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Mr. Roth goes to “Virginia Mother****ing Commonwealth University” — p. 10



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

commonwealthtimes.org





briefs

Local and VCU

VCU Police set two checkpoints this weekend

VCU Police checked for a variety of safety issues during a pair of administrative checkpoints this weekend.

VCU Police operated a checkpoint from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 27, along the 800 block of West Franklin Street. A second checkpoint took place from 11 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 27, until 3 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 28, along the 700 block of West Main Street. Officers checked operator licenses and vehicle registrations and reviewed seatbelt compliance and other safety issues. Any drunken or drug-impaired drivers were arrested.

The checkpoints were funded through a Virginia Highway Safety Grant from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. Vehicles will be screened by officers from the VCU Police Department, the City of Richmond Police Department, Virginia State Police and Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

Brief by VCU News Center

Update: Computer woes continue for state

The state's largest computer failure ever continued to hamstring key Virginia government agencies trying to handle their core duties Friday morning.

Agencies across the state wrestled with different types of problems as a result of computer server failures, which hinder their access to IT applications, shared information and stored data.

For instance, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles—one of the state's priorities as a customer-facing agency—continued to be unable to issue driver's licenses this morning because it can't save drivers' photos. State IT officials don't know when the problem that affected hundreds of servers will be fixed.

Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch

Beck seeks help restoring traditional American values; Sharpton tries to keep King dream alive

Glenn Beck and Sarah Palin appealed Saturday to a crowd on the National Mall to help restore traditional American values and honor Martin Luther King's message. Civil rights leaders who accused the group of hijacking King's legacy held their own rally and march.

Beck billed his event as nonpolitical and put a heavy religious cast on nearly all his remarks. "Something beyond imagination is happening," he said. "America today begins to turn back to God."

A group of civil rights activists organized by the Rev. Al Sharpton held a counter rally at a high school, then embarked on a three-mile march to the site of a planned monument honoring King.

Brief by the Associated Press

National and International

Safety officials say salmonella found in feed was used by 2 farms at center of massive recall

Food and Drug Administration officials say they have found positive samples of salmonella that link two Iowa farms to a massive egg recall.

FDA officials said Thursday that investigators found salmonella in chicken feed at Wright County Egg that was used by that farm and also Hillandale Farms. They also found additional samples of salmonella in other locations at Wright County Egg.

More than 550 million eggs from the two farms were recalled this month after they were linked to salmonella poisoning in several states.

Also Thursday, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that there could now be as many as 1,470 illnesses linked to the outbreak, about 200 more than previously thought.

Brief by the Associated Press

Kenya gets new American-style constitution

Kenya's president signed a new constitution into law Friday that institutes a U.S.-style system of checks and balances and has been hailed as the most significant political event since Kenya's independence nearly a half century ago.

Kenya's new constitution is part of a reform package that President Mwai Kibaki and Prime Minister Raila Odinga committed themselves to after signing a power-sharing deal in February 2008. That deal ended violence that killed more than 1,000 people following Kenya's disputed December 2007 presidential vote.

Odinga said the new constitution was a major step in bridging Kenya's political and ethnic divisions.

Brief by the Associated Press

Baby tiger found stuffed in bag at Thai airport

Authorities at Bangkok's international airport found a baby tiger cub that had been drugged and hidden alongside a stuffed toy tiger in the suitcase of a woman flying from Thailand to Iran, an official and a wildlife protection group said Friday.

The woman, a Thai national, had checked in for her flight and her overweight bag was sent for an X-ray, which showed what appeared to be a live animal inside, according to TRAFIC, a wildlife trade monitoring group.

The woman was arrested at Suvarnabhumi Airport before boarding her Sunday flight. The cub, estimated to be about three months old, was sent to a wildlife conservation center in Bangkok.

Brief by the Associated Press

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The Commonwealth Times strives to be accurate in gathering news. If you think we have made an error, please call Executive Editor Erica Terrini at 828-6516 or e-mail her at editor@commonwealthtimes.com. Corrections will appear on the Opinion page.

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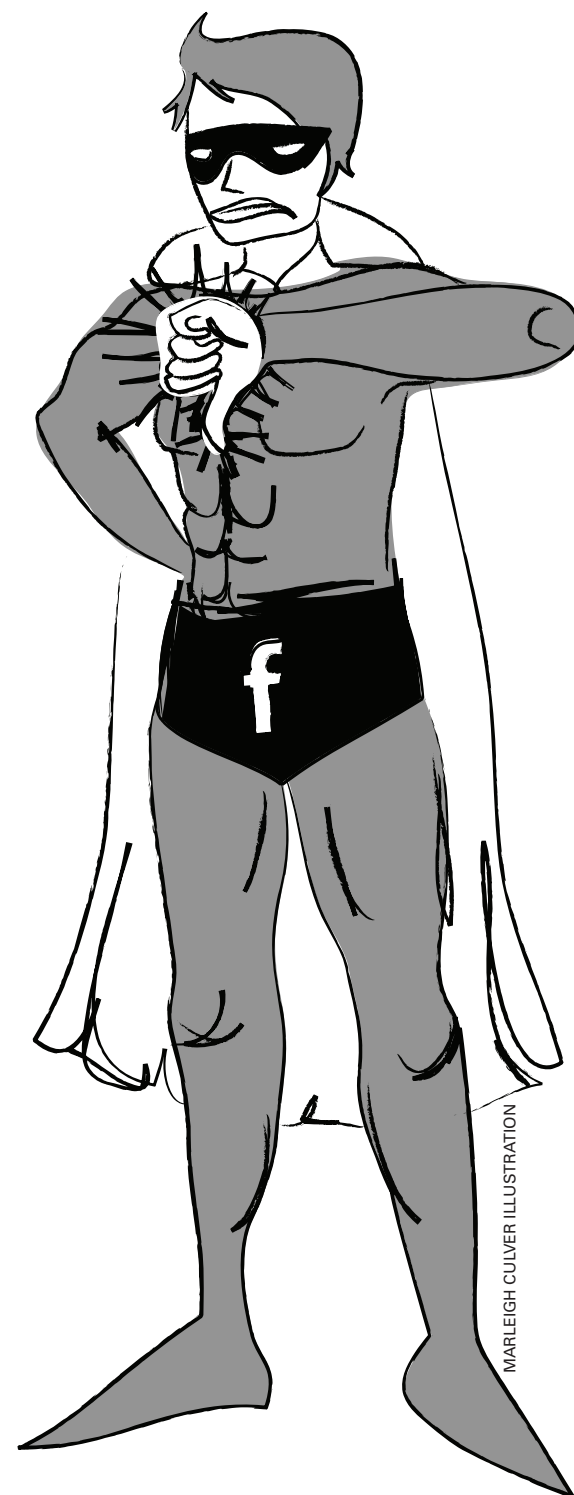
COVER PHOTO BY KYLE LAFERRIERE



news

Facebook ads go to pot

Gillan Ludlow
Staff Writer



The New York Times has long been known as the “paper of record.” It is no stretch to say that within the past few years, Facebook has become the online medium of record for college students. Likewise, the term “Facebook-official” has become a familiar phrase on campus. What then happens when Facebook exercises control over what is discussed on its site?

Just Say Now is a coalition pushing the legalization of marijuana. Between August 7 and August 16, Facebook accepted and ran ads for the campaign, drawing 38 million views to the group’s page. Then, abruptly, Facebook deleted it.

The sudden censorship created a major problem for the campaign, which collects signatures on college campuses to cull support for marijuana legalization.

Andrew Noyes, a spokesman for Facebook, blamed the censorship on the group’s logo which displayed the leaf of a marijuana plant. Speaking to the Huffington Post, he said “The image of a pot leaf is classified with all smoking products and therefore is not acceptable under our policies.”

In an e-mail interview, Devon Tackels, president of VCU’s Students for a Sensible Drug Policy, questioned the validity of Facebook’s censorship. “There are so many images on Facebook profile pictures,

group pictures, wall posts, et cetera that are much more offensive than a marijuana leaf,” he said. “Just wait until a ‘local singles’ ad pops up with a half-dressed woman and asks you to ‘mingle.’ ”

VCU Mass Communications Professor Jeff South points to Facebook’s concern for turning away other advertisers by running a pro-pot ad.

“I respect Facebook’s decision, as a private business, to restrict what kind of advertising it accepts,” he said in an e-mail. “The stumbling block is clearly the marijuana leaf logo. Facebook sees that logo as promoting marijuana usage. I disagree, but I respect Facebook’s right to make that determination.”

With 500 million users and counting, Facebook has an extensive influence on web-based public debate. Tackels, among other students, feels that Facebook is impinging free speech by rejecting the pre-approved advertisements.

“(Marijuana illegality) affects millions of Americans and proponents and opponents alike should be able to openly express their views using social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter,” Tackels said.

According to VCU Communication Law professor Robert Dybing, however, there is no right to political speech on Facebook. “Because Facebook isn’t government-owned or sponsored,” he said,

“they have the right to censor whatever they want.”

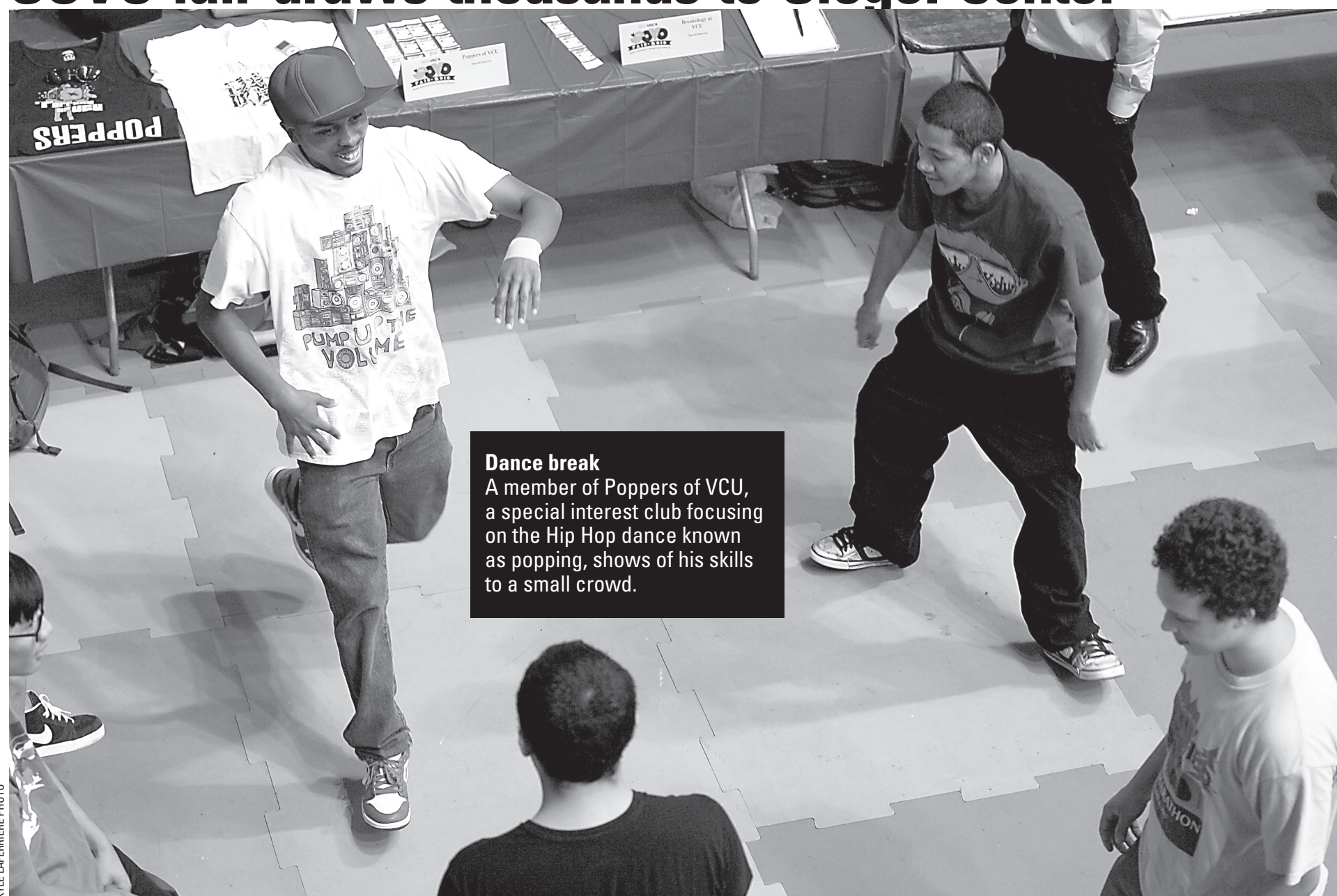
There is a tinge of irony in the way Facebook—a social media site founded on a college campus—has reacted to the legalization debate. Marijuana is the most commonly-used illicit drug in the US. A 2007 survey by the Center for Disease Control reported that half of all college students admitted to smoking marijuana at least once.

Not all students agree with Just Say Now’s campaigns and advertisements, however. Students like Paige Smith, a clinical exercise science major, said that Just Say Now shouldn’t have the right to post a marijuana leaf as their group picture because it’s against the rules.

“It says in the advertising policies that paid advertising will not support any illicit activity or illegal content,” Smith said. “If Just Say Now wants to continue campaigning for the legalization of marijuana on Facebook, they can use a different photo.”

Just Say Now is currently protesting Facebook’s decision with a Facebook petition. **CT**

SOVO fair draws thousands to Siegel Center



KYLE LAFERRIERE PHOTO

Liz Butterfield
Contributing Writer

Students awaited the opening of the Student Organization and Volunteer Opportunities Fair at the Siegel Center this Friday with a buzz of anticipation. Before the fair officially opened its doors at 3 p.m., students crowded the entrance clutching goldenrod diagrams of the arena and VCU USCA bags that would later be filled with brochures and giveaways.

According to Carolyn E. Whittier, associate director of programs and educational services, about 5,000 students attended the fair, with 275 organizations occupying 310 tables.

Natasha Kovacs, a freshman in Art Foundations, was excited to get to the fair and get the scoop on what exactly there is to be involved in at VCU. "I just want to see what clubs there are," Kovacs said. "I don't know what I want to do exactly; maybe I'll find like a German Club or something that might make me change my major. You never know." Kovacs is interested in trying something new, like a Ballroom Dance Club.

As the doors opened, students

poured on to the floor of the arena, crowding tables and grabbing giveaways.

Lucien Kastivo, a representative from the Shafer Alliance Laboratory Theater (SALT) agreed. "We haven't been able to advertise much in the past because our organization was only open to theater majors," Kastivo said. "But now that we've changed our policies, we're really hoping to get more students involved."

SALT ran more than 20 student productions last year, and had about 50 members. Kastivo expressed his hopes this year for more new members and he was surprised by the many other student organizations available to students. "It is so important for students to be involved," she said. "I wish I did this before; I never knew all of this existed."

Alongside special interest organizations like Quiddich Club, running clubs, fraternities, cultural clubs and even a club for scrabble players were volunteer and service organizations. Another key component to student

involvement at VCU, said Richmond Department of Justice Services Cultural Enrichment Coordinator Rosalind Battle, is giving back to the community.

"I'm here to let our students know about the volunteer and internship opportunities in our area," she said. "They want to be civically aware and civically engaged. And after all that we have received we need to give back too."

Area organizations like the Bon Secours Hospice, Virginia Supportive Housing, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Children's Museum of Richmond and many other groups had tables at the SOVO fair to give information to students about the local opportunities to volunteer.

"I'm happy to be in the same atmosphere and to find out about a lot of services and programs available to VCU students that I didn't know about before."

But the SOVO fair does not just help new VCU students get involved; it has also helped returning students,

like senior Daniel Phan, get involved too. "I like to go around and see what other organizations are offering," he said. "There is a lot, and I've signed up for a lot of newsletters, just to see if I'm interested right now," said Battle.

Phan, a mechanical engineering major, believes there is a lot students can gain from joining clubs, especially as freshmen.

"I didn't join anything my freshman year and I kind of regret it. It's important, and I feel like freshmen don't know what we have to offer. This really gives people a better perspective."

As the SOVO Fair of 2010 came to a close at 6:00 on Friday, students left with heavy bags and lots of possibilities. **CT**

Monday, August 30, 2010



news



KYLE LAFERRIERE PHOTO



Above, Left At full capacity

The entire basketball court quickly filled up with interested students, who spent part of their day checking out the 275 VCU organizations.

**Above, Right
Getting down to business**
Two members of the Young Democrats at VCU gather contact information from students.

**Left
Two Thumbs up**
A student gives us a seal of approved for the annual SOVO fair.

**Below
Strike a pose**
Students rush to get camera-ready after they checked VCU's long list of organizations.

WELCOME WEEK BY THE NUMBERS

125 student volunteers

30 University Student Commons & Activities staff

100 student staff wearing blue Welcome Week t-shirts

3,500 meals ordered for the Monroe Park Block Party

1,751 people attended Convocation and heard Rebecca Skloot speak.

2,313 students attended Campus Comedy Hour: Love n' Liquor.

Monday, August 30, 2010



news · commonwealthtimes.org · CT5



Skloot brings "Immortal Life" to VCU

Nan Turner
Staff Writer

Imagine you are struggling to pay medical bills and find yourself without health care. Now imagine that your mother or grandmother's cells were used to make some of the most innovative vaccines and medications in the world—the same medications and vaccines that you will not have access to because you cannot afford them. This is only part of the true story Rebecca Skloot uncovers in her book "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks."

"The Immortal Life" was selected as VCU's 2010 summer read, and all incoming freshmen were required to read Skloot's story in order to join in on a book discussion in their Focused Inquiry classes. Skloot was also the keynote speaker at the VCU New Student Convocation.

"The Immortal Life" tells the true story of an African-American woman who worked as a tobacco farmer from the South. Lacks died from cervical cancer in the early 1950s, but scientists removed some of her cancerous cells without her knowledge. After her death, more cells were created to be used for medical research. Lacks' cells—still living today long after her death—were used to assist in the development of the polio vaccine and other major medical discoveries.

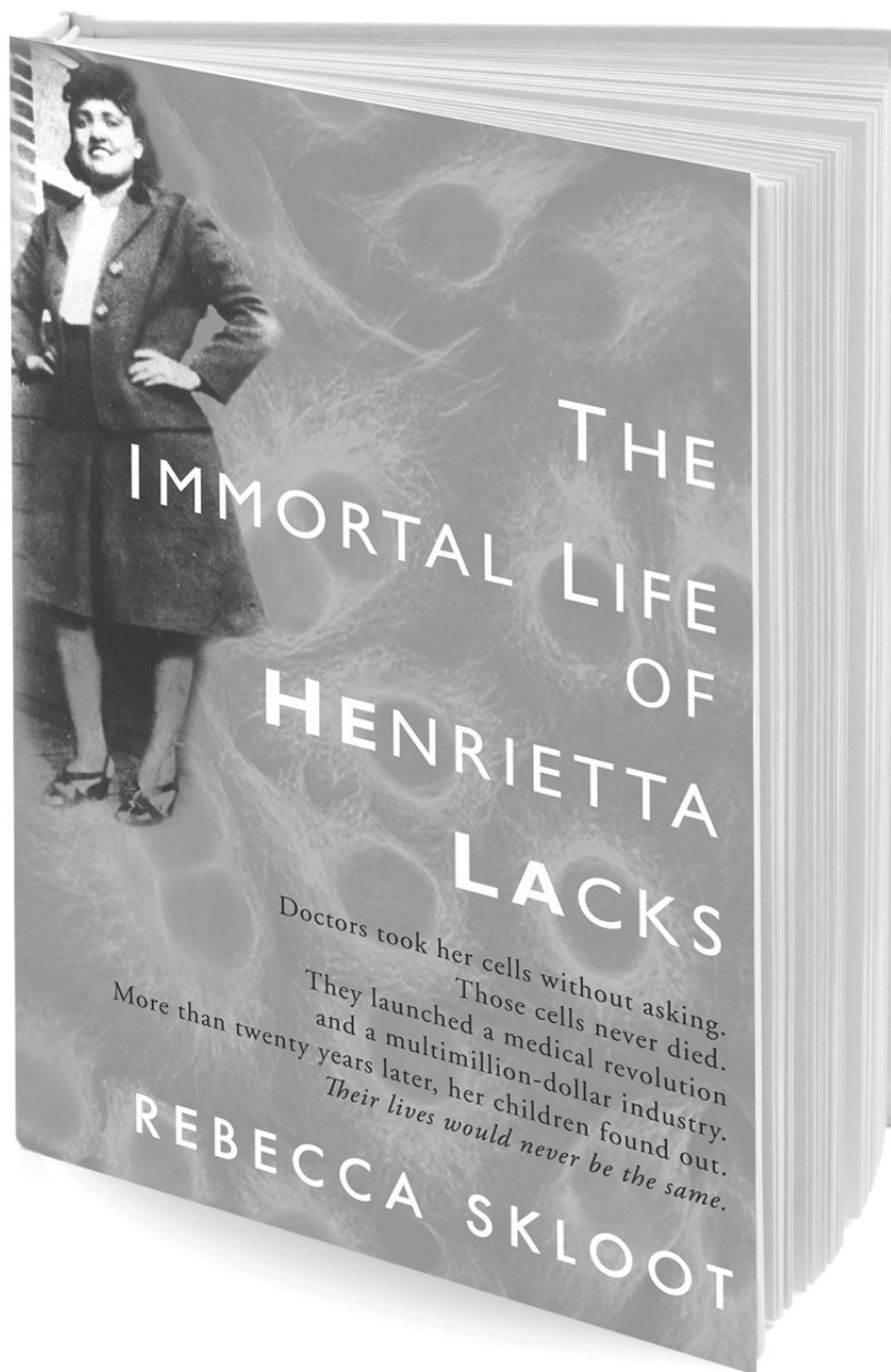
Skloot takes the story of Lacks and pairs it with the struggles of her modern day family residing in Baltimore. Even after Henrietta's name was released as the donor of the cells the Lacks family never received any payment.

This side of the story has elicited a strong response from some readers, including VCU freshman Derek Cook.

Pictured below, Rebecca Skloot



PHOTO CREDIT: MANDA TOWNSEND



"Something was just wrong with that," Cook said. "I can understand the name being confidential but when they released the name they should've told her family so they could do something about it."

Last week, Skloot held a book discussion and signing at the Library of Virginia in downtown Richmond. The author attracted a standing room-only crowd. The library staff estimates that around 450 people attended in all.

VCU alumni Kim Williams drove all the way from her home in Lynchburg, Va. to see Skloot. Although she did not make it into the auditorium, she got the chance to meet the author and have her book signed. Williams thinks Skloot's book was an excellent choice for VCU's summer read and believes young people have a lot to learn from it.

"Although you may feel wronged you can still take the time to make it right," Williams said. "And you can turn to whoever is willing to help you

make it right. Don't stick to one race or one group of people or one person. Broaden your horizons. Whoever is willing to help you let them help you."

Williams said she plans to give the book to her friends and family as a Christmas present this year.

The book covers more than just medical matters; it addresses issues of race and socio-economics as well as many others, which surprised VCU freshman Haley Lutz.

"It's a well-rounded book and she did a good job with hitting opinions and researching and getting to the bottom of it," Lutz said. "It's pretty interesting to learn the history and the story behind the controversy, how everyone plays a part in the medical field and the research today."

For more information on Rebecca Skloot and "The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks" visit the author's website at www.rebeccaskloot.com. **CT**

news

Crime Log

Compiled from VCU Police reports

8/26

At the intersection of North Cherry and South Cathedral streets, a female visitor was arrested for DUI.

At the Pollack Building at 325 N. Harrison St., a male visitor was arrested for being drunk in public.

At 1009 W. Franklin St., a male visitor was arrested for an open alcoholic beverage container in public.

A male student and two female students were arrested for underage possession and consumption of alcohol.

In Monroe Park, a female visitor was arrested for simple assault and a male visitor for malicious wounding.

Also in Monroe Park, a male visitor was arrested for underage possession and consumption of alcohol.

At Ramz Hall at 933 W. Broad st., a female student reported that an unknown vehicle damaged her vehicle.

8/27

In Monroe Park, a male visitor was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon.

Outside Starbucks at 1510 W. Broad St., a male visitor was arrested for simple assault.

At the Stokes House at 918 W. Franklin St., a male employee reported that a known person embezzled money.



sports

Football: VCU's question that won't quit

Adam Stern
Sports Editor

It's the question VCU Athletic Director Norwood Teague just can't dodge.

Will football ever be brought to VCU, and if so, when?

Teague — a North Carolina native who is in entering his fifth year at the university after a five-year stint as Associate Athletic Director at UNC — gets asked almost daily, and does not think the questions are going to cease anytime soon.

"I get (questions about football) all the time," Teague said. "If I'm out in the community, I'll honestly get one every day. It could be joking, it's not always; somebody asked me about it at lunch today."

For years, thoughts of forming a football team have been merely a pipedream or passing fantasy to most at the university, yet to Teague it's a turned into a task; one that is more of a marathon than a sprint and one with no finish line in sight.

Though the topic itself is hardly a new one for those associated with the school, the idea seems to be as relevant, and indeed asked about, as ever. That's because longstanding VCU President Eugene Trani — who was famously known for insisting football would not be brought to the school 'on my watch' — stepped down last year after almost two decades in charge. When Trani stepped down, the possibility of pignskin once again reappeared.

With Trani's successor, current VCU President Michael Rao, coming from Central Michigan, a school with a football program, proponents of bringing the sport to VCU have renewed reason to believe.

"Dr. Rao knows the benefits of Monday, August 30, 2010



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MARK JEFFRIES

football; he also knows the costs and large undertaking that it is," Teague said. "(He and I decided) if we ever were to do it, we want to make sure we do it the right way."

Further fuel to the fire was added last year with the addition of Old Dominion's football team. ODU's team enjoyed a successful run in their first season of play, cruising to a 9-2 record. With the two schools already sharing a storied and heated rivalry, even the conference's head honcho is under the impression that the Monarch's move may force the Rams' hand.

"CAA Commissioner Tom Yeager always says ODU starting a football team adds another log to the fire for VCU," Teague said. "As (ODU's football team) starts becoming more public, and as they start playing in the CAA and they start winning at a higher level, which they will, I think that will add a lot more fuel to the fire."

Such a fire, however, will be easily doused without donor's dollars. A lot of donor's dollars, in football's case.

If VCU were to add a football team, Teague projects startup costs to be

in the range of \$50 to 100 million overall with yearly operations sitting somewhere in the \$5 million range. So massive is the undertaking that a football team would, in any and all likelihood, see the doubling of VCU's student athlete population, a doubling of VCU's athletic budget and a near doubling of VCU's athletic support staff. Additionally, three female sports would have to be added to equal out the addition of some 50-plus football players due to Title IX.

So, where exactly is this money going to come from?

"We'd have to have a couple of major, major gifts to start football," said Teague. "We would probably have to have one very, very involved corporation, financially, to have a naming right on the stadium. And after that you have to have sustainability in season ticket sales, with donations that go with that. It'd be an expensive proposition."

It's a proposition that also needs a facility to house the team. No official sites have been named as definitive destinations the school would pursue. However, City Stadium— which

was vacated by the University of Richmond this year after moving into their new stomping grounds, Robins Stadium — is a natural fit and may be the most likely course of action.

No course of action will be taken on any front regarding football till after the start of the New Year, when Teague and Rao are scheduled to meet to begin studying the proposition of bringing the sport to VCU more intently.

"We really have to study (the proposition) more than we have and a lot of it depends on the economy," Teague said. "If the economy comes roaring back are we guaranteed to start a football team? No, but it's a huge factor in the question."

A question that will continue to be asked until there is an answer, one way or the other.

"If VCU wasn't doing so well both academically and athletically, it wouldn't be that big of a question," Teague said. "It's a question because over the last 15 years we've done so well and have become such a strong university." **CT**

sports · commonwealthtimes.org · CT7

Long-range goals: women's soccer team eager to improve

Jim Swing
Assistant Sports Editor

There are two things VCU women's co-head coaches Tiffany and Tim Sahaydak want their team to improve on in the 2010 season: looking organized defensively and finishing opportunities.

With the addition of 12 new recruits for the 2010 season, the Rams should have a great opportunity to do just that.

"We're excited about our new players; they bring new energy and talent to the team," coach Tiffany Roberts Sahaydak said. "They have worked really hard over the summer and meshed well with our returners during preseason testing."

Hard work is already showing it can pay off for the Rams in the start of the 2010 season with an impressive 2-1 win over Longwood, with freshman forward Bex Kunz recording four shots on net along with the games opening goal. In the win over Longwood, VCU got their first chance to utilize depth in which they've lacked in previous years, making multiple substitutes throughout the course of the game.

"It's a huge difference to have depth in the college game and we've never had that luxury so we are definitely using it," Sahaydak said. "It's a huge advantage if you have depth and it makes practice competitive because now players are competing for playing time."

The Rams transitioned from competitive play on the practice field to competitive play on game day this past weekend when they participated in the JMU Invitational against Big East powerhouses Villanova and St. John's.

VCU faced Villanova in the first game of the invitational and proved that they can compete with the best holding the game at a 1-1 tie up until a late goal in the 85th minute by Villanova to win the game.

In the 55th minute and down by one goal, junior defender Molly Allen was given a red card for obstruction leaving the Rams with only ten players for the remainder of the game. Freshman goalkeeper Megan Lynch was able to step up and make the save on the penalty shot keeping VCU within one goal. In the 75th minute sophomore Bre White broke through the defense and beat the Wildcat keeper for her first collegiate goal to even the game.

"We never like to lose but we take a lot of positives from this game," CT8 · commonwealthtimes.org



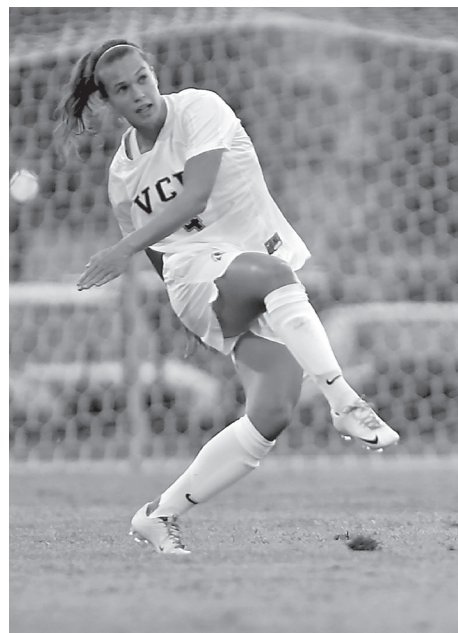
PHOTO CREDIT: SKIP ROWLAND

Sahaydak said. "I was thrilled by the way we fought, we showed a lot of grit and heart."

On Sunday the Rams faced St. John's without help from freshman Sami Kuykendall (sprained MCL), Allen (red card) and Jessica McNamara (slight concussion), but were able to draw a 0-0 tie, making their record 1-2-1. Keeper Megan Lynch was stellar once again producing four saves on 11 shots faced and recording her first collegiate shutout.

With quite arguably the two toughest teams on the schedule under their belt the Rams have set their goals one step at a time for the remainder of the season.

"Our first goal is to be in the top four of the conference so we can make the playoffs and then we will re-evaluate our goals," Sahaydak said. "Winning a championship will always be in the back of our minds." CT



Canadian Internationals Molly Allen (right) and Myriam Bouchard (left) are two pivotal players on the squad this season.

Above: Co-head coach Tiffany Roberts Sahaydak talks to the troops during a break.

Monday, August 30, 2010



sports

Women's soccer CAA Report

Preseason CAA Women's soccer player of the year:

Devin Petta, sophomore, forward, Northeastern

2010 preseason all-CAA team:

Devin Petta, forward, Northeastern

Salma Tarik, forward, Hofstra

Cate Tisinger, forward, James Madison

Courtney Breen, midfielder, Hofstra

Omolyn Davis, midfielder, George Mason

Teresa Rynier, senior, James Madison

Tiffany Yovino, midfielder, Hofstra

Myriam Bouchard, defender, VCU

Sandra Magnusdottir, defender, Northeastern

Diana Weigel, defender, William & Mary

Heidi Blankenship, goalkeeper, Georgia State

2010 CAA Women's soccer preseason coaches poll:

1: James Madison

2: Hofstra

3: UNC Wilmington

4: William & Mary

5: Northeastern

6: George Mason

7: Old Dominion

8: Delaware

9: Towson

10: VCU

11: Georgia State

12: Drexel

Weekend scoreboard:

Fri. Aug 27:

Drexel 0 Hartford 2

Bryant 0 Northeastern 3

Towson 0 St. Louis 0

VCU 1 Villanova 2

William & Mary 0 Connecticut 0

Boston College 5 Hofstra 0

VMI 1 Old Dominion 4

James Madison 0 St. Johns 1

Sat. Aug 28:

Delaware 0 Army 1

Sun. Aug 29:

VCU 0 St. Johns 0

Drexel 0 Niagara 1

James Madison 1 Villanova 0

Rhode Island 1 Northeastern 2

Georgia State 1 Mercer 0

Towson 2 Duquesne 1

Penn State 1 William & Mary 2

George Mason 0 Navy 1

Notes:

This season, the CAA will boast three players on the Watch List for the Hermann Trophy, college soccer's equivalent to college football's Heisman Award. The players are Northeastern sophomore forward Devin Petta, James Madison senior midfielder Teresa Rynier and George Mason senior midfielder Omolyn Davis.

William & Mary forward Danielle Axenfeld took home Week 1's Player of the Week after scoring on a header late in the first half to vault The Tribe to a 1-0 win over Big East team Syracuse.

Georgia State freshman Jewel Evans was named the CAA's Week 1 Freshman of the Week after scoring the winning goal in a 3-2 overtime victory over Jacksonville State last Sunday.





spectrum

Des Letemps
Contributing Writer

After their first two days of classes, VCU students were welcomed with a free concert. Students entering the Siegel Center on Saturday night were given a complimentary once over with a metal detector, asked to swipe their ID, and then escorted to their assigned seats to await the controversial musical stylings of Asher Roth and chart topping crossover appeal of B.o.B.

Students eagerly trickled in after the doors opened at 7 p.m., anxiously awaiting the co-headliners of the SHOOTiN for Stars tour. The opening act, Playboy Tre, stormed the stage at 8 p.m, much to the surprise of the half-full gym. Tre's set lasted only twenty minutes, but he managed to bring a down south, gritty edge to the show which eventually won over the crowd.

After a brief interlude, Roth slowly emerged, saying nothing but "Virginia mother-f***ing Commonwealth University" before performing "Lark on My Go Kart" with a wild enthusiasm that propelled him through his 30-minute set.



B.o.B hypes up the crowd after Roth finished his set.

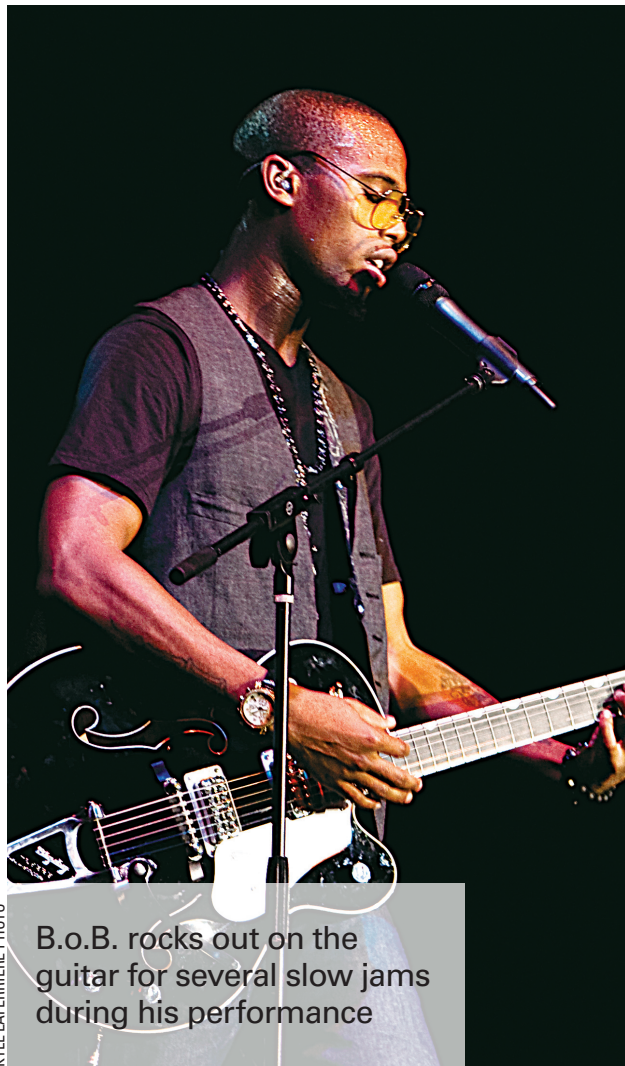
KYLE LAFERRIERE PHOTO

B.o.B, Asher Roth welcome students to new school year



Students filled the Siegel Center for Saturday's concert.





KYLE LAFERRIERE PHOTO

B.o.B. rocks out on the guitar for several slow jams during his performance

Some opposed to Roth's appearance at VCU due to the controversial content of his songs, including alcohol consumption, drug use and casual sex. He acknowledged the controversy, stating "I smoke weed, write raps, and try to change the world."

Roth performed "Blunt Cruisin'" and wildly flailed his limbs during "Cannon." In a move that caused pandemonium, he took off his light blue T-shirt and slipped on a VCU MBA T-shirt. He led a chant of "V-C-U," then ran into the crowd while performing.

He wound down his set by bringing out about a dozen girls on stage, who danced his performance of "She Don't Wanna Man," then kicked them off to perform "Be By Myself."

Roth's set ended with his hit song "I Love College," which drove the crowd into a frenzy. Roth bowed out after thanking the crowd for coming.

DJ Rayvon played music between performances from Asher Roth and headliner B.o.B. A drummer on stage started playing a hip-hop beat and stole the attention as the DJ's music stopped.

B.o.B charged on stage wearing a black T-shirt and vest, Levi's jeans and a pair of flashy Adidas sneakers and fed the crowd's energetic cheers. He quickly slowed the pace by performing "Satellites," one of many songs he performed while playing guitar, a talent that has drawn him comparisons to Andre 3000 from the Atlanta based hip hop group, Outkast.

Things picked up again when he played his ode to ill-wishers, "Haterz Everywhere," followed by another headbanger, "Bet I Bust," with Playboy Tre making a short reappearance. *Both songs made the heads in the crowd nod as if they were headbanging at a rock concert.*

Though it was after 10 p.m., B.o.B asked everyone with shades to put them on. He himself wore a pair of sunglasses with "we run vcu" on the temple while he performed "Shades." He threw the sunglasses to a lucky fan after the performance.

His verse on "Teach Me How to Dougie (Remix)," which is highly regarded in the hip-hop community, was the last song he performed for the rest of the set without playing a guitar. He strummed away, smoothly singing "Lovlier Than You" to the ladies in the crowd.

"Don't Let Me Fall" put most of the audience in a trance, swaying side to side, while the rest hung on to the rap verses as B.o.B passionately delivered them. The energy was up and down with the sound of his music sitting on thin lines between genres.

From here on out it was one hit record after another, performing "Nothin' On You" followed by "Airplanes." As a "gift," B.o.B threw a pair of autographed sneakers into the crowd, then joined them while performing the gleeful song "Magic."

In an unexpected move, B.o.B. closed out his set by covering of MGMT's "Kids," which the audience sang along to. "I didn't even know who B.o.B was until tonight and I'm in love with him." was Junior Andrianna Nicholas's reaction to his performance. "I'm going to go buy his CD."

"I enjoyed the performances [from] Asher Roth and Playboy Tre but B.o.B was phenomenal," said Christian Dorn, junior. Roth may have outdone B.o.B in sheer energy, but B.o.B's versatility more readily shone this Saturday night. **CT**

Mark Robinson contributed reporting to this article.



Roth gets close to the crowd: later on, during the concert he pulled about 15 VCU students on stage with him.

At Anderson opening, “spongeHQ” celebrates at across disciplines

Mechelle Hankerson
Contributing Writer

In Assistant Art Professor Hope Ginsburg's exhibit “spongeHQ,” one can watch the complete process of making a rug, see a whole table dedicated to biology and watch a film about bees. It's all in one room, and in fact, it's all one large art exhibition.

Ginsburg presented spongeHQ on August 27 at the Anderson Gallery, the same night Siemon Allen presented his extensive exhibition, “Imaging South Africa.”

Allen's work focused on capturing the day-to-day life and culture of South Africa through a series of collection projects. Vast installations of film, newspaper, stamps and most notably record albums, meticulously collected and archived over many years, explored South African identity through mass-produced artifacts.

Ginsburg's spongeHQ, in the gallery's top floor, was an interactive, immersive art project that began when Ginsburg herself worked at a textile company. “My work has always been about immersing myself,” Ginsburg said.

She attended MIT as a graduate student and describes the environment as being “very ‘spongy’—it mixes disciplines and (everyone) is very passionate.” She said the idea of spongeHQ is to stimulate the dynamic between an artist's context and his or her artwork.



Ginsburg came up with the name “sponge” because of a sponge's absorbent nature.

“To be a sponge is to want to learn, to absorb and to be an expert,” she said. “It's a celebration of people transferring knowledge.

“Sponge projects can vary,” Ginsburg said. “Even though it's an art project, it's still very much about celebrating creativity in all disciplines.”

Ginsburg tested her ideas about interdisciplinary art in the last Spring semester by enrolling as a VCU student in a Biology class. All the students in her “Colablabab” also enrolled in the same Biology class

and spent the semester creating research-based art, focusing on Biology.

At the spongeHQ opening, Ginsburg displayed some of the pieces that came from Colablablab, but also had art students on hand to demonstrate some of the projects to be displayed as conventional art in the sponge headquarters.

Sculpture Arts student Jessica Dodd was one of those students, spending the night skirting the full coat of a sheep. Dodd had to use her hands to pull feces, dried urine and other unwanted parts of the wool from the coat. Ultimately, the wool would be used to make a rug to be displayed with spongeHQ's library of books.

Dodd describes spongeHQ as a program that teaches a constant exchange of knowledge and said the Anderson Gallery opening was the first time the program had a real, permanent location.

Ginsburg will continue to use spongeHQ for live art classes and yoga classes, among other purposes. In April, she plans on moving a colony of bees into a constructed beehive. Before that, she said she will be hosting a workshop in October. **CT**

Any students interested in contributing to or helping with spongeHQ can contact Ginsburg at hdginsburg@vcu.edu.



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Candy Pantzzz strikes a majestic pose in a fuschia faux-snake-skin catsuit.

JENNIFER LING PHOTO

Diversity Thrift fashion drag show extravaganza raises funds, extols compassion

Nick Bonadies
Spectrum Editor

At the Gay Community Center of Richmond on Saturday, past the locally iconic rainbow wall on the back end of Diversity Thrift and under the rainbow disco ball, a runway had been built.

The “Don’t Hate, Celebrate!” fashion show, whose ticket sales raised funds for GCCR, featured original designs assembled from pieces found in Diversity Thrift, as well as performances by local drag celebrities. Lindsay Ess, VCU Fashion alum and frequent guest lecturer, volunteered her services in designing and directing the show.

Several months after graduating in 2007, Ess underwent quadruple amputation after complications with an intestinal surgery developed into sepsis, a severe inflammatory disease. Since then, she has spent much of her time putting her talents in fashion towards charitable causes.

Don’t Hate was her last show in Richmond before traveling to the University of Pennsylvania for a groundbreaking hand transplant surgery.

“When I was in need, people were there for me,” Ess said. “So now it’s my turn to be there for people.”

Ess said she believed artists are in a unique position to motivate change in the world. “We’re the weird thinkers of society. People turn to us for innovation, for change and leadership.”

“Mistress of ceremonies” Magnolia Jackson Pickett Burnside, who describes herself as “the Southern Fried Socialite of Richmond,” echoed the sentiment. “I always hope that we’re providing the audience

a little bit of inspiration,” said Burnside, whose warm classy southern twang could rival Dolly Parton’s. “Kind of opening and broadening people’s horizon. There’s so much beautiful color in this world—I find as many opportunities as possible to just make that color *explode*.”

Burnside was indeed explosive in her opening act as MC, emerging resplendent in a dazzling hot pink cocktail dress, matching gargantuan church hat and mind-blowing purple heels. The audience, themselves dressed to party, cheered and whistled through Burnside’s performance of Shirley Bassey’s “Get This Party Started” cover. “Y’all look good,” she said to

the crowd. “Not as good as me but you tried, bless your heart.”

The show to follow was categorized into facets of a sufficiently colorful life: *Family*, *Work*, *Chill*, and *Party*. Throughout the show, old secondhand Diversity Thrift items had been rendered timeless: expertly chosen and arranged to stunning effect. The *Family* section, whose models worked in doubles, featured a pregnant mother with her young son and a gay couple holding hands. *Work* showcased the chicest outfit ever to include a VCU School of Medicine resident’s coat.

An additional category, *Legalize Gay*, was sponsored by American Apparel’s campaign of the same name, and centered on the company’s line of garments bearing the same slogan. At this point, Burnside reflected on being “raised by a lot of good Christian women,” and having attended Bible school and church every Sunday as a child. “One thing I was always taught is that there is nothing wrong with love,” she said. “There are only two emotions that exist in this world, love and fear. Tonight, we’re encouraging you all to choose love.”

Other drag acts were interspersed between each category. Performers included Mr. Xavier Drake, “the king of kings” and talented popper who lip-synched to T-Pain, and Tam’ra Tornei, who rocked a disco medley in peace-sign earrings and a glittering



Millenium C. Snow hits an altissimo C.

Monday, August 30, 2010

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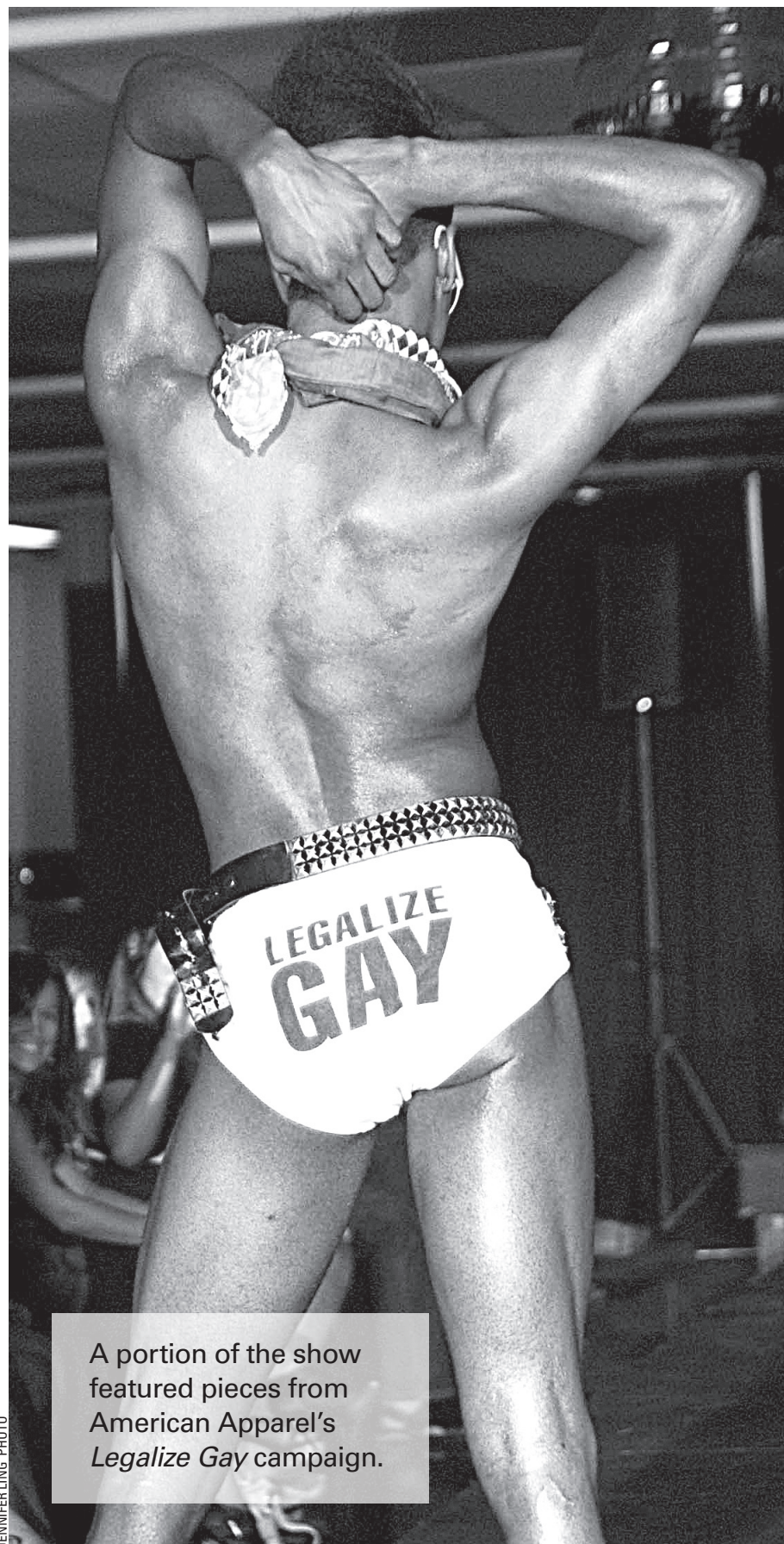
rainbow zebra-print jumper. Millenium C. Snow performed an operatic aria entirely on her knees: her faux-reptile dress crawled twelve feet past her legs like a snake.

Candy Pantzzz won for tallest platform heels and most expansive hat of the evening. Her coat was a bushy mass of raven feathers that when flung aside revealed an electric fuchsia catsuit. She also revealed to the Commonwealth Times her alter-ego as VCU Fashion professor Jonathon Bennett.

When asked what advice she would give to young people finding their place in the world, Pantzzz answered in a professorial Socratic fashion. "What's your passion? – Find your passion and serve that passion, whatever it is. Wherever it is, go find it and have fun. Because it will pay off at some point in your life – whether it's now or then, it will pay off." **CT**

The Gay Community Center of Richmond is a 501 (c) 3 public charity who have given a total of more than \$500,000 dollars to LGBT supportive organizations since 2000. Visit GayRichmond.com for more information.

Check out CommonwealthTimes.org for a slideshow of images from the show.



A portion of the show
featured pieces from
American Apparel's
Legalize Gay campaign.

JENNIFER LING PHOTO



Can't you listen to me baby: concert series fosters aural discourse

Nick Bonadies
Spectrum Editor

Tuesday night saw Richmond concertgoers locking their bikes en masse to a guardrail leading to a church basement. However, the night's biggest departure from Richmond-music-scene protocol was not the location.

Headline act Tim Barry, formerly of the punk band Avail, admitted himself to being caught off-guard, though you couldn't tell it from his playing. He managed to break his jitters with a bit of topical humor: "So, VCU is back in session. What a nightmare."



This was The Listening Room vol. X, the tenth in a series of shows held monthly at St. James Episcopal Church's Michaux House on West Franklin Street, with free admission. There is one rule at The Listening Room, framed in benevolent gravitas by the door: "No talking during performances."

"Playing quieter music is tough in places like bars, which are most of the venues in town," said Jonathan Vassar, local singer-songwriter and co-creator of the series. "The basic idea is to create a quiet environment, to put the listener and the performer ... into a space conducive to listening and performing."

This was certainly a setup for intimate listening as opposed to, say, moshing: it was toasty, like it was November outside, and the smell of coffee and cin-

namon rolls (provided free of charge by Ap-ropos Roasters) coated everything. A humming pre-concert crowd was barely lit by strands of Christmas lights and warm antique table lamps. Although the building soon reached full capacity, leaving some waiting outside, the room was raptly attentive as each act took the stage.

Chris Edwards, a bandmate of Vassar's and series co-creator, said this was their second show to reach legal capacity. "When we first started last November, we didn't know how it would go," he said, not having to raise his voice much over the crowd. "I remember the first day setting up, we were hoping for maybe thirty people. Now we even have some people travel big distances (to attend)."

"There's obviously a crowd that's really been searching for that kind of venue," commented Chris Payne, founder of therichmondscene.com, which sponsors the series. "Apparently there's ... a lot of listeners who are interested in a space where they can really listen in a meaningful way."

For a seasoned performer like Tim Barry, who admitted he was unused to such focused attention on his music, the effect was jarring. "Do any of y'all feel as awkward as I do?" he said, breaking the hush before his first song. Nonetheless, Barry and wingman Josh Small brought a passionate and unforgiving set, addressing such topics as heroism, our unjust treatment of the past, and ironic moustaches in Oregon Hill.

Brothers Jonathan and Alan Parker were more immediately at home in the venue, with richly textured and polyphonic duo guitar. Never phoning it in, their set was multicolored, clever and musically involved, as well as involving for their spellbound listeners.

Andy Cobb, with a crackling Appalachian folk sound, was easily the best music of the evening. Infectiously unpretentious, his surface playfulness



belied a deeper sincerity, straying to the realm of heartbreaking when least expected. His voice was the better for being somewhat raw and unpolished—the beauty lies in his growls and falters.

While the end of the first year-long "set" of Listening Rooms ends this October, Vassar said the series hadn't planned on ending anytime soon—Michaux House is booked until "at least February," he says, as long as the shows keep drawing crowds and donations. September's show is set to feature a bill of performers from New York.

As for October, "We're kind of trying to end the set with the bang," said Vassar. "I mean, I can't really say anything bad about anything coming up, but if October was the last show I ever booked, I'd be really happy." **CT**

Check out photos, videos, audio, and more info from past Listening Rooms on their member page at The Richmond Scene, <http://www.therichmondscene.com/profile/TheListeningRoom>. Shows are every third Tuesday at 8pm at The Michaux House, 1133 W. Franklin St. 23220. Admission is free.



spectrum



Street Style: Back to the grind

Erika Wilkins
Staff Writer

Classic red lip

Ayesha Philogene (a fashion merchandising major) pairs a quintessential red lip with vintage earrings and a vibrant button-down for a novel classicalism.



MEL KOBRAN PHOTO



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Fresh squeezed footwear

Juan Carlo (an anthropology major) in crisp white pants rolled at the calf, paired with saturated salmon oxfords: in a word, perfection.

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Clean-cut polo

Rocking khakis and a polo, Stephen William (an education major) has got this look in spades.



MEL KOBRAH PHOTO



By any other name

Looking like she walked out of a bed of roses, Elizabeth Freeman (an environmental studies/politics doubled major) is a breath of fresh air on a balmy sunny day. (Pictured left)

Eazy, breezy, beautiful

With all of the hustle and bustle of “Welcome Week” and the first day of class, the organic style of Yossera Bouchtia (a cinema major) is quietly exuberant. (Pictured top) **CT**





opinion

Sobering up at James Madison

My name is James, and I haven't had a drink since Springfest

Robert Showah
Opinion Editor

The first step toward recovery is admitting that you have a problem. That is exactly what James Madison University President Linwood Rose did last week just before the start of the new academic year in the wake of last semester's Springfest disaster that left a rather large, vomity stain on the university's reputation.

Now, in preparation for the fall, the university's administration has a brand spankin' new set of policies it hopes will sober students up. All of this happening at a time when Gov. Bob McDonnell is pushing to privatize the government-run Alcohol Beverage Control liquor stores.

Rose sent out a letter to all new and returning students stating, "It is time to change our culture. JMU will not be defined by a negative alcohol culture, nor will we allow it to be perpetuated."

Wow. This almost sounds like Rose just recently discovered JMU's buck-wild party scene, which would make him either terribly out-of-touch or totally ignorant to how people refer to his university. It's even possible that he simply did not want to acknowledge this reputation before, probably because the administration and law enforcement both knew that they were letting students get away with underage alcohol consumption and possession — something that is so ingrained in the college experience no amount of law enforcement can entirely eradicate it. Much can be deliberated about who knew what when, but the current issue is what these new policies will be, if they will truly be enforced and how students will react.

The policies include: additional law enforcement on-and-off-campus,

preemptive police intervention during weekends, the presence of ABC agents to ensure underage people aren't being served alcohol by a host, apartment managers being asked to not allow outdoor parties, and harsher sanctions on students with multiple alcohol-related violations. Yes, like setting dumpsters on fire.

It is difficult to know what the effects exactly will be if these policies are enforced. Remember, prior to this year Springfest was a "small" gathering of a couple thousand students. However, last semester's disaster included more than 8,000, many of whom were not JMU students. So are these policies in response to JMU students or people who don't even attend JMU or live in Harrisonburg?

Even if JMU students—for the most—are innocent of the most violent acts of Springfest 2010, there is one that should be held responsible for his or her incredibly stupid actions: the schmuck who posted the party to Facebook.

Perhaps this person is the cause to this whole problem, somebody who doesn't know that creating a Facebook event to one of the largest party schools on the East Coast would cause problems that would not be taken lightly by authorities.

Another one of JMU's policy initiatives is "educate students about the safe and responsible use of social media." Despite the rampage that

took place, this policy addresses what lit the fuse.

The bottom line here is that there isn't a point-value system for the amount of carnage a non-JMU student caused compared to a JMU student. An event this huge was held on JMU's turf and the students involved need to suck it up and take responsibility for their actions instead of acting as though they are being victimized.

JMU students were straddling the red line for years and it was accepted. The authorities would ignore students going on drunken food excursions or screaming on the notorious drunk bus. But then they crossed the line, about 6,000 people over, and now this is the situation they find themselves in. It's hard to dispute the enactment of these policies.

Aside from how students might react, there is another dimension to the issue. McDonnell wants to privatize the ABC liquor stores to raise money for the state's transportation fund.

While there is sound reasoning for this legislatively, according to State Senate Majority Leader Dick Saslaw, D-Springfield, it would not pass, "nor is it even close." Not only this, but Saslaw was quoted in the Washington Examiner doubting the passage of the plan, arguing that the Governor's revenue estimates from privatization would not be enough to match the current revenue unless triple the amount of liquor were sold, or if the excise tax on the product were raised.

Not to mention if the stores were privatized it would defeat JMU's policy of having ABC agents deployed in the Harrisonburg area.

If the university's administration actually enforces these new policies, then JMU could be a different place than from year's past, though perhaps the parties will simply be kept indoors. As many ways as there are to crack down on this sort of behavior, there are an equal number of ways to dodge them.

Only time will tell what the possible collision of liquor store privatization and thirsty college students will mean should McDonnell's initiative become a reality potentially weakening the new university policies. **CT**



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The Daily Stoop

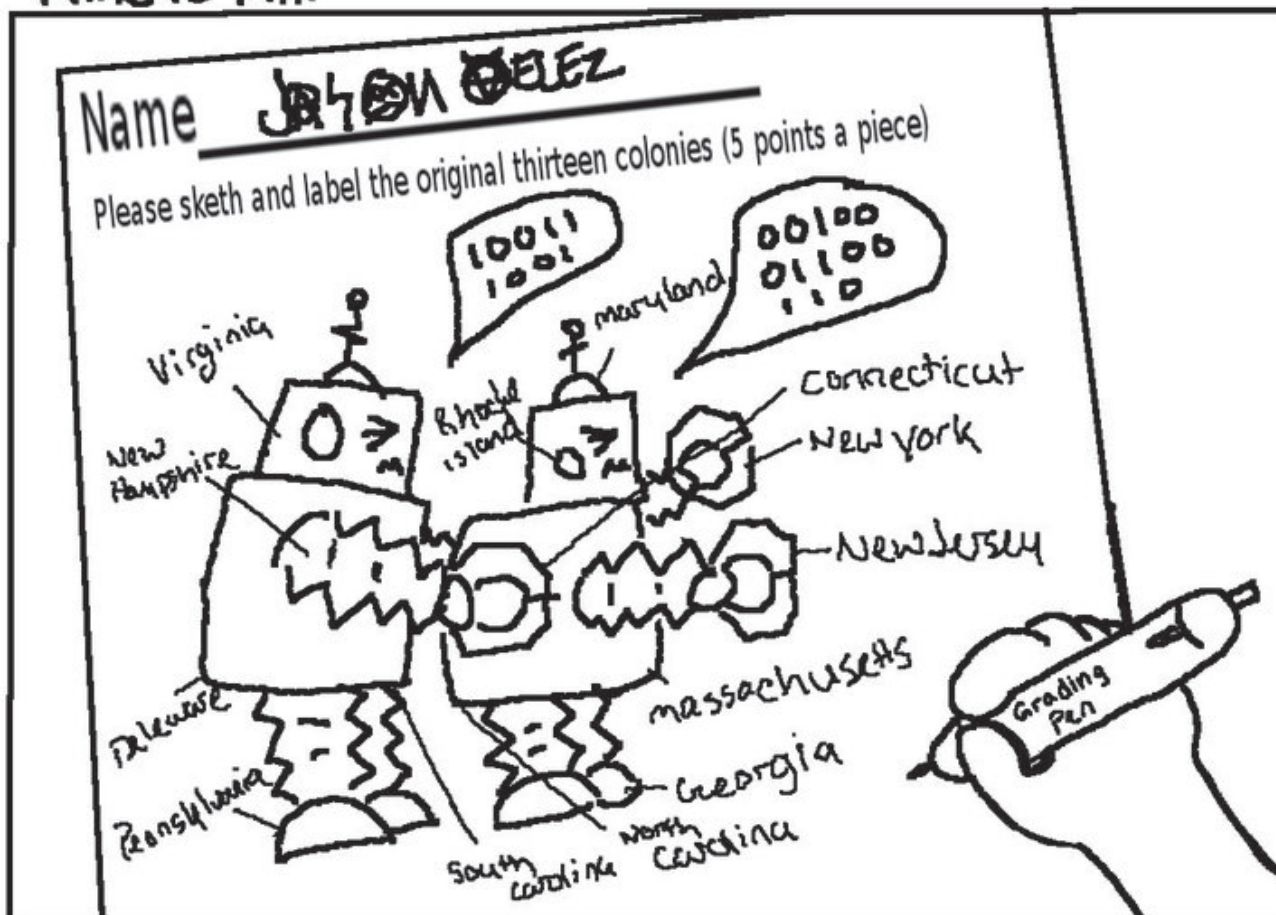
by Rachel Maves



Time To Kill

by Jason Velez

time to kill



Monday, August 30, 2010

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