



Monday, April 28, 2008 Vol. 47 No. 57

the ct

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

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briefs

This week in the news

Conference at VCU to focus on alcohol misuse among older adults

A conference to examine the risks of alcohol misuse and the potential for alcohol and medication interactions in older adults will be presented in VCU's University Student Commons Tuesday.

"The Hidden Epidemic: Alcohol, Medication and the Older Adult" will be held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and is being sponsored by VCU's Virginia Center on Aging, the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and the Alcohol and Aging Awareness Group.

Michael Weaver, M.D., associate professor in internal medicine at VCU, will discuss the prevalence of alcohol abuse in older adults. Patricia W. Slattum, Pharm.D., Ph.D., an associate professor in VCU's pharmacy department, will discuss using alcohol and medications safely.

The founder of VCU's alcohol-and-drug-education/rehabilitation program in the department of rehabilitation counseling, Marcia J. Lawton, Ph.D., will discuss her book "Beacon of Hope." Debra Jay, author of "Aging and Addiction: Helping Older Adults Overcome Alcohol and Medical Dependence," will serve as keynote speaker.

More than 200 health and social workers, family caregivers and older adults have registered for the conference to learn about the signs and symptoms of alcohol misuse, about

how to address the issue with clients and families and about where to find help.

Information provided by VCU Communications and Public Relations

Law aims to make textbooks more affordable

A law passed recently by the Virginia General Assembly seeks to make textbooks and other learning materials more affordable for students in Virginia's public schools.

House Bill 137, sponsored by Delegate Christopher K. Peace, R-Mechanicville, permits local school boards to enter into contracts with publishers for the purchasing of textbooks.

Identical to Senate Bill 356, sponsored by Sen. John C. Watkins, R-Midlothian, the bill broadens the term "textbook" to include not only print material but also electronic media.

A key component of the legislation calls for local school boards to provide the materials at reduced prices or free of charge to students who are unable to afford them.

The measure was approved unanimously by both the House and Senate and was signed in March by Gov. Timothy M. Kaine. The law takes effect July 1.

"This bill is a step in (the right) direction, allowing for the first time an all-electronic version of the book to be purchased with textbook funds," said

Mark Burnet, director of the Virginia Open Education Foundation.

The foundation is a nonprofit organization that funds educational content for Virginia's K-12 schools.

Brief by Michelle Antogiovanni, Capital News Service

Toll-road compact ends for Va., N.C.

The toll-road agreement between Virginia and North Carolina has reached a dead end.

House Bill 84, sponsored by Delegate R. Steven Landes, R-Weyers Cave, repealed the Virginia-North Carolina Interstate Toll Road Compact established during the 2006 session of the General Assembly.

The original legislation in 2006 allowed both Virginia and North Carolina to set, impose and collect tolls for traffic along Interstate 95.

The toll was not to exceed \$5 for a two-axle vehicle. Proceeds from the tolls would have been split between Virginia and North Carolina after collection and other costs were paid.

North Carolina's General Assembly failed to pass legislation like Virginia's 2006 law, and no compact between the two states has been ratified.

Virginia's charter had hoped the tolls would be used for establishing welcome centers, rest areas and facilities where travelers could obtain food, fuel, souvenirs, and vehicle repairs and

service along the stretch of highway connecting the two states.

The charter also called for the establishment of a compact commission with five legislators from Virginia and five from North Carolina.

The bill to repeal the toll-road compact will take effect July 1, 2009.

Brief by Michelle Antogiovanni, Capital News Service

Small plane crashes into Chesterfield house, killing two passengers

Virginia police say two people aboard a small plane were killed when the aircraft crashed into a Chesterfield County house.

Sgt. Tom Cunningham said one person in the home was taken to VCU Medical Center with burn injuries.

Names of the victims were not immediately available.

The accident happened about 10:20 a.m. Sunday, about eight miles from the Chesterfield County Airport. The house was engulfed in flames, and debris was strewn through the neighborhood, but no other homes appeared to be damaged.

A Chesterfield County Airport manager said the plane took off from his airport moments before crashing.

The Federal Aviation Administration is investigating.

Brief by the Associated Press

cover photo by Rachel Larue

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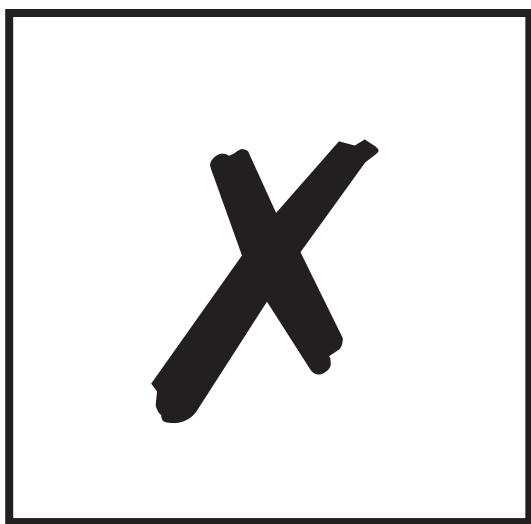
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news



SGA run-off election results confirmed

ANNAYATES
Contributing Writer

The run-off election for the remaining eight Monroe Park Campus Student Government Association senate seats disputed in the March election concluded Thursday.

The complete results can be found on the door of the SGA office and will soon be posted to the SGA Web site, Chair of Elections Angela Bitter said.

Bitter said the run-off election went as planned, despite one glitch in the ballot that allowed people to vote for too many candidates but did not affect the results.

"Nothing's going to be perfect; I think they went as best as we can do," Bitter said. "All the candidates seem to be satisfied with the results."

Steven Latimer, one of the eight winners in the run-off senate race, stated in an e-mail he also was satisfied with the results of the run-off election. Latimer ran for SGA president in March. Joshua Ronk, who ran for executive director on Latimer's ticket, filed a complaint about voter intimidation that was rejected earlier this month.

"This time, voting went much, much smoother," Latimer stated.

Ronk and Latimer's vice-presidential running

CANDIDATES	VOTES
Darrell Coffey	145
Cassandra Harris	137
Jenny You	132
Steven Latimer	106
Tavarris Spinks	94
Joshua Ronk	80
Gonzalo Aida	69
Anthony Spain	61

mate, Gonzalo Aida, also won senate seats.

Bitter said there will be plenty of names to draw from if any of the seats become vacant this summer. It is common for seats to be vacated, she said, as some people drop out or resign. If this happens, the SGA would be able to fill the opening seats by drawing from the candidates who placed lower than eighth in the run-off election, Bitter said.

"There will be a full senate in the fall," she said.

The elected SGA members will be inaugurated Monday.

'Follow code of ethics'

Times-Dispatch editor advises future journalists

REED S. ALBERS
Contributing Writer

Glenn Proctor, executive editor of the Richmond Times-Dispatch, didn't hesitate to fire a reporter for writing a fake news story.

"He was supposed to cover a migrant gathering place in Northern Virginia," Proctor said. The reporter wrote the story, but editors later discovered the place didn't exist.

"It was a very easy firing," Proctor said.

Proctor and Sundra Hominik, a senior editor for the Times-Dispatch, spoke about ethics in journalism during a panel discussion April 23 at the T. Edward Temple Building. The discussion was sponsored by the Society of Professional Journalists to mark Ethics Week.

In discussing the journalist's code of ethics, Hominik cited the first rule: "We want to seek truth and report it."

She then led role-playing exercises in which students were asked to make quick ethical decisions. Newsrooms across the world face ethical decisions every day, she said.

"It's a tough call."

Proctor reminded students their writing will face constant scrutiny.

"People criticize us every day for what we put in the paper," he said.

Proctor referred to former Washington Post reporter Janet Cooke as an example of someone who violated the code of ethics.

In 1981, Cooke wrote a story about an 8-year-old heroin addict. The story, titled "Jimmy's World," garnered national attention and even won a Pulitzer Prize. When questions arose about Cooke's credentials, and community groups wanted to help Jimmy, the truth came out: Jimmy was fictitious, a composite character Cooke created for her story. The Washington Post returned the Pulitzer Prize, its credibility damaged.

Proctor thinks Cooke actually could have met such a boy.

"If she had done her homework, she could have found a story like that in (Washington,) D.C.," he said.

Cooke's lie ended her career.

"(The) last time we heard about Janet Cooke, she was working in retail," Proctor said.

Proctor also spoke about Jayson Blair, a former reporter for The New York Times. Five years ago, Blair filed stories about the suburban Washington, D.C., sniper attacks but never actually interviewed the people he wrote about or visited the area. Further investigation also revealed he had faked

ETHICS continued to CT5



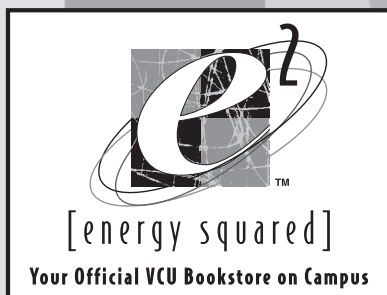


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ETHICS continued from CT3

other stories. Like Cooke, Blair was fired but not without damaging The New York Times' reputation.

Proctor said Cooke and Blair are examples of when reporters do not take ethics seriously.

"People get lazy; Blair filed his dispatches from his apartment in New York City," Proctor said.

Proctor also thinks Cooke and Blair won't be the last journalists to falsify a news story.

"We hear about it every so often."

Proctor told VCU students to remain ethical.

"Your stories have to be balanced; you cannot be one-sided."

Journalists who ignore ethics infringe on the trust of their readers, Proctor said.

"A lot of people don't trust us," he said. "We have to do as much as we can to gain their trust."

Proctor told student journalists to be honest if they breach journalistic ethics.

"Admit when you screw up—it works personally and professionally."

WORD OF THE DAY

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a pattern of beats on a snare
drum executed with alternate
strokes of the sticks

Asthma Study



Do you have Asthma?

Volunteers (ages 18 to 40 years old) are needed for a study about asthma and the common cold. The goal is to improve asthma care. You must have asthma and not smoke. Screening is in progress and involves 2 visits (\$40 will be paid to participants for each visit).

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Screening near VCU, along with reimbursement for travel costs, will be available.

For more information and questions, please call or email.

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Applications for editorial positions on next year's staff can be obtained at the Student Media Center at 817 W. Broad St. from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, contact Stacey Hamman at editor@commonwealthtimes.com.



sports

For Nicole

Athletes,
community
participate
in charity 5k



Participants race in the 'Make it Happen' 5K Run/Walk for the Nicole Megaloudis Foundation.

Allison Fiebert photo

JONATHAN HOWARD
Sports Editor

Dozens of people gathered for a common cause at Richmond's Byrd Park Sunday. Some talked, smiled and laughed. Some kicked around a children's soccer ball. Others enjoyed the taste of free bagels and orange juice.

By the look of it, you wouldn't know that a 5k was about to take place. However, that's exactly what happened. Friends, family and community members gathered to honor the life of former VCU women's soccer player Nicole Megaloudis with the Fourth Annual Nicole Megaloudis Foundation 5K Run/Walk.

Megaloudis died in February 2004 after being involved in a single-vehicle accident in Goochland County, Va., on the way back to school from her home in Northern Virginia. Megaloudis was slated to participate in the Summer Olympics in Athens with

Greece's women's soccer team. Her father's Greek heritage enabled her to be eligible to participate.

Known as a funny and caring person to those who knew her, Megaloudis had a passion for helping others. Because of this, her mother, Gayle, set up the foundation to fulfill the work she thought Nicole to be passionate about.

"We decided that we wanted to do something to keep Nicole's memory alive and continue doing things that she did, because she was such a humanitarian and into helping people," Gayle said.

According to Gayle, Nicole had a passion for wanting

NICOLE continued to CT9

THIS WEEK

BASEBALL

Tue., April 29, vs. VMI, The Diamond, 7 p.m.

Wed., April 30, vs. Norfolk State, The Diamond, 7 p.m.

May 2-4, vs. Towson, The Diamond

MEN'S TRACK & FIELD

Sun., May 4, @ George Mason Invitational, Fairfax, all day

WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD

Sat., May 3, @ George Mason Invitational, Fairfax, all day

Thank goodness for the NFL draft



JONATHAN SAYS

I'm not going to beat around the bush here. I love Al Davis. For years, the owner of the Oakland Raiders has had my affection. Obviously, I'm not a Raiders fan. If I were, I'd be saying exactly the opposite. However, I like Davis a lot, because he keeps me entertained during the season and constantly on my toes during the draft.

Sure, Darren McFadden can be considered easily the top-overall player among those selected for this past weekend's draft. Sure, McFadden is a big-time performer with a lot of potential. But Davis' selection of the Arkansas running back made me – of all things – giggle. In selecting McFadden, Davis seemed to have overlooked some things.

For starters, Oakland already has enough running backs on the roster to field a basketball team, including last year's 1,000-yard rusher Justin Fargas, who averaged almost five yards per carry. Secondly, if Davis is going to spend time on offense, maybe he should take a look

at his oft-injured receiving corps. Lastly, perhaps Davis should have noticed his team spent a lot of the season playing from behind. Maybe it's something other than the offense that's messed up.

At the end of the day, McFadden is going to turn out to be a fine player in the NFL. He probably will rush for more than 1,000 yards in a season within three years and have a chance at a Pro Bowl. But for one day, at least, he made me giggle.

On another note, I've had a number of people ask me recently about my feelings regarding the Dolphins selecting Jake Long, an offensive lineman, as the top-overall pick. The questioner always means it in a way that points towards Miami wasting the top pick (and millions of dollars) on a non-skill position. So what's my answer? I'm completely fine with it. For years under head coach Mike Shanahan, the Denver Broncos have had constant 1,000-yard rushers consistently. Some of the players that have eclipsed this mark under his

watch include "all-stars" Olandis Gary and Mike Anderson. Others include true all-stars such as Terrell Davis. No matter who touches the ball, what has been the key to their success? The offensive line! The Dolphins' offensive line has been a weak link for several years now, and last season, it did nothing but get worse—just like the rest of the team.

With a team that needs rebuilding on both sides of the ball, you have to start with the groundwork. A good offensive line is the key to a good and productive offense.

Long will come in and play right away and will be key to the re-building of a once-proud team. Yes, the Fins could have started on the defensive side of the ball and taken Chris Long as Jason Taylor's eventual replacement as leader of the D-line, but with the quarterback situation still up in the air, someone has to run protection. Furthermore, those Broncos teams didn't fare so poorly—now did they?

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Sports Briefs

BASEBALL

Rain once again interfered with VCU's schedule in its weekend series at James Madison. Junior R.J. Schenk's (Yorktown/Tabb) seventh-inning two-run home run put the Rams on top and gave them the 6-4 win. Saturday's action was suspended in the bottom of the third inning with the Rams leading 5-3 and was resumed Sunday morning. The Dukes came back to win 9-7 Sunday and took the rubber match 13-6 that afternoon. Junior Jared Bolden (Lynchburg/E.C. Glass) homered twice in the day. The Rams fall to 4-14 in the Colonial Athletic Association and 11-26 overall.

MEN'S BASKETBALL

Head coach Anthony Grant signed a contract extension with VCU this past week through the 2013-2014 season. Grant has led the Rams to a 52-15 record in two seasons and earned Colonial Athletic Association Coach of the Year following the 2006-2007 season. The announcement came a day after Eric Maynor (Raeford, N.C./Westover)

decided he will return to the Rams for his senior season.

MEN'S TRACK & FIELD

Senior Jason Gallo (Rochester, N.Y./Eastridge), sophomores DeAngelo Wilson (Richmond/Prince Edward County) and Jamal Blyden (Virginia Beach/Landstown) and freshman Antonio Norvell (Portsmouth/I.C. Norcom) teamed up in the 4x200 to break a 13-year-old school record with a time of 1:25.11—nearly a second faster than the old record. The quartet finished the event in ninth place out of 52 teams.

WOMEN'S TRACK & FIELD

The team of seniors Erika Banks (Hampton/Bethel) and Sharmane Duren (Richmond/Varina), along with junior Whitney Key (Goochland/Goochland) and sophomore Cassandra Thondique (Norfolk/Granby), placed again in the all-time VCU top-10 in the 4x400 relay with a time of 3:52.14 at the Penn Relays.

NICOLE continued from CT7

to help those in other countries. Because of this, part of the donations received from the 5k and other events hosted by the foundation is sent to countries such as Ghana and Haiti for purposes such as funding education. The other part of the money is set aside for scholarships for high school students who show leadership abilities and financial need.

"She (Nicole) decided that she wanted to help people ... the run is kind of an extension of that," said friend and former roommate Melanie Simonich.

Some that showed up to participate in the 5k didn't see it as a competition, but in the spirit of keeping Nicole's memory alive and helping others in the process, saw the race as a chance to reflect.

"It's just great to see everyone out here and just keeping her spirit alive. It's a time where everyone she really cared about can get together," Simonich said.

"It's a competitive thing if you want it to be a competitive thing ... if they want to take the three laps to think about what kind of person their friend was, they can do that, too," said Stephanie Power, a current member of the soccer team.

VCU women's soccer co-head coach Tim Sahaydak agreed the 5k means more than just running a race.

"It's extremely important for the VCU soccer program, because I think it's traditions like this that help teach the girls things outside of the soccer field," Sahaydak said.

On a rainy day, when normally most people might have stayed inside, the 5k had plenty of attendees. One attendee eventually won, and one eventually crossed the finish line last. However, on a day meant to remember Nicole Megaloudis, her mother made sure to point out that winning wasn't the focus.

"It's really more of a reunion than anything else to bring people back together ... we celebrate her on this day."

"Building a New World" Conference

May 22-25, 2008 – Radford University, Ra

In 2008 many of us understand that our nation, and even the entire planet, are in a state of crisis. The deep longing for positive, lasting change is the bedrock upon which this conference is based. How do we fix our country and our world? And how can we form one mass movement to address the crisis?

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spectrum

Senior choreographers show promise of bright futures

dance
review

ROBERTO CURTIS
Spectrum Editor

If senior dance projects are the ultimate test for graduating student choreographers, then the dance-and-choreography department should be proud of their polished progeny.

For the first time, the Spring Senior Project Dance Concert had to be divided into a two-weekend affair because of the size of the senior class. Six out of 10 seniors presented their final projects this weekend at the Grace Street Theater—the other four, Hannah Frisch, Samantha Crawford, Katie Dean and Danielle King, presented the weekend prior.

The results were stunning, with the choreography nearly overshadowed by the quality of the dancers selected for the works themselves.

Though the pieces with larger ensembles came off as more visually stunning, the beauty of the concert shone through in nearly every aspect, from the subtleties of the lighting and music, to the dramatic duets and solos.

Tony E. Colden Jr.'s "Configured Time" was an octet of mostly upper-classmen who danced to ambient metronomic music by the esoteric John Zorn, Jaga Jazzist and Motorpsycho. The synchronization of music and movement stood out in particular, probably because of the added input from the choreographer and Robbie Kinter's highly regarded sound engineering—as the department's music director, Kinter's fingerprints can be found on



Amanda Garrison in Tashara Moorehead's 'Spirit Wrapped in Flesh'

Rachel Larue
photo spread

nearly every work choreographed by the department's faculty and students. The seniors in the cast added a layer of experience that was no doubt a morale booster for the younger members of the ensemble. Tashara Gavin-Moorehead – who also choreographed the last piece of the evening – and Glen Lewis were the focus of the climactic work, though supporting dancers were incorporated thoughtfully and were not overshadowed by the duet.

Adrienne LaNee' Moody's "It's Time She Knows" was a colorful quartet of freshmen set to very slow and soothing, yet tense music. Margaret Allen, Anneke Collins, Courtney Cook and Allison Meyer interpreted Moody's creative structures wonderfully. Especially striking was the trio that featured each dancer performing individual motions while revolving together. As the dancers began to throw themselves to the ground, the thuds of their impact made the piece difficult to watch.

"preSSed" might have been the most-perfectly synched work of modern dance and music I've ever seen. With choreography by Ami Dowden-Fant, hardly a sporadic musical blip went by without a dancer interpreting it in some way. Dowden-Fant's octet featured a diverse, limber cast that paired well with one another in every conceivable combination. Transitions were seamless as duos shifted from quartets to trios to unison ensemble. The lighting was fantastic and added to the diverse textures that seemed to morph and erupt like a





Courtney Cook, Margaret Allen and Allison Meyer perform Adrienne Moody's 'It's Time She Knows.'

violently bubbling cauldron.

Like Colden's piece, Melaney Cash's "Guided Reflection" was focused on a duet. Danielle King and Colden interacted throughout the work, though the supporting dancers – in this instance – took more of a backseat role. Each dancer had specific interaction with the duet, resulting in variance in King's and Colden's movement from then on. Cash's poignant ending was captured marvelously through abstract industrial music and somber lighting as a lone figure was left with nothing but darkness to contemplate.

Alex Miegel's "Ethereal Emissaries" incorporated a prim, regal feel. A chandelier hung from upper stage left while Miegel's sextet channeled his interpretation of the supernatural through ornate, flowing costumes or plain, ghostly garb and classical, ballet-like movement. Ghosts and mortals mingled beautifully in what was reminiscent of a dreamy masquerade ball.

Gavin-Moorehead's piece, "Spirit Wrapped in Flesh," was as sensuous as it was spooky. It was impressive both because of the size of the ensemble and because of how convincingly and uniformly the



Jasmine Domfort and Tashara Gavin-Moorehead perform Tony Colden Jr.'s 'Configured Time.'

promise

Rachel Larue
photo spread

dancers phrased their movement. Minimal lighting and red-and-black costumes cast a sassy tinge that paired well with the raw feminine attitude of Gavin-Moorehead's nine-member cast. The members' technique was particularly noteworthy, both throughout the solos and in the dozens of combinations they formed. Among the cast, Danielle Currica, Jaclyn Rea and Megan Thompson stood out for their remarkable technique and expression.

The caliber of work presented was no surprise. Every year, the senior class unleashes the best ideas and a culmination of experience onto the audience with fantastic results. The upcoming fall projects undoubtedly will be no exception.

CT Photography Editor Rachel Larue contributed to this review.



Megan Harrold and Glen Lewis perform Ami Dowden-Fant's 'preSSed'.



Taking Shortbus to Afrobeat Movement proves grand—and *that's no Bull*

KEMI OWENS-HART

Associate Spectrum Editor

Bikes tethered to every available parking meter and traffic sign lined the 600 block of downtown Main Street this past Thursday night.

As an eclectic mix of young and old shuffled past the large, open windows of Capital Ale House, the screaming virtuosic trumpet solo that spilled from those windows made it clear this was not going to be a typical weekday bar excursion.

For the past seven years, Style Weekly—a publication that describes itself as “Richmond’s alternative for news, arts, culture and opinion”—has hosted its annual Music Issue Party at various venues in the city. The truly intoxicating concoction Capital Ale House served up last week included bands Fight the Big Bull, the Richmond Afrobeat Movement and Special Ed & the Shortbus.

Fight the Big Bull opened the show with its signature style. Attempting to relegate its sound to one musical genre would be doing the band a great disservice, as it incorporates jazz modes, the

brass-laden sound of big bands and the asymmetrical, driving rhythmic patterns of the avant-garde. As the band members played through their set, one word came to mind: cohesion. Each member of Fight the Big Bull is completely in tune with himself, the band and the environment. This quality makes the group exude a sort of quiet intensity. Watching—or moreso, experiencing—the dialogues between trombonists Reginald Pace and Bryan Hooten is like watching a debate between two skilled orators—their points are convincing and passionate without missing a beat.

With waiters running in and out of the room, which had been cleared of its tables to provide spectator space, the Richmond Afrobeat Movement took the stage with the now-crowded area abuzz.

While Fight the Big Bull excels in the electricity of the calm before the storm, the Richmond Afrobeat Movement throws the listener right into the middle of it. The myriad of West African rhythms and soaring scale passages of individual solos made even the 40- and 50-somethings in the crowd—some well

past their first or second drink of the night—nod their heads and tap their feet in spite of themselves. Despite the sound engineer’s inability to mic the 11-piece ensemble properly for its first ten minutes on stage, the band played through it all, inciting the crowd to dance before the set even officially began.

It is difficult to put a finger on exactly what makes seeing Afrobeat perform such a good time. Perhaps it is the band members’ stage presence—their choreographed dances and encouraging nature exudes a contagious positivity—or simply the unmistakable sense of raw, young talent. The face of the Richmond Afrobeat Movement has undergone some major changes over the past year, but its formula has produced impressive results consistently.

Even though the crowd had thinned

later into the night, there was still a significant presence for the bluegrass sounds of Special Ed & the Shortbus. Exchanging light-hearted banter, the band’s commitment to its on-stage personality provided a nice change of pace, exemplifying the variety of the night’s lineup. Fiddler Aaron Lewis, donning a sailor hat and a substantial beard worthy of an old-timey bluegrass band, was a definite standout performance of the night. Technically solid and well-versed in the style he was playing, Lewis’ control of the fiddle would impress even the most rigidly trained classical player.

Even though there was a significant mix-up with checks as everything wrapped up, the friendly waitstaff, the Style personnel and the excellent music made for quite the enjoyable night. Kudos to all involved—job well done.



Kemi Owens-Hart photo

The Richmond Afrobeat Movement, from left: Alex Powers, Mary Hicks, Lucas Fritz, Sean VandeLinde and Charles Nill.

Check this out:

Jason Gareau photo



MFA Film and Photography Candidacy Show

ROBERTO CURTIS

Spectrum Editor

To check out the best the photography-and-film department has to offer, one needs to look no further than Plant Zero, where the First Year MFA Photo/Film Candidacy Show is being held through May 3.

The exhibition premiered this Friday and featured a wide array of interactive multimedia installations. MFA students John Hendershot, Nia Burks, Jennida Chase and Hassan Pitts had works on display for the opening exhibition, which was well received by

the 100-plus visitors that evening.

In addition to isolated projection screens and sound installations, individual portable screens are on hand and are headphone-equipped for individual viewers.

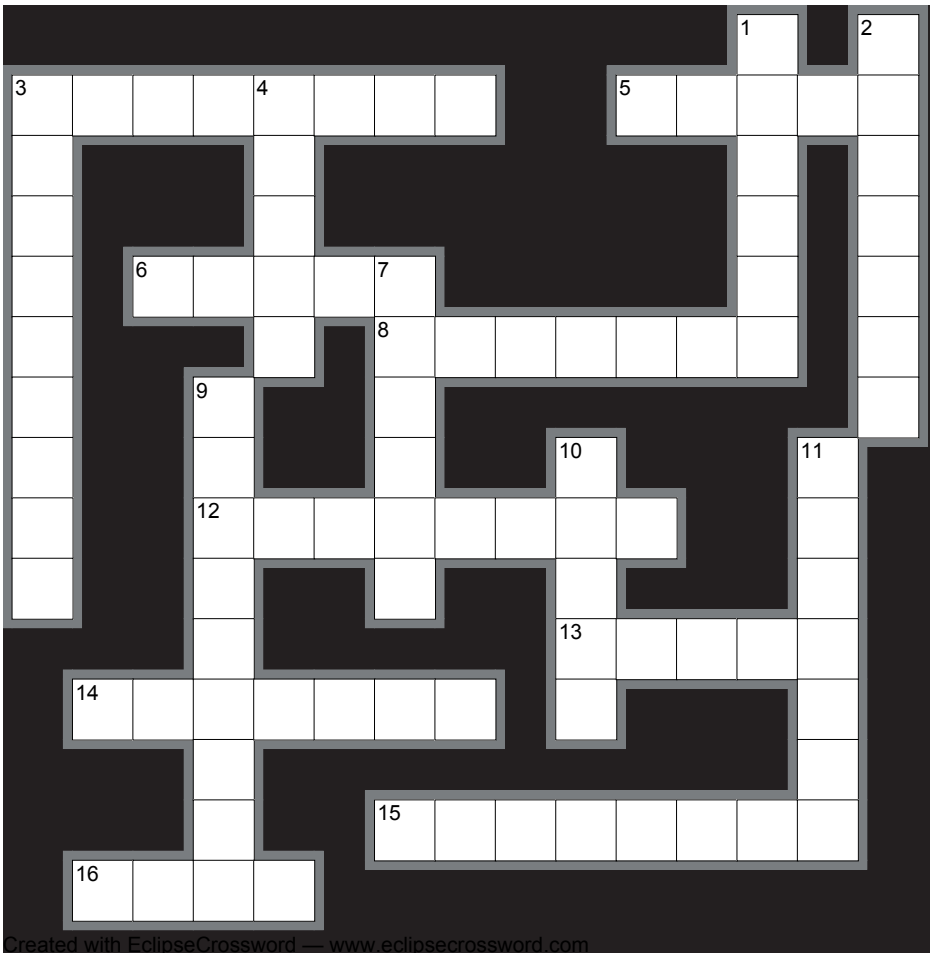
Though all the participating students opted for film and sound as their medium, the results are varied, experimental and thought-provoking—definitely worth checking out.

Plant Zero is located at 0 E. Fourth St. and is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call 804-231-6500 for more information.



crossword

Super hero identities



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Across

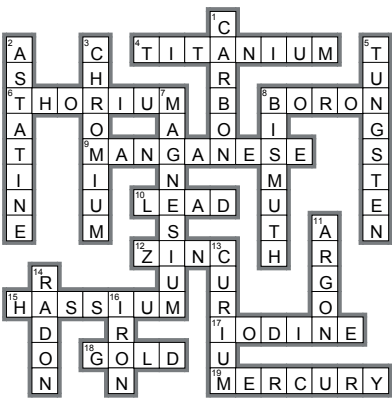
3. Clark Kent
5. Eric Brooks
6. Benjamin Jacob Grimm
8. Arthur Curry
12. Frank Castle
13. Al Simmons
14. Erik Lehnsherr
15. Doug Funnie
16. Dr. Robert Bruce Banner

Down

1. Bruce Wayne
2. Anung un Rama
3. Peter Parker

4. Dick Grayson
7. Remy LeBeau
9. Kara Zor-El
10. Dr. Henry Philip "Hank" McCoy
11. Anthony Edward "Tony" Stark

Answers from April 24



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opinion

RICH GRISET
Opinion Editor

Abraham Lincoln once said, “a house divided against itself cannot stand.” If this is so, the Monroe Park Campus Student Government Association is in shambles.

I realize I am generalizing about all SGA members, and for that, I am sorry. The majority of the SGA probably wants to help provide the student body a better atmosphere while at VCU—but most of the SGA members I’ve dealt with have acted like catty, immature children drunk on visions of their own self-importance.

At least, with real politics, there are important issues being discussed beyond all the infighting and bickering. The United States Congress makes real decisions that affect many lives and that shape the course of our nation. The SGA should be more than a glorified high-school-prom committee.

The CT has been sent numerous letters to the editor personally attacking other SGA members regarding the elections, judicial rulings and other nonsense. These people do not have the courtesy to distinguish between professional disagreements and personal attacks.

Before the second elections took place,

SGA Holes

I couldn’t decipher what was going on. But then again, even Jessica Lee, the current SGA president, seemed not to have a grip on what was happening. In the April 21 issue of The CT, Lee was quoted about the lack of communication in the SGA.

“It’s ridiculous,” Lee said. “It’s like trying to get information out of a wall.”

There had been such a lack of information that, Lee reportedly said, some SGA candidates didn’t even know if there would be another election. Trying to find information on the SGA Web site is as challenging as running past the bums between Little Caesar’s and Hell Block with a fresh pizza.

The VCU SGA needs to get its act together. It needs an accurate Web site so that students can stay better informed about what is going on.

The SGA should direct more money to advertising both its existence and ways to contact its members. The SGA members



should be much more vocal about ways students can reach them and can submit problems to be discussed.

Currently, a voting grievance only can be submitted within the 24 hours after an election concludes. To give students a fair opportunity to submit grievances, the bylaws should be changed to allow a grievance to be submitted within at least the first three days after voting has ended.

Votes need to be counted in a timely fashion so they still have significance. The SGA Joint Elections Committee, which oversees elections, needs to be strengthened tenfold if it’s going to deter voting discrepancies.

Bylaws also should be put into place that discourage infighting among higher-

ranking members of the SGA. Presidents, vice presidents and justices should not be ripping apart other members of the SGA publicly, especially when they have decided a case involving other members. Official judicial opinions are where ideas should be expressed—not in personal-attack letters.

VCU SGA members have a long way to go if they want to rebound from the past few weeks.

Encouraging the honorable President Eugene P. Trani to sign the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment is a step in the right direction, but—as a whole—the SGA just needs to get organized and fix the holes in their organization. SGA members need to provide information and transparency about their workings and need to promote themselves better.

A house divided cannot stand, but with a solid foundation, the SGA might get back on its feet again.

War to the max

JOHN S. WILSON
Contributing Writer

Have you checked your credit score lately? I usually check mine about twice a year, and discrepancies are somewhat common. I’ve seen some little stuff (an old hospital bill—that can wait), and I’ve seen some big stuff (the Internal Revenue Service—whoa, that can’t be me). What I had yet to see – until now – was my share of a trillion-dollar war.

The Bush administration continues to tell the American people we are going to reap the benefits of our continued operations in Iraq—regardless of the Defense Department noting 30,000 injuries and more than 4,000 casualties, the escalation of conflicts between Sunni and Shiite insurgents, no weapons of mass destruction (nope, no nukes) found and insufficient evidence of a credible threat to national interests (no Yellow-cake uranium bought in Nigeria, either). And amid all the administration’s talking, there has

been no mention of how we will pay for everything.

After Sept. 11, the country was in a malaise, and Americans felt Bush empathized with them. Bush traveled to New York’s ground zero, put on a hard hat and gave a speech. It was all very touching. The political capital Bush developed was immense, and – in 2003 – he decided to do a little shopping.

Congress passed a joint resolution authorizing “the use of force against terrorists” and appropriated the necessary funds to make this action possible. The administration estimated the war would cost \$50 billion, and Iraqis would pay their share of reconstruction costs by using oil revenues.

I certainly wanted to believe the administration. This was why I felt confident enough in Bush to vote for him in 2004. Unfortunately, five years after the beginning of the War in Iraq, according to the nonpartisan Congressional

LETTER continued to CT17

the
ct

**REBECCA
LANDAU**
Executive Editor

**RICH
GRISET**
Opinion Editor

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WAR continued from CT16

Budget Office, America has spent about \$845 billion on the war. Iraqis have yet to contribute any significant amount of funds, and my generation disproportionately will bear the brunt of the costs.

During Bill Clinton's administration, Joseph Stiglitz was former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, the group responsible for the president's economic policy. Stiglitz estimated the cost of operations will total \$3 trillion. Worse yet, Stiglitz calls this a low estimate.

Undoubtedly, this debt will not be a problem for Bush, who exits office in less than a year, or – more specifically – for his generation. The baby-boomer generation – which includes my

parents and other nice folks – will not be asked to foot the bill for this debt. In 20 years, the last wave of baby boomers will reach retirement age, yet this debt will still exist. If U.S. Sen. John McCain has his way, we'll still be in Iraq, too.

While baby boomers received tax cuts during the past seven years, the national debt continued to increase at a phenomenal rate.

The U.S. Treasury notes that U.S. debt rose from \$2 trillion in 2001, when Bush took office, to more than \$9 trillion today. According to the Federal Reserve System, the U.S. spent nearly \$430 billion on interest payments this past year alone. And the interest will continue to rise.

My generation, named the "Millennials" generation by authors Neil Howe and William Strauss, will be paying for this war and its to-be-determined aftermath. We in this generation will pay for the troops who have become stationed permanently in Iraq "securing democracy" for the future; we will pay for the physical rehabilitation and mental-health care of Iraq War veterans, who return home as a shell of their former selves; we will pay for the increased interest rates of the war debt and the national debt as a whole.

We will pay the staggering costs incurred by having a less-educated, less-skilled and less-healthy citizenry that has developed because of a lack of

educational parity among our youth. This inequality has been exacerbated by an endemic bureaucratic mismanagement that chronically underfunds our public-school system and by an overburdened health-care system that disproportionately disenfranchises the poor.

No longer should neoconservatives and "lame ducks" habituating Washington, D.C., solely determine how much longer this war should last.

If my generation is going to foot the bill, then we deserve to be heard, too.

Next time Bush asks Congress to swipe our charge card yet again, I yearn to hear: "Sorry, Mr. President—it's been declined."



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Jonathan Scheer and Nate Waggoner



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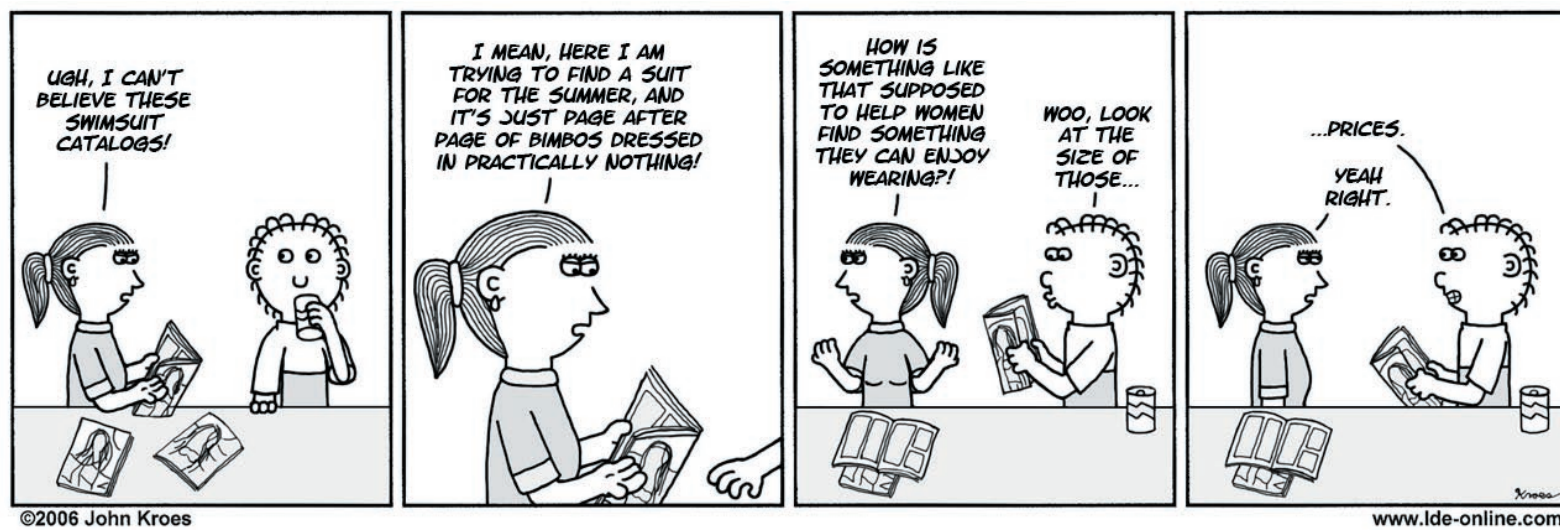
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