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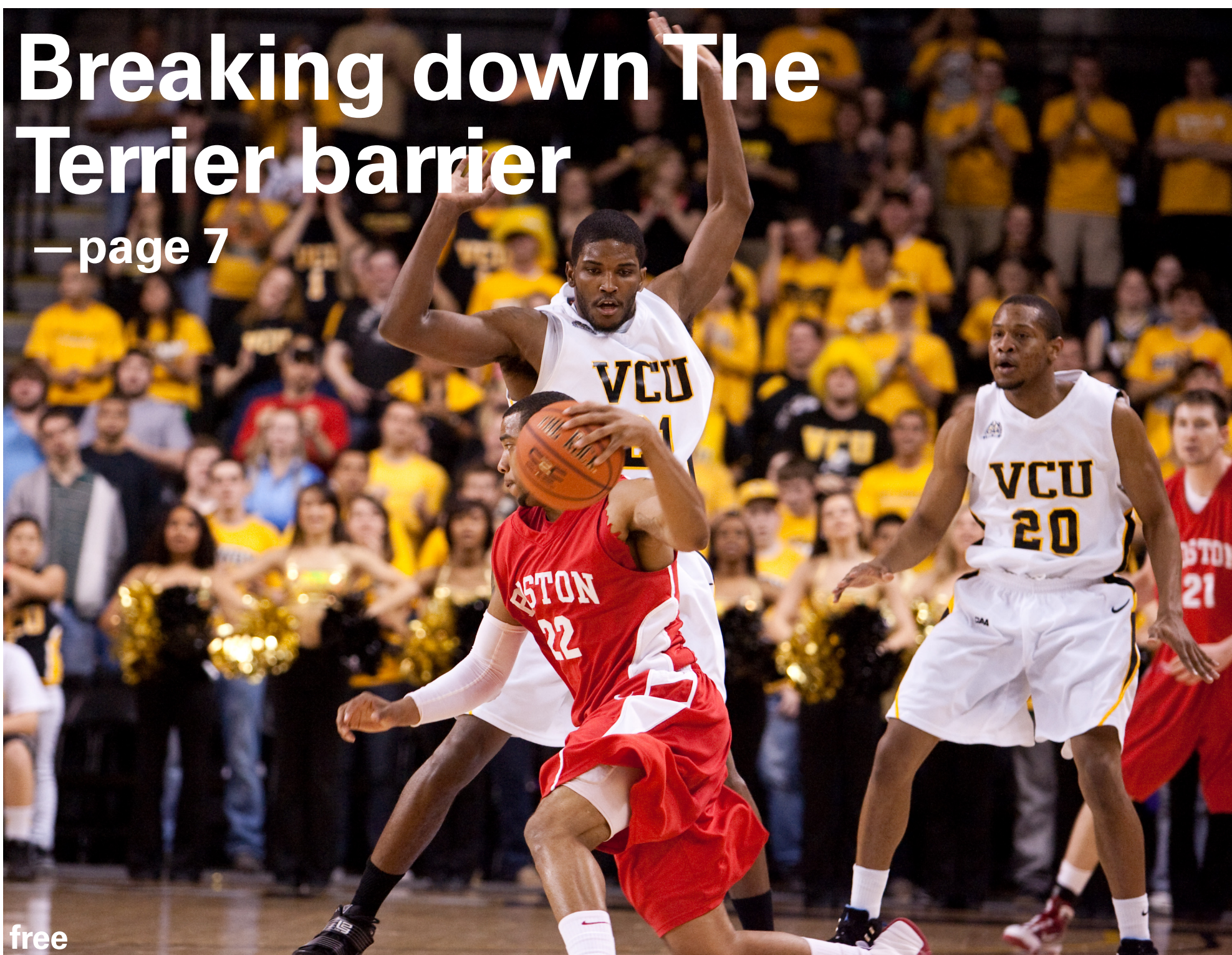


The **independent** student press of Virginia Commonwealth University

commonwealthtimes.org

Breaking down The Terrier barrier

—page 7



free





briefs

Kyle Laferriere cover photo

Local and VCU

Rescuers search James River for missing student

Richmond authorities say Wednesday afternoon they found the backpack of a missing VCU student, Jonathan S. Dorey, near the James River in the Shockoe Bottom area.

VCU Police Chief John Venuti said Dorey's belongings were found shortly after 1 p.m. by a citizen, who notified police. He declined to comment on what was found.

The search was conducted along the north bank of the James River at the northernmost part of the Rocketts Landing property. Officials said they found nothing in the water.

VCU spokesman Michael R. Porter said police continue to have no evidence of foul play in the case and that Dorey's parents have been notified.

Also on Wednesday, VCU Police released two new photos and a videotaped statement from Dorey's parents according to VCU News Center.

Porter said that the search will resume Thursday morning.

Dorey was last seen March 2 leaving Gladding Residence Center with his mountain bike at 11:19 a.m.

Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch and VCU News Center

National and International

Senate writing final chapter to Obama health care bill

President Barack Obama signed the U.S. health care bill into law Tuesday, senators are debating a package of fixes to the new health law.

The bill would eliminate a special Medicaid deal for Nebraska, soften a tax on insurance plans, provide more expansive subsidies for lower-income people and offer more prescription drug coverage to seniors, among other changes.

It's being debated under fast-track budget rules that allow passage with a majority vote.

Republicans used the floor debate Tuesday afternoon to repeat the accusations: that it raises taxes, slashes Medicare and includes a questionable requirement to carry health insurance.

Brief by The Associated Press

Virginia, 13 other states sue over health-care law

Minutes after health-care legislation was signed into law by President Barack Obama Tuesday, Virginia made good on its promise to sue the federal government over it, joining at least 13 other states that are legally challenging the health-system overhaul.

State Solicitor General E. Duncan Getchell Jr. and Deputy Attorney General Wesley G. Russell Jr. filed Virginia's complaint in U.S. District Court in Richmond on behalf of Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli.

Virginia is challenging the constitutionality of the new law, primarily based on the argument that the "commerce clause" of the U.S. Constitution cannot be used by Congress to mandate that individuals purchase health insurance as part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. *Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

Assembly OKs infanticide bills

The General Assembly passed bills to close a loophole in the state's homicide laws that can prevent the prosecution of some infanticide cases.

On March 13, the House and Senate approved identical "infant baby bills"—House Bill 1033 and Senate Bill 602. Under current law, a baby is not considered an independent being if the umbilical cord or placenta is still attached to the mother. As a result, in such instances, if the child is injured or killed, prosecutors may not be able to press charges.

The bills state that for the purpose of homicide, "the fact that the umbilical cord has not been cut or that the placenta remains attached shall not be considered in determining whether a human infant has achieved an independent and separate existence."

SB 602 passed unanimously in the Senate and House. HB 1033 was approved unanimously in the Senate and by a 94-2 vote in the House. The bills now have been sent to Gov. Bob McDonnell for his consideration.

Brief by Capital News Service

US-Russian nuclear deal to be signed in Prague

Prague announced Wednesday it will host the signing of a new U.S.-Russian treaty to reduce long-range nuclear weapons—the clearest sign yet that Washington and Moscow are close to completing a deal to replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

For President Barack Obama, a ceremony in Prague would be a symbolic return to the city where he outlined his nuclear agenda in April and declared his commitment to "a world without nuclear weapons" in a sweeping speech before tens of thousands.

Czech Foreign Ministry spokesman Filip Kanda said negotiations on the treaty have not been completed yet but Prague agreed to host the signing by Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev when a deal was reached. The START treaty had expired in December.

Brief by The Associated Press

Banks on verge of losing student lending business

Banks and other private lenders are about to lose a \$70 billion-a-year student loan business, part of a massive overhaul of college assistance programs that has received an unexpected boost from the recently passed health care bill.

Democrats and the Obama administration appear to be on the verge of shifting student lending from private banks to the federal government.

Under the measure, private banks would no longer get fees from the government for acting as middlemen in loans to low- and middle-income students. With those savings, the government would increase Pell Grants to needy students and make it easier for workers burdened by student loans to pay them back.

Brief by The Associated Press

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

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news

SGA elections

Candidate platforms reach out to students



Jim Thompson (left), SGA vice presidential candidate and Kanwar Singh Anand, SGA presidential candidate

Top issues

Communication within the SGA
Improving academic standards
Improving student resources
Increasing student diversity

Strategies

Academic standards – Anand said if he and Thompson are elected, they will focus on getting free electronic textbooks for students.

“Considering the people that come to VCU, I think it’s critical that we work with the university and provide grants to professors to write books, which the university can then buy and provide free of charge for our students to download on their e-book readers or their computers,” Anand said.

Thompson said he and Anand are currently working with the Center for Teaching Excellence to provide electronic textbooks.

Improving student resources – Anand said he and Thompson want to provide more scholarships, fellowships and student organization resources. Thompson said he and Anand want to improve

student organization funding by transforming the funding process to be entirely electronic based.

“I want to make this an electronic platform,” Thompson said.

Because Wachovia works with VCU, Thompson said the university could set up a debit account for every student organization and the requested funds could be moved to one account and funds will be more readily available.

Increasing student diversity – Anand said he and Thompson will fight for students’ rights to ensure diversity remains one of the university’s strengths and continues to distinguish it from other universities.

Anand said he and Thompson want to provide more scholarships, fellowships and student organization resources.

ERICATERRINI

News Editor

The Student Government Association elections will be held March 30 to April 1. Students can vote online at www.vcusga.com.

Joshua Ronk, SGA presidential candidate and Lisa Opie, SGA vice presidential candidate (pictured on CT4)

Top issues

Transparency
Leadership
Communication
Environmental efficiency
Tuition

“We want to address issues that are really what we need to focus on with VCU and the student body,” Ronk said. “We feel like these six are six that students have come to us and said, ‘These are really big issues that need to be discussed.’ ”

Ronk said there are many student concerns. “We’re all about listening to what the students have to say,” he said.

Strategies

Tuition – Ronk said students need to know exactly why the tuition is being raised.

“We never really get a breakdown of what the extra 10, 15, 20 percent addition to our tuition actually goes toward,” Ronk said. “It would be nice to know what the university actually plans to spend the money on.”

Environmental efficiency – Ronk said the university is taking great strides in becoming a greener campus and the SGA should work to continue that. Ronk said he and Opie would like to begin incorporating more green features into university buildings and infrastructure and speak with contractors, the Board of Visitors, administrators and faculty about green initiatives.

Transparency – “With transparency, I’ve

SGA continued to CT4





SGA continued from CT3



Joshua Ronk (left) and Lisa Opie

always been a big believer that students need to know exactly what the university is doing and what the student (government) is doing,” Ronk said.

He said he plans to make the SGA more transparent to the student body through updates on the SGA Web site and by using more available media sources.

Communication – Ronk said the SGA has had problems communicating

“We have to hold ourselves accountable to the student body and we also have to hold the university accountable as well.”

-Joshua Ronk

with the student body. He said he wants to do fireside chats with the Student Media Center and talk to the student body about what is going on with the SGA and the university.

Accountability – “We have to hold ourselves accountable to the student body and we also have to hold the university accountable as well.”

McClure and Maye say they want to ensure the resources that the university currently has are being utilized effectively and efficiently.



Adele McClure (right), SGA presidential candidate and Joshua Maye, SGA vice presidential candidate

Top issues

- We strive to achieve more transparency
- Better communication with administration and the student body
- More green initiatives
- More student engagement
- Increasing the quality of education
- Easier access to student organization allocations

McClure and Maye say they strive for realistic solutions that they can achieve in their term—visible results.

Strategies

Transparency – McClure said she and Maye want to increase student involvement on campus so transparency is very important for their campaign. She said she realizes a lot of students are angry with some university policies and may not understand why they are in effect. She said she hopes to better inform students about certain issues.

Student engagement – McClure said international engagement is another focus of their campaign. She said there is a lack of interaction between international and domestic students and she and Maye want to find a way to bring students together to create a more diverse environment within VCU. McClure said she and Maye also plan to hold a university wide sports event to encourage students to interact.

Easier access to student organization allocations – McClure and Maye say they want to ensure the resources that the university currently has are being utilized effectively and efficiently. McClure said she and Maye have talked with Student and Enrollment Services directors about hosting forums for students to discuss general concerns and the university can inform students of different resources available.

Increasing quality of education – McClure said she and Maye want to branch out and attract out-of-state students to VCU in order to raise university revenue.

Communication – McClure and Maye said they plan to uphold visibility with students by talking directly with students during student events and meetings.

To view video chats with the SGA candidates, visit www.commonwealthtimes.org.





news

Transportation transformation

City transit system set to change

KATRINA LOCKHART
Contributing Writer

The city of Richmond can expect changes in public transportation over the next few years.

An ongoing study will poll public transportation users and make improvements to the transit system based on the public opinion.

The study is being conducted by the Greater Richmond Transit Company, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, according to the GRTC Web site.

Last month, a public meeting on a rapid transit system was held at the Children's Museum of Richmond on West Broad Street. The purpose of the meeting was to inform and receive feedback from the public, according to the Connection newsletter that is published by the DRPT.

According to the GRTC, DRPT and RAMPO; the companies have developed a strategy for a new regional transit framework. The proposed corridor for the study would occur on Broad Street.

At the public scoping meeting, John Lewis, the CEO of GRTC, said the proposed transit transformation "will really be an exciting opportunity for Richmond."

"We're talking about 700 buses a day riding up and down Broad Street. What we're looking to do is transform public transportation to make it rapid, efficient and effective to give people options for their mobility," Lewis said.

Lewis said there are three different types of alternatives being studied: No Build Alternative, Baseline Alternative and a Build Alternative. The No Build Alternative is representative of no improvements. Baseline Alternative is the least costly. The Build Alternative will construct a new transit system altogether.

The need for change in the transit system is evident, said freshman Paula Ward.

"The bus system is very important. It helps me get to places a little bit farther than right on campus like Willow Lawn," Ward said.

Lewis said a more effective transit system would cut travel times, serve as an alternative to congested highways, and be more convenient and reliable to transit users. He said some people in Richmond do not have any personal transportation, and public-provided transit serves as a means of travel.

K.B. Basseches, a former art education professor, said she believes her art business will appeal to students in the area, but lack of reliable transportation could reduce student turnout.

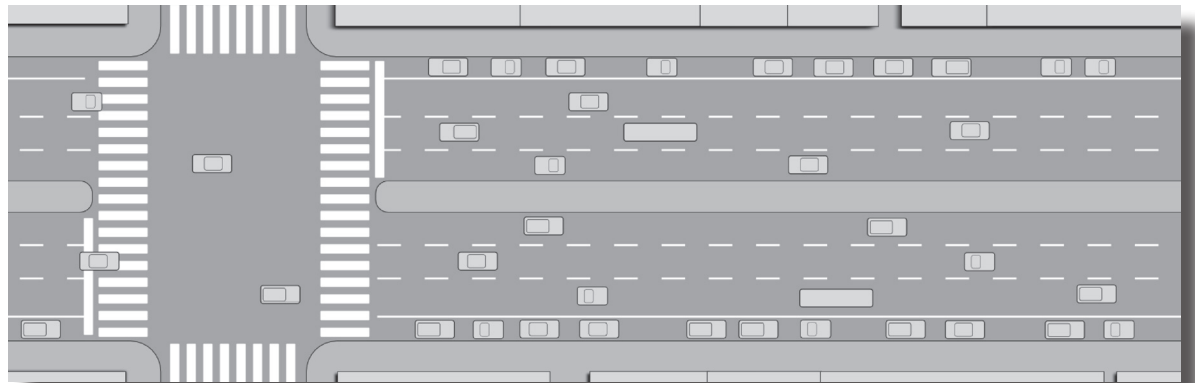
"The railway system is the way to go. I think (the city needs) a light rail system that goes to Short Pump all the way to where they're proposing at Rocketts Landing and they need a segment that goes to the University of Richmond," Basseches said.

Some attendants of the public meeting questioned where the funding would come from. According to a DPRT press release, the DRPT was awarded \$30.4 million in federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery funds on Feb. 23 for regional rapid transit improvements in Northern Virginia.

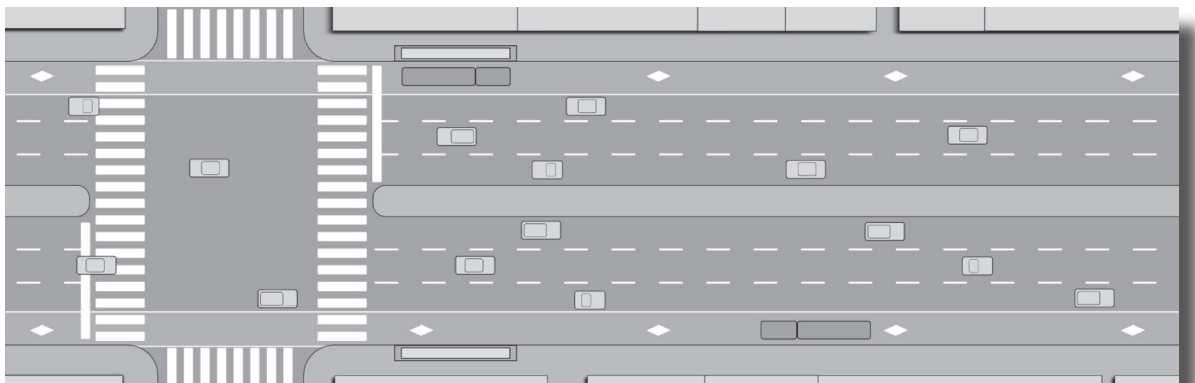
Other concerns addressed included how a revised transit system might affect roadside parking but according to the DPRT, it will be a while before a permanent plan is in effect for the city.

Thursday, March 25, 2010

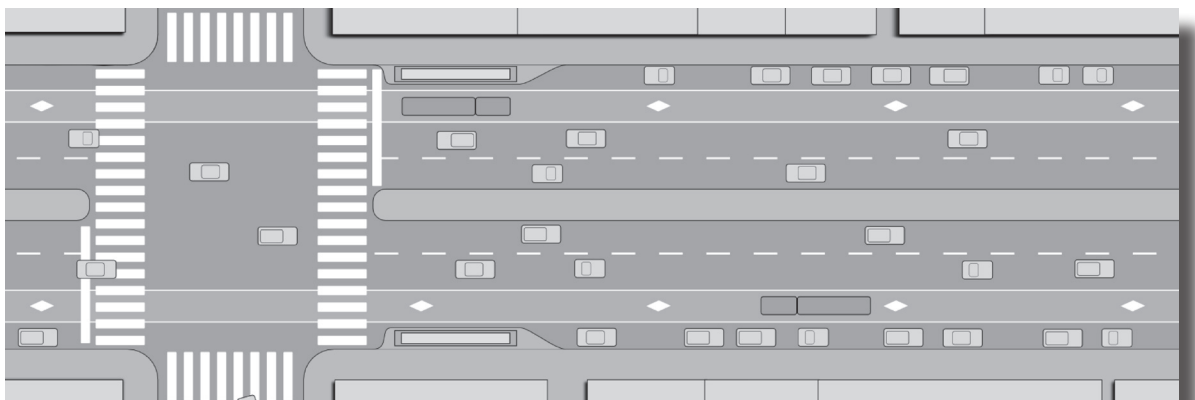
Guideway options



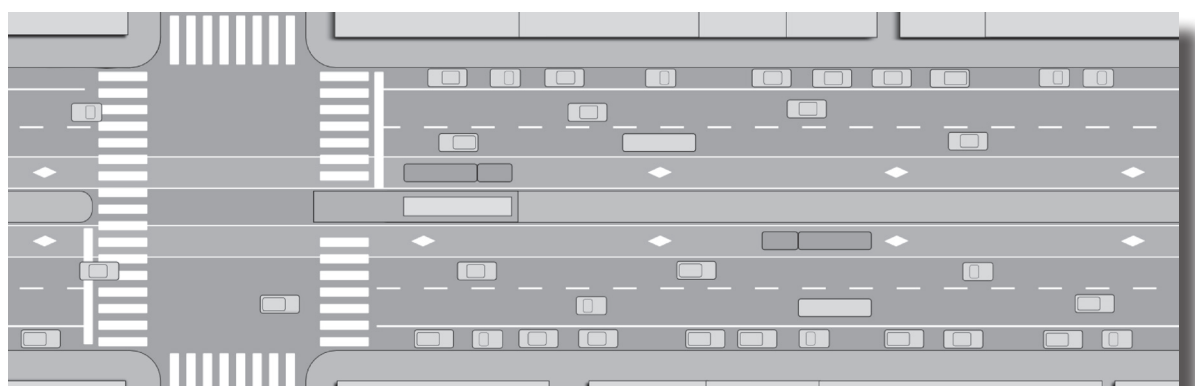
General existing conditions



Exclusive curb lane



Exclusive curb lane with parking



Exclusive median lane

images provided by GRTC Transportation Sytem

news · commonwealthtimes.org · CT5





Spring break travels

Student says New Orleans relief effort not forgotten

ERICATERRINI
News Editor

Each house is marked with an “x” in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans. The markings’ four quadrants are used to specify the last date the house was searched, which organization it was searched by, the number of human deaths and the number of animal deaths.

Images of the remnants and wreckage still left over from Hurricane Katrina were described as devastating by Eric James Hallal, a sophomore elementary education major, and Interfraternity Council vice president for public relations. Hallal traveled to New Orleans with his fraternity, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, last week for the fraternity’s first annual alternative spring break trip. He is the eminent treasurer for SAE.

Hallal said he and 11 other SAE members want people to know about the conditions “in our own backyard.”

The Commonwealth Times: What motivated SAE to travel to New Orleans and assist the ongoing relief effort?

Eric Hallal: We had decided to do this a few months back so some of our families donated some money to our trip. Most of us paid out of pocket. We decided that New Orleans would probably be the best area because we had seen a lot of pictures that (New Orleans) was still devastated in most of the areas.

The CT: Why did you decide to volunteer through the Camp Restore organization?

Hallal: We found this place called Camp Restore, which is a Lutheran restoration camp in New Orleans. They put you at projects everyday to help restore New Orleans.

The CT: What types of projects did you and the other SAE members do?

Hallal: The first day, half of our group was at a New Orleans mission building replanting around the building. The other half of the group, what I was in, we went to a local elementary school and helped mentor young kids. Then the second, third and fourth day, we actually worked on a home in the Lower Ninth Ward, which was the most devastated area that was hit. This whole neighborhood, just like most of New Orleans, was under 12 to 20 feet of water. We helped scrape houses for painting, we put up sheetrock in a house, we painted a house ... in the Lower Ninth Ward.

The CT: What is the significance of the projects and of the relief efforts?

Hallal: The significance of that, which is the most heart-wrenching to me and most of the group, is that 80 percent of the houses are still completely boarded up—not been touched since the storm. They’re all just sitting there because the federal government, the city of New Orleans, the citizens—they don’t have the money. So, they’re just waiting for groups like us to come down and volunteer with these nonprofits to help rebuild New Orleans and it was devastating.

The CT: What experiences affected you and the SAE members?

Hallal: (The condition of the area) was probably one of the most heart-wrenching things and also to hear the stories of these people like: the water rose and rose and rose so they had to stay on their roofs and a lot of these people didn’t know if they were going to survive.

The CT: How did residents react to the volunteers?

Hallal: We spent our whole week down there, it was in the mid-upper 80s. We all got sunburned but it was really worthwhile because you just take for granted what you have in Richmond. You have it nice here – you really do. You go down there and you see how devastated people are. They’re so gracious to have you down there helping, they’re so excited and I really would hope more people will make an effort to go down there and help them out because they need it.

The CT: Do you think people are aware of the conditions in New Orleans?



SAE members collect debris from a New Orleans battelfield.



SAE members stand in front of a New Orleans house they painted on their trip.



photos provided by Eric Hallal

Hallal: I definitely think a lot of people forgot about it, but the place we stayed at they have a big map of where each group has come from to help volunteer. All 50 states, Canada and countries over the world—people are still coming. People still know about it but I feel that there are instances right now that people are more worried about and want to help but New Orleans is just as bad and that’s in our own backyard.

The CT: What is the damage and when can residents expect restoration?

Hallal: These people cannot live in their homes. There’s 50,000 people that still live in FEMA trailers down there and it’s been five years. The restoration for New Orleans won’t be finished ‘till close to 2020—15 years later is how long it’s going to take. That’s on the low end, it might be close to 2025. These people lost everything. It’s about them getting back on their feet, getting jobs, getting help from people like you and I.

The CT: Does SAE plan to return to New Orleans next year?

Hallal: It was tough to leave; you wanted to stay around. If we could have, we probably would have stayed a few more weeks because there was just so much left to do. In the week we were there we did a lot and it was just hard, I think, on all of us to not be able to do more because of the time constraint. That’s why we’re ready to start planning to go back next year.

Go to www.commonwealthtimes.org to read the full story.





sports

Post-season silver lining

MBB trudges through CBI Tournament

ADAM STERN
Sports Editor

The men's basketball team first had to cast aside its NCAA Tournament hopes because of an exit that came too early in the CAA Tournament.

Then, the Rams had to deal with their disgust at being snubbed for the National Invitational Tournament by an NIT Selection Committee that put 11 teams with inferior RPIs into the tournament ahead of them.

So after VCU begrudgingly accepted its place in the obscure College Basketball Insider Tournament, the Rams might have been forgiven for letting the season pitter off quietly.

Yet to the contrary, the Rams have been playing with a refreshed, if not relaxed, enthusiasm ever since and are now in the three-game series final of the CBI after soundly defeating Boston University 88-75 before 3,352 spectators at the Stuart C. Siegel Center last night.

"I think everybody is more focused on winning and getting this championship (than worrying about being left out of the NIT)," said sophomore Bradford Burgess (Benedictine/Richmond). "Now we have one more team to play and hopefully we can get it done."

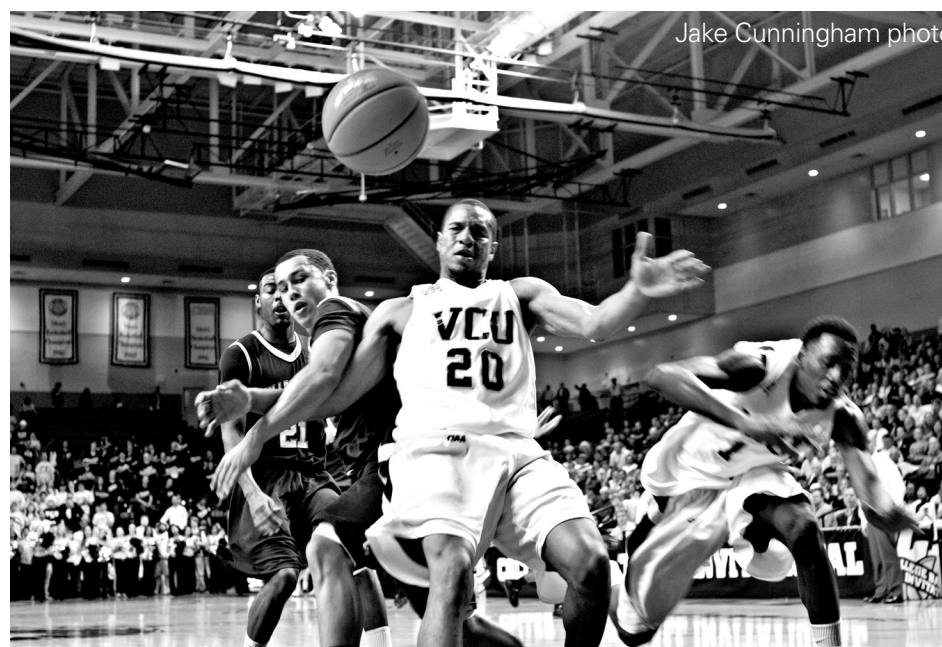
Though VCU boasted a resounding 16-1 home record going into the game, Boston had more than enough reasons to be confident they could steal a result in what was the first match up between the two schools since 1978. The Terriers, coached by a fellow first-year head coach in Patrick Chambers, had won 10 of 12 games coming into the night and are coming off their first consecutive 90-plus point performances since 1974.

True to form, Boston came out the more aggressive team in the first half and put the Rams on their heels through the play of American-East All Conference guard John Holland and forward Jake O'Brien, who both seemed to have VCU's defensive efforts figured



Kyle Laferriere photo

ABOVE Junior Ed Nixon lays the ball up.



Jake Cunningham photo

BELOW Sophomore Bradford Burgess and junior Larry Sanders battle for a loose ball.

BASKETBALL continued to CT8

Thursday, March 25, 2010

sports · commonwealthtimes.org · CT7





sports

GOOAAALL!

VCU World Cup scores one for culture

ADAM STERN
Sports Editor

This summer's 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa is 77 days and soccer fans all over the world and at VCU are eagerly awaiting the arrival of the most watched and celebrated sporting event in the world. The World Cup will be held nearly 8200 miles east of Richmond and will be comprised of 32 teams saturated with the most gifted soccer players from all over the globe.

VCU's own (and first) official rendition of the tournament may not match up to the fabled soccer showdown in terms of glitz, glamour or greenbacks, but it should hold up just fine in one department: Diversity.

The tournament – to be held this weekend at the Cary Street Field – will feature 18 different teams, each a different nation made up of at least three natives of that country with contestants ranging from every continent except Australia and Antarctica.

“What greater way to show off your campus's diversity then by having a World Cup? If you have enough diversity on your campus to have an international competition, I think that's great,” SGA Chairman and Team Peru participant Gonzalo Aida

said.

Originally just a conceptual idea thought up last summer by current SGA President and Vice-President Gabriel Walker and Roberto Celis, the plan went from hypothetical to tangible only through the advent of a new Special Grants Committee that just began this semester at VCU.

The committee is crucial because they can allot up to \$15,000 per student group for an event and their addition has led to a much quicker turnaround in the normal application and appropriation process, those familiar with the process said.

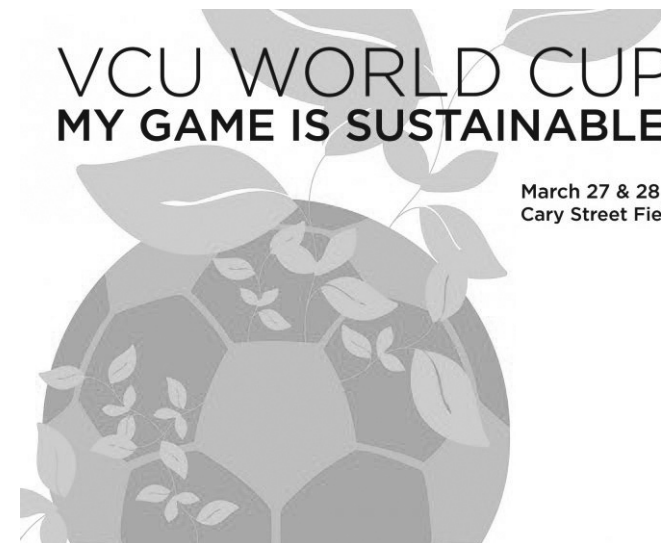
With the event now a reality, tournament organizers are hard at work to ensure the event will reflect VCU's cultural themes in more ways than one.

On top of the diversity that comes naturally at a school with such a large melting pot, organizers were equally adamant in ensuring the event would reflect VCU's Go-Green initiatives by using local, environmentally-conscious companies to help run the event.

All of the tournament's jerseys are being purchased from a Midlothian store – Global Embroidery – that specializes in producing organic tee shirts while all the sporting equipment will be bought from local

VCU WORLD CUP
MY GAME IS SUSTAINABLE

March 27 & 28
Cary Street Field



sporting good shops.

The event will also feature international cuisine from local restaurants including Ethiopian-themed restaurant The Nile and Thai cuisine from Elephant Thai.

“People are going to be hungry and try food they've never tried before. Some people have never had Ethiopian food but its great—that's one of the best things VCU can offer students: Culture,” Celis said.

Aido and Celis alike agree that, like the World Cup, VCU itself demonstrates how a kaleidoscope of culture and ethnicity can bring people together.

“A gentlemen once said to me ‘the campus of VCU is the face of America’ because of how diverse we are—and I believe that 100 percent.”

This week

Upcoming events

Women's track and field

Friday-Sunday, March 26-27, Raleigh Relays, Raleigh, N.C., all day

Men's track and field

Friday-Sunday, March 26-27, Raleigh Relays, Raleigh, N.C., all day

Men's baseball

Friday-Sunday, March 26-28, Northeastern, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 30, Maryland, College Park, Md., 6 p.m.

Wednesday, March 31, Liberty, 6 p.m.

Men's tennis

Saturday, March 27, UNC Wilmington, 11 a.m.

Women's tennis

Saturday, March 27, Georgia State, 2 p.m.

Sunday, March 28, Boston University, 10 a.m.

BASKETBALL continued from CT7

out early.

VCU, although having trouble stopping the Terriers, made sure Boston never gained a large lead through the play of habitual starters Burgess and Larry Sanders (Fort Pierce, Fla. /Port St. Lucie), and through seldom-used freshman guard Troy Daniels (Roanoke/William Fleming)— who hit two big three-pointers in a span of 36 seconds midway through the half. The Roanoke native, who saw minimal minutes in the regular season, is one of many players on the team who are benefiting from head coach Shaka Smart's tinkering in what is now a prolonged run into the postseason.

“90-some percent of teams are done playing and we're not,” Smart said. “We have the opportunity to get better as a group and also individually and if you look at these three CBI games that we've played in, we've really had some individual guys step up and had some great accomplishments come their way.”

VCU came out of halftime much more in tune and exploded out to a 9-0 run to transform a one-point half time deficit into a sudden eight-point lead. The

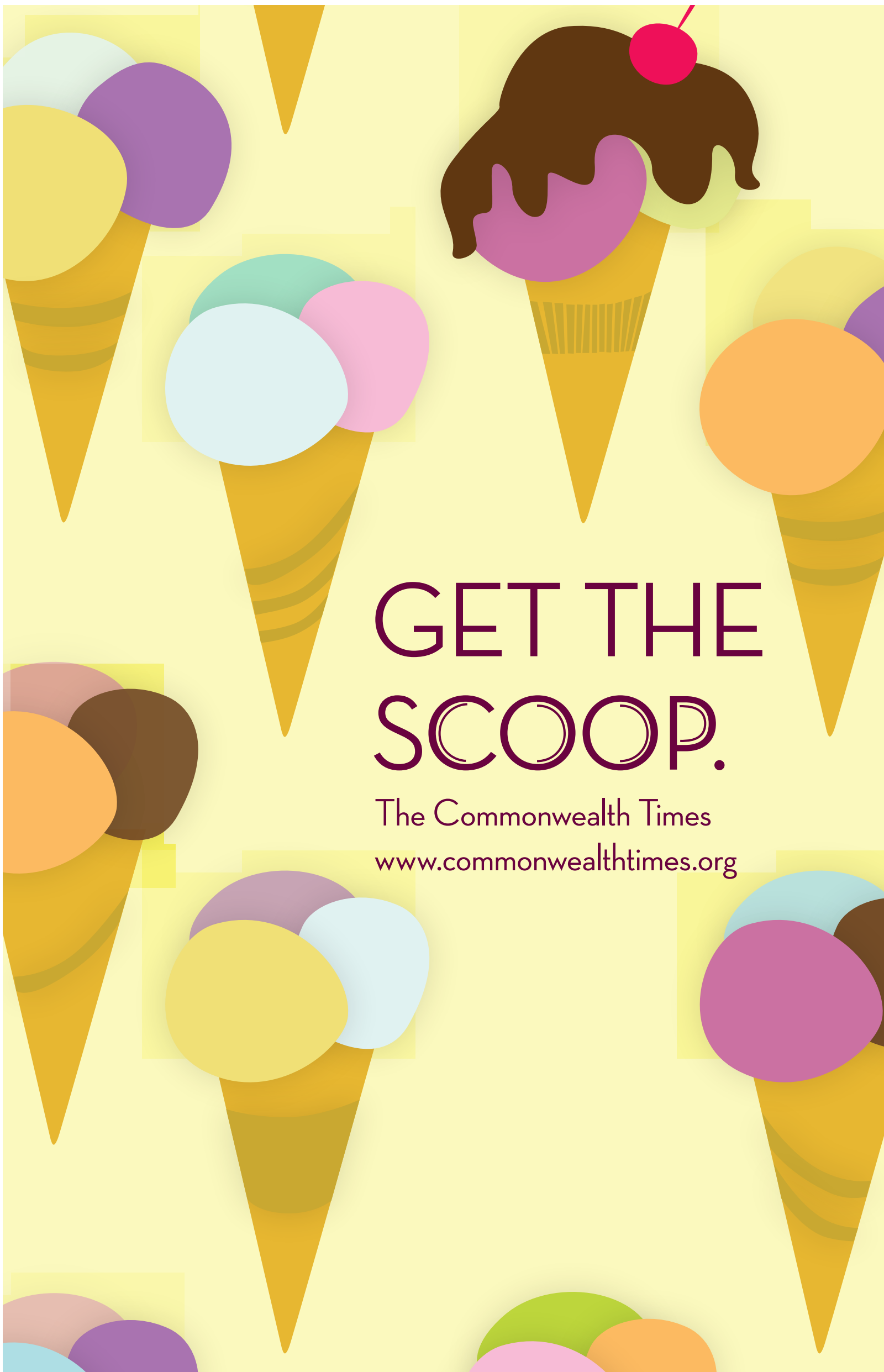
Rams were also getting stingier on the defensive side of the court and didn't allow a bucket for more than five minutes coming out of halftime. Boston, who hit seven first half three-pointers, didn't hit their first trey in the second half until there was just over six minutes remaining.

With the win already safely assured for the Rams, the last thing to tend to was to get team distributor Joey Rodriguez (Oviedo, Fla./Lake Howell) his 200th assist of the season—a feat which leaves the Florida native in third place in VCU's all-time assists in a season record behind former teammate and buddy Eric Maynor.

“So I'm with Eric now?” Rodriguez said jubilantly after being alerted to the fact that he had surpassed the 200-assist milestone. “That's what's up!”

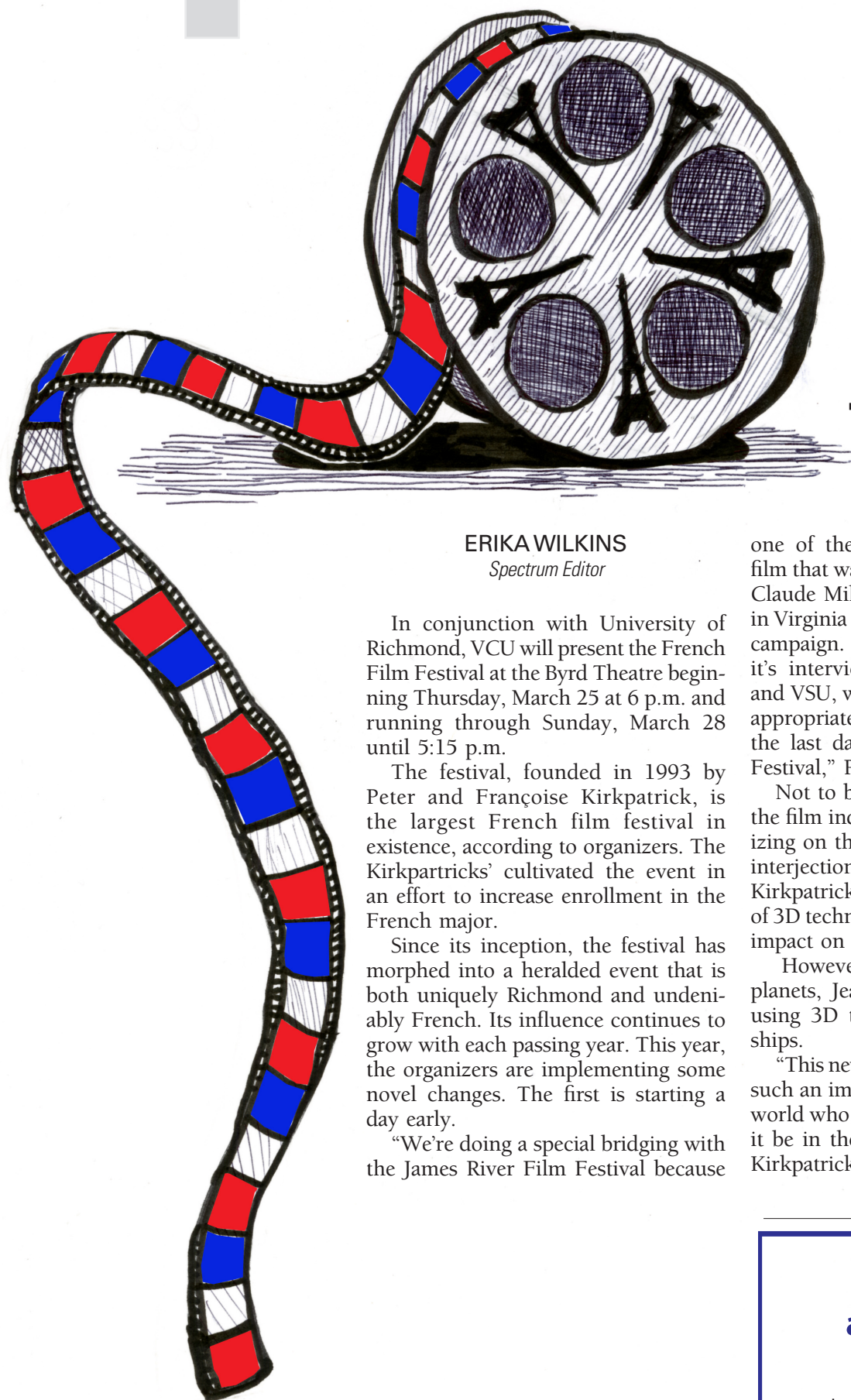
VCU will now play St. Louis, who defeated Princeton 69-59 in the night's other semifinal, in a three-game series to decide this year's CBI winner. The first game will be held at the Siegel Center Monday at 7 p.m. while the second game and, if necessary, third game will be held in St Louis.





spectrum

festival preview



Matt Schmidt illustration

ERIKA WILKINS
Spectrum Editor

In conjunction with University of Richmond, VCU will present the French Film Festival at the Byrd Theatre beginning Thursday, March 25 at 6 p.m. and running through Sunday, March 28 until 5:15 p.m.

The festival, founded in 1993 by Peter and Françoise Kirkpatrick, is the largest French film festival in existence, according to organizers. The Kirkpartricks' cultivated the event in an effort to increase enrollment in the French major.

Since its inception, the festival has morphed into a heralded event that is both uniquely Richmond and undeniably French. Its influence continues to grow with each passing year. This year, the organizers are implementing some novel changes. The first is starting a day early.

"We're doing a special bridging with the James River Film Festival because

one of the films we're having is the film that was shot by French filmmaker Claude Miller, who shot the film here in Virginia during the 2008 presidential campaign. Since that film is in English, it's interviewing students from UVA and VSU, we thought it would be more appropriate to go ahead and have it on the last day of the James River Film Festival," Peter Kirkpatrick said.

Not to be outdone by their peers in the film industry, the festival is capitalizing on the most recent, buzz-worthy interjection in modern movie making. Kirkpatrick said he believes that the use of 3D technology will have "as major an impact on cinema as sound was."

However, instead of exploring alien planets, Jeanne Guillot's short film is using 3D to explore human relationships.

"This new technology is going to have such an impact for all of us around the world who like to watch films, whether it be in the theater or at our homes," Kirkpatrick said.

For those who won't make it to the 3D-film showing, fear not. Kirkpatrick says the festival will be a special experience for all viewers. The French Film Festival flew in the technicians responsible for the screenings at the Cannes International Film Festival to "tweak the Byrd's optics and sounds to the maximum performance."

A master class and discussion with the filmmakers after each film will also be available for participants enjoyment.

After reviewing all French films released in the past year and a half, 12 films and a multitude of shorts have been selected as the Kirkpartricks continue to bring culture to Richmond.

The French Film Festival runs from Thursday, March 25 to Sunday, March 28 at the Byrd Theatre located at 2908 W. Cary St. For more information visit www.frenchfilm.vcu.edu.

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*Fulbright Scholar in Residence
VCU Department of Art History*

Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya, Associate Professor of Buddhist Studies at Tribhuvan University, Nepal, was selected for the prestigious 2009-2010 Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence award and teaches Buddhist art and ritual in the Department of Art History at VCU. He is one of the leading ritual specialists of Nepalese Buddhism

Dr. Bajracharya, of Kathmandu, Nepal, holds the Ph.D. in Buddhist Philosophy from the University of Delhi, India, and has been director of the Department of Buddhist Philosophy at Mahendra Sanskrit University and the Central Department of Buddhist Studies at Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu, Nepal. He has lectured and demonstrated “Buddhist Meditation and Visualization” for the Department of Psychology at Rutgers University, and has lectured on “Literature, Arts, and Culture of the Himalayas” for the NEH at both the College of Holy Cross and at Harvard University. His writings and editorial work on Ritual and Iconographic texts in Sanskrit are extensive. He was invited to create a sand mandala at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 2003.

Generous gifts established the Powell-Edwards Lecture in Religion and The Arts series within the Religious Studies Program at VCU in 2008. The lectures honor the late Marcia Powell, a long-time teacher of French language and culture who was associated with Virginia Commonwealth University for over forty years, and Professor Clifford Edwards, VCU Religious Studies program.

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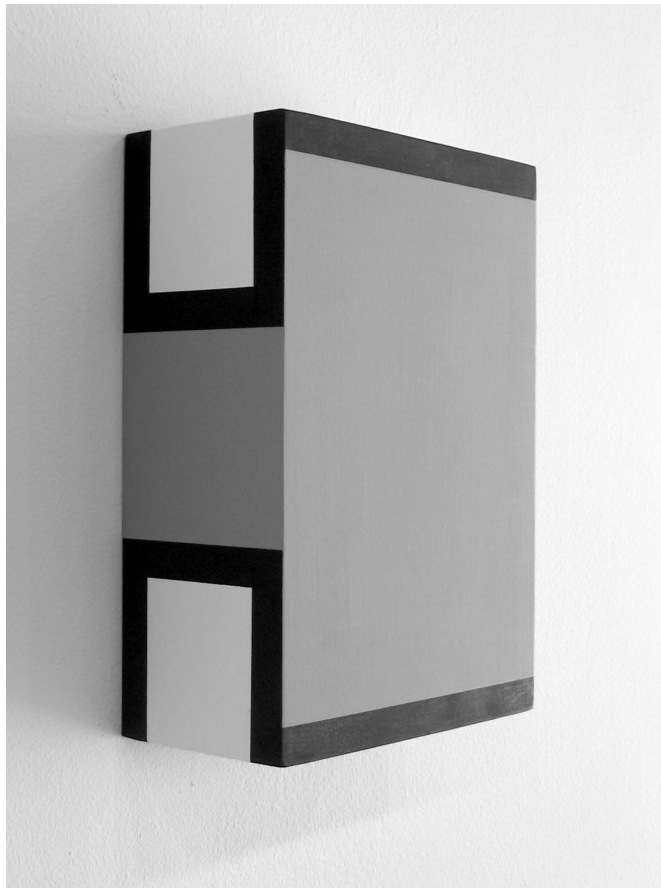
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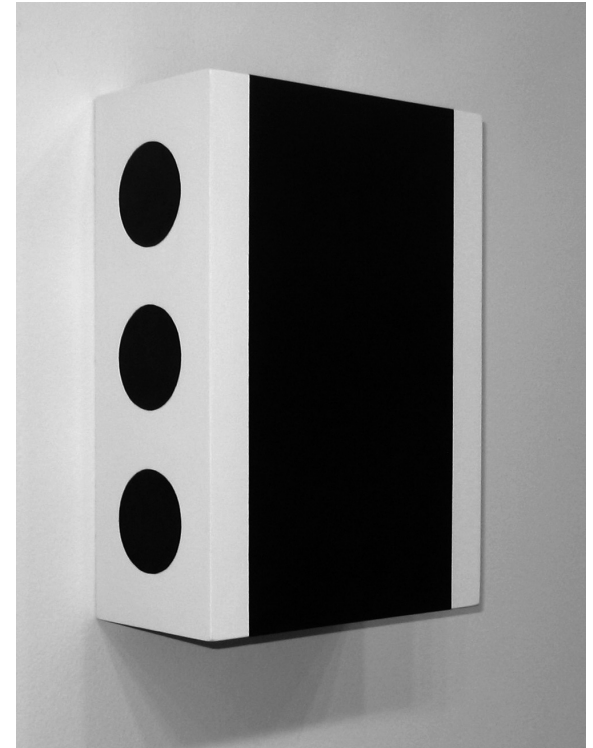
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Painting outside the box

RAINBOW BRACEY
Assistant Spectrum Editor

All setting the stage for a unique comeback to painting is well worth the short walk from campus.

VCU professor of painting Richard Roth's "Perimeter Check" opened March 5 and will continue through April 17 at the Reynolds Gallery. Walking through the Reynolds Gallery doors on Main Street reveals an open, well-lit gallery space to rival any of the better-known art venues in Richmond.

The exhibit features several mounted boxes varying from 1 1/4 to 4 inches in depth. Each box fabricates its own theme though the prevalence of stark, black lines running through each painting. The boxes take on the appearance of everyday boxes—cereal,

shoe, and gift boxes, each containing its own special gift. No side is left untouched as Roth explores the advantages of the 3D shape.

The myriad colors bring the viewer into the season, drawing upon nature and popular and commercial culture. From the basic red, white, and black, to neon yellow, orange and pale pink, Roth delves into the spectrum.

His artist statement, available at the gallery, explains the concepts he attempts to explore are product and packaging design, custom cars, nature and fashion. This coincides with the idea that each piece can stand alone.

The use of the edge on several of the boxes credits the technical skill of the artist. He has created an exhibit that can be enjoyed from any angle in the space.

The characteristic traits of the boxes varied from a happy cow to a strong red warrior readying himself for battle. Roth's meticulous choice of work is evident in the lack of clutter and quality of the displayed pieces.

"Inclusion to this set of objects is carefully controlled," Roth stated in his artist statement.

The ones that made the cut leave a lasting impression.

Grade: B+

"Perimeter Check" will be exhibited until April 17 at the Reynolds Gallery located at 1514 West Main St. 355-6553.

Weekend calendar

March 25-28

Thursday 3/25

French Film Festival: The 17th annual festival brings France to Carytown. 6:30 p.m. Various show times. \$15. Byrd Theatre. 2908 W. Cary St. 342-9100.

James River Film Festival: Enjoy independent film and animation. 6 p.m. \$5. Plant Zero. 0 E. Fourth St. 231-6500.

Artist in Exile: Forgotten Iraqi Refugees in Syria. 11 a.m. Gallery 5. 11 a.m. Free. 200 W. Marshall St. 644-0005.

Friday 3/26

The Bizarre Bazaar's Spring Market: Enjoy an upscale retail gift show. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. \$7 adults \$1.50 children. Richmond Raceway Complex. 600 E. Laburnum Ave. 228-7500.

Full Plate Collection: Enjoy Virginia's 2010

celebration of Women in Arts. 8 p.m. Empire Theatre. 114 W. Broad St. 783-1688.

Lisa Lampanelli: Have a side-splitting evening. 8 p.m. \$40 and up. Carpenter Theatre at Richmond CenterStage. 600 E. Grace St. 225-9000.

Richmond Ballet: Encore New York. Preview the works soon to be performed in NYC. 7:30 p.m. \$40. Studio Theatre. 407 E. Canal St. 344-0906.

CALENDAR continued to CT14

spectrum · commonwealthtimes.org · CT13

Thursday, March 25, 2010





CALENDAR continued from CT13

Last Summer At Bluefish Cove: Jane Chambers’ milestone play. 8 p.m. \$20-25. Richmond Triangle Prayers. 1300 Altamont Ave. 346-8113

Saturday 3/27

Live Music at Plaza Bowl: Featuring The Protomen and We Love to Die. 8 p.m. \$5. 523 E. Southside Plaza Bowling Alley. 233-8799.

French Film Festival: The 17th annual festival brings France to Carytown. Begins at 9 a.m. Various show times. \$15. Byrd Theatre. 2908 W. Cary St .342-9100.

The National’s Country Music Showcase: Featuring The Chiggers, Johnnynchange,

Smokehouse, Busted Soul, and Fifth Gear. 6:30 p.m. \$10. The National. 704 E. Broad St. 757 622-9877.

Daffodil Festival: Enjoy a parade and all day garden tours. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. Gloucester Court House. 6467 Main St. Gloucester, Va. 693-2355.

EOTO: Techno group. 10 p.m. \$15-\$18. The Hat Factory. 140 Virginia St. 788-4281.

Sunday 3/28

“Wicked” Find out what happened before Dorothy dropped in. 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

\$40-\$70. Landmark Theatre .6 N. Laurel St. 646-4213.

“Arabia” IMAX Dome film. 9 a.m. \$8.50. Science Museum of Virginia. 2500 W. Broad St. 864-1400.

Richmond Ballet: “Encore New York” Preview the works soon to be performed in NYC. 2 p.m. \$40. Studio Theatre. 407 E. Canal St. 344-0906.

Thelma Shook reunion: 9:30 p.m. Free. The Triple. 3306 W. Broad St. 359-7777.

Weekend Traveler
M e t r o A r e a

Thursday 3/25

Christian Scott: Jazz trumpeter. 8 p.m. \$15-\$25.. Reston Community Center at Hunter Woods. 2310 Colts Neck Road. Reston, Va. 703-476-4500.

“Directions” John Gerrad. 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Free. Recent work by Irish artist John Gerrad who uses customized 3-D gaming software to alter landscape art. Hirshhorn Museum & Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution. Runs through March 28. Independence Ave. at Seventh St. SW. 202-633-1000.

Deleted Scenes and Savoir Adore: 9 p.m. \$8. With Grandchildren, Mon Khmer. Velvet Lounge. 915 U St. NW. 202-462-3213.

Big Apple Circus: Bello is Back: 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. \$15-\$52. Bello the clown returns to D.C. with jugglers, trapeze artists and animals acts. Big Apple Circus Tent. Runs through Saturday, March 27. 45630 Dulles Town Center Blvd. Sterling, Va. 800-922-3772.

Friday 3/26

“Lord Arthur’s Savile’s Crime” 2:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. \$40-\$50. Washington Stage Guild’s adaptation

of the Oscar Wilde play about a man who puts stock in a palm reading. Mount Vernon Place United Methodist Church. 900 Massachusetts Ave. NW. 202-582-0050.

Terra Cotta Warriors: Guardians of China’s First Emperor. 17,000 tickets go on sale for the last two weeks of one of the season’s most popular exhibits. 9 a.m.-10 p.m. \$12. \$10 student with valid I.D. National Geographic Museum. Runs through Sunday, March 28. 1145 17th St. NW. 202-857-7588.

Saturday 3/27

Saturday Night at kstreet: 10 p.m. \$10-20. Women receive free admission until 1 a.m. and free drinks until midnight with RSVP. DJ Nesta Hip-Hop, mashups and Top 40. kstreet Lounge. 1301 K St. 202-962-3933.

Hip-Hop Cinema Café: 2 p.m. Free. A free screening of “Copyright Criminals” is followed by a panel of discussion about sampling, intellectual property rights and hip-hop music. Historical Society of Washington. 801 K St. NW. 202-383-1850.

Smithsonian Kite Festival: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. One of the opening events of the annual Cherry Blossom madness. Washington

Monument. 15th St. and Constitution Ave. NW. 202-485-9880.

Chelsea Handler: 3 p.m. Free. The comedian reads from and discusses her new book of essays, “Chelsea Chelsea Bang Bang.” Borders Books and Music Downtown. 18th and L streets NW. 202-466-4999.

Sunday 2/28

Mary-Jo Salter: 2 p.m. Free. Salter reflects on “Decades in Japan: Reverberations of a Poet’s Life in Japan.” Walter’s Art Museum. 600 N. Charles St. Baltimore, Md. 410-547-9000.

“The Liar” open rehearsal 2:30 and 4 p.m. Free. Get a sneak peek of the Shakespeare Theatre Company’s next play with this rehearsal, open to the public. Shakespeare Theatre Company, Lansburgh Theatre. 450 Seventh St. NW. 202-547-1122.





spectrum

Eyes on the arts



Patrice Dalesandro illustration

ERIKA WILKINS

Spectrum Editor

‘STRUT’ fashion show

On Saturday March 27, at 6 p.m., the Stuart C. Siegel Center will open its doors for “STRUT in Wonderland.” In preparation for what is likely Richmond’s most buzzed-about fashion show, “STRUT” organizers have laced this week with a litany of Wonderland-themed events. A mad-hat competition, tea party, and down-the-rabbit-hole potato sack race have occupied the University Student Commons since Monday afternoon. With the weekend steadily approaching and the main event looming overhead, the “STRUT” committee is taking extra care to make sure the word gets out. Tickets are \$15 for the public and \$10 for students are on sale now at the Siegel Center box office and Break Point Games Room in the Commons.

Anderson Gallery student art exhibitions

During the student exhibitions, the Anderson Gallery will also be open Mondays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

This year the undergraduate juried exhibitions – Fine Arts, Design, and Kinetic Imaging – will be on view concurrently for two weeks. Faculty members from VCU’s Departments of Communication Arts, Fashion Design and Interior Design will select student work for the Juried Design Exhibition.

The Juried Kinetic Imaging Exhibition will include sound art, animation and video.

Hamza Walker, director of education and associate curator for the Renaissance Society at the University of Chicago, will serve as juror for this year’s Juried Student Fine Arts Exhibition.

Walker will give a talk in the Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall at VCU’s Singleton Center, 922 Park Avenue, on Thursday, March 25 at 11 a.m. It is free and open to the public.

The Anderson Gallery is the exhibition facility of VCU’s School of the Arts. Located at 907 1/2 W. Franklin St., the gallery is free and open to the public, Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 12-5 p.m.

The Mary Anne Rennolds Chamber Series presents: The Jupiter String Quartet

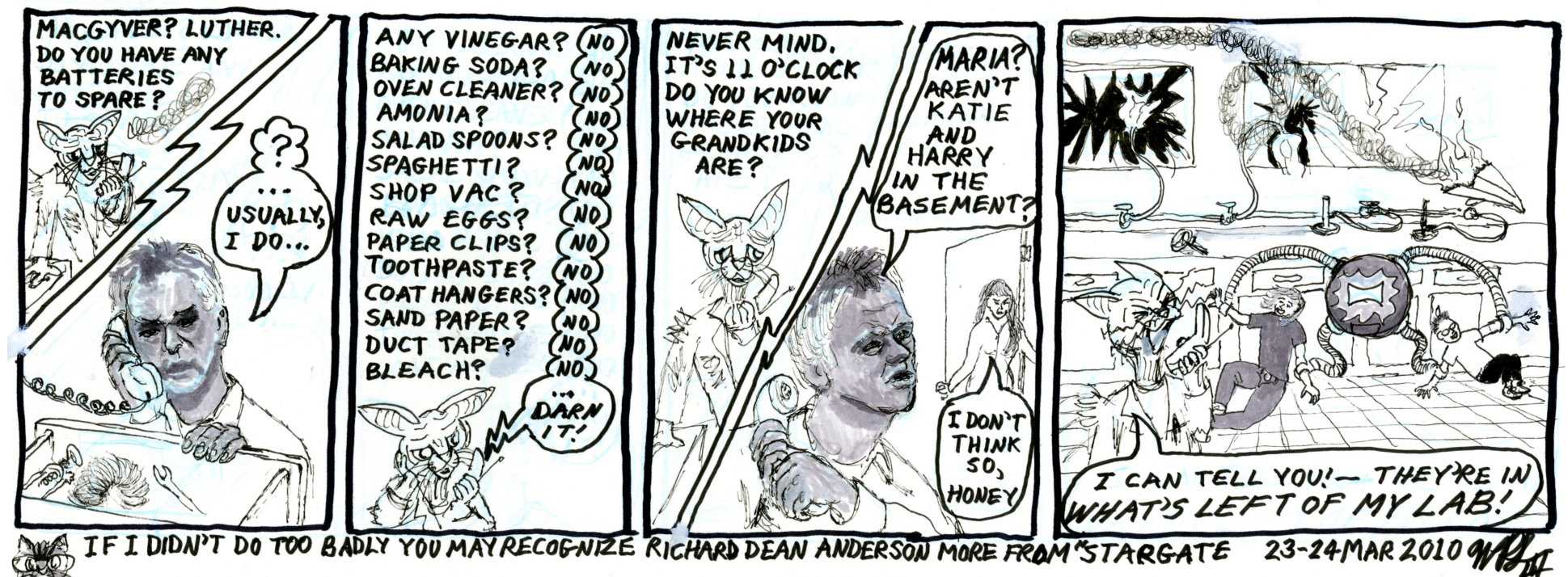
The Mary Anne Rennolds Chamber Series continues its efforts to bring affordable classical music to students with a performance by the Jupiter String Quartet. The quartet has received numerous chamber music honors, including grand prize in the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition and membership in Lincoln Centers Chamber Music Society Two. Held at the Sonia Vlahcevic Concert Hall at the W.E. Singleton Center for the Performing Arts on Saturday, March 27 at 8 p.m., full-time students can experience critically-acclaimed chamber music for \$10.



comics

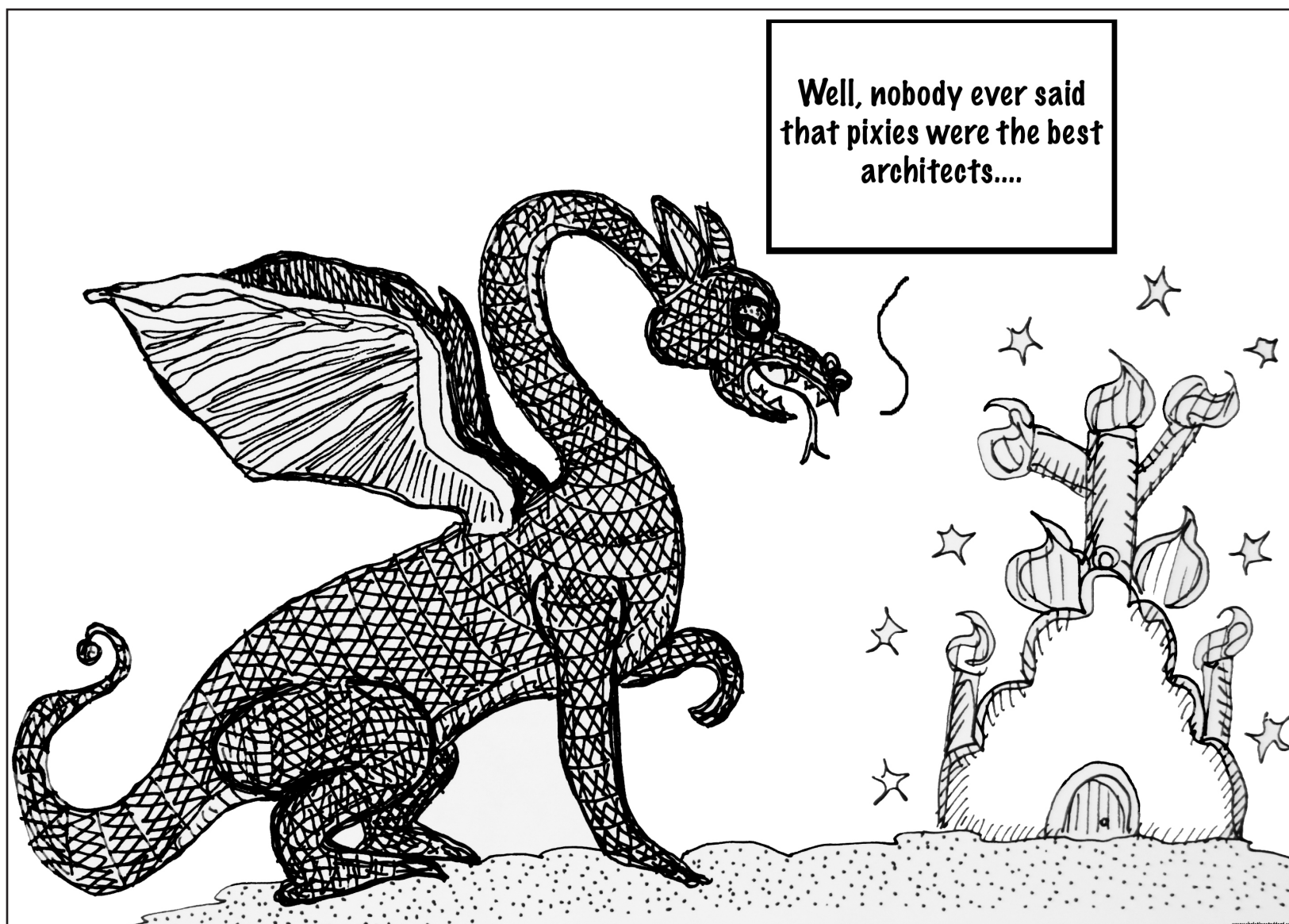
Pizza from Scratch

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Forget Fairytales

Christine Stoddard



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, 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.

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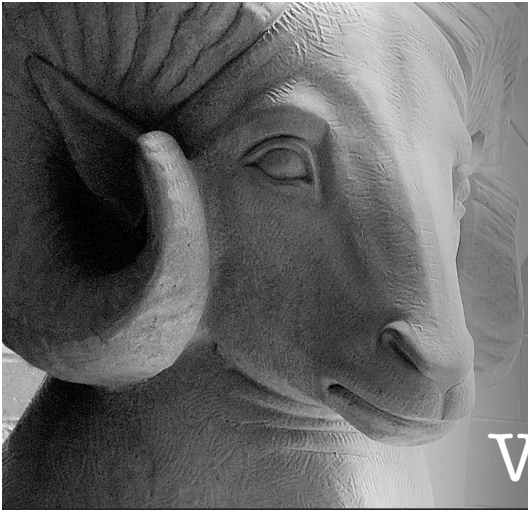


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V i r g i n i a C o m m o n w e a l t h U n i v e r s i t y



opinion

Sadly, my chickadees ...

I am off to the real world at the end of this semester. As my name will not grace the pages of The CT for very much longer, someone will have to take my coffee-and-ink-stained desk.

My original plan was to clone myself and call him Whiney Randy, but unfortunately he decanted with a brain disorder that causes him to just say “lower taxes, government takeover!” I think it was because he was cloned in Texas ...

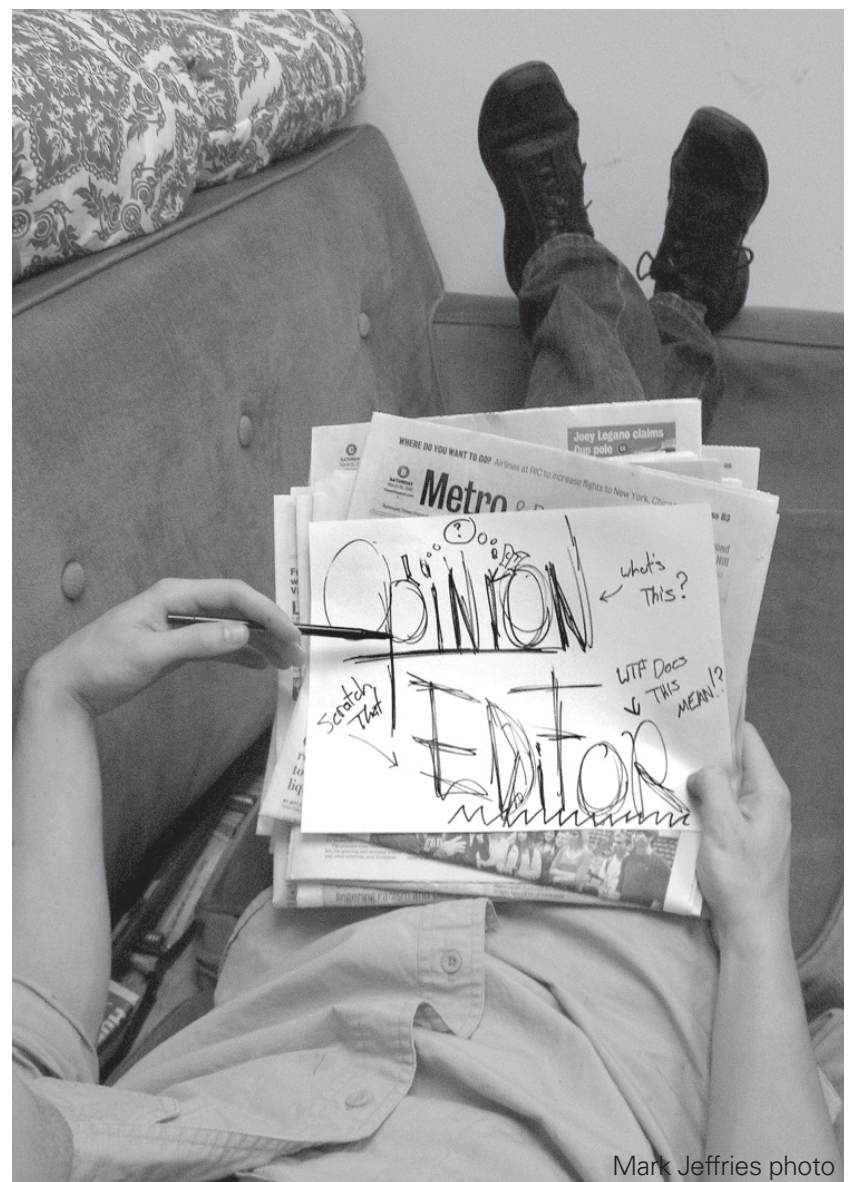
After I sent Randy back to Texas, I realized I had to find someone who could fill my shoes, so naturally I thought someone here at VCU might want it.

I can’t just give you a job though—this is America. There has to be an election, and then an appointment of the position by the executive and managing editors. I can, however, recommend you, and there is a way you can win my recommendation.

To put yourself in the running for my recommendation for the Opinion Editor position, write me an opinion. I would like for whomever is interested in the job to write an opinion on a subject that you have strong feelings about. Dot your i’s, cross your t’s and cite your sources please.

Did I mention you get paid? I hope to hear from VCU’s best and brightest very soon.

XOXO,
Eric Hill
Opinion Editor



Mark Jeffries photo

RAMZ Hall article correction

The article “Students express concerns over housing, RAMZ Hall closing,” published March 11, stated RAMZ Hall would be closing. According to Alethea M. Parker, the vice president of Property Operations, Ramz Hall has not been owned by the University since it was built and is still available to students, but as an off-campus option. VCU has offered Ramz Hall as a twelve-month lease option and it will continue to be offered in the same fashion. The major difference is students will not be paying VCU but Virginia Properties II, LLC. The owner has been leasing to VCU, and will now lease directly to the student. There is no need for any of the existing students to move out.



The budget is out, but please don't pout

COLIN HANNIFIN
Columnist

From local town hall meetings to filibusters on the Senate floor, there is little question that politics can get rather confusing. When you add in budgeting, the glass gets even murkier. This is especially true for state budgets, which must balance each fiscal year—a requirement that does not apply to the federal government.

In this economy, Virginia has struggled to balance its budget. Virginia issues a biennial budget—that is, one budget to serve two fiscal years. For political purposes, the fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 of the previous year to Sept. 30 of the year in which it is numbered (for instance, fiscal year 2011 will run from Oct. 1, 2010 to Sept. 30, 2011). The current budget in question is for fiscal years 2011 and 2012.

Because of the figures for projected revenues, which predict a \$4.2 billion shortfall over the next two fiscal years, Gov. Bob McDonnell and the General Assembly have struggled to find a balance to the budget. Still, the General Assembly managed to pass a preliminary budget on March 14 – two Sundays ago – but the plan still requires McDonnell's approval before it is signed into law.

It has been far from easy to come up with this balance and this compromise still has many interest groups calling foul. McDonnell has faced pressure to deliver on campaign promises (such as reopening rest stops and not raising taxes), while necessarily needing to find \$4.2 billion to move the legislative process forward. The shortfall is filled chiefly through in-state funding reductions and cuts in spending.

One of the hardest-hit public sectors is education. The General Assembly approved budget calls for a \$243.5 million reduction in spending for education. In addition to the vast reduction in funds educational institutions will see from the state, many federal stimulus funds for education have started to run dry, and individual schools are looking at budget struggles of their own.

It's hard to wrap our heads around how much money this is, or just what this may mean for us. As VCU President Michael Rao told us in a school-wide e-mail, VCU will lose a total of \$42.1 million in funding for fiscal year 2012. While that is still a year and a half off, it does have immediate ramifications. As with all things political and financial, budgeting takes considerable time and VCU does not have much of it to find a stop-gap of \$42.1 million dollars.

VCU's first priority, by all accounts, is its students. Unfortunately, a budget shortfall of this magnitude is difficult to absorb and could be most damaging to us students in the ways of fees, tuition increases, program cuts, and larger class sizes. It virtually spells

out another steep hike in tuition next year, as well as personnel cuts and more limited course offerings. With more and more people are coming back to school and the state is throwing up more educational obstacles, it seems that a degree will only get harder to come by.

There seems to be little that can be done. There have been protests and gatherings, but these haven't been significant enough to persuade lawmakers, nor would I anticipate any effective future demonstrations. After all, the bottom line speaks, and Virginia does have \$4.2 billion dollars to find. Indeed, \$243.5 million, while no paltry sum, accounts for less than 6 percent of the total cost reductions Virginia has had to account for.

Of course there may be other fields that VCU could enter into in order to increase its revenue. Over the past few years, there has been a democratization of higher education, with institutions like the University of Phoenix offering full majors online. Could a program like this be on VCU's road map, as online universities and courses are perceived to be more and more equivalent to brick-and-mortar institutions?

One thing that will not be slowed down by the proposed Virginia budget is VCU's planned expansion. The budget document (available online at Virginia's Department of Planning and Budget) includes \$3 million for a new baseball facility, almost \$41 million for new housing and a parking deck on West Grace Street, another \$3 million to renovate MCV's One Capitol Square, and more than \$4 million to renovate the Stuart C. Siegel Center.

At a time like this, though many complain for the slowing trickle of funds from the state, there is little to do but tighten our belts and prepare for a few rough years ahead. McDonnell and the General Assembly faced little choice, and treated education as kindly as they could. The only other option to balance the budget was significant tax increases—an almost universally unpopular option. It appears our current president and the Congress have already started down that road, with the recent passage of legislation that could significantly increase federal taxes. Whether that is the best decision for the country is another story.

“Indeed, \$243.5 million, while no paltry sum, accounts for less than 6 percent of the total cost reductions Virginia has had to account for.”



Mark Jeffries photo

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ct

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Executive Editor

ERIC HILL
Opinion Editor

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