





# briefs

## Local and VCU

### \$6.2 million makeover planned for Monroe Park

Monroe Park, Richmond's oldest park, is targeted for a \$6.2 million makeover, with more canopy trees, reconstructed paths, monumental-style lighting and a café.

Backed by the city and VCU, supporters of the proposed renovation and restoration are looking to establish a nonprofit group, the Monroe Park Conservancy, to manage the nearly 8-acre park and to oversee fundraising efforts, said Alice McGuire Massie, president of the city's Monroe Park Advisory Council.

"The enthusiasm is there to start this spring if the money is available," she said.

So far, the city has committed about \$772,000 toward park infrastructure and other upgrades, and Mayor Dwight C. Jones hopes to provide a total of \$1.1 million, press secretary Tammy D. Hawley said. VCU President Michael Rao has pledged fundraising support.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

### Judge dismisses Cuccinelli demands in U.Va case

An Albemarle County judge on Monday dealt a serious blow to Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli's attempts to gather evidence from the University of Virginia as part of a fraud investigation into the grant research of a former U.Va. climate-science professor.

Judge Paul M. Peatross Jr. set aside the civil investigative demands issued by the attorney general's office for documents and material related to Michael Mann's grant applications.

In a six-page decision, Peatross found that the attorney general's office did not support its "reason to believe" the university had documents demonstrating that Mann committed fraud.

He also found that Cuccinelli's office did not sufficiently articulate "the nature of conduct" by Mann to support its inquiry that he defrauded state taxpayers to obtain the grants.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

### Governor pushes liquor-store plan at town-hall meeting

More than 400 people turned out Monday to hear from Gov. Bob McDonnell at his seventh town-hall meeting, where he voiced his support of liquor-store privatization, among other government reforms.

McDonnell, who is to reveal his privatization plan Sept. 8, touted the \$500 million he expects the state to pocket from selling off its "government monopoly" on distilled spirits. He said the biggest benefit of the plan would be the boost to transportation funding.

"Times have changed," McDonnell said during the nearly two-hour meeting at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, comparing life during Prohibition to today in an overhead presentation. "Things are different in 2010."

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

## National and International

### Bus vanishes, NY transit impostor arrested again

A man who commandeered a subway train at age 15 and has repeatedly posed as a transit worker was arrested again Tuesday on charges he stole a bus in New Jersey and drove it to a New York airport.

Darius McCollum, 45, was stopped by police officers Tuesday morning in Queens while driving an empty New York Trailways bus, authorities said.

McCollum, who lives in Harlem, has been arrested 26 other times. Over the years, he has donned Metropolitan Transportation Authority uniforms and cheerfully collected fares, cleared trash from tracks and put out underground fires.

Police say he told them that he went to John F. Kennedy International Airport and drove around Queens. He didn't pick up any passengers, and he wasn't wearing a uniform.

*Brief by the Associated Press*

### NYC mayor disapproves of probe of mosque financing

New York's mayor says an investigation by the state attorney general into the finances of a proposed Islamic center and mosque near ground zero would set "a terrible precedent."

Mayor Michael Bloomberg says there's no reason for the government to investigate donations to religious organizations.

Congressman Peter King disagrees. The ranking minority leader of the Homeland Security Committee says "a number" of terrorist plots have "emanated from mosques." He cites the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center as an example.

The mayor made the remarks Tuesday after he was asked about a Quinnipiac University poll showing a majority of New Yorkers want the attorney general to investigate funding sources.

*Brief by the Associated Press*

### Chile rescuers begin work of drilling to miners

Thirty-three men stuck far underground are now the longest-trapped miners in recent history as a huge drill begins digging a planned escape route.

The men were trapped Aug. 5 when a landslide blocked the shaft down into the San Jose copper and gold mine in northern Chile's Atacama Desert.

While doubts and extreme challenges remain, experts said rescuers have the tools to get the job done — though the government still says it will take three to four months to reach the miners.

*Brief by the Associated Press*

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# news

## Cuccinelli suggests abortion regulation

Nan Turner  
Staff Writer

On Aug. 20, Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli issued a legal advisory concerning the health regulations in abortion clinics throughout the state of Virginia. In his opinion, Cuccinelli said he would like to see abortion clinics be required to meet health standards that match that of a large-scale hospital. If this becomes law, many clinics would be made to retrofit their operating rooms and hallways among other things. These renovations would force some smaller clinics to close if they could not meet the new policies.

Gov. Bob McDonnell has publicly supported Cuccinelli's opinion.

In a statement released by the National Organization for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (NARAL), Tarina Keene, executive director of the group, said she is not in favor of the advisory or the governor's support on the issue.

"It's clear that Governor McDonnell and Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli are working hand in hand to undermine women's health and privacy in the commonwealth," Keene said. "If the McDonnell-Cuccinelli agenda succeeds, we could see 17 of

the 21 abortion providers disappear from Virginia, eliminating women's access to abortion and other services, such as birth control and cancer screenings, that these medical facilities provide."

Although the legal advisory does not hold the weight of a law, it could impact future legislation.



Attorney General  
Ken Cuccinelli

In the past five years, several bills have been proposed and subsequently denied (during Cuccinelli's time as a state senator) that have similar repercussions as Cuccinelli's latest opinion.

In early 2004, Senate bill 146 was proposed, voted on and ultimately defeated. The bill aimed to restrict abortions to hospitals or ambulatory surgical centers. This would have put a higher cost on abortion providers. The bill also wanted to change the definition of "hospital" to include anywhere that practices more than 25 abortions a year. This particular bill was defeated in Feb. 2005.

Olivia Gans, the president of the Virginia Society for Human Life, said that the opinion is much more a discussion between parties, but

that any discussion about the issue is positive.

"Abortion is the most under-researched and under-regulated procedure performed on women but it is also the most common procedure performed on women," Gans said. "No abortion can be made truly safe — the procedure still endangers the mother's life

and results in stopping an unborn child's heartbeat.

"Whenever any kind of protective legislation is discussed, you always see this cloud of hysteria from the pro-choice side."

However, Keene of NARAL said that safety has nothing to do with pro-choice advocates resistance to the Attorney General's opinion.

"In 2008, some 27,000 abortions were performed in the commonwealth and I am unaware of even a single minor complication," Keene said. "Abortion is one of the safest and most frequently performed outpatient procedure in the country and in Virginia. This is a slap in the face to every board that regulates this procedure."

"If they're so concerned about safety, why aren't they looking at women who get cosmetic surgery or lasik?"

Keene estimates that retrofitting a single clinic to meet the proposed requirements would cost \$1.5-2 million.

Diane Derzis, owner of A Capital Women's Health Center in Richmond, agrees with Keene's belief that Cuccinelli is not concerned about women's health but more about the procedure of abortion itself.

"I'm not in any way opposed to regulations in clinics, just like any other practices, but that's not the objective," Derzis said. "Abortion is 9-14 times safer than childbirth and statistically it's safer than a shot of penicillin. He knows that would close most of the clinics in the state. You have physicians doing outpatient surgery in their office, which is far more serious than a first trimester abortion service."

Derzis said if the Attorney General was sincerely interested in women's health she would be more than willing to sit down with him and discuss how to implement new regulations and make improvements.

Still, there are some who fully support Cuccinelli. VCU senior Lauren Hidalgo is a member of the Students for Life group at the university; she said she thinks the opinion could reap many benefits.

"I think that the advisory could definitely be worthwhile and helpful," Hidalgo said. "People should recognize that they deserve better quality service for something as serious as an abortion. Once they realize that, they may even reconsider having an abortion at all."

"I would like to see this law passed and a majority of abortion clinics shut down. I would also like to see more support given to those women who choose not to have an abortion."

Cuccinelli's office did not immediately return calls or e-mails. **CT**

For more information on the legal opinion visit the Attorney General's website at [www.cuccinelli.com](http://www.cuccinelli.com).

## CarnivOil highlights murky oil issues

Julie DiNisio  
Contributing Writer

On Tuesday the Clean Energy Works and Environment Virginia, a state-wide advocacy group, held a two-hour long event to raise awareness about the Gulf Coast oil spill and the government's current oil and energy policies.

CarnivOil: The Greatest Addiction on Earth took place in Monroe Park and assumed the theme of a traveling carnival. Featured were a variety of activities and classic carnival games with a politically-minded twist, including Tar the Goldfish and Toss-O-Rama, the goal being to teach the effects of the oil spill on various animals.

While the carnival theme promoted a light-hearted atmosphere, Environment Virginia's intent was

to rouse interest and awareness on America's oil dependency and what they believe to be a lack of concern from Congress, which made little progress toward clean oil and energy bills before their August recess, causing concern for groups like Environment Virginia. West Virginia Senator Jay Rockefeller's continued push towards the "Dirty Air Act," aiming to downplay the EPA's recent findings on greenhouse gases, was also highlighted.

CarnivOil will have reached cities from the mid-West to the East Coast by the end of its three-week run, and Sarah Driscoll, state associate with Environment Virginia, has been a main contributor to CarnivOil in the state. She believes that Congress has "wormed its way out of clean energy and oil legislation" and that the oil executives are putting profit before the needs of the people.

J.R. Tolbert, assistant chapter director of the Virginia Sierra Club, echoed Driscoll's sentiments, stating that "too much power rests with the oil companies and not enough with the people."

Jes Sprouse, President of Algal Farms Inc. in Chester, Va. was also at CarnivOil. Sprouse's company uses algae to create renewable biofuels. The company's website states that the goal of Algal Farms Inc. is to become "a leader in biomass industry by developing and implementing the most cost effective technologies for growing, harvesting and converting algae to fuel and other valuable products."

Also assisting in the production of the CarnivOil were several individuals representing the Public Interest Research Group.

CarnivOil is now moving north, making stops in Massachusetts and Maine with the goal of raising awareness. **CT**



# Ground Zero mosque debated at Muslim Student Association meeting

news

Zarmeena Waseem  
Contributing Writer

The first meeting of VCU's Muslim Student Association was dominated by discussions about a national controversy regarding Islam in America. The building of new mosques have made headlines recently, but the proposed construction of an Islamic Center famously referred to as the 'Ground Zero Mosque' in the Lower East Side of Manhattan has become a major national topic. During the meeting in the Student Commons' Richmond Salons, students weighed in with varying opinions.

According to Muslim Student Association member Ashraf Eltahir, the nationwide bickering over this issue has "highlighted Islamophobia, the real issue that was not being explicitly addressed." He added, "the bigger problem has been exposed and that problem is acceptance." The establishment of this Islamic Center has been met with widespread

resistance and criticism from the public.

Jesse Hudson, a sophomore chemistry major, is not a member of the MSA, but showed up to share his views. He said that the Islamic center "shouldn't be modified because of others' bigotry, and we shouldn't compromise the integrity of the original plans just to quell fear.

"I hope this center is a beacon and dispels fears to show people that it truly is a community center and brings people together," said Hudson.

A centerpiece of debate has been the proximity of the mosque to Ground Zero of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center site on September 11, 2001. Matthew Moore, a senior marketing major, reacted strongly to this particular point.

"It is not on Ground Zero, and it's a community center

not a mosque," said Moore. "This would otherwise be another empty building; it is going to be good from the community and the economy." Many of the structures surrounding the building under scrutiny have remained empty and profitless since 2001.

Further disagreements on the creation of the community center date back to the foundation of the United States and religious rights guaranteed by the Constitution. "People came to this country for religious freedom and that is what America was founded on. It's ironic to me that it has become a problem in our country," said Linah Taeb, a senior biology major.

Charlie Turner, president of the MSA, expressed his fears and hopes for the Islamic Center. "It needs to be built and offers a lot as a community center, it is more than just a mosque," he said. "Hopefully, it will come through and be constructed without incident, but it has received so much criticism that that may not be possible." **CT**



ILLUSTRATION BY HANNAH SWANN

## Crime Log

Compiled from VCU Police reports

**8/28**

At the corner of West Grace and North Shafer streets, a male visitor was arrested for possessing an open alcoholic container in public.

On the 800 block of West Grace Street, a male visitor was arrested for being drunk in public.

**8/29**

On the 700 block of West Main Street, a male visitor was arrested for possession of marijuana.

At the intersection of North Harrison and West Broad streets, a male visitor was arrested for possessing an open alcoholic container in public.

On the 600 block of Bowe Street, a male visitor was arrested for being drunk in public.

**8/30**

At the intersection of North Harrison and West Broad streets, two female visitors were arrested for disorderly conduct.

At 711 W. Main St., a female visitor was arrested for driving while possessing an open alcoholic beverage container.

On the 700 block of West Main Street, a male visitor was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

At the 7-11 on the corner of North Harrison Street, a male visitor was arrested for underage possession of alcohol, littering and resisting arrest.

At 231 S. Laurel Street, a male visitor was arrested for underage possession of alcohol and obstruction of justice.

Outside the Village Cafe at 1001 W. Grace St., a male visitor was arrested for being drunk in public.

Outside the School of Engineering building at 601 W. Main St., a female visitor was arrested for assaulting a police officer, disorderly conduct, trespassing and obstruction of justice.

Outside Ramz Hall at 933 W. Broad St., a female visitor was arrested for hit and run of unattended property.

**8/31**

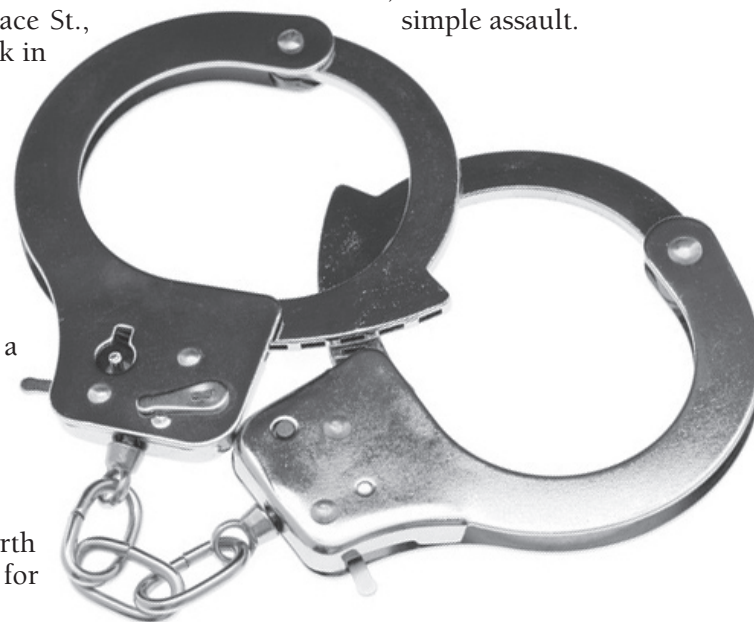
At the intersection of West Grace and North Shafer streets, a male visitor was arrested for

driving under the influence of alcohol and driving with a restricted license.

Outside the 7-11 at 1101 W. Grace St., a male visitor was arrested for underage possession of alcohol and possession of marijuana.

On the 700 block of West Main Street, a male visitor was arrested for possession of marijuana.

At the corner of North Harrison and West Broad streets, a male visitor was arrested for simple assault.





# sports

## Busy summer for Shaka caps off with extension

Jim Swing  
Assistant Sports Editor

A year after posting the highest win total amongst first-year coaches in NCAA basketball, VCU head coach Shaka Smart is committed to the continuing of excellence in the Rams organization. Following a 27-9 overall record in 2009, Coach Smart and his coaching staff have utilized the off-season to their advantage. Despite the summer having been short-lived due to VCU winning the CBI Championship in March, Smart has made certain he could accomplish as much as humanly possible in the off-season.

Coach Smart and three of his assistants were allowed 20 days in the month of July to travel the country in search of new recruits for the 2011 season. Smart and his staff managed to pull in three new recruits for 2011 including shooting guard Traveon Graham along with combo guards Pierria Henry and Briante Weber. "July was a very busy month for us," said Smart concerning the structuring of his 2011 recruiting class. "It's still an ongoing process."

Coach Smart and his staff are not ordinary when it comes to assessing recruits. They carry a unique strategy that goes far beyond raw talent. When evaluating a potential recruit Smart and his staff use a customized card in which they rate players from one to five based on characteristics such as toughness, competitiveness and unselfishness. "If you watch a kid enough times and you write down notes you get a good feel for who he is," said Smart.

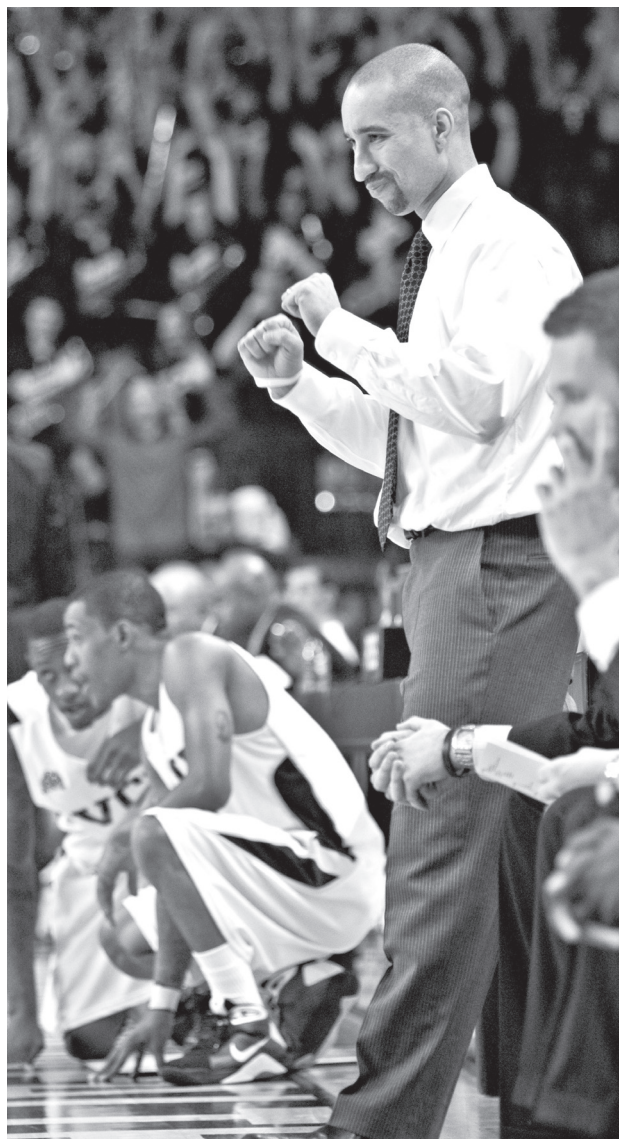
For Shaka Smart the recruiting process is much more than just points basketball, it is a segue to building relationships with players and their families. "I enjoy the people part of it the most," said Smart, "spending time and getting to know them along with helping them have a smooth transition from high school into college."

Apart from recruiting during the off-season coach Smart strives to spend as much time with his team as possible. Although he and his coaching staff are not permitted to participate in workouts or team practices in the off-season due to NCAA regulations, Smart puts time aside to keep a strong relationship with his players. Whether it be dinner with the team or just casual talks in the office, coach Smart is fully dedicated to his team.

Smart was rewarded for his hard work and dedication to Ram's basketball last month when VCU Athletics Director Norwood Teague granted him a two-year extension after being on the job for less

than 17 months. "I love it here," said Smart, "I really enjoy continuing to meet more and more students and faculty members, it's always nice to meet new people."

After serving as head coach for almost a year and a half head coach Shaka Smart has generated a new era of VCU men's basketball. After producing 27 wins in 2009, one win shy of the school record, Smart is excited for the future of his players and the organization. "We have a very well-rounded team with returning players that are even better this year than they were last year," said Smart. "This is a special place to be a basketball coach and it's a terrific university that continues to grow and emerge." **CT**



Shaka Smart will begin his second season as VCU head coach.

### Field Hockey Preview

## Northwestern vs. VCU

### Northwestern University

**Location:** Evanston, Illinois

**Type:** Private, coeducational

**Founded:** 1851

**Current Enrollment:** 18,935

**Field Hockey Team:** (2-1, 0-0)

**Latest results:** 4-1 win at Colgate, Chelsea Armstrong led the team with 15 shots and 2 goals.

**Coach:** Tracey Fuchs - Connecticut '88 (2nd season with Northwestern (12-8))

**2009 Record:** 12-8, 1-5

**Big Ten Projected Starting Lineup:** (GK): #25 Amanda Wirth (B): #2 Sarah Macincin (M/B): #3 Chelsea Armstrong (M/B): #8 Stacy Uchida (F): #12 Regan Mooney (F/M): #13 Jaimie Orrico (M): #16 Kendra Sirak (M/B): #19 Kaylee Pohlmeier (B): #21 Zoe Almquist (F/M): #28 Marnie Robbins (F/M): #30 Nikki Parsley

### Virginia Commonwealth University

**Location:** Richmond, Va

**Type:** Public

**Founded:** 1968 (Merger of Richmond Professional Institute and Medical College of Virginia)

**Current Enrollment:** about 32,000

**Field Hockey Team:** (0-2, 0-0)

**Latest results:** 2-1 loss against Boston University at the Sports Imports Classic in Albany, N.Y., the loss was VCU's second straight.

**Coach:** Kelly McQuade - William & Mary '04 (4th season as VCU head coach)

**2009 record:** (8-9, 1-6)

**CAA Projected Starting Lineup:** (GK): #17 Erin Jablonski (M): #2 Kelsey Scherrer (D): Rymme van Dessel (M): #12 Melanie Marotta (M): #8 Flore van Dessel (M): #7 Chelsea Hill (M): #5 Emily Soares (D): #4 Stephanie DeMasi (M): #3 Marle van Dessel (F): #15 Ariele Hess (M): #24 wMegan Rea

**Game Information:** Date: Fri. Sept. 3

**Time:** 3:00 p.m.

**Location:** Cary Street Field

**Ones to watch:** - Chelsea Armstrong will look for her third straight game with two goals for Northwestern. - Marle van Dessel tallied her first goal of the season against Boston U., she has scored 26 career goals for VCU (6th in school history).





sports

## Men's basketball putting in hours in the offseason

Adam Stern  
*Sports Editor*

This past April, VCU men's basketball Strength and Conditioning Coach Daniel Roose was preparing his summer workout program for the team when he received a remarkable request from senior guard Brandon Rozzell.

Rozzell, one of eight returning players to the Rams roster this season, pleaded with Roose to switch the team's workout schedule from four days a week—the norm in college basketball workout regimens—to five.

"I said 'you're saying you want to go all five days?' and he said 'yeah' and I said 'ok, you're going to lead the way', so I changed [the program] all up," Roose said.

Nearly five months later and a week into the school year, Roose is already seeing an increase in performance level.

So why was the added day so important?

With the extra time, Roose was able to further condition the eight returners plus freshman Toby Veal — the only freshman deemed ready to workout with the returners — and prepare them for a style of play so hellacious it's dubbed Havoc 2.0.

The extra time also helped in providing specialized individual workouts that are not easily available during school or season; take senior guard Joey Rodriguez, for example.

"Joey Rodriguez is not going to dunk a basketball this year. However, Joey's body takes a beating on the court every night," Roose said. "He's on the floor 20 times a game, he's getting hit by bigger guys so it was an issue for us to have him gain weight so, one, he can handle that and, two, he can take his conditioning to another level because of the minutes we ask him to play."

Returners aren't the only ones who have been receiving Roose's attention, though.

VCU's highly anticipated freshman class — save the aforementioned Veal — meet with Roose six days a week and get the sort of special attention only the youngest on a team get. For example, the five-man group includ-

PHOTO BY KYLE LAVERRIERE

# Summer strength

Senior guard Brandon Rozzell has shown leadership in off-season workouts.





ing Auburn-decomitt Heath Houston, are being implored to gain weight to add muscle to their frames.

All three meals of their days are not just required, they are near chaperoned; a required breakfast at the weight room, required lunch at Shafer Dining Hall and occasionally, a semi-required cell phone picture of dinner since that is the one time of day Roose can't be around the players.

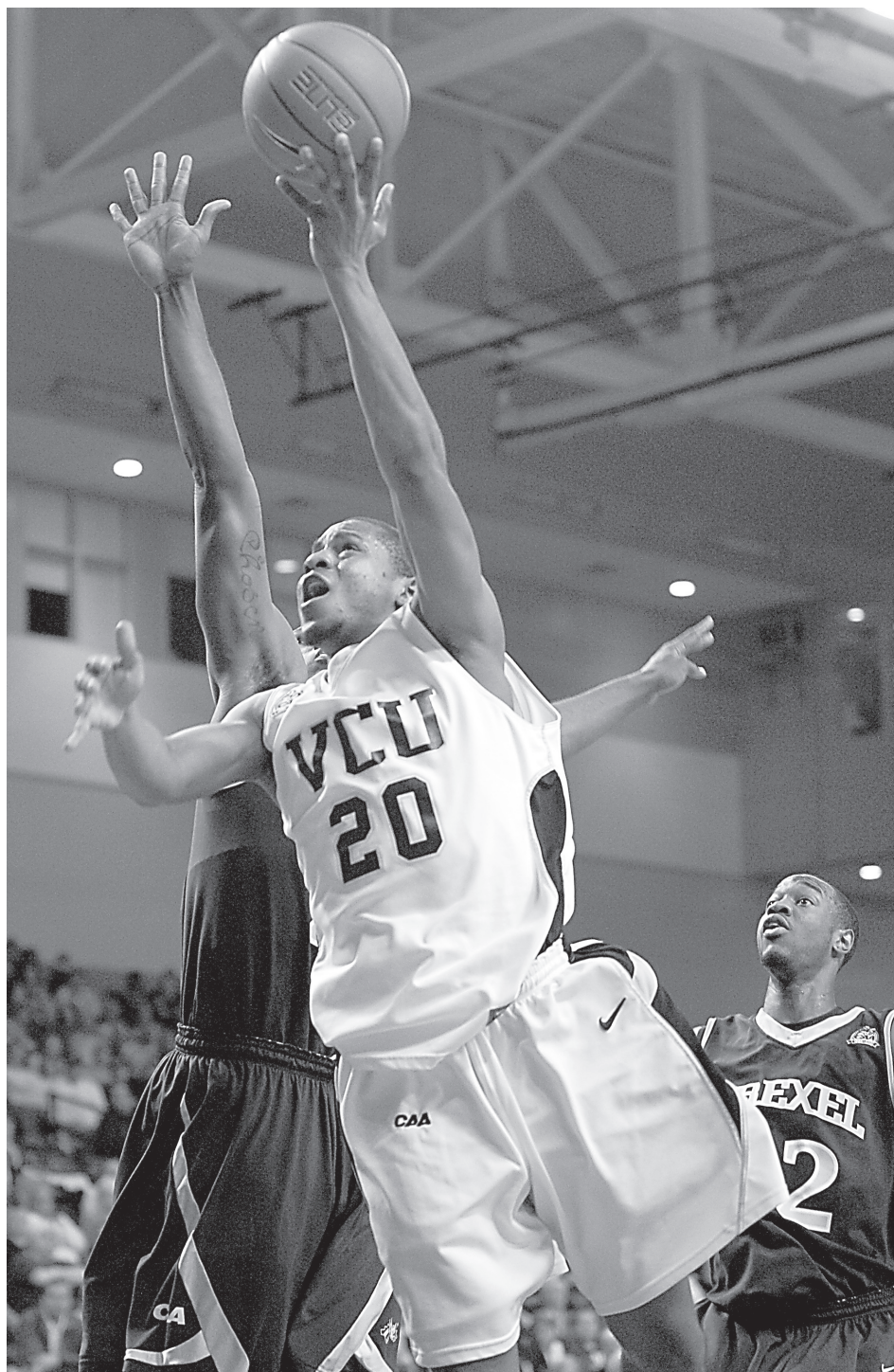
"The biggest need [for the freshman] was to gain weight," Roose said. "Their program is one without the conditioning elements because that's going to diminish the gains we see in the weight room."

Gains that already appear to be significant: The four freshmen, mi-

nus Veal and Houston, have already gained a combined 69 pounds since they came to VCU, an average of just over 17 pounds per player.

Such resounding results don't come easily, and make no mistake about it; Roose has been putting in plenty of overtime to ensure the Rams are ready to rock when the season starts. But if you think Roose regrets adding even more hours to his work load, think again.

"I told the guys in our first meeting: Last year in summertime I came to work because this was my job," Roose said. "That's not the case anymore; I come in because I love these guys." **CT**



Junior guard Bradford Burgess.

PHOTO BY KYLE LAFFERIERE

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# spectrum

A mass of VCU students, collected via posters in Shafer Court, were hired as extras for the movie's concert scenes. Compensation for one day's work: \$30 and a boxed KFC lunch.



STILLS COURTESY OF STYLE WEEKLY

## Long-lost and presumed dead, 'Rock 'n' Roll Hotel' rises from the grave at the Byrd

Nick Bonadies  
*Spectrum editor*

"How many people here remember the 80s?" Style Magazine editor Jason Roop called out to the ecstatic audience at Byrd Theatre in Carytown last Monday night. "Now, how many people remember the 80s fondly?"

Needless to say, one question enjoyed a more enthusiastic response. The Byrd was decked out in neon lights for the packed Richmond premiere of *Rock 'n' Roll Hotel*, an eighties-steeped "rock 'n' roll teen horror musical" that until recently was thought to not even exist. After its infamously botched and cheapjack filming in downtown Richmond's Jefferson Hotel in 1982, the film was assumed abandoned and lost forever.

Decades later, however, while researching for an article in Style Weekly, freelance writer Dale Brumfield stumbled upon a VHS tape buried in an architect's archive room in California - marked "Rock 'n' Roll Hotel, 83 mins., 1986."

Monday, August 30, 2010

After running an exclusive cover story on the resurrected movie called "The Best Worst Movie You've Never Seen," Style Weekly collaborated with the Byrd Theatre Foundation to present a special one-night showing whose proceeds would fund the theatre's restoration and upkeep.

The Byrd has held premieres for some of the cinematic masterpieces of our generation, said Todd Schall-Vess, Byrd Manager, addressing Monday's crowd. "This," he said, referring to *Rock 'n' Roll Hotel*, "is not one of them."

Make no mistake, *Rock 'n' Roll Hotel* is a strikingly terrible movie. A unique breed of godawful. A grand buffet of facepalm-worthy continuity errors, cheesy editing tricks, overlong scenes of actors clearly forgetting their lines and a terrible plot (or lack thereof) like a tragically misguided attempt at a *Rocky Horror Picture Show* for the 1980s.

If discovered by the greater public, this piece of Richmond underground history could achieve infamy on equal footing with John Waters' *Pink*

"... Freelance writer Dale Brumfield stumbled upon a VHS tape buried in an architect's archive room in California - marked "Rock 'n' Roll Hotel, 83 mins., 1986."

*Flamingos* or Ed Wood's *Plan 9 from Outer Space*.

Why, then, the huge turnout on Monday? A healthy "camp" sensibility, perhaps, and the local interest of a film made right here in Richmond - but that's only part of the reason Richmonders flocked to the Byrd to suffer together Monday night. According to Byrd Foundation president Bill Barrett, ticket sales for *Rock 'n' Roll Hotel* had raised over \$10,000 to restore and preserve "Richmond's Premiere Movie Palace."

"You have proved (to corporate backers) that this community values the Byrd Theatre," said Barrett in a pre-movie speech.

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spectrum

# At Shafer Street Playhouse, upcoming season promises engaging student theatre

Nick Bonadies  
*Spectrum editor*

Readers are likely familiar with the No Shame Variety Show, which regularly packs the Shafer Street Playhouse every other weekend with students from all over VCU. “Because,” says No Shame’s Facebook page, “let’s face it, we know you don’t have enough money to do anything else.” Performers, given up to ten minutes of stage time, are invited to “sing a song, present a monologue, do a skit, standup or really anything.” No Shame acts involving “really anything” typically become the stuff of local legend. The next No Shame, set for the 25th of this month, promises no less.

Shows like No Shame, as well as a host of other free-admission student theatre productions at the three-story Playhouse behind Shafer Court Dining Center, are made possible by the Shafer Alliance Laboratory Theatre – SALT – a student-run, SGA-sanctioned organization.

According to its website, SALT “facilitates, encourages, and promotes the public performance of student theatre.” The group held a meeting this Sunday to announce its upcoming Fall 2010 play schedule. The town hall-style gathering took place in the Playhouse’s Richard Newdick Theatre, the 150-seat blackbox where SALT stages its independent student productions.

“SALT is taking a large leap into the future,” announced Lucian Restivo, SALT board member, to a crowd of supporters, volunteers and student directors. “We’re revising ourselves... We’re taking what’s in the passive voice and putting it in the active voice.”

Among other changes and initiatives in the group, it was announced that SALT volunteering opportunities are now no longer restricted to Theatre majors. After an outpouring of interest at the recent SOVO fair, any and all students are now welcome to put their effort towards bringing student theatre to the VCU community.

SALT’s upcoming season includes *Endgame*, Samuel Beckett’s 1957 play widely considered as haunting and innovatory as his *Waiting for Godot*; *Godspell*, a musical based on the gospel according to St. Matthew; and *Animal Farm*, an adaptation of George Orwell’s novel. Admission to all shows will be free. Check out SALT’s full calendar of shows at Shafer Street Playhouse below. **CT**

*Shafer Alliance Laboratory Theatre “champions the cause of collaborative student theatre that reflects the overall diversity of the student body and the vast spectrum of theatrical possibility.” Check out their website, [shaferalliancelabtheatre.webs.com](http://shaferalliancelabtheatre.webs.com), or email at [vcu.salt.org@gmail.com](mailto:vcu.salt.org@gmail.com) for more information.*

## Shafer Street Playhouse Fall 2010 Schedule

### September 9-12, 2010

*Sailor’s Song* by John Patrick Shanley  
Directed by Ted Carter

### September 17-19, 2010

*Endgame* by Samuel Beckett  
Directed by Phil Vollmer

### October 7-10, 2010

*Godspell* by Stephen Schwartz & John-Michael Tebelak  
Directed by Walid Chaya

### October 28-31, 2010

*Apartment 3A* by Jeff Daniels  
Directed by Anna Kurtz

### November 4-7, 2010

*Animal Farm* adapted by Peter Hall  
Directed by Josh Chenard

### November 18-21, 2010

*All Hail Hurricane Gordo* by Carly Mensch  
Directed by Tommy Callan

### December 2-5, 2010

*dark play or stories for boys* by Carlos Murillo  
Directed by Lucian Restivo

### December 9-12, 2010

*Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds* by Paul Zindel  
Directed by Eryn Snyder

*Schedule courtesy of HYPERLINK*  
<http://shaferalliancelabtheatre.webs.com/>  
All shows and dates are subject to change.

STILLS COURTESY OF STYLE WEEKLY



The Jefferson Hotel, abandoned and empty in 1982, seen here transformed into the movie's namesake. In the movie, the dark and derelict building explodes in fireworks at the mention of the "secret password." (The password is "zits.")

The Byrd, which suffered financial troubles this year, undertook an array of fundraising efforts over the summer to avoid raising their well-loved \$1.99 ticket prices. Besides *Rock ‘n’ Roll Hotel* with Style Weekly, efforts have included a well-received run of “Give Richmond the Byrd” T-shirts.

“(The Byrd) is ... one of our cultural assets,” said Style Weekly Arts & Culture Editor Don Harrison, in a mini-documentary shown before the movie. “We all need to do what we need to do to make sure it survives and thrives.”

As for *Rock ‘n’ Roll Hotel* itself, the experience of a movie whose characters use “fantabulacious” without irony is multifaceted, to say the least. Audience utterances of “oh my God, no” and “seriously?” were as common as outbursts of “what?!” The crowd laughed incredulously, often fell to groaning, and occasionally sat stoically mesmerized in what might be called utter disbelief.

To *Rock ‘n’ Roll Hotel*’s credit, the rock ‘n’ roll itself actually drew genuine cheers from the Byrd’s audience: if you’re one given to remember the eighties fondly, the songs are pretty catchy.

The original VHS has been donated to the Valentine Richmond History Center as a “cultural treasure.” All hope is not lost for cinema masochists who missed Monday’s show: Style Weekly, according to editor Jason Roop, is exploring the idea of future showings.

Best known to moviegoers as Carytown’s \$1.99-ticket “movie palace” of the past 82 years, the Byrd is no stranger to midnight movies and cult classics. On October 9th, look for a one-night screening of 1984’s *Toxic Avenger*, which features a mop boy-turned-superhero after falling into a vat of toxic waste. **CT**

Check out [www.byrdtheatre.com](http://www.byrdtheatre.com) for more information and upcoming showtimes. Style Weekly’s cover story from August 17, *Yes, Virginia, There Is a Rock ‘n’ Roll Hotel*, can be accessed on their website, [www.styleweekly.com](http://www.styleweekly.com).

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Thursday, September 2, 2010





# Gallery5 series a study in extemporaneous movie scoring



PHOTO BY ZACH GIBSON

**Zaynah Akeel**  
*Contributing writer*

Gallery5 and A Silent Music Revival presented “The Adventures of Prince Achmed” with Dave Watkins this past Sunday, the latest entry in a monthly silent film screening accompanied by a musician who has never seen the film. The premise is intriguing, and Sunday’s result was brilliant.

Before the show, as another film played noiselessly over the screen, audience members filed in. Soon all the seating, the standing room in the back and the floor were all filled, and the audience was tangibly energized for the show.

“The Adventures of Prince Achmed”, a 1926 film by German filmmaker Lotte Reiniger, was completed after three years of intricate and painstaking labor in stop-motion animation using cut out images on color tinted glass frames – yes, the film was in color. Reiniger was inspired by Indonesian puppetry, and also drew from “1001 Arabian Nights”, though dialogue title cards are in her native German.

“It was really beautiful,” said Brookes Finnie, a student in the cinema program at VCU. “I didn’t really read the subtitles. ... I was really just paying attention to the movie. It told a really great visual story.”

One of the oldest full-length animated films, “Prince Achmed’s” 65 minute duration presented a challenge for featured musician Dave Watkins,

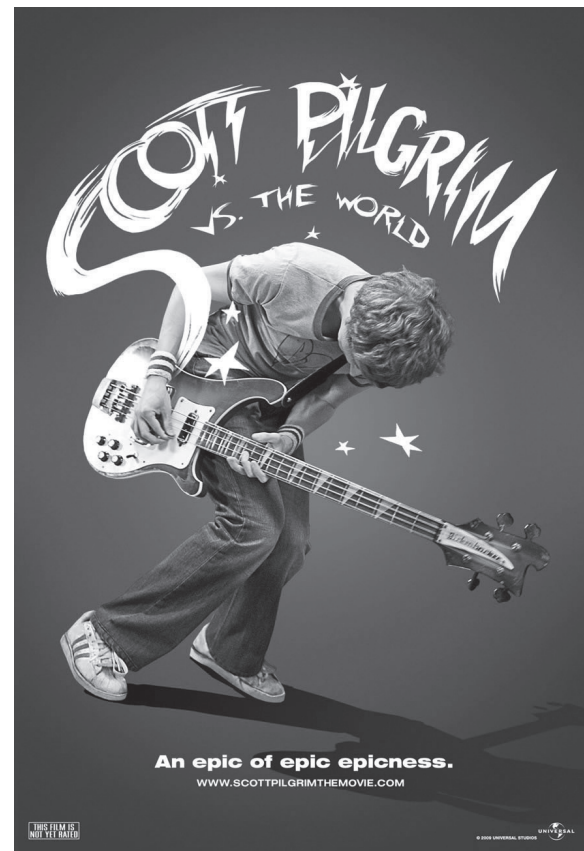
who provided the live soundtrack for the film with his gorgeous custom-made dulcitar and killer pedal setup. In keeping with the rules of Silent Music Revival, Watkins had never seen the film before Sunday night’s performance, with the exception of some screen stills.

Watkins was able to watch the film and to take visual cues from the movie. The resulting music depended a great deal on looping and amplification technology, and therefore maintained a hypnotic rhythm and mood throughout. In moments of intense action, Watkins would surprise the audience with sharp acoustic accompaniment, but would soon revert to his steady pace.

Members of the audience were sucked into the continuous loop of Watkin’s accompaniment. “The next day the music was still in my head,” says VCU student Caitlin Blomstrom. “It held my attention amazingly through the whole thing, and I wish I could see more.” This feeling seemed to be felt by much of the audience, but they’ll have to wait until later this month: Silent Music Revival next returns to Gallery5 on September 26th, with The Low Branches accompanying Jean Epstein’s 1947 film “Le Tempestaire”. **CT**

For more information, check out Gallery5 at [gallery5arts.org](http://gallery5arts.org), or A Silent Music Revival on their Myspace Film page, <http://www.myspace.com/silentmusicrevival>.

## Film review: For Scott Pilgrim, the entire world’s a game



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL PICTURES

**Zaynah Akeel**  
*Contributing writer*

Seeing the commercial for “Scott Pilgrim vs. the World”, directed by Edgar Wright (Hot Fuzz, Shaun of the Dead) and released on August 13, one might have assumed we’d already seen all the good parts. Incredibly, this is completely false. Scott Pilgrim really is that awesome for nearly all of its 1 hour and 53 minutes.

23-year-old Scott Pilgrim (Michael Cera) lives with his witty gay roommate (Kieran Culkan) in Canada, plays in a band and has a girlfriend (Knives Chau, played by Ellen Wong) – but then he meets Ramona Flowers (Mary Elizabeth Winstead) and throws all that away for her. He discovers, when attacked by an Indian man in a rugby shirt, that in order to date Ramona, he must defeat her seven evil exes.

A videogame inspired deluge ensues, and each defeated ex becomes another “level” that has been beaten on the way to the boss level, the final evil ex.

The artistic style employed in both editing and script, which will put you in mind of the original graphic novel series by Bryan Lee O’Malley, is thoroughly entertaining throughout. There’s never a dull moment – they’re all edited out – with the exception perhaps of the strangely-timed fight with the twins, whose powers involve playing keyboards and conjuring dragons, but

FILM REVIEW continued on CT12

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unfortunately also involves lacking personality. This can be easily overlooked, though.

For those who fail to see the appeal in Michael Cera, or who perhaps feel that he can play no one but Michael Cera, don't let this stop you from seeing *Scott Pilgrim*. He really is perfect for the role of awkward, not-sure-what-I'm-doing-here Scott – he's cute enough to believably have girlfriends, and only a little bit funny to see behind a bass guitar. Mary Elizabeth Winstead makes for a very acceptable Ramona Flowers, getting the whole unaffected act down fairly well. Ellen Wong is perfect for the role of Knives Chau, the initially dependent and gushing high-school girlfriend of Scott who gets dumped for Ramona. From this point on, Knives takes on a new kick-ass personality, showcased mainly in the final scene.

Look out for Jason Schwartzman of *Rushmore* fame as evil ex numero seven, and Culkan playing Scott's gay roommate (with whom Scott shares a bed – adorable). In fact, also watch for Mae Whitman, who played Ann Veal, Cera's girlfriend in *Arrested Development*.

The creative awesomeness going on draws the audience in so much, that one might be a bit blindsided by the cliché self-discovery twist thrown in at the end of the film. However, the truth is that this ending makes the film applicable to a very wide audience: if anyone is looking for a film to see that both they and their parents might enjoy, try this one. Everyone can relate to the desire to understand oneself, regardless of endless video game and cultural references. **CT**

Want to add your voice to  
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Contact opinion editor  
Robert Showah at

opinion@commonwealthtimes.com

spectrum

# opinion

## The oil spill blame game

Who will serve the cacophony that is the American people?

Bobby Showah  
Opinion Editor

The BP oil spill didn't just create a mess in the Gulf of Mexico—it's left the public's thoughts in complete disarray.

While this confusion might be for good reason, Americans should not take out their frustration on a president who is working to find a solution that not only solves this crisis but also can gain the approval of the American public. This is difficult to do when the people do not know what they want.

In events like these, it's rare that the right plan of action and what the public would like to see happen are actually the same thing. But what happens when a president knows the correct course to take, but the American people don't know what they want?

That is the situation President Barack Obama has found himself in. He might very well have a solution to this crisis (or not), but any plan has to meet the standards of the American public—regardless of whether what they think is right. Because the oil leak cannot be plugged immediately, the best response, for now, is to compensate Americans affected by the spill.

Unfortunately, a large portion of the public is either apathetic or uninformed. Those who are informed are often blinded by their political biases. This is why we cannot entirely blame presidents who make decisions we might not all agree with them on. We aren't experts. For most of us, the worst environmental crisis in American history is being summed up for us by the media in video clips and sound bites, by talking heads

and the most partisan politicians.

The confusion Americans are feeling is only growing. After a heated health care debate, where it's fair to say the role of government received more coverage than the actual content of the law passed, the media have reignited the question of where federal government intervention begins.

The public is frustrated and simply wants a solution to this crisis, regardless of who can provide one. But they also contradict one another, which puts greater pressure on the president to make a wise decision.

According to a June Gallup poll, 48-44 percent of Americans disapprove of how Obama is handling the spill. Eighty-one percent of those polled rated BP's handling of the spill either "poor" or "very poor." Seventy-one percent said they believe Obama has not done enough about the spill. Forty-nine percent of Americans said they believe BP should be in charge of the spill,

whereas 44 percent believe the federal government should.

So, while people believe BP should be responsible for their own mess, they disapprove of the job the company is doing taking responsibility for the mess. And while they believe this, they also think Obama has not done enough. Uh, okay?

Throughout the health care debate, the percentage of Americans in support or opposition to the bill were pretty close, compared to the figures regarding the president's job rating on the oil spill (more usually opposed the bill by a few points). The difference is that the Tea Party movement has been mum on the spill. Their silence is perhaps a concession that government can and should lend a helping hand when a

OIL SPILL BLAME GAME continued on CT15



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# OAP SEPTEMBER TRIPS

9/7	Kayak Roll Clinic
9/8	Canoeing under the Stars
9/11	Day Canoeing on the Upper James
9/12	Back Bay Day Hike
9/14, 9/28	Climbing at Manchester Wall
9/17-9/19	Women's Rock Climbing Clinic
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spectrum

# VCU praise band plays to midday crowd at the Commons

Mark Robinson and Samuel Roots  
*Contributing writers*

The University Commons was the site of another free concert for VCU students Wednesday afternoon. Aletheia at VCU, a campus organization and affiliate of Aletheia Richmond church, sponsored the concert.

Aletheia at VCU is a student organization with a goal, according to their website, “to mobilize and equip a generation of students passionate about the message of Jesus.” The organization is comprised of VCU students that are involved with the Aletheia church, brought to Richmond in 2007 by Joshua Soto. Similar chapters exist near other college campuses throughout the state, including JMU and ODU.

With the Commons Plaza decorated in balloons and banners, the Aletheia Richmond Band took the stage to perform a mixture of contemporary praise-band covers. The 8-piece group was supplemented by Kyle Tower and Zach Crump on the first song, “Riches of Grace,” a hip-hop take on accepting spiritual growth - proclaiming, “I use to throw stones but now I cast crowns.”

Despite some sound quality issues the group performed solidly, taking a break between each song to make clear their mission in the VCU community. An audience of VCU students in between classes waited in lines for free pizza and the chance to win an iPod nano.

Junior Julian Cha, an official of Aletheia at VCU, focused on his hope that the event will convince more VCU students to attend sessions at the Pace Center by Rhoads Hall “as we explore the truth that is communicated in the Bible.” **CT**

More information on Aletheia at VCU can be found on their website, [www.aletheiarichmond.com](http://www.aletheiarichmond.com).



PHOTO BY BRANDON HAMBRIGHT

The musical group included some acoustic songs in their set, Wednesday.

Thursday, September 2, 2010



Aletheia Rock Band guitarist performs on stage in the Commons Plaza.

PHOTO BY BRANDON HAMBRIGHT

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# opinion

## Tea Partiers anonymous

Discovering who's who in a fractured conservative movement

Robert Showah  
*Opinion Editor*

Last Saturday, FOX News talk show host Glenn Beck held his "Restoring Honor" Tea Party rally in Washington, but it was no ordinary Tea Party rally. Beck's speech ended up covering God rather than politics, likely surprising Reverend Al Sharpton, who held a smaller rally in Washington at the same time. The God rhetoric came as a surprise to many conservatives and journalists, but is a clear example of how the conservative movement in America is insanely fractured.

However, when it comes to this November's elections, division is irrelevant. In a year where Republicans have an edge, the question is not whether or not they will win seats, but how many. Most importantly, what type of Republicans will be elected. There are a few.

First, there are the generic Republicans we have known for eight years. They're tough on terrorism, support low financial regulation, tend to be religious and social conservatives and are big spenders. Most have taken advantage of the Tea Party movement's anger to remain incumbents. Then there are the libertarians. These are the true libertarians, the ones who support states' rights across the board. They support little to no financial regulation, a non-interventionist foreign policy, a strict constructionist interpretation of the Constitution, oppose populism and are religiously diverse. These are people who are polite, have all their teeth and engage in civil conversation. They also don't dress up like Uncle Sam and keep American flags in their back pockets. Finally, there is the Tea Party or the commercialized "libertarians." I am not sure about how similar or different their views are compared to true libertarians, but those that are representing them are painting a

wrong picture, but the people seem to be enjoying themselves at these rallies anyway.

"This is a day that can start the heart of America again," declared Beck at the Washington rally. "And it has nothing to do with politics, but has everything to do with God."

Since when?

It is rhetoric like this that makes the Tea Party a mess. A movement that was supposed to be inclusive of all people who are angered by the federal government regardless of their religious background or devotion, are now experiencing the same discomfort many libertarian and moderate Republicans felt when they had a religious-conservative president in office.

But the divisions are deeper than religion. Even though the views of people like libertarian-Republican Congressman Ron Paul might be similar to that of the Tea Party's (intended) political views, it certainly does not mean he shares the same rhetoric, ideas or views as someone like Sarah Palin who has been embraced by the Tea Party.

In policy they clash. Ron Paul opposes military intervention in Iran, supports States' rights to determine their policy on same-sex marriage and supports legalizing marijuana. Sarah Palin would consider invading Iran, supports a federal constitutional ban against same-sex marriage and opposes legalizing marijuana.

In rhetoric they also clash. After the BP oil spill, Paul rejected the criticism President Obama was receiving from Republicans about how he was not doing enough to solve the problem. Paul further explained, convicted to his beliefs, that whenever disasters like this occur critics should not have this habit of running to the federal government and expect the President to be whipped into solving this crisis.

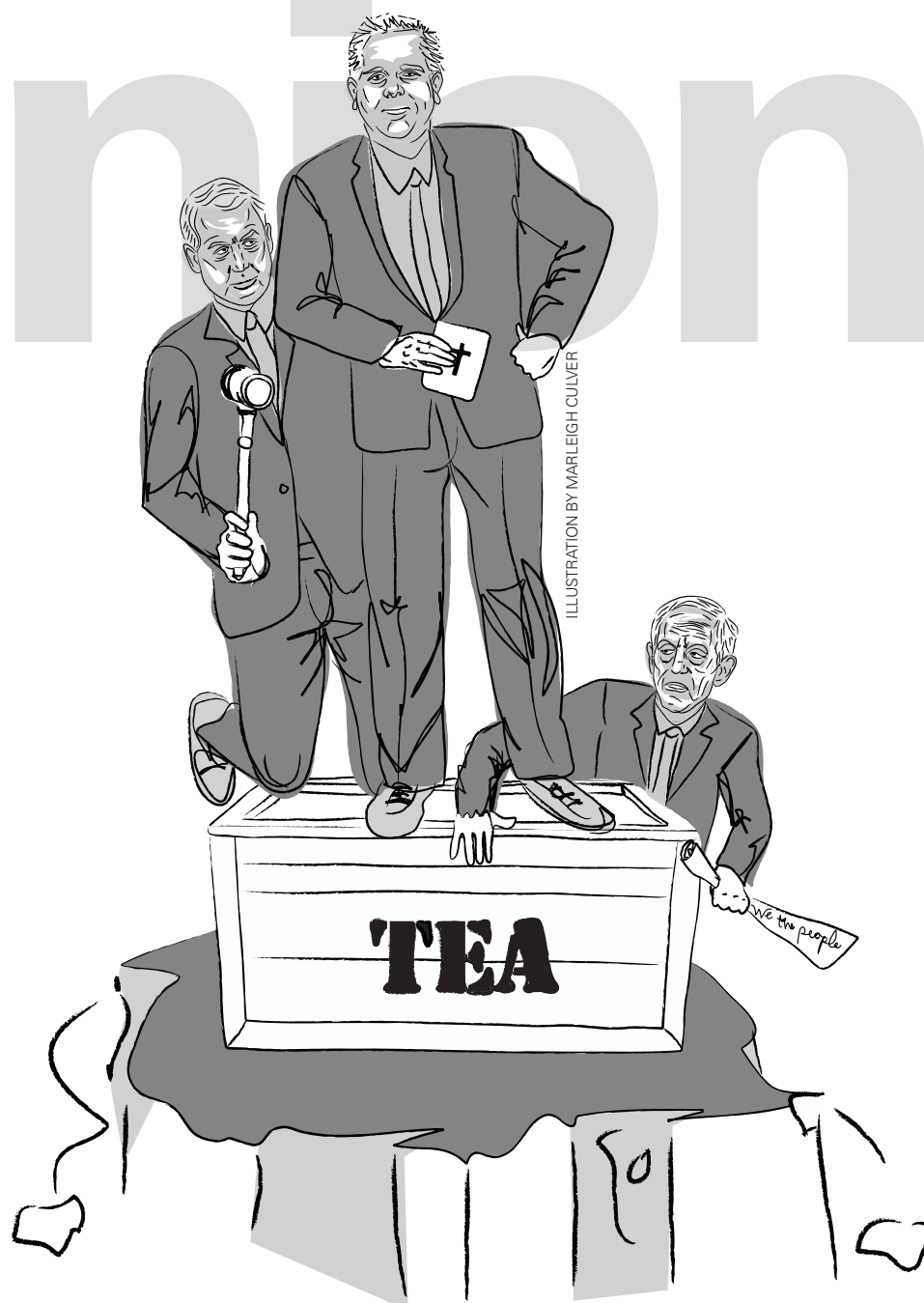


ILLUSTRATION BY MARLEIGH CULVER

Sarah Palin, on the other hand, hammered away at the president and demanded that she know that it was his top priority to stop the leak. Afterward she accused the president of taking advantage of the crisis to raise energy costs, a jab that was never clarified.

This ultimately means that people like Sarah Palin and even House Minority Leader John Boehner have become demagogues of the Tea Party movement, using it to their advantage. For Palin it is to gain popularity and perhaps support for a presidential bid and for Boehner, the House Speaker's gavel this November. Speaking of November, a problem with electing different breeds of Republican is that while different crowds within the conservative movement might elect them, they might not always vote as one would expect. Take Sen. Scott Brown, the Republican who won a special election earlier this year as the "Tea Party" candidate in liberal "Taxachusetts" succeeding the late Ted Kennedy. He voted with Democrats and a few other Republicans for the financial reform law.

It is worth noting that if the only issues that make up the Tea Party's

platform are an anti-tax, anti-federal government message, then that certainly leaves many issues where Democrats may be able to gain their votes.

This election season, the bottom line seems to be that people are pissed. Republicans/Libertarians/Tea Partiers will support the name with the "R" next to it. Independents, however, won't be voting for Republicans, they'll just be voting against Democrats.

Throughout the midterms, Democrats will tout their accomplishments to the people between now and November: health care reform, financial and regulatory reform, ending the War in Iraq and holding BP accountable for their mess.

Despite what sounds like an impressive list of achievements, the Republican public relations machine (which is far stronger than the Democrats') has helped and I presume will continue to assist in smearing Democrats but will particularly be used to elect Republicans, any "Republicans," as long as it's anyone that takes seats away from Democrats. **CT**





## Time To Kill

by Jason Velez



## Forget Fairytales

by Christine Stoddard



## The Daily Stoop

by Rachel Maves



Thursday, September 2, 2010

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This new route will operate for the fall 2010 and spring 2011 semesters. Rider counts will be reviewed to see if the service will be continued. This trial service is provided in addition to the Security Escort Service by VCU Police.

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