

An even more avid fan has to go a step beyond to look for road games in close proximity. Philadelphia and the Meadowlands are always in range, but other than that it's slim pickings. The 'Skins make their first-ever trip to Baltimore in the regular season. After that, you'll be making the trek to Cincinnati to catch the next closest road game.

Now to the team's perspective. The Redskins must be motivated by having only six games this season against teams that made the playoffs last season (and four of those games are against division opponents).

Pull back the curtain a little farther though, and many other matchups are deceptively challenging when only looking at making the playoffs as a pass-fail indicator of success. New Orleans, Arizona, Philadelphia, Cleveland and Detroit were all considered to be "in the mix" to make

the playoffs for the last month of 2007.

That's another six games against quality opponents. Do the math and it leaves only four "duds" of a year ago: St. Louis, Baltimore, Cincinnati and San Francisco. The latter three are all in the last four weeks of the schedule.

Finally, be wary of losing streaks. The Redskins, per usual, have a midseason stretch in which they could lose six straight games, but it's bookended by winnable matchups.

The bottom line: 11-5.

What's beautiful about the schedule is that any crafty fan could take a glance at it and justify why the New England will go 0-16 or Miami 16-0 this season. It leaves room for endless speculation. Fans' optimism or pessimism shine through their predictions of records.

Why would an Oakland fan look at the schedule and pick his Raiders, who haven't won more than five games in a season since 2002, to win the AFC West? Because he thinks they can.



ON MATT'S MIND

Vote for Your editor



The CT will hold elections for executive and managing editors for next school year. Applications for the two positions can be obtained at the Student Media Center at 817 W. Broad St. from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Applications are due by Friday, April 18 at 5 p.m.

Candidates will present platform speeches at the Student Media Center April 18 at 5:30 p.m. Voting will take place by paper ballot following the speeches Friday, April 18 — as well as at the SMC reception desk — until Friday, April 25 at 5 p.m. All staff and contributors from the past school year are eligible to vote.

For more information, contact Rebecca Landau at editor@commonwealthtimes.com.



SPORTS BRIEFS

BASEBALL

Junior Ian Thomas (Virginia Beach/Kellam) earned CAA pitcher-of-the-week honors after picking up two wins and holding a 1.64 ERA in pitching performances against VMI and Northeastern this past week.

GOLF

Sophomore Vincent Nadeau (Penn Hook/Purdue) won the individual title while the Rams finished second overall at the Palisades Collegiate Classic in Charlotte, N.C. Nadeau finished the tournament at 10-under par (68-71-67-206) to win the title by five strokes. Lanto Griffin (Blacksburg/Blacksburg) tied for fifth individually with a 3-under-par (70-72-71-213) performance. VCU finished with a three-day team score of 862, six strokes behind tournament champion Charlotte. Conference rival Old Dominion finished in fifth place.

TENNIS

After finishing the season with a 16-7 record, the men's team earned the top-seed in this weekend's CAA tournament. The Rams will face the winner of Thursday's match between Hofstra and Drexel Friday afternoon. The women's team earned the No. 2 seed in the tournament and will face the winner of the match between Hofstra and Towson Friday morning.

MEN'S TRACK & FIELD

DeAngelo Wilson (Richmond/Prince Edward) was named CAA men's track athlete of the week after a pair of victories at the Lou Onesty/Abramson Invitational in Charlottesville this past weekend. Wilson picked up wins in the 100-meter dash and was a part of the victorious 4x100-meter relay team.

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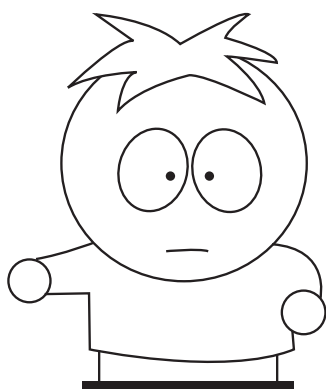
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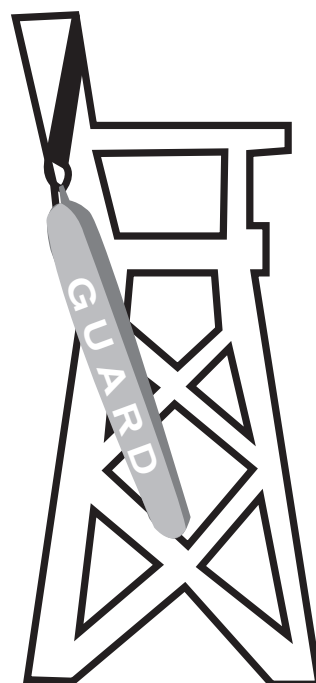
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spectrum

Preview: 'Someone Who'll Watch Over Me:' Theater majors do some investigating



Brian Gartland and Alex Gerber play an Englishman and an American held captive in a Lebanese prison.

Rachel Larue photo

ROBERTO CURTIS
Spectrum Editor

The Shafer Alliance Laboratory Theatre is presenting Frank McGuinness' "Someone Who'll Watch Over Me," a play that addresses the sensitive issue of Islamic radical kidnappings that have frightened Westerners for decades.

"It's more than just a play about some historical instances. It's a play about human beings and how they treat each other in times of crisis," director Sarah Yount said.

"It's about male companionship. It was interesting for me as a female to take on a play like this and to try to get to the meat of the issue while working with a cast of all men, and just finding the differences in directing and how you go about doing that and how to really connect with them."

Yount, a second-year graduate student, said the gravity of the plot required meticulous research and heightened awareness of social issues surrounding the conflict—so much so that four dramaturgs had to be called in to enlighten the cast and director.

Matthew Shiflett was one of two historical and political dramaturgs for the play and is a second-year graduate student.

"My job was to be the director's advisor on historical accuracy and factual research and help the director with their artistic choices—basically

another set of ears on the set."

"Someone Who'll Watch Over Me" is a play about three prisoners – an Irishman, an Englishman and an American – who get kidnapped during the Lebanese Civil War in the 1980s and become prisoners in a make-shift Lebanese prison in an unknown location.

To keep themselves sane, the prisoners must entertain one another constantly; they discuss politics and pop culture. Giving the dialogue historical accuracy was important to the writers. The connection the prisoners share aims to strengthen the message of the play.

"Because they're in this extreme situation, sometimes emotions run very high," Yount said.

All three of the play's actors say they felt greater responsibility participating in a socially conscious play.

"It was a different level of responsibility from community theater and high school. Having people come in and tell us about the historical significance of what we're doing and what makes my character act the way he does was helpful, but I had never thought about using those resources before," freshman Zach Betz said.

Junior Alex Gerber plays the American doctor who is disconnected from world politics. Gerber said he found some parallels between his character's obliviousness and his own worldly awareness.

"It's interesting to think about it from a point of

view of an actor and the character that was unaware of what's going on out there. The more we learned about what was going on, history of the region and such, the play started to take on a great importance. I've done a lot of fun theater, but it's really exciting to be a part of something with social relevance," Gerber said.

Junior Brian Gartland, who plays the Englishman, said the learning process opened his eyes to another world of politics.

"(The conflict) all seemed so black and white, but when we were doing our research, it hit us how many different factions there were and who wants what," Gartland said.

Even though the play is on the tip of the iceberg of the Middle East conflict, Shiflett pointed out the difference between plays about the Middle East and "Someone Who'll Watch Over Me."

"Something we talked about early on—this isn't a play about Lebanon. This is a play about three people; none of whom are Lebanese. It's a universal story with universal themes. I think it's the play's strength that it does not try to portray any Lebanese characters and therefore risk portraying them wrongly," Shiflett said.

"Someone Who'll Watch Over Me" runs Friday at 7:30 p.m., Saturday at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sunday at 8 p.m. at the Newdick Theatre in the Shafer Street Playhouse. Admission is free to the public.





Preview: VCU Dance department offers double dose of senior talent

KEMI OWENS-HART
Associate Spectrum Editor

The Spring 2008 Senior Dance Project Concert is the culminating event for the VCU Department of Dance and Choreography.

This year's event, "Back 2 Back," will take place over the course of two weekends, unlike past years, when only one weekend was allocated for the event. The change was due to the high volume of graduating seniors.

Concert A, to take place this weekend, will present the works of four seniors.

"The Kitchen Table," an original piece by Samantha Crawford, features a quartet illustrating the "interpersonal dynamics" of the personal interactions of daily life.

The mundane and the uncommon weave together to exemplify the inherent connectivity of humankind in "twine and bark" by Katie Dean. The five performers will use their bodies to unfold their individual experiences and how they pertain to the subject matter.

Hannah Frisch challenges the idea of reality versus a fabricated atmosphere in "World," her acrobatic foray into the real significance of truth and actuality, while Danielle Victoria King derives inspiration from another medium for her piece, "Pathways To...." With Tupac Shakur's poem "What Is It That I Search 4" as her muse, King fuses literature with motion to portray the catalysts that drove her to seek out dance as her artistic outlet.

The second installment of senior projects, Concert B, will take place next weekend, with six pieces focusing on a range of emotional extremes and exploration of the spiritual self.

One's struggle with his or her personal demons is the focal point of Melaney Cash's "Guided Reflection," which utilizes the talent of seven performers.

"Configured Time," a piece by Tony E. Colden Jr., also concentrates on the internal. This piece is a choreographed entity that alters the common conception

of time to depict the progression of self-development.

Emotion drives "preSSed" by Ami Dowden-Fant, while women are the motivation behind the works of Tashara Gavin-Moorehead and Adrienne LaNee' Moody. Sensuality is touched upon in Gavin-Moorehead's "Spirit Wrapped in Flesh" and Moody's "It's Time She Knows" motivation comes from the book "Captivating: Unveiling the Mystery of a Woman's Soul" by John and Stasi Eldredge.

Alex Meigel addresses the eternal question of whether there is life after death. Using six dancers and various lighting techniques, his "Ethereal Emissions" ponders the possibility of a connection existing between the living and non-living plane.

The Senior Project Concert will be held at the Grace Street Theater at 934 W. Grace St. Tickets are \$10 for the general public and \$5 for students. For more information, contact the Grace Street Theater Box Office at 804-828-2020.



Sarah Ferguson photo

The Dance and Choreography Department's 2008 senior class.

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Guitarist Anthony Wilson graces stage

ROBERTO CURTIS
Spectrum Editor

Grammy-nominated guitarist/composer/arranger Anthony Wilson teamed up with VCU's Jazz Orchestra I Tuesday night for an impassioned concert to coincide with the release of the Jazz Studies Program's newest CD, "A Joyful Noise."

Director of jazz studies Antonio García kicked off the evening with the Mercer Ellington classic "Things Ain't What They Used to Be," an up-tempo swing that featured a seductive introductory bass solo by David Ashby, a cool smoky story told by David Hood on the alto saxophone and an aggressive bop-oriented display by the cool and confident trumpeter Marcus Tenney.

Emotions were high as six of the J.O. I members were playing their last Jazz Orchestra I concert at VCU prior to graduation. Along with the three previously mentioned, Reginald Chapman on bass trombone, Jason Mathias on baritone saxophone and John Lilley on tenor saxophone, all plan on "moving on to bigger and better things," García said.

Victor Lopez's "Macumba" set the auditorium on fire with a tricky Afro-Brazilian rhythm that featured a three-piece percussion section composed of regular-drum-set player Devonne Harris, Greg Loewer on congas and Dean Christesen on clave. Christesen and Loewer stayed right in the pocket while Harris killed it on the timbales. Lilley took his best solo of the night, which was laden with bluesy elements and showed a deep understanding of the tropical rhythm. Split lead trumpeter Rob Quallich soared above the riffs with a range that would humble Arturo Sandoval.

Following that spicy number, Wilson came on stage to perform his composition "Chorale." A beautiful piece

that featured a four-part trombone-chorale introduction, Wilson's arranging chops proved to be worthy of their reputation. As if it weren't enough to merely wow the crowd with deep sensual textures, Wilson's solo was as scary as it was soothing. He conducted the orchestra like a shaman controlling the forces of nature—with each variation in dynamics a response to the dramatic sweeps of his hands. After this piece, Wilson thanked each member of the orchestra and faculty for all they had done to prepare for his arrival.

"It's truly been an honor," Wilson said.

Wilson's tune "Karaoke" revealed a completely different side of the composer.

"It's a wacky word—kind of like my piece. I thought it was an appropriate title," Wilson said.

Featuring a wide variety of timbres using various mutes, instrument pairings and countless shifts in key and time, the song was an acid trip through a disturbing colorful-candy Mardi Gras where John Zorn and Pat Metheny jostle for power.

In keeping with the in-house arrangements, García brought out a student fresh from the boot camp that is Doug Richards' jazz-arranging class to present his first big-band chart. Jazz studies major James Beard II was able to present and conduct his own take on George Gershwin's "Oh Lady Be Good." Beard showed promise and burgeoning wisdom—the band responded well to his writing.

My favorite pieces of the evening came at the end, and Wilson wrote both of them. "W-2 Blues" was a vent on the popular theme of hating taxes and the unpopular Iraq war. Alex Powers on trombone and Jonathan Gibson on alto saxophone took thoughtful, drawn-out solos that kept the drama tight without spoiling the mood, while Harris and Wilson did well

Concert review



to intensify the groove playfully.

"I don't need to get on a soapbox about taxes and what the government is doing with them," Wilson said.

"Ted's Tune" is a Wilson ballad inspired by the late guitar guru Ted Greene, who inspired Wilson at a younger age to play on a higher, more harmonically conscious level. The chord changes illustrated just that—a profound understanding of the world of harmonies that showed how deep Wilson's proficiency in improvisation and composition really is.

Wilson and guitarist Karl Morse accompanied each other over the complex tune and moved the crowd to a thunderous applause.

The band closed the surreal evening with Sammy Nestico's "Ya Gotta Try," at a tempo that would normally make one's head spin. A five-man sax solo was the highlight with David Hood showing his comfort at quick tempos.

Album review: 'A Joyful Noise,' the new voice of VCU Jazz

ROBERTO CURTIS
Spectrum Editor

With endowments trickling in, a recent appearance at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago and the largest enrollment ever, VCU Jazz is on the up-and-up. Add to the growing list "A Joyful Noise," the program's first all-live-recorded album, and you couldn't ask for much more.

There is much to be said about the caliber of VCU Jazz's previous recordings, which include "Things to Come" (1983), "Mood Indigo" (1992) and "It Could Happen to You" (2002). Although some around the department hold the view that the students of yesteryear had a unique, savage lust for their music, there is no denying the prowess displayed by this new school of future pros.

In addition, director of jazz studies and album executive producer Antonio J. García points out a remarkable trait of "A Joyful Noise" no other VCU Jazz CD can.

"No intercuts, remixes, or overdubs were made within any selection ... this

is who we are and how we perform," states García's liner notes.

Being the first jazz orchestra from Virginia to perform at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago, Jazz Orchestra I was dealing with heaps of hype and preparation leading to the event, and that preparation is evident in the performance quality.

According to Andrew Horton, trombone J.O. I, the band was pleased to learn their entire set soon would become the flagship album of VCU Jazz.

"We knew a few selections would be put on a CD for our listening pleasure. I was shocked when (García) told us he'd use the whole set," Horton said.

It was surprising to pop in the album and hear how nice J.O. I's blend was for a live recording. Inner harmonies are discernible, lead lines are not overly prevalent and the bass and drums are not muddled by the size of the Grand Ballroom of the Chicago Hilton.

Eight of the 10 tracks feature student performances while three of those include special guests—trumpet faculty

Rex Richardson, saxophone alumnus Steve Wilson and trombone guest-artist Wycliffe Gordon, faculty member at the jazz-studies program at the Julliard School—performing with J.O. I.

The guest artists add their own charisma and driving force to each song, no doubt a tremendous morale booster for the students in a live setting.

Gordon slays on the blues standard "Green Onions," where he displays his phenomenal range and harmonic control. His didgeridoo technique on the trombone is jaw-dropping.

Steve Wilson—who has recorded with all the heavies from Chick Corea and Billy Childs to Mulgrew Miller and Dave Holland—solos over trumpet faculty member and alumnus Taylor Barnett's arrangement of Woody Shaw's "Beyond All Limits." Wilson's agility over the chord changes and Barnett's wonderful arrangement itself show the kind of intimidating aural coloration that has drawn critical acclaim of the VCU Jazz program for decades.

In addition to the student jazz

orchestra, the album features a student combo, as well as two songs from the Faculty Jazz Septet.

Richardson's virtuosity is featured both in "Beyond All Limits" and in the two faculty songs—Freddie Hubbard's "The Core," arranged by saxophone faculty member Skip Gales, and Rahsaan Roland Kirk's "Bright Moments," arranged by piano faculty member Bob Hallahan.

The grooves are of a different breed of sophistication yet take on a reassuring quality when one realizes on to whom their expertise is getting passed. The students at VCU Jazz are in good hands.

Because "A Joyful Noise" has just arrived, stock is still being processed to Plan 9 Records and CDBaby.com. Unfortunately, the VCU Bookstore has declined to stock the CD until at least this fall. For more information about how to obtain a copy, e-mail Antonio J. García at ajgarcia@vcu.edu. All proceeds go to the VCU Jazz Students Fund.

Grade: A



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For any questions or comments, please contact Garda Ghista at:
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spectrum

weekend calendar

→Thursday 4/17

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts: Third Thursdays Entertainment Series: Latin-dance party. 6 p.m. \$5-\$10. 340-1405.

“Take Back the Night” annual rally: Presentations, musical performance, march around Monroe Park. University Student Commons. 7 p.m. Free.

VCU Music: Small Jazz Ensembles. W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts, Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall. 8 p.m. Free.

VCU Visiting Writers Series: Claudia Emerson and Clint McCown, poetry reading. University Student Commons, Richmond Salons 1 and 2. 8 p.m. Free.

Infuzion: Gypsy Roots. 8 p.m. Free. 249-COOL.

→Friday 4/18

VCU Music: Senior Recital: Jason Mathias, saxophone. Grace E. Harris Hall, Harris Hall Auditorium. 6 p.m. Free.

VCU Spring Senior Dance Project Concert A: Grace Street Theater. 8 p.m. \$5-\$10.

The National: Jason Mraz. 9 p.m. \$25-\$27.50. 612-1900.

Bogart’s: Richmond Afrobeat Movement. 9 p.m. \$5. 353-9280.

→Saturday 4/19

Earth Day & Fish Festival: South of the 14th Street Bridge to 320 Hull St. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. 291-1400.

Jazz Titans of Tomorrow Festival: Antonio García and The No BS Brass Band. 3850 Pittaway Drive, Trinity Episcopal School Lacrosse Field. 1 p.m. Free. 272-5864.

VCU Music: Senior Recital: Julian Rose-Carmack. Grace E. Harris Hall, Harris Hall Auditorium. 7:30 p.m. Free.

→Sunday 4/20

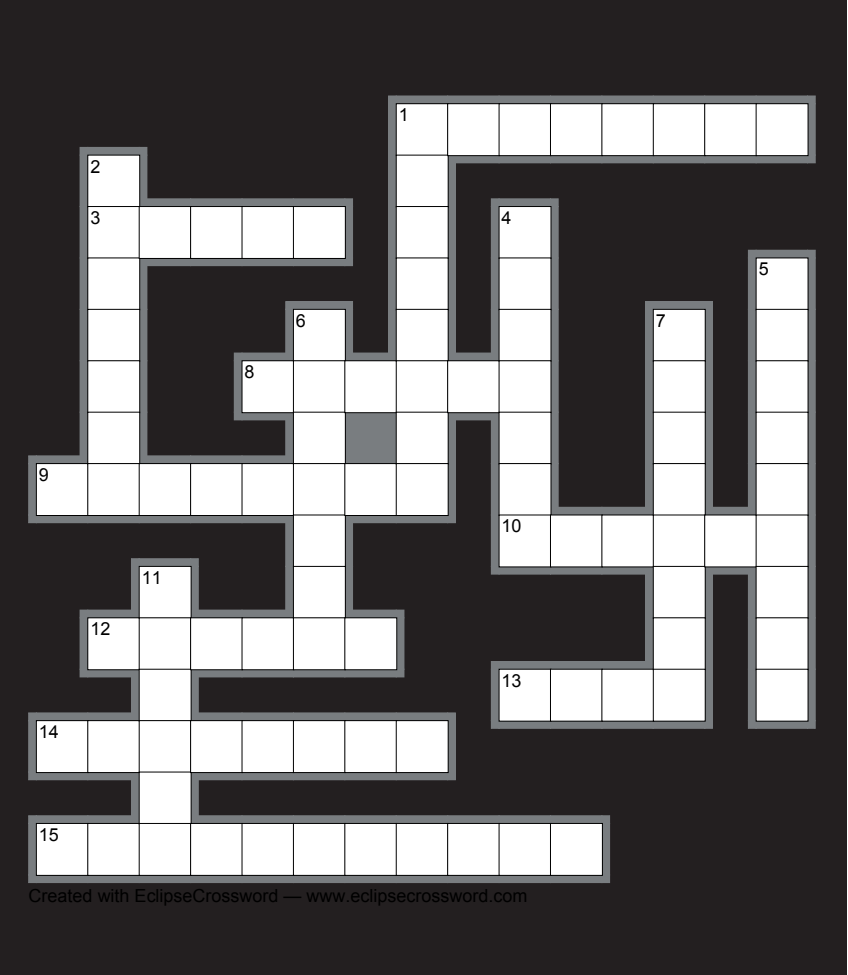
VCU Music: Senior Recital: John Lilley, jazz saxophone. Grace E. Harris Hall, Harris Hall Auditorium. 6 p.m. Free.

Toad’s Place: Streetlife Manifesto. 7:30 p.m. \$12.50-\$15. 648-TOAD.

Commercial Taphouse: Cary Jackson. 9 p.m. Free. 359-6544.

crossword

Parts of the brain



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Across

- 2. "La Borinqueña"
- 4. "Hino Nacional Brasileiro"
- 6. "Marcha Real" (Royal March)
- 8. "O _____." Royal anthem: God Save the Queen.
- 11. "Nahnu Djundulla Djundulwatan" (We Are the Army of God and of Our Land)
- 13. "Aegukka" (The Song of Love for the Country or The Patriotic Song)
- 14. "Il Canto degli Italiani"
- 15. "Imnos eis tin Eleftherian" (Hymn to Freedom)
- 16. "Tien Quân Ca" (The March to the Front)

Down

- 1. Civil anthem: "Phleng Chat" (National Song). Royal anthem: "Phleng Sansoen Phra Baram"
- 2. "Mazurek Dabrowskiego"

- (Dabrowski's Mazurka)
- 3. "The March of the Volunteers"
- 5. Civil anthem: "Du gamla, Du fria" (Thou ancient, Thou free, Thou mountainous North). Royal anthem: "Kungssången" (The Royal Anthem).
- 7. "Lupang Hinirang" (Chosen Land)
- 9. "Advance _____ Fair"
- 10. "Jana Gana Mana" (Thou Art the Ruler of the Minds of All People)
- 12. "La Marseillaise" (The Song of Marseille)

Answers from April 14



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opinion

Virginia Tech *remembered*

RICH GRISET
Opinion Editor

April 16 always will hold a different meaning for those of us who remember the shootings that took place at Virginia Tech a year ago. With the one-year anniversary of the massacre, numerous questions arise.

Many of us had friends and family members attending or working at Virginia Tech, and – even now – it is difficult to describe the panic of that day—the terrified anxiety we felt as we thought of our loved ones in danger.

There seems to be something horribly wrong with our generation that causes this sort of violence. Our parents' generation had no "Virginia Techs," no "Columbine High Schools" and no "Northern Illinois Universities."

Why do members of our generation think it necessary to commit these atrocities?

Some argue concealed weapons should be allowed on campus to deter shootings, and professors should be allowed to carry guns while they teach.

Are these people delusional?

If everyone packs heat, how would the authorities find out if someone plans to shoot up the school?

If I were to see a handgun in someone's bag, I would report the sighting. That person should not have brought that weapon on a gun-free campus, because the only reason to have a gun on campus is to hurt another person.

If we all have guns, who can know someone's true intention until he or she starts shooting?

I firmly believe in the right to bear arms, but with that right comes the responsibility of exercising reasonable restraint. The second amendment is a right, not a privilege, and therefore cannot be taken away—but this cowboy line of thinking where you get into a showdown with a lone gunman is absolutely absurd. Concealed carry would get more people injured or killed by accident than campus shootings ever will.

Some have taken issue with the idea of having fake-gun battles on campus. I'm sorry, but a group of kids with bright yellow-and-orange guns hitting

each other with soft-foam sticky darts is far from troubled behavior. Some of my best experiences at VCU were during my freshman year in the dorms, when the students living on the 13th floor of Rhoads Residence Hall would get into all-out Nerf warfare. I fail to see how a game of "capture the flag" equals shooting up the school.

The real issue our generation faces – the issue that we need to focus on more – is that of mental health. The most tragic element of every school shooting is that it could have been prevented if someone had taken the time to reach out to troubled individuals and to offer them help.

Although it might seem difficult or embarrassing to seek a mental-health professional, I can tell you from my own experience that it is extremely beneficial. Sometimes, to get relief you just need to talk about how you feel and what is going on in your life to an unbiased party. Just talking about my depression helped me. If you or someone you know is feeling down and out, seeking out a counselor never hurts.

Questions about the tragedy at Virginia Tech always will outnumber answers. But two things are certain: the fallen always will be remembered, and the spirit of Virginia Tech is stronger than ever.

Even before the massacre, I felt no campus would bounce back more resiliently from a tragedy than Virginia Tech. Every time I've encountered a Hokie in my life, they always have been filled with great pride – sometimes to the point of annoyance – about their institution. With any hope, these three school tragedies will serve as a reminder to promote mental health and to lend a hand when it's needed.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To whom it may concern:

Throughout our lives, we go about our daily routines; day in, day out they rarely vary and, for the majority of us, this is perfectly acceptable, and we do not think twice about it. But every once and a while, we run across something that is out of place; it might be something we find troublesome or something that is wrong. Regardless, we change it and continue with our routines. However, sometimes, we do nothing. And by doing nothing, the problem grows larger and larger. It begins to involve more people than just one or two individuals; other people begin to notice it as well. Finally, the problem gets to be so large, and so many can no longer bear to deal with it, the problem is addressed and resolved.

This is the current situation with the Monroe Park Campus Student Government Association. It has reached a point where it is no longer legitimate. The problem

we, as a part of this campus, are experiencing is a lack of attention on the issue. As of now, the problem only resonates within the souls of some students. And this is unfortunate, because it only will become an issue to the majority of students when it is too late, and the system is so ineffective that it will cease to exist. Change needs to be made from the top down.

Looking first into the judicial branch, one can see its obvious agenda. For the past two years, a president has been elected after a direct breach of election bylaws. And these breaches were found to be OK by our justices. Our leaders are cheating to become elected representatives of the student body. Last year, a presidential candidate used illegal materials to campaign. She was caught, put on trial and was only required to give an apology. This year, both

LETTER continued to CT17

the
ct

**REBECCA
LANDAU**
Executive Editor

**RICH
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LETTER continued from CT16

senate- and executive-branch candidates harassed and intimidated voters into voting for a particular person*. Numerous reports of these fraudulent tactics were reported. When the former justice went on trial, he was found not guilty by a unanimous verdict.

It is clearly evident the judicial branch finds the SGA's constitution a set of guidelines rather than laws that students must follow. The integrity of the court has been lost.

However those in the judicial branch are not the only ones. Individuals in the executive branch, as stated above, have been elected illegitimately the past two years. The lame ducks have not passed a single bill this term, or – at least – no note of one can be found in their minutes. Their ineptitude to take detailed minutes leads me to think they have large parties and do nothing, for there is hardly a record of what goes on. While they've made strides working for a greener campus, this is the only work I can see being done. Who knows, maybe there is more than meets the eye. However, the lack of transparency of those in the executive branch only further hides them behind a veil of smoke and mirrors. The front they present tries to show an SGA that is hard at work for the VCU student when in reality, the "Oz" we find behind the curtain is nothing more than an illegitimately elected group of do-nothings.

But our misbegotten leaders cannot be blamed for it all. The Senate is as ineffective as the executive branch it fights against. If you sit in on a Senate meeting as I did recently, you will find a room full of students who throw pointless questions around at senators trying to bring forth legislature and amendments. These students do not follow Robert's Rules of Order or even have the courtesy to allow their fellow senators to talk. Numerous times, the vice president had to cease all talking to regain order – an act that was humorous to watch as he was forced to repeat himself five minutes later when he finally announced no more questions were to be asked unless they were relevant. The sheer fact it took three weeks to decide what to do about the illegitimate online ballot this year can go to show not only the lack of organization in the Senate but also its lack of promptness on issues of

importance.

Overall, the SGA is considerably hidden from students. It is opaque. No one knows what is going on, and most do not care, because they do not understand what the SGA does for them. Why should they care when they see the cover of the paper reading "SGA election results scandal"? What they see, instead of a body of students working toward the betterment of campus life, are people who don't care and use corrupt tactics to become elected officials. The SGA needs to make these primary changes before it can change anything constitutionally. The following will better involve students:

- **Spread the word** – Whether through The CT, WVCW, organizational papers, a new Web site, TelegRAMs or daily emails students can sign up for, SGA needs to work to become more transparent. If students know what's going on, they are more inclined to be a part of it.

- **Make it open** – SGA should hold weekly meetings that are open to all students to voice their concerns to representatives. Students should not have to resort to Facebook.com groups and messages to voice their concerns. They also should have access to any information the SGA has at any time in any place.

- **Cooperation** – By working together, SGA shows that it is effective and useful to students. Students will want to become part of something they see works to the best of its ability.

Many will see this letter as politically motivated because of my loss in the executive-director bid. This is not the case at all. Although my ticket's loss has jump-started this demand for change, it would have been initiated had we been elected. This demand for change is rooted in concern about the lack of integrity, legitimacy and effectiveness of the current SGA. The legislative branch has drafted, amended and enacted a constitution for a reason, and if the SGA as a whole refuses to abide by it, why are there rules in the first place? The above ideas have been provided as an example of what one student can think of to better the SGA. Now it is your turn. Make a real change for the SGA and for VCU. Demand reform and demand it now!

Sincerely,
Joshua Ronk

* Editor's Note: This trial was prompted by a grievance filed by Joshua Ronk against Jibran Muhammad. Muhammad was found not guilty because no eye witnesses were produced in the case.



Worse Than Waco

After raiding the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, it appears once again religion trumps law, and most of the "child molesters" (call 'em what they probably are) from a Texas compound will walk away free men. Leave it to Texas to let something like this go on. And leave it to religion to back it up. After receiving several phone calls from a 16-year-old saying her 50-year-old husband raped, beat her and got her pregnant (she already has one child), the authorities decided to step in and search the place. Of course, those in the compound were throwing out the "freedom of religion" bargaining chip automatically, and it just might work for them to an extent. There has been a special master appointed to intercept records, computers and even family Bibles that would be protected for religious reasons.

When the compound was raided, 416 children were taken into custody and among them, many were pregnant teens. The leader of this sect, Dale Barlow, is a registered sex offender and (big shock) has gone missing.

Am I the only person who finds that the whole "freedom of religion" thing has gone a tad too far in this country? Don't get me wrong, I personally could care less about what God you do or do not worship, but when it comes to people hiding behind religion at the expense of a child's well-being, then – sorry – but the government needs to crack down. Personally, I am sick of the whole "I did it because of my religion" excuse. Whether in regard to murder, rape, child molestation or what have you, this country has become a Mickey Mouse version of itself when it comes to letting people ride for their religious beliefs.

From 9/11 onward we will spend billions upon billions of dollars to track down terrorists and break international

laws like they are simple recommendations to prevent another incident of domestic terrorism, yet we can't get by the nut jobs that are doing damage from the inside. Sure, this sect didn't kill anyone (that we know of yet), but girls in the compound were raised to think their only purpose was to breed and boys were raised to believe that it is their job to make sure they have children with these girls. Am I the only one feeling an Elizabethan tone here?

I guess I am meant to believe freedom of religion trumps democracy? When I am told that God loves all his children, I don't think that's what was meant by the phrase. This is no different than what our government has been protesting in other countries for decades, yet we sit back and do nothing here. I almost can guarantee with all certainty that no air raids are being planned on the compound, and tanks aren't rolling in to destroy it, although I would fully support any motion in that direction. The fact these people have amassed wealth (and if you think they haven't, look up pictures of the place) basically to make sex slaves out of young girls is crazy, and the fact we let things like this continue to happen in this country is even more insane.

As for Texas, I am disappointed thoroughly. For a state that uses the death penalty on almost a daily basis*, and where walls are built and deadly force is used to keep out immigrants*, it seems kind of sad that, every few years, we have another sect in that state that is worse than the one before (anyone remember Waco?). Maybe it's just me, but it appears Texas is focusing its attention on the wrong groups; I haven't seen any Latin American compounds full of illegal immigrants molesting and abusing children. Personally, if I were an illegal immigrant, I seriously would consider swimming the Gulf of Mexico to Florida before tossing my child over a fence in Texas because there's no telling what's on the other side anymore.

Sincerely,
Kadie Chandler

*Editor's Notes: In 2007, Texas executed 26 offenders, and currently there is no wall that runs the length of the border between the United States of America and Mexico.

VOTE FOR YOUR EDITOR

For more information, contact Rebecca Landau at editor@commonwealthtimes.com.

The CT will hold elections for executive and managing editors for next school year. Applications for the two positions can be obtained at the Student Media Center at 817 W. Broad St. from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Applications are due by Friday, April 18 at 5 p.m. Candidates will present platform speeches at

the Student Media Center April 18 at 5:30 p.m. Voting will take place by paper ballot following the speeches Friday, April 18 — as well as at the SMC reception desk — until Friday, April 25 at 5 p.m. All staff and contributors from the past school year are eligible to vote.

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PERSONAL

Rachel! Met at Village; re-met at drug-a debate last year. please contact me. IGaveYouARideHome@yahoo.com

Students

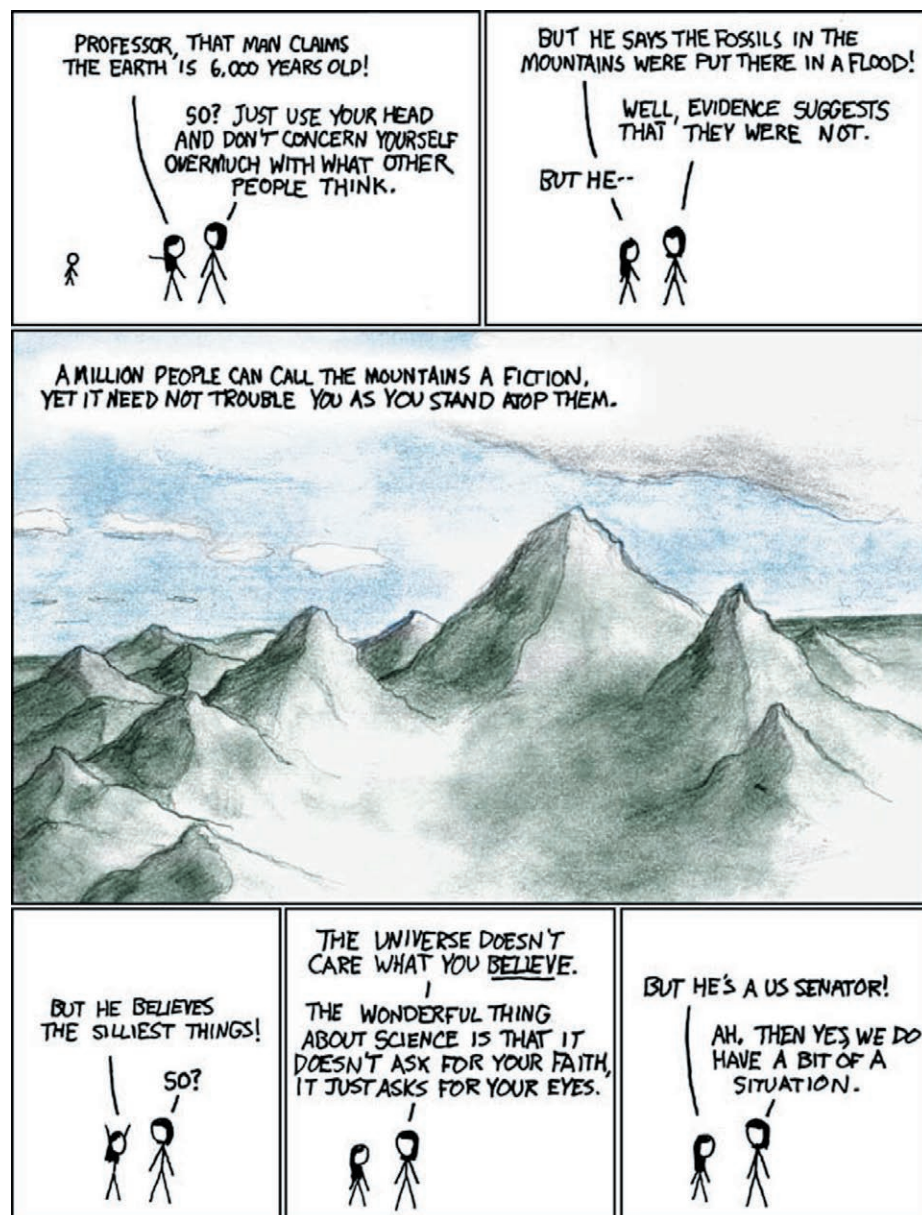


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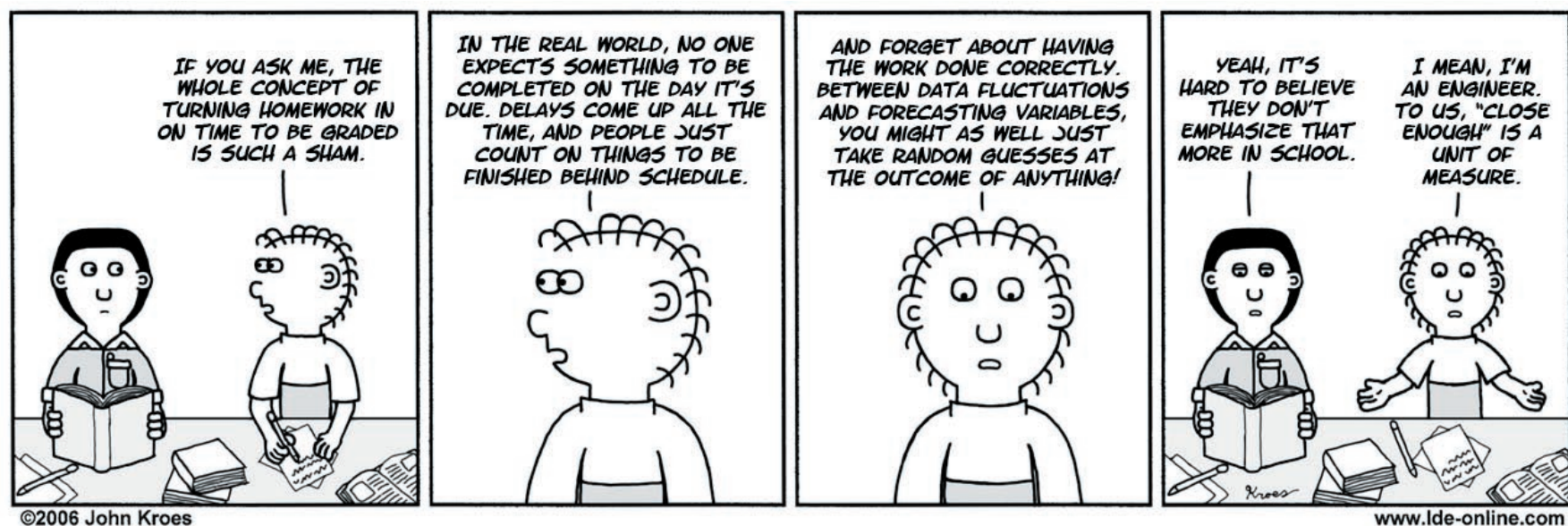
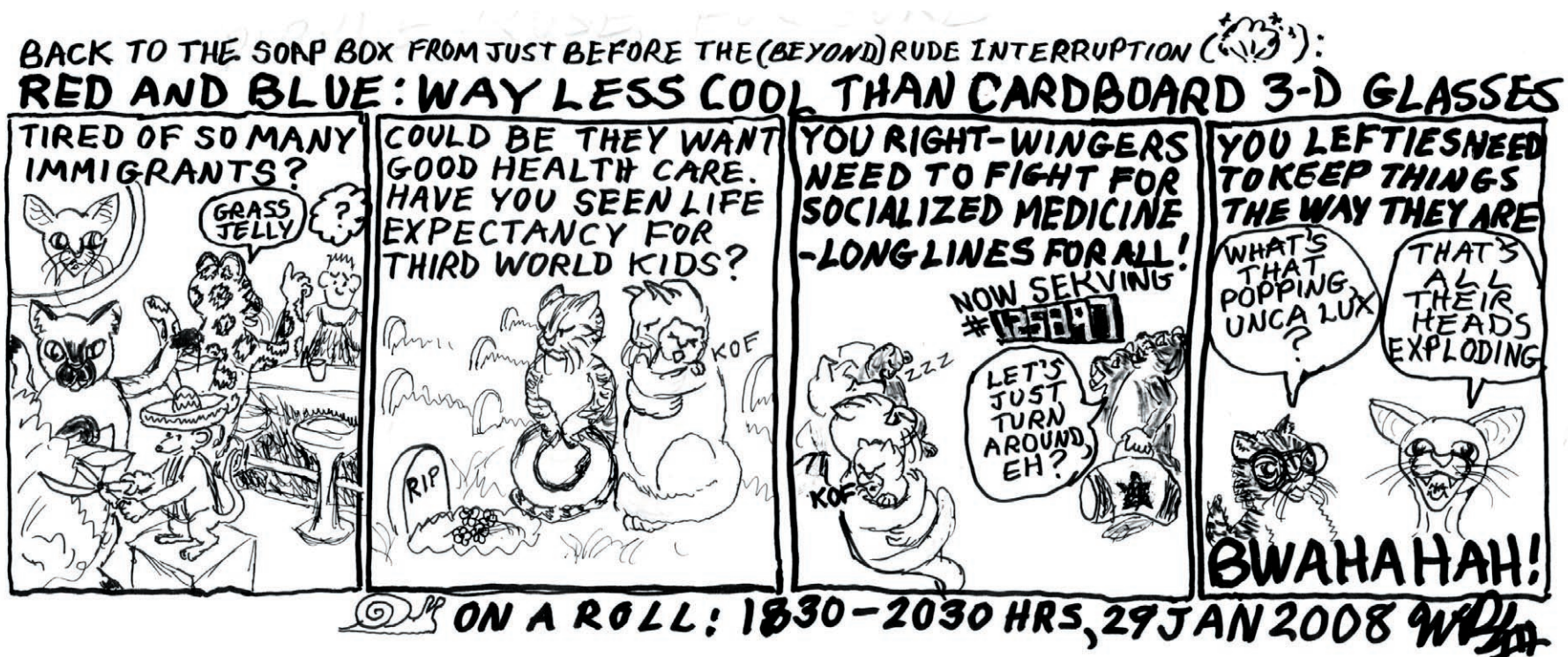


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