



Wednesday, Aug 27, 2009 Vol. 50 No.3

# the ct

## News ▶

Sprinkler sprays A-OK · 3

## Sports

Big 12 college  
football preview · 6

## Spectrum

Old Bogart's  
transformed · 9

## Opinion

Health care fact check · 14



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

[commonwealthtimes.com](http://commonwealthtimes.com)

# Alumna revisits Richmond

— page 9

free





# briefs

Jennifer Ling  
cover photo

## Local and VCU

### Chris Brown sentenced in Rihanna assault case

Richmond Police Chief Bryan Norwood will oversee R&B singer Chris Brown's community labor sentence stemming from his beating of former girlfriend Rihanna.

A judge on Tuesday sentenced Brown to five years' probation and six months' community labor for the beating of Rihanna and ordered the pop star to stay away from his former girlfriend for the next five years.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Patricia Schnegg told Brown that he could be sent to state prison if he violated any terms of his sentence, including an order to stay 100 yards away from Rihanna unless they're attending music industry events.

Brown will serve his sentence in his home state of Virginia.

*Brief by The Associated Press*

### Remains identified of missing Chesterfield woman

Chesterfield County police said Tuesday skeletal remains found Aug. 18 are those of a woman missing for more than eight years. Police said it was uncertain what killed Pamela Sue Dodson and they are continuing to investigate the circumstances of her death.

Dodson, 32, was last seen May 4, 2001, after her brother dropped her off at House of Dave's Restaurant at about 10 p.m. When he returned to pick her up about an hour later, she was gone. Dodson's family reported her missing 10 days later.

Maintenance workers found her remains near the Falling Creek Apartments on the 2500 block of Marina Drive. Authorities originally said they did not know the person's gender or exactly how long the remains had been there.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

### Retired VCU professor dies at 71

Joseph Liberti, who lived in Richmond, died unexpectedly Friday at a local hospital after suffering an aortic aneurysm. He was 71.

Liberti came to Richmond in 1967 as an assistant professor in the department of biochemistry at MCV. As a full-time professor, he taught at VCU's schools of medicine, pharmacy, dentistry and graduate studies. Liberti retired in 2000.

Over the years, Liberti trained and inspired many medical students and ran a research program with a focus on the structure and function of growth hormones, said Glenn Van Tuyle, a colleague and friend at VCU's School of Medicine.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

## National and International

### Mass. Sen. Ted Kennedy dies at age 77

Sen. Ted Kennedy, the liberal lion of the Senate and haunted bearer of the Camelot torch after two of his brothers fell to assassins' bullets, died at his home in Hyannis Port Wednesday after battling a brain tumor. He was 77.

For nearly a half-century in the Senate, Kennedy was a powerful voice on health care, civil rights and war and peace. To the American public, though, he was best known as the last surviving son of one of America's most famous political families, the eulogist of a clan shattered again and again by tragedy.

His family announced his death in a brief statement released early Wednesday.

*Brief by The Associated Press*

### Most red ink ever: \$9 trillion over next decade

The White House is predicting a 10-year federal deficit of \$9 trillion—more than the sum of all previous deficits since America's founding. And it says by the next decade's end, the national debt will equal three-quarters of the entire U.S. economy.

Before President Barack Obama can do much about it, he will have to weather recession aftershocks including unemployment that his advisers said Tuesday will still reach 10 percent.

In a brace of new estimates, White House and congressional budget analysts said the economy will shrink overall by 2.5 to 2.8 percent this year even as it begins to climb out of the recession. Those estimates reflect this year's surprisingly deep economic plunge.

*Brief by The Associated Press*

### Pakistani Taliban admit leader Mehsud dead

After weeks of denials, two Pakistani Taliban commanders acknowledged Tuesday that the group's top leader, Baitullah Mehsud, was dead—claiming he died 18 days after a U.S. missile strike and disputing reports that the al-Qaida linked movement he left behind was falling apart.

Pakistani officials said the Taliban were in disarray after Mehsud was killed in a CIA missile strike Aug. 5 and that his would-be successors were locked in a bitter power struggle. Some unconfirmed reports said two contenders — Hakimullah Mehsud and Waliur Rehman — were killed in a shootout during a meeting to choose an heir.

Mehsud's death is a victory for the United States and Pakistan. Pakistan considered him its No. 1 internal threat because of the numerous attacks he staged on its soil, while the Americans saw him as an unacceptable danger to the stability of a nuclear-armed ally and to the war effort in neighboring Afghanistan.

*Brief by The Associated Press*

the  
ct

ROBERTO CURTIS, Executive Editor  
editor@commonwealthtimes.com, 828-6516

NATALIE ALLEN &  
CATHERINE MACDONALD,  
Managing Co-Editors  
managing@commonwealthtimes.com,  
828-6516

RICH GRISET, News Editor  
news@commonwealthtimes.com, 828-6056

JEROME FOSTER, Sports Editor  
TAYLOR HOWSMON,  
Associate Sports Editor  
sports@commonwealthtimes.com,  
828-2420

VERONICA GARABELLI,  
Spectrum Editor  
spectrum@commonwealthtimes.com,  
828-5317

ERIC HILL, Opinion Editor  
opinion@commonwealthtimes.com,  
828-7108

JAKE CUNNINGHAM, Photography Editor  
photo@commonwealthtimes.com, 828-4770

MARY FRANKE, Production Manager  
MELISSA TABLANTE  
& PATRICE DALESANDRO,  
Production Assistants  
production@commonwealthtimes.com,  
828-7660

CAROLINE EVERTZ, Graphic Designer  
graphics@commonwealthtimes.com,  
828-4770

GREG WEATHERFORD,  
Student Media Director  
gowweatherfor@vcu.edu, 827-1975

LAUREN GEERDES, Business Manager  
827-1642

PATRICIA RODRIGUEZ, Accounts Manager  
ctaccounts@gmail.com, 828-2544

CHRISTINA DICK,  
Director of Advertising Sales  
ctadvertising@gmail.com, 828-6629

MATT SCHMIDT  
& JOEL ABERCROMBIE,  
Advertising Representatives,  
ctadvertising@gmail.com, 828-5019

FRANCES CORREA, Multimedia Editor  
webmaster@commonwealthtimes.com

BILL LEMMOND, Circulation Director

*The Commonwealth Times strives to be accurate in gathering news. If you think we have made an error, please call Executive Editor Roberto Curtis at 828-1058 or e-mail him at editor@commonwealthtimes.com. Corrections will appear on the Opinion page.*

*Limit one CT per person. Additional copies may be purchased through the Student Media Center for \$1 a copy.*

817 W. Broad St., P.O. Box 842010  
Richmond, VA 23284-2010

Thursday, August 27, 2009



# news

## Did you know?

- The comic book collection at James Branch Cabell Library is the fifth largest in the United States.
- It currently houses more than 30,000 comic books.

Mel Kobran photo illustration

## Authorities: No Shafer sprinkler malfunction

**RICH GRISET**  
*News Editor*

When a fire broke out in a trash compactor behind Shafer Court Dining Center Sunday, only one of the 12 sprinklers activated, and it deployed 45 minutes after the fire alarm went off. Both the Richmond Fire Department and VCU contend that the sprinkler system worked correctly, and neither is conducting investigations into what caused the fire or the operation of the sprinklers.

"The sprinklers worked exactly as they should be activated," said Pamela Lepley, the director of VCU Communications and Public Relations. "This

was not a heat intensive fire. In fact, it was more smoldering than flames, and so it only affected one sprinkler because there wasn't enough heat to cause other sprinklers to go off."

Ken Farmer, a branch chief for the National Fire Academy, said sprinklers are designed to contain a fire instead of eliminate it, and that sprinklers are usually set to go off individually, and not as part of a set. Farmer and others at the National Fire Academy refer to this misperception as the "Hollywood Effect" because of its common attribution to movies.

"Movies and TV have not done us justice in regards to sprinklers," said David Creasy, the fire marshal for the



City of Richmond.

According to Creasy, sprinklers usually have a heat-activated fusible link that melts out when a fire reaches a certain temperature. When the link melts, it releases a cap in the head of a sprinkler, allowing water to flow. Damage is kept to a minimum because only the activated heads go off.

Creasy said in his experience it's uncommon for all sprinklers in a system to deploy.

"It's possible, but it's rare," he said.

Lepley said the university is "pretty sure" hot coals from a grill station caused the fire. The coals were not cool enough yet, and the container they were put into had a combustible top. The university has since changed the lid of the container to one that is not combustible, and Lepley said the dining court staff will now make sure the coals are cool enough before dumping them.

## VCU stimulus money only temporary reprieve

**FRANCES CORREA**  
*Multimedia Editor*

VCU received \$20.5 million in stimulus money for the 2010 fiscal year, which started July 1. Funding came under the condition that the money be used to support education and reduce the need to raise tuition. The university originally planned on a \$20.5 million budget reduction for this year. The university will receive another \$20.5 million in stimulus money next year.

The Board of Visitors met May 14 and 15 to discuss how the stimulus funds would be dispersed. Pam Curry, associate vice president for finance and administration, said the board was able to raise tuition by a fairly minimal amount.

"If we hadn't had that 20 million on such short notice, The Board of Visitors would have had to look at a much higher increase," Curry said.

John Bennett, the senior vice president for finance and administration, said despite the help, there are around \$9 million in unavoidable costs that VCU will face.

Among these costs, Bennett said, are the operational costs of new buildings including the medical sciences building, health and life sciences engineering lab and the addition to the dentistry building.

Most costs include library materials, particularly the most expensive specialized journals.

Although the stimulus money offers some temporary reprieve from anticipated budgetary cutbacks, the stimulus money will run out after two years. Curry said the Board of Visitors has yet to devise a detailed plan concerning how to

For more information  
on the VCU budget, visit  
**[www.budget.vcu.edu](http://www.budget.vcu.edu)**

handle the budget after the stimulus money runs out, while still handling the unavoidable costs for the next two years. However, Curry said the board is developing spending proposals to phase out its reliance on the stimulus money.

Curry said the board plans to avoid spending all of the stimulus money within the next two years, allowing for more time to devise an efficient budgetary plan. According to Curry, VCU will be investing in energy-saving technology to reduce long-term costs.

Bennett said the board will have only two options when it comes to accounting for costs and preparing for 2012 when the stimulus money will

no longer be available: raising tuition over the next three years or making budget cuts.

"We will try and keep tuition as low as possible," Bennett said.

In an April interview, former University President Eugene P. Trani said he is concerned about VCU's budget.

"That's my biggest concern for the future is funding ... The stimulus money is two year money. It's not permanent money," Trani said.

Curry said VCU would likely cut some course sections.

"Every seat will be filled," Curry said.

Despite the cut, Curry said the board is striving to keep cuts as far away from the classroom as possible.

However, because cuts to other areas of the university, such as travel, phone usage, training, paper usage and maintenance fees, have already been addressed, students will begin to be affected.

Gov. Tim Kaine announced Aug. 19 he might have to cut funding to services, among which public education is included. Virginia's budgetary deficit includes \$1.2 billion from this fiscal year and \$300 million from the previous fiscal year. Consequently, Curry expects VCU to incur further budgetary cuts.



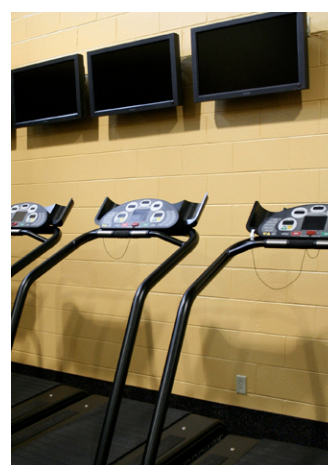
# MCV CAMPUS RECREATION CENTER UPGRADED AND OPEN NOW!

Come see our new facilities and enjoy our upgraded gym!

## Features include:

- Completely renovated, air conditioned locker facilities
- Personal training and fitness resource areas
- Two court gymnasium for basketball, volleyball, and badminton
- Racquetball and squash courts
- Group exercise classes
- Easy to use day lockers
- Flat screen TVs in fitness center
- 25 meter heated indoor pool with whirlpool spa
- Brand new cardio equipment including 20 treadmills, 15 elliptical trainers, and 30+ pieces of various cardio machines
- 2 circuits of selectorized weight equipment from Cybex and Nautilus
- Full selection of weight equipment including plate loaded machines and free weights

**VCU students: you're already a member!**  
Memberships available to VCUHS and VCU faculty and staff.



MCV Campus Recreation Center | 10<sup>th</sup> and Turpin St. | 804.828.6100  
Our temporary entrance is located on Duval St.



Questions? Call **827.0319** or visit [www.recsports.vcu.edu](http://www.recsports.vcu.edu)

VCU is an EEO/AA institution.

V i r g i n i a C o m m o n w e a l t h U n i v e r s i t y





# the crime blotter

## MCV Campus

Aug. 22-23	7 p.m.-10 a.m.	Cabaniss Hall, 615 N. 8th St.	<b>Petit Larceny</b> — A male student advised that an unknown person(s) removed property from its secured location.
Aug. 24	12:35 a.m.	W. Leigh St./N. 3rd St.	<b>Alcohol Violation</b> — A male visitor was arrested for Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol.

## Monroe Park Campus

Aug. 19	3:49 p.m.	Monroe Park, 620 W. Main St.	<b>Drug Offense</b> — A male visitor was arrested for Possession of Marijuana with Intent to Distribute and Possession of a Controlled Substance with Intent to Distribute within 1000 Feet of a School.
---------	-----------	------------------------------	--

Aug. 20	4:11 a.m.	900 Block W. Grace St.	<b>Drug Offense</b> — A male student was arrested for Driving While Intoxicated and Possession of a Controlled Substance.
	11:08 p.m.	7-Eleven, 1101 W. Main St.	<b>Drug Offense</b> — A male visitor was arrested for Possession of Marijuana.

Aug. 21	11:39 p.m.	Rhoads Hall, 710 W. Franklin St.	<b>Alcohol Violation</b> — A male visitor was arrested for Underage Consumption of Alcohol.
---------	------------	----------------------------------	---

July 19-Aug. 21	2:30 p.m.-11:41 a.m.	Chili's Restaurant, 301 W. Cary St.	<b>Fraud</b> — A male student advised that an unknown person made fraudulent purchases on a card.
-----------------	----------------------	-------------------------------------	---

Aug. 22	2:55 a.m.	Johnson Hall, 801 W. Franklin St.	<b>Alcohol Violation</b> — A male visitor was arrested of Drunk In Public.
	2:55 a.m.	Johnson Hall, 801 W. Franklin St.	<b>Alcohol Violation</b> — A male visitor was arrested of Drunk In Public.
	11:31 p.m.	Stuart C. Siegel Center, 1200 W. Broad St.	<b>Assault/Alcohol Violation</b> — A female student was arrested for Assault on a Police Officer and Underage Consumption of Alcohol.
	11:41 p.m.	Stuart C. Siegel Center, 1200 W. Broad St.	<b>Disorderly Conduct</b> — A male visitor was arrested for Disorderly Conduct.
	11:47 p.m.	Stuart C. Siegel Center, 1200 W. Broad St.	<b>Assault/Disorderly Conduct</b> — A male student was arrested for Simple Assault and Obstruction of Justice.
	11:50 p.m.	Stuart C. Siegel Center, 1200 W. Broad St.	<b>Disorderly Conduct</b> — A male visitor was arrested for Disorderly Conduct.

Aug. 23	4:25 a.m.	Rhoads Hall, 710 W. Franklin St.	<b>Alcohol Violation</b> — A female student was arrested for Underage Consumption of Alcohol.
	4:33 a.m.	Stuart C. Siegel Center, 1200 W. Broad St.	<b>Alcohol Violation</b> — A female student was arrested for Underage Consumption of Alcohol.
	4:57 p.m.	300 Block N. Shafer St.	<b>Sex Offense</b> — A male visitor was arrested for Indecent Exposure.
	5:04 p.m.	Shafer Court Dining, 810 Cathedral St.	<b>Damage to State Property</b> — A male employee advised that an unknown person(s) damaged state property.
	11:56 p.m.	Stuart C. Siegel Center, 1200 W. Broad St.	<b>Disorderly Conduct</b> — A male student was arrested for Obstructing the Free Passage of Others.

Aug. 16-23	3:52-3:52 p.m.	UU Lot, 1200 W. Broad St.	<b>Damage to State Property</b> — A male employee advised that an unknown person(s) Damaged State Property.
------------	----------------	---------------------------	---

Aug. 19-23	9 p.m.-2:56 a.m.	313 Goshen St.	<b>Harassment</b> — A female student advised that a known person harassed her.
------------	------------------	----------------	--

Aug. 22-23	3 p.m.-9 a.m.	1118 Grove Ave.	<b>Grand Larceny</b> — A female student advised that an unknown person(s) removed property for its secured location.
	4 p.m.-7:57 a.m.	Monroe Park Roadhouse, 1 Monroe Park	<b>Vandalism</b> — A female employee advised that an unknown person(s) vandalized state property.
	10 p.m.-1:45 a.m.	1200 Block W. Marshall St.	<b>Grand Larceny</b> — A male visitor advised that an unknown person(s) removed property from its secured location.

Aug. 24	12:50-1 p.m.	Cabell Library, 901 Park Ave.	<b>Grand Larceny</b> — A female student advised that an unknown person(s) removed property from an unsecured location.
	4:25 p.m.	Broad Street Deck, 1111 W. Broad St.	<b>Alcohol Violation</b> — A male visitor was arrested of Drunk In Public.
	8-8:50 p.m.	Grace Harris Hall, 1015 Floyd Ave.	<b>Petit Larceny</b> — A male student advised that an unknown person(s) removed property from an unsecured location.
Mar. 1-Aug. 24	12-1:25 a.m.	Stuart C. Siegel Center, 1200 W. Broad St.	<b>Harassment</b> — A male student advised that a known person harassed him.



# sports

## Six conferences in three weeks Big 12 North preview

TAYLOR HOWSMON  
*Associate Sports Editor*

**Colorado** has seen a trend of underachieving seasons since winning the Big 12 North in 2005. Last season, they did not live up to high expectations and finished 5-7. This year, coach Dan Hawkins has most of his skill players back on offense but lost depth in the offensive line department. The Buffs also lost a lot on defense, if the team can pull some upsets in an always difficult Big 12 they have the potential to be bowl eligible. If they do not reach the post season, Hawkins could have a hot seat by the end of the year.

**Iowa State** has never really been a winner and even though they have a new coach, Paul Rhodes, things might not get any better. The one thing they have going for them is a cupcake schedule. Iowa State plays only one 2008 bowl team in their first five games — all but one at home. But with a 2-10 season last year, the expectations will stay extremely low and this could allow Iowa State to surprise many in the fall.

**Kansas** has built a winning program in basketball country. With the Orange Bowl win two years ago and a respectable 8-5 mark last year, Kansas looks to continue their winning ways. Quarterback Todd Reesing returns along with tailback Jake Sharp in the backfield which gives the offense a lift. The only thing really holding them back is a murderous schedule. I think they will have a very similar season to 2008.

**Kansas State** brought back legendary coach Bill Snyder to the sidelines, in an attempt to return the Wildcats to past glory. Josh Freeman, a 2008 NFL first round pick, is gone, but if the quarterback situation works out, this team could be a huge surprise because they have a playmaking defense. I see an average season that will produce a bowl game, but nothing further.

**Missouri** must somehow deal with the loss of its two best players in Jeremy Macklin and Chase Daniel. Newcomers on offense will have to figure out tough

opponents and carry a Tiger team that traditionally struggles on defense. Mizzou could be respectable, but I think the program takes a serious step back in 2009.

**Nebraska** could be a team to look out for. Bo Pelini surprised many in his first season back in Lincoln with a 9-4 finish. He will have to replace quality players on offense, but he has a playmaking defense that could resemble great Husker defenses of old. Nebraska does have to play Virginia Tech, but other than that, they have a manageable out of conference schedule. The Cornhuskers also avoid games with elite south division teams such as Texas and Oklahoma State. The Huskers could have a huge year.

## Big 12 South preview

JEROME FOSTER  
*Sports Editor*

**Texas** looks to get to the BCS championship game after watching the Oklahoma Sooners make it despite losing to Texas 45-35. The Longhorns feature one of the game's best weapons in quarterback Colt McCoy. McCoy led the Longhorns in passing and rushing. If McCoy can repeat his performance from last season, the Longhorns will be in great position to make the championship game.

**Oklahoma** Quarterback Sam Bradford returns to lead the Sooners back to the championship game. Bradford won the Heisman last season partly because he had the best offensive line in college football. This season, four of those five starters are gone. The Sooners offense has the potential to be explosive just as it was last season, but the new-look offensive line will have to keep Bradford clean.

**Oklahoma State** returns one of the best offenses in all of college football. However, the Cowboys also return one of the worst defenses.

Quarterback Zac Robinson and wide receiver Dez Bryant will need to put up similar numbers to keep the offense rolling. If the Cowboys are going to beat the likes of Texas and Oklahoma, the defense will need to be better than the 93rd ranked unit it was last season.

**Baylor's** season will hinge on the maturation of sophomore quarterback Robert Griffin. Griffin is one of the best dual-threat quarterbacks in the country. He finished second on the team in rushing. The Bears also have to replace left tackle Jason Smith after he was drafted second overall by the St. Louis Rams in the NFL draft. While Baylor does not have enough weapons to break into the top half of the South division, the Bears are no longer a cupcake on the schedule.

**Texas Tech** loses quarterback Graham Harrell and wide receiver Michael Crabtree, the Red Raiders

have big holes to fill on the offense. Texas Tech needs to find replacements in its pass-happy offense to be competitive because it does not have the kind of defense that will keep it in games. Replacing Harrell and Crabtree will be tough, so expect the Red Raiders to take a step back this season.

**Texas A&M** has a lot of work to do just to become competitive in this division. Texas A&M was one of the worst offenses in college football last season and the defense was not much better. Head coach Mike Sherman did not get any high impact recruits, so expect the Aggies to finish at the bottom of the division again.

## Big 12 predictions and awards:

### South

Texas (12-0, 8-0)  
Oklahoma (11-1, 7-1)  
Oklahoma State (10-2, 6-2)  
Baylor (7-5, 4-4)  
Texas Tech (7-5, 3-5)  
Texas A&M (4-8, 2-6)

### North

Nebraska (10-2, 7-1)  
Kansas (8-4, 4-4)  
Colorado (7-5, 4-4)  
Kansas State (6-6, 3-5)  
Missouri (5-7, 2-6)  
Iowa State (4-8, 1-7)

**Players of the Year:** Colt McCoy, Texas; Roy Helu, Nebraska  
**Coaches of the Year:** Art Briles, Baylor; Bo Pelini, Nebraska  
**Big 12 title game:** Texas vs. Nebraska



# I'm so done with...

TAYLOR HOWSMON  
*Associate Sports Editor*

I figured because we still haven't entered that football season and the sports landscape is still seemingly barren, I would talk about the five things in sports that I am absolutely done with.

As much as I love sports, sometimes they can give me headache after headache. These are the personalities, ideas or events I have officially washed my hands of for the time being.

1) Dog lovers on Vick - I heard a sports television host say that she would never forgive Eagles quarterback Mike Vick because she owned dogs. This is the kind of thing I can't stand and haven't been able to stand since the whole dog fighting thing came about. I absolutely do not condone what Vick did and I have a hard time hearing about some of the specific actions related to this practice, but that doesn't have anything to do with the fact that I love dogs. Owning or loving a dog does not give someone any more reason than the next guy to hate Vick's actions, period.

2) Major League Baseball - I have always been a huge baseball fan. But for some reason baseball in 2009 has worn extremely thin. It might have been the Stephen Strasburg signing, the Manny and A-Rod steroid cases or the fact that the same teams will be in the playoffs ... again. No matter what the cause I am so done with baseball.

3) College basketball sleaziness - This is in no way a new pet peeve. This round included John Calipari and Memphis, who was caught for the second time on recruiting violations. It was the second program Calipari left and screwed. Yet despite his infractions, Calipari will coach this season and make major bank while Memphis will lose one of its only final four appearances. But once again,



a T.O.  
with T.H.

this is not a new thing.

4) The United States Men's Soccer Team - Let me preface this by saying I am not a soccer hater. It is not a sport I'm in love with, but I do respect it a lot and enjoy it from time to time. The only reason I am so done with the U.S. national team is that they continually set back the effort to make soccer mainstream in this country. Every time we get into World Cup qualifying, they play these huge "groundbreaking" matches and lose them. Players like Alexi Lalas or Landon Donovan become the face of the soccer movement and give encouraging pump-up interviews to get people excited but struggle to back it up. I am still a minor soccer fan, I am just fed up with American soccer.

5) Shaq - This guy is everywhere and it is starting to work my last nerve. Now O'Neil has a reality show where he plays other sports' athletes in their sport. He also has switched teams for the fifth time in his career this offseason and I have no doubt going to play with LeBron is a little bit of a publicity stunt in itself. What happened to athletes just being athletes? Why can't a guy stay out of the spotlight and just play the game he loves? It has gotten old, and Shaq keeps "being that guy."

## This week

### MEN'S SOCCER

Fri., Aug. 28, Virginia Tech (exhibition), Sports Backers Stadium, 7 p.m.

### FIELD HOCKEY

Sat., Aug. 29, Miami (Ohio), Charlottesville, 1 p.m.

### VOLLEYBALL

Fri., Aug. 28, Temple, Siegel Center, 11:30 a.m.

Fri., Aug. 28, St. John's, Siegel Center, 8 p.m.

Sat., Aug. 29, Wright State, Siegel Center, 12:30 p.m.

Sat., Aug. 29, East Carolina, Siegel Center, 6 p.m.

# "He who pays fewer banking fees keeps more of his own money"



## You belong with us.

Fewer fees, good rates  
and helpful service.

**Find out about Richmond-area  
locations including:**

DMV - 2300 West Broad Street  
Downtown - 720 East Broad Street  
Tower - 101 N. 14th Street



## Virginia Credit Union

www.vacu.org • (804) 323-6800

Federally insured by NCUA.





# VCU Fall 2009 Schedule



sports

## VOLLEYBALL

<b>VCU/Third Degree Sportswear Invitational</b> <b>Aug. 28 Friday</b> Temple 11:30 a.m. <b>Aug. 28 Friday</b> St. John's 8 p.m. <b>Aug. 29 Saturday</b> Wright State 12:30 p.m. <b>Aug. 29 Saturday</b> East Carolina 6 p.m.  <b>Jefferson Cup</b> Sept. 4 Friday vs. Campbell, Charlottesville, Va. 10:30 a.m. Sept. 4 Friday at Virginia, Charlottesville, Va. 7 p.m. Sept. 5 Saturday vs. N.C. Central, Charlottesville, Va. 1 p.m.	<b>Michigan/Pepsi Challenge</b> Sept. 11 Friday vs. Missouri, Ann Arbor, Mich. 10 a.m. Sept. 11 Friday vs. Fairfield, Ann Arbor, Mich. 5 p.m. Sept. 12 Saturday vs. Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich. 12:30 p.m. Sept. 12 Saturday vs. Morehead State, Ann Arbor, Mich. 5 p.m.  <b>University of Maryland Invitational</b> Sept. 18 Friday at Maryland, College Park, Md. 7 p.m. Sept. 19 Saturday vs. UMBC, College Park, Md. 11 a.m. Sept. 19 Saturday vs. Howard, College Park, Md. 5 p.m.	Sept. 23 Wednesday at Winston-Salem State, Winston-Salem, N.C. 6 p.m. Sept. 26 Saturday at William & Mary, Williamsburg, Va. 2 p.m. Sept. 29 Tuesday at Georgetown, Washington, D.C. 7 p.m. Oct. 2 Friday at George Mason, Fairfax, Va. 7 p.m. Oct. 3 Saturday at James Madison, Harrisonburg, Va. 7 p.m. <b>Oct. 7 Wednesday</b> George Washington 6 p.m. <b>Oct. 9 Friday</b> UNC Wilmington 7 p.m. <b>Oct. 10 Saturday</b> Georgia State 7 p.m. <b>Oct. 16 Friday</b> William & Mary 8 p.m. <b>Oct. 23 Friday</b> Hofstra Siegel Center 7 p.m. <b>Oct. 24 Saturday</b> Northeastern 7 p.m.	<b>Oct. 27 Tuesday</b> Liberty 7 p.m. <b>Oct. 30 Friday</b> at Delaware, Newark, Del. 7 p.m. <b>Oct. 31 Saturday</b> at Towson. Towson, Md. 7 p.m. <b>Nov. 6 Friday</b> James Madison 7 p.m. <b>Nov. 7 Saturday</b> George Mason 7 p.m. Nov. 13 Friday at Georgia State Atlanta, Ga. 5:30 p.m. Nov. 15 Sunday at UNC Willmington, Wilmington, N.C. 1 p.m.  <b>CAA Tournament TBA</b> <b>Third Degree Sportswer Thanksgiving Invitational</b> <b>Nov. 27 Friday</b> Pittsburgh 7 p.m. <b>Nov. 28 Saturday</b> Liberty 4 p.m.
---	---	---	--

## FIELD HOCKEY

<b>Aug. 22 Saturday</b> Radford (Scrimmage), Cary Street Field 1 p.m. Aug. 29 Saturday vs. Miami (OH), Charlottesville, Va. 1 p.m. Sept. 4 Friday vs. Saint Joseph's, Philadelphia, Pa. 4 p.m. Sept. 6 Sunday vs. Penn, Philadelphia, Pa. 12 p.m. Sept. 11 Friday vs. Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 7 p.m.	Sept. 12 Saturday vs. Stanford, Iowa City, Iowa 7 p.m. <b>Sept. 20 Sunday</b> Monmouth, Cary Street Field 1 p.m. <b>Sept. 25 Friday</b> Delware, Cary Street Field 6 p.m. <b>Sept. 27 Sunday</b> Towson, Cary Street Field 12 p.m. Oct. 2 Friday vs. Drexel, Philadelphia, Pa. 7 p.m.	Oct. 4 Sunday vs. Hofstra, Hempstead, N.Y. 1 p.m. Oct. 7 Wednesday vs. Longwood, Farmville, Va. 6 p.m. Oct. 9 Friday vs. James Madison, Harrisonburg, Va. 7 p.m. <b>Oct. 11 Sunday</b> Davidson, Cary Street Field 1 p.m. <b>Oct. 16 Friday</b> Appalachian State, Cary Street Field 4 p.m.	<b>Oct. 20 Tuesday</b> Richmond, Cary Street Field 7 p.m. <b>Oct. 23 Friday</b> Old Dominion, Cary Street Field 4 p.m. <b>Oct. 25 Saturday</b> William & Mary, Cary Street Field 1 p.m. Oct. 30 Friday at Northeastern, Boston, Mass. 2 p.m. Nov. 1 Sunday at Princeton, Princeton, N.J. 1 p.m.
--	---	---	---

## WOMEN'S SOCCER

Aug. Sunday 16 Longwood (exhibition), Farmville, Va. T, 0-0 Aug. 21 Friday East Carolina, Greenville, N.C., L,0-1 Aug. 30 Sunday Wofford, Spartanburg, S.C. 2:00 p.m.  <b>UNCG Tournament</b> Sept. 4 Friday UNC, Greensboro, N.C. 5:30 p.m. Sept. 6 Sunday VA Tech, Greensboro, N.C. 2:30 p.m.	<b>VCU Tournament</b> <b>Sept. 11 Friday</b> Loyola 7:30 p.m. <b>Sept. 13 Sunday</b> Richmond 3:30 p.m. Sept. 18 Friday Lehigh, Bethlehem, Pa. 5:00 p.m. Sept. 20 Sunday Bucknell, Lowisburg, Pa. 3:00 p.m. Sept. 24 Thursday Towson, Towson, M.d. 4:00 p.m. <b>Sept. 27 Sunday</b> George Mason 1:00 p.m. <b>Oct. 2 Friday</b> Georgia State 7:00 p.m. <b>Oct. 4 Sunday</b> UNCW 1:00 p.m.	Oct. 9 Friday Drexel, Philadelphia, Pa. 7:00 p.m. Oct. 11 Sunday Delaware, Newark, Del. 1:00 p.m. <b>Oct. 16 Fiday</b> William & Mary 7:00 p.m. <b>Oct. 18 Sunday</b> ODU 1:00 p.m. Oct. 23 Friday Hofstra, Hempsted, N.Y. 7:00 p.m. Oct. 25 Sunday Northeastern, Boston, Mass. <b>Oct. 31 Saturday</b> JMU 5:00 p.m.
---	---	---

## MEN'S SOCCER

Friday, Aug. 21 Duke (exhibition), Durham, N.C. T, 0-0 Sunday, Aug. 23 North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. Away L, 0-1 <b>Friday, Aug. 28</b> Virginia Tech 7:00 p.m.  <b>Coastal Carolina Tournament</b> Friday, Sept. 4 St. Francis, Conway, S.C. Away 5:30 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 6 Albany, Conway, S.C. 11:00 a.m.	Friday, Sept. 11 Seton Hall, South Orange, N.J. 7:00 p.m. <b>Tuesday, Sept. 15</b> Richmond 7:00 p.m. <b>Sunday, Sept. 20</b> Longwood 5:00 p.m. <b>Saturday, Sept. 26</b> George Mason 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 29 UVA, Charlottessville, VA. 7:00 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 3 Hofstra, Hempsted, N.Y. 7:00 p.m. <b>Friday, Oct. 7</b> James Madison 7:00 p.m. <b>Saturday, Oct. 10</b> William & Mary 7:00 p.m.	Tuesday, Oct. 13 UNCW, Wilmington, N.C. 7:00 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 17 Drexel, Philadelphia, Pa. 7:00 p.m. <b>Wednesday, Oct. 21</b> Georgia State 7:00 p.m. <b>Saturday, Oct. 24</b> Towson 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 27 ODU, Norfolk, Va. 7:00 p.m. <b>Saturday, Oct. 31</b> Delaware 7:00 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31 Northeastern, Boston, Mass. 6:00 p.m.
--	--	--





# spectrum

preview

## Alumna travels back to Richmond

VERONICA GARABELLI

*Spectrum Editor*

It's been a long journey for artist Dragana Crnjak. She's driven from Youngston, Ohio with her husband and unborn child to set up for a show, which is part of a larger exhibition with fellow artists Leslie Van Millar and James Stroud. Eight months pregnant, Crnjak shows no signs of ill-temperament. She calmly offers me a glass of water and begins talking about her latest summer works.

As a 2004 recipient of a Master of Fine Arts from VCU, Crnjak is no stranger to Richmond. She remembers the inclusion of her work in the first Page Bond Gallery show in 2006.

CRNJAK continued to CT11



**Dragana Crnjak in front of one of her paintings, now on display at The Page Bond Gallery through Sept. 26.**

Jennifer Ling photo

review

## 'Balliceaux': New restaurant transports and impresses

VERONICA GARABELLI

*Spectrum Editor*

After walking by Balliceaux several times, my curiosity grew stronger as I wondered what became of the old dungeon-like place that was once Bogart's back room. I celebrated my 21st birthday there, ate copious amounts of greasy tater tots and, of course, watched live music.

Two years ago, Bogart's packed its bags and eventually relocated to West Cary Street. When Balliceaux came into the picture, I had no idea what its plans were. After watching them tear down most of the building, one thing was clear: This was not going to be anything like Bogart's. When I finally saw the Balliceaux sign this summer, it confirmed my suspicion that a new, high-class restaurant was in town. I was eager to check it out and knew of the perfect occasion: me and my boyfriend's first year anniversary.

We arrived promptly at 8 p.m. A visit to the bar wasn't originally planned, but the staff redirected us there even though I had made reservations. It looked as though they overbooked on this Saturday night, but props to them because it seemed to be working in their favor. A crowd of fashion-forward, working professionals socialized while sipping fancy drinks. For a moment, I forgot I was in Richmond. I couldn't even believe this place used to be Bogart's. Balliceaux's management transformed it all right, down to the soft, cloth-like paper towels in the bathroom and the sign that read "WC," a European abbreviation



**Balliceaux offers diners charm and class.**

Mel Kobran photo

for restroom.

The bartender had only been working at Balliceaux for two weeks yet seemed to be its biggest fan. The \$9 Hemmingway's Revenge was just as refreshing as the standard Orange Crush I normally get, and packed a similarly fruity flavor. The concoction of lime juice, grapefruit, rum, vanilla syrup and ice screamed class, just like everything else at Balliceaux's. It didn't take long before I went to try another original cocktail. The Bubbly O Neg, a mix of sparkly white wine, instantly appealed to me. Undoubtedly my favorite drink of the night, the Bubbly O certainly delivered. It is the glorious sparkly, rose pink drink it promised to be. The best part is an herb placed inside the drink that gave it a flawless, flowery kick.

Balliceaux aimed to set itself apart from other Richmond joints and, instead of a standard table for two, they sat us at a communal table in the back room. Across from us was an older couple, who we couldn't help but make eye contact with periodically. Not what I originally expected for a romantic evening, but with the drinks from the bar kicking in, I was in good spirits.

The menu ditched standard food categories and displayed them in the cutest of fashions. The fish wasn't under "seafood," it was under "waters," and anything that quacked, mooed or baahed was under "farm and pasture," giving me a mental image of the duck confit crêpe I was

BALLICEAUX continued to CT11

Thursday, August 27, 2009

spectrum • commonwealthtimes.com • CT9





# Weekend Calendar

spectrum

## Thursday 8/27

**Wine Tasting:** Presented by Private Stock Cigar and Wine Company. Spanish wine sampling and education about wine production. 7 p.m. The Tuckahoe Shopping Center. \$15. 435-A N. Ridge Road. 285-3760.

**Writing Show:** Authors Shawna Kenney, Anne Thomas Soffee and Rodney Lofton host Nicole Anderson Ellis in a panel discussion on "Me, Myself, and I: A Conversation about Modern Memoir." 6:30-8:30 p.m. The Pavilion Room. \$5-\$12. The Children's Museum of Richmond. 2626 W. Broad St.

**Roger Carroll and Chez Roué:** 9 p.m. Free. Bogart's. 1903 W. Cary St. 353-9280.

**Ray Pittman Soul Revival:** 9 p.m. Café Diem. 600 N. Sheppard St. 353-2500.

**Dave Shiflet and Friends:** 7 p.m. Free. Positive Vibe Café. 2825 Hathaway Road. 560-9622.

## Friday 8/28

**"Breathless":** photographs by Annie Hogan. "Fe203," photographs by Louis Joyner. "Rebirth," paintings by Inge Strack. 7 p.m. Free. Through Sept. 20. Artspace. 0 E. Fourth St. 232-6464.

**"New Works":** Art by Dragana Crnjak, Leslie Millar and James Stroud. 7 p.m. Free. Through Sept. 26. Page Bond Gallery. 1625 W. Main St. 359-3633.

**AAAARRR! Town:** Presented by Random Acts Improv Comedy. A night of on-the-spot humor. First showing for all ages, second showing for mature audiences. 7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. \$7-\$10. HATTheatre. 1124 Westbriar Drive. 343-6364.

**Unknown Hinson:** 8 p.m. \$15-\$17. The Canal Club. 1545 E. Cary St. 643-2582.

**Scoven, Beard and Cruse:** 7-9:30 p.m. Free. Emilio's Tapas Bar. 1847 W. Broad St. 359-1224.  
**Pat Russell Band:** 9:30 p.m. Free. Home Team Grill. 1630 W. Main St. 254-7360.

## Saturday 8/29

**Antiques on Broad:** A special sale of antiques and collectables. Costume jewelry, fine art and vintage clothing. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Quirk Gallery. 311 W. Broad St. 344-1557.

**Central Garage:** 9 p.m. Café Diem. 600 N. Sheppard St. 353-2500.

**Plunky and Oneness:** 9:30 p.m. \$10. Martini Kitchen and Bubble Bar. 1911 W. Main St. 254-4904.  
**Soulgasm:** DJ Sayeed (hip-hop and soul). 9 p.m.-2 a.m. \$5. Tropical Soul Café. 314 N. Second St. 771-1605.

## Sunday 8/30

**Sounds of Summer Fest:** Yearling, Love and Reverie, Girls Get All the Action, the Downtown Fiction, Colin Healy and the Jet Skis, I-Rival, Amely, Boys Will Be Boys, Bobby Faithful, Running with Giants, Hellow Conductor. 1-11 p.m. \$10-\$14. Alley Katz. 10 Walnut Alley. 643-2816.

**Workingman, Crossroads Voodoo:** 7 p.m. The Camel Café. 1621 W. Broad St. 353-4901.  
**Blue Line Highway:** 6 p.m. Free. Legend Brewing Company. 321 W. Seventh St. 232-3446.

**Ralphie May:** 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. \$17. Funny Bone. 11800 W. Broad St. 521-8900.

**Tripp and Jenny Johnson Jam Session:** 2-5 p.m. Free. Tunkel-Marssella Duo. 9 p.m. \$5. Cary Street Café. 2631 W. Cary St. 353-7445.

## Egg Donors Needed



We are looking for healthy women between the ages of 18-29 willing to help couples establish a pregnancy. Participants will be compensated for their time and effort. Inquiries will be confidential and anonymous.

VIRGINIA  
**IVF & Andrology**  
C • E • N • T • E • R

To learn more about becoming an egg donor, please visit our website at [www.vaivf.com](http://www.vaivf.com) or call (804) 323-9980 x 14.

STEP INTO SISTERHOOD!

September 9-13, 2009

Register at [www.CPCVCU.com](http://www.CPCVCU.com)

No Later than midnight, September 9, 2009

VCU Panhellenic Sorority Recruitment



## BALLICEAUX continued from CT9

about to eat. Something tells me they weren't going for the guilt trip, but for the whole organic, fresh aspect which, to their credit, they seem to have.

Balliceaux's wine list seemed to be the best example of this. Options ranged from organic, sustainable and biodynamic, which were a perfect touch for the environmentally conscious diner. I opted for the Torrontes, an Argentinian floral wine. At \$24, it was the cheapest on the list but not cheap when it came to taste. A little bit dry, just the way I like it, and perfect for a summer evening.

Once my food arrived it was everything I hoped it to be and more. That duck crêpe was stuffed to the max, and at \$15, I know I got my money's worth. A tangy orange sauce added a perfect freshness to the richness and was paired with a crunchy jicama salad. Dessert called for shared red velvet mini cakes, which were more like red velvet cheese cakes with a daunting side shot of absinth. By the end of the night our bellies were full, our minds a little fuzzy, and somehow we ended up striking a conversation with that older couple we thought we had nothing in common with.

Sure, the service wasn't the fastest but the food was out of this world and the staff was friendly. Most importantly it provided for a unique experience that took us out of Richmond for a couple hours and gave us just what we were looking for.

*Balliceaux is at 203 N. Lombardy St. Reservations can be made by calling 355-3008.*



**Balliceaux's communal table (right) allows for a unique dining experience.**

Mel Kobran photo

## CRNJAK continued from CT9

Crnjak received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Akron in Ohio after having moved there from Bosnia. Traditionally trained in art in her native country, Crnjak describes European art as serious. This was something she learned to let go of as she advanced her education, citing that she doesn't always create art with a certain meaning in mind.

"I discover later what (a piece) means," Crnjak said. "It's an open ended discovery."

A mix of large, medium and small canvases display Crnjak's art throughout the room, which demand a closer observation. From afar, they appear to be simple pieces, reminiscent of sketches, only they're created with acrylics. This is something Crnjak has done on purpose, just as she layered textures on different shapes of the paintings. A closer reveals what she's talking about: Glossy, flat and raised textures catch my eye, giving each painting a different feel. She also points out the use of pastel colors is not because she's expecting but because she's normally drawn to that color scheme.

Crnjak says she's ready to take a break for a little while but mentions she loves coming back to Richmond.

"I have a special connection to this gallery," Crnjak said.

*The "Crnjak, Millar and Stroud" exhibition will be on display at the Page Bond Gallery, 1625 W. Main St, until Sept. 26. The Page Bond Gallery is open from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and Monday through Friday after Sept. 6.*



RECYCLE ME,  
PRETTY PLEASE.

Thursday, August 27, 2009



### DENALI JACKET \$165.00

AVAILABLE AT Blue Ridge Mountain Sports  
Lexington Commons  
Richmond, VA  
(804) 965-0494  
M : 10am-8pm T-F : 10am-9pm  
Sat: 10am-6pm Sun: 12pm-5pm  
www.brms.com



NEVER STOP EXPLORING™

Ryan and Dylan Zellers—Photo by Corey Rich | Mike Wolfe, Nikki Kimball—Photo by Tim Kemple |  
Renan Ozturk—Photo by Tim Kemple | Ingrid Backstrom—Photo by Ian Coble



spectrum · commonwealthtimes.com · CT11

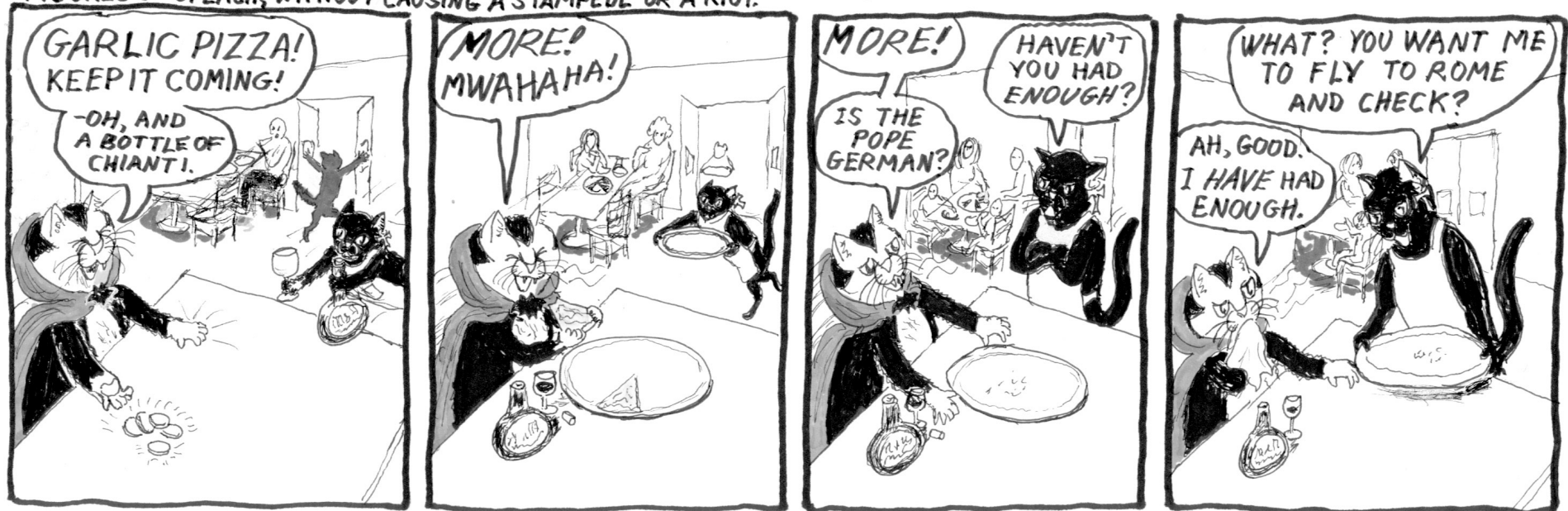


# comics

## Pizza from Scratch

Bill Lemmond

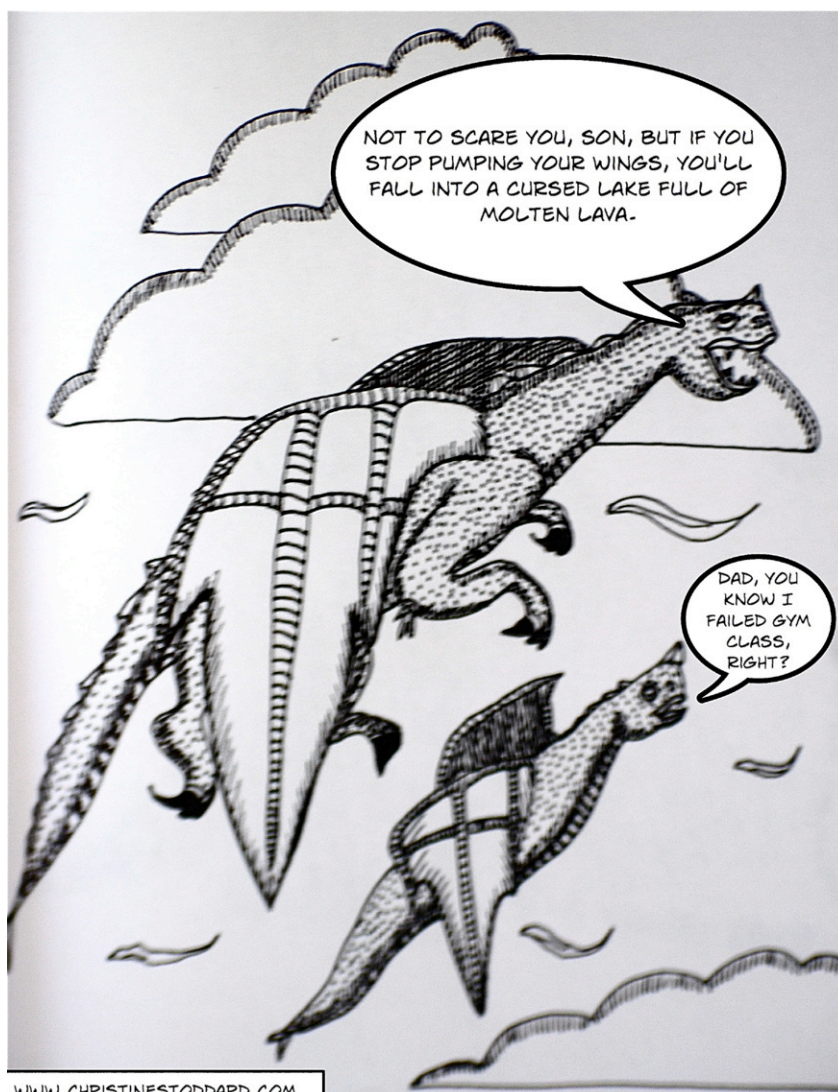
COUNT VITO DI AVALLONE SEEKS TO CURB HIS MIND-CONTROL POWERS, SO HE CAN CASUALLY USE FIGURES OF SPEECH, WITHOUT CAUSING A STAMPEDE OR A RIOT.



23 AUG 2009 WPL II

## Forget Fairytales

Christine Stoddard



WWW.CHRISTINESTODDARD.COM

Opinions expressed within the comics pages are those of individual artists and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Commonwealth Times or Virginia Commonwealth University.

### Add your voice

The comics pages of The Commonwealth Times are open to the VCU community. Contributors are welcome by email at [graphics@commonwealthtimes.com](mailto:graphics@commonwealthtimes.com), or by mail and in person at 817 W. Broad St., Richmond, Va. 23220-3806.

Comics must be sent from a valid VCU e-mail address or signed with daytime and evening telephone contact. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, style and space.

Roberto Curtis  
Executive Editor

Caroline Evertz  
Graphic Designer



**train for your future endeavors**



Get involved, stay connected.

VCU Student Media Center » 817 W Broad St. Richmond, VA



# opinion

## What the Health?

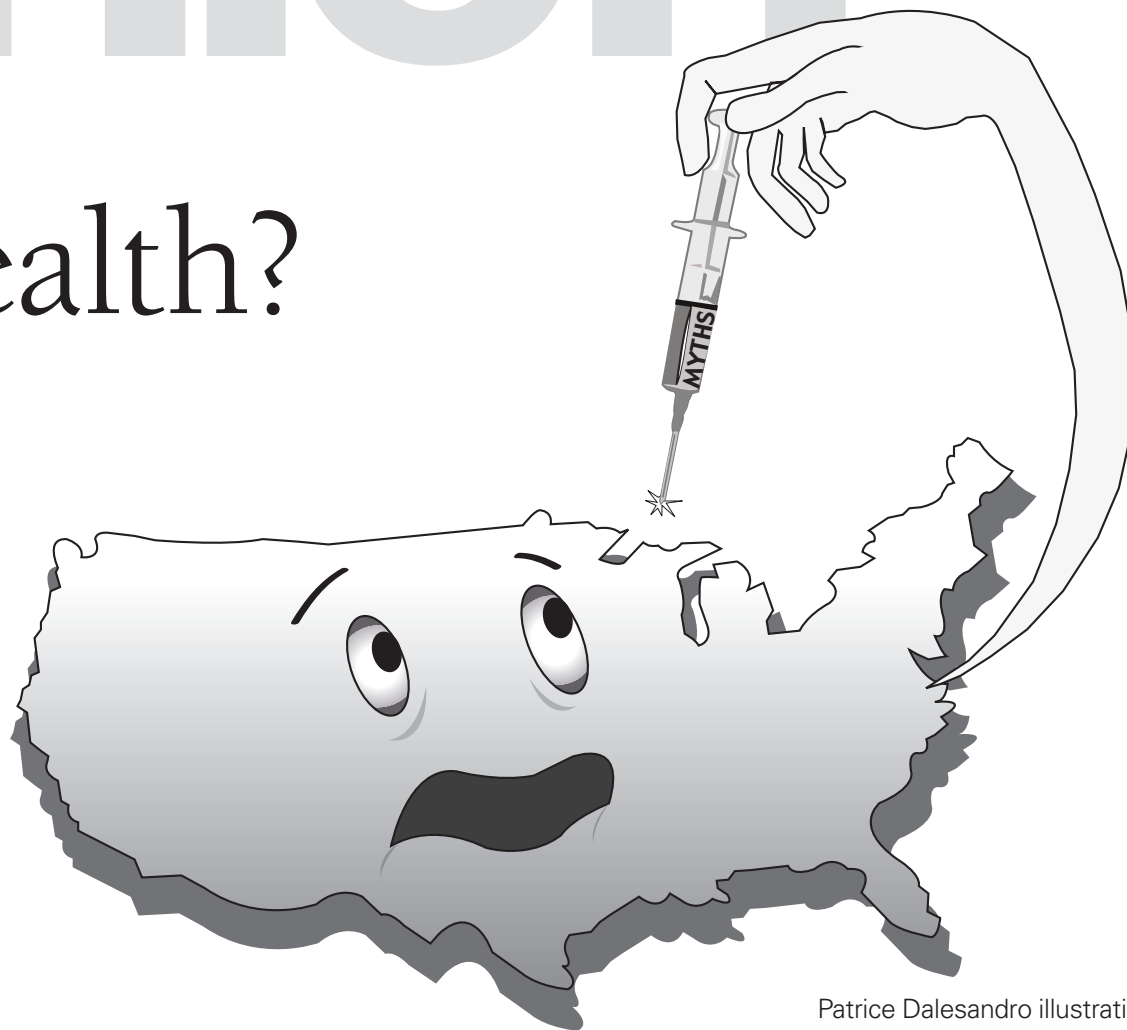
CHRIS ADELL  
Staff Writer

It was recently revealed by American citizens at Congressman Barney Frank's town hall meeting in Dartmouth, Mass. that Obama's health care plan, covertly known to government agents as H.R. 3200, is actually a Nazi coup attempt against the American government. If only we'd known sooner. It has also been revealed that the proposed health care reform "will stop (the) rationing" of

health care, which must mean H.R. 3200 will limitlessly increase the supply of health care enough to satisfy every thinkable American health care whim. With that kind of supernatural power, I'm not sure I understand the need to pass a bill.

I am, of course, being sarcastic. This is not a Nazi plan and hopefully I don't need to go into detail to prove that. But considering the source, the claim that this bill will end health care

ADELL continued to CT15



Patrice Dalesandro illustration

## Elections do not make good democracies, elected officials do

ERIC HILL  
Opinion Editor

As the world watches to see the results of the first free election in Afghanistan, there are questions concerning how the outcome will affect the nation's stability. Will there be election fraud? Will the Taliban try to disrupt the ballot counting? Will the election disputes be satisfied, or will there be violent infighting between political factions? The response to these questions is that, no matter the outcome, the people are responsible for their candidates.

When a country declares it has sovereignty and creates a government to lead its people, the only way sovereignty can remain legitimate is if the government respects the spirit of its people. It does this by passing just laws, taking just actions, and leading by the example the people agree upon. A democratic republic attempts to do this by directly engaging the people in the process of governance. Ultimately though, whatever actions are taken are ordered by elected officials, who in doing rightly will fulfill their oaths to serve not just some but all of the people.

The United States has instituted a democracy in Afghanistan that is holding elections. That does not mean, however, that a democracy actually exists there. When people are dominated by another entity, whether it is the Taliban's occupation or the United States' occupation, the spirit of the entire people is not served. When the Taliban cuts off the

fingers of voters and bombs public places in the name of its insane ideology, it is attempting to dominate the people and convert or kill them. Even if there is an election, it does not necessarily mean the people will be served.

For instance, Iran's government thinks of itself as an Islamist republic, a religious free state (even though this is in itself an oxymoron). Though it held an election this summer for the presidency, the results were heavily disputed. In a true republic, these disputes must be resolved peacefully, and must happen with the spirit of the people in mind. Iranian citizens who protested the election were beaten, imprisoned and killed, thus proving the government was serving its own interests to stay in power. The government's elected officials denounced the protestors as foreign-backed interlopers, and declared everything was legitimate. All the while the government was cutting every line of communication to the outside world to hide its crimes and obscure the truth.

At one time Afghanistan was a thriving, beautiful and surprisingly egalitarian place. It can be that way again, so long as its people are capable of electing officials who can envision it. It might happen that this election will yield a valid and respected ruler who is in touch with his people, or it might be that it produces a buffoon. If the country accepts that ruler, it accepts the wisdom of that person's

HILL continued to CT15

the  
ct

ROBERTO CURTIS  
Executive Editor

ERIC HILL  
Opinion Editor

Opinions expressed are those of individual writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Commonwealth Times or Virginia Commonwealth University. Unsigned editorials represent the institutional opinion of The CT.

### Add Your Voice

The opinion pages of The Commonwealth Times are a forum open to the public. Clear, concise and compelling contributions are welcome online at our Web site, by e-mail at [opinion@commonwealthtimes.com](mailto:opinion@commonwealthtimes.com), or by mail and in person at 817 W. Broad St., Richmond, Va. 23220-3806.

Letters must be sent from a valid VCU e-mail address or signed with daytime and evening telephone contact. We reserve the right to edit for grammar, style and space.

## ADELL continued from CT14

rationing approaches the same level of idiocy, which is why it gave me pause when I found it on the White House website's health care reform "reality check" section. Anyone with a basic understanding of economics knows that health care is a scarce resource. It is impossible to satisfy the entirety of health care demand with a limited health care supply. Health care rationing, though it may take different forms, is inevitable. Anyone with a basic understanding of supply and demand knows that as the price decreases, the quantity demanded increases, or inversely stated, as the price increases, the quantity demanded decreases.

Pricing is a form of rationing by willingness and ability to pay. For those of us romantically involved with the free market, a higher price conveniently provides a greater profit incentive to increase supply. Though health care is a unique product with unique characteristics, fundamentally, health care is no exception. If the economic model is correct, and the quantity demanded increases exponentially with respect to a decrease in price, a nominal charge for doctors' visits would make sense. Our neighbor to the north has learned this the hard way; where there is concern that some are using free Canadian hospitals as nursing homes. Even in France, caricatured as a bastion of socialism, there is €22 charge to visit a general practitioner. It's health care rationing.

As Peter Singer eloquently points out in his New York Times Magazine article "Why We Must Ration Health Care," health care rationing in some form is necessary; be it price, queues, QUALYS (quality-adjusted life years), or even death panels. Without an unlimited supply, at some point we have to ask the question of how much we are willing and able to pay to increase the quality of life or increase its duration, and the answer has to involve tradeoffs. The health care reform debate should not be characterized by paranoid delusions of a socialist takeover versus free unlimited health care or callous profiteering versus altruistic selflessness, but over how best to ration the limited supply of health care. As far as I can tell, the health care reform debate has yet to fully recognize this.

Instead, the debate is being sabotaged by those on the fringes who discredit and refuse to consider the merits of reasonable arguments. For those interested, I encourage you to examine the actual proposed bill, because I think it will become immediately apparent to you that partisans on both sides are full

of ... shenanigans. If you're a health care fanatic, feel free to read all 1,036 pages, but I recommend reading and comparing a couple good summaries. Luckily, you can do all those things at [opencongress.org](http://opencongress.org). Furthermore, if you are interested in my humble opinion, a proper analysis must recognize a few important points.

Health care in the U.S. is not a purely free market system. An AARP town hall meeting erupted in laughter when President Obama described a letter from an elderly woman that wrote, "I don't want government-run health care, I don't want socialized medicine, and don't touch my Medicare." As a Cato Institute article by Michael Cannon rightly points out, "government tax, spending, and regulatory policies thwart (the) conditions necessary for a (completely) free market." There are the obvious examples of Medicare and Medicaid, but there are more subtle examples. The private health insurance system we have currently did not arise organically through the free market. The government, probably beginning with President Richard Nixon when he signed the HMO Act of 1973, has heavily subsidized it.

That brings me to my next point; our private health insurance system is likely not the best answer to the question of how we should ration health care. A report on health care jointly published by the Federal Trade Commission and Department of Justice during the George W. Bush Administration agrees that "third-party payment of health-related expenses can distort incentives and have unintended consequences." As far as I can tell, these distorted incentives render it in your insurer's best interest that you die having received minimal medical care throughout your premium-paying life. To a private insurer, it's profitable to thwart any treatment costing more than the premiums they would earn through extending your life, and that still ignores quality of life considerations.

Finally, I'll give you what I consider to be the most sensible framework for the debate. This is a debate about how to ration health care, and the greatest consideration should be equity versus innovation, or providing more equitable access to health care in the short term at the expense of better health care in the long run. Part of what makes health care reform such an emotional debate is that health care is necessary to extending life, like food. But consider the path of this analogous good. In 1870, even with 70-80 percent of the U.S. population

working in agriculture, starvation was a real and constant threat. Today, the U.S. is one of the world's largest food producers, and this is possible with only 2-3 percent of the U.S. population working in agribusiness.

Acknowledging that we can never be certain of hypotheticals, and that the government is actually heavily involved in agriculture, I tend to believe that more equitable access to agriculture in the past would have reduced agricultural profits and production incentives. Thus providing more equitable access to agriculture in the past would have been at the expense of the long run productivity and innovation from which we now benefit. Regarding health care innovation, to quote Cato Institute scholar Will Wilkinson, "It's just a fact that much of the world's medical innovation comes from the U.S. This goes a good way toward explaining why survival rates for many potentially mortal health problems are highest in the U.S., and also partly explains why U.S. costs are so high." As we were once in the throes of the agricultural revolution, the biotech revolution has now become common lexicon.

In summary, this debate is moral politics gone mad, while in actuality it should be an essentially administrative debate. The moral decision on whether or not to ration health care has already

been made for us, by reality. What we are dealing with are the trade offs involved in answering the question of how. In answering this question, be reasonable, and keep in mind a few points. The U.S. health care system is not a free market. If you have private insurance, there is someone between you and your doctor; it's just not necessarily the government. The U.S. private health insurance system has obvious costs, and is likely not the best answer. And finally, although I believe the most important trade off to be short term equity versus long run innovation, I will leave you with a quote from economist John Maynard Keynes ... "In the long run, we are all dead."

## HILL continued from CT14

judgment. For the past eight years the United States was viewed as a pigheaded, lethargic and foolish nation. It served the spirit of the times, and it had the appropriate official behind the steering wheel. While the jury is out on Afghani democracy, that country has the capacity to be great again. It can change, after all, we did.



commonwealthtimes.com · CT15

Thursday, August 27, 2009





**Listen, Damnit. WVCW.ORG**