



Thursday, September 23, 2010 Vol. 51 No. 9

# the ct



## Right Of Way

### Mayor campaigns for increased pedestrian safety

#### News

Burglars hit 11 people in 5 instances this weekend · 3

#### Sports

Conspiracy theorists beware: CAA Tournament extends it's stay in Richmond · 7

#### Spectrum

For 25th anniversary, Fall Block this weekend goes silver · 11

#### Opinion

Combating the Westboro Baptist Church · 14







# briefs

## Local and VCU

### Harringtons say social media has helped murder case

Gil and Dan Harrington say social media websites have had big impact on their daughter's murder case that's gone unsolved for nearly a year now.

"It has become a way to participate, give input, give another set of eyes. It has been valuable," Gil Harrington said.

After her daughter Morgan Harrington disappeared last October. They hired a public relations company to help manage the media attention they were getting. Digital Strategist Valerie Elston headed up that effort and explained their methods at Roanoke College to a room full of other PR specialists from around the state.

"Without social media, I think the case probably would have died out in the media a lot faster," Elston said.

Elston says people flooded to the Facebook page with tips, theories, and volunteered to help with search efforts.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

### Virginia jobless rate up slightly in August

Virginia's unemployment rate edged up slightly in August, but still remained well below the national average.

The Virginia Employment Commission said Tuesday its adjusted unemployment rate was 7 percent in August. That's up from 6.9 percent last August.

The agency says August is typically a transition month between summer and fall labor markets.

During the month, the labor force, total unemployment and the number of unemployed normally decline as students quit summer jobs and head back to school and local school districts see their lowest employment levels before school starts back up in the fall.

The agency said more than 61,930 people were receiving regular unemployment benefits in August, down more than 9,430 from July and down more than 30,980 from August last year.

The national rate stood at 9.6 percent in August, up slightly from July.

*Brief by the Richmond Times-Dispatch*

### Republicans block bill to lift 'don't ask, don't tell'

Senate Republicans on Tuesday blocked legislation that would have repealed the law banning gays from serving openly in the military.

The partisan vote was a defeat for Senate Democrats and gay rights advocates, who saw the bill as their last chance before November's elections to overturn the law known as "don't ask, don't tell."

With the 56-43 vote, Democrats fell short of the 60 votes needed to advance the legislation. It also would have authorized \$726 billion in defense spending including a pay raise for troops.

Senate Democrats attached the repeal provision to the defense bill in the hopes that Republicans would hesitate to vote against legislation that included popular defense programs. But GOP legislators opposed the bill anyway, thwarting a key part of the Democrats' legislative agenda.

If Democrats lose seats in the upcoming elections this fall, repealing the ban could prove even more difficult — if not impossible — next year.

*Brief by The Associated Press*

## National and International

### Man in Brazil amasses \$259K in traffic fines

Police in Brazil say they have caught an Italian man who managed to amass \$259,000 in traffic fines and other penalties linked to his van.

Police say they arrested 62-year-old engineer Roberto Cintio at his office after a 10-day investigation.

Most of Cintio's fines were for speeding, which are levied in Brazilian cities by radar cameras without a police stop of the vehicle. Other fines were for parking, not paying vehicle property taxes and other infractions.

A police statement issued Tuesday says Cintio likely evaded police by using false IDs. It says several blank identification cards were found with him.

There was no indication how long it took Cintio to build up the fines on his 9-year-old General Motors van.

*Brief by The Associated Press*

### US expects closer Russia-NATO ties

A planned summit between NATO leaders and Russia's President Dmitry Medvedev will significantly boost cooperation on the Afghan war, missile defense and fighting drug trafficking and piracy, a senior U.S. official said Tuesday.

U.S. NATO Ambassador Ivo Daalder said that Wednesday's foreign ministers session with Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov will lay the groundwork for the November summit of the 28 NATO members and Russia in Lisbon, Portugal.

"I hope what we get out of this is that everyone will leave with an understanding that there is a good basis for trying to achieve some significant breakthroughs by the time we are able to get together at the leaders' level in November," Daalder told journalists.

Ties between the alliance and Russia hit a post-Cold War low after the Russo-Georgian war two years ago, when the alliance — under pressure from the Bush administration — froze relations with Moscow.

But since President Barack Obama announced a "reset" of U.S. ties, there has been a shift toward closer cooperation.

*Brief by The Associated Press*

### World's oldest man marks 114th birthday in US

A Montana resident believed to be the world's oldest man celebrated his 114th birthday Tuesday at a retirement home in Great Falls.

Walter Breuning was born on Sept. 21, 1896, in Melrose, Minnesota, and moved to Montana in 1918, where he worked as a clerk for the Great Northern Railway for 50 years.

Breuning inherited the distinction of being the world's oldest man in July 2009 when Briton Henry Allingham died at age 113. Allingham had joked that the secret to long life was "Cigarettes, whisky and wild, wild women — and a good sense of humor," according to Guinness World Records.

The Guinness organization and the Gerontology Research Group each have verified Breuning as the world's oldest man and the fourth-oldest person. Three women were born earlier in the same year as Breuning.

Robert Young, senior consultant for gerontology for Guinness World Records, presented Breuning with a copy of the book's 2011 edition that lists him as the record holder.

"Walter wasn't in last year's edition," Young joked. "He was too young."

*Brief by The Associated Press*

the  
ct

ERICATERRINI  
Executive Editor  
editor@commonwealthtimes.com  
828-6516

MEL KOBRAN  
Managing Editor  
managing@commonwealthtimes.com

FLETCHER BABB  
News Editor  
news@commonwealthtimes.com

ADAM STERN  
Sports Editor  
sports@commonwealthtimes.com

NICK BONADIES  
Spectrum Editor  
spectrum@commonwealthtimes.com

ROBERT SHOWAH  
Opinion Editor  
opinion@commonwealthtimes.com

KYLE LAFERRIERE  
Photography Editor  
photo@commonwealthtimes.com

DOMINIC BUTCHELLO  
Art Director  
graphics@commonwealthtimes.com

MARLEIGH CULVER  
Graphic Designer  
graphics@commonwealthtimes.com

HANNAH SWANN  
Graphic Designer  
graphics@commonwealthtimes.com

TRENT REED  
Webmaster  
multimediaeditor@commonwealthtimes.com

JACOB MCFADDEN  
Advertising Manager  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
828-6629

MICHAEL LARSEN  
Associate Advertising Representative  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
827-4562

MONIQUE WILKINS  
Associate Advertising Representative  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
827-4562

JOHN MCWHORTER  
Advertising Graphics Specialist  
ctadvertising@gmail.com  
828-6629

#### SMC STAFF

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

LAUREN GEERDES  
Business Manager  
827-1642

MARK JEFFRIES  
Production Manager  
mjeffriesVCU@gmail.com

*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.*

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

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

Thursday, September 23, 2010

COVER PHOTO BY CHRIS CONWAY







PHOTO BY KYLE LAFERRIERE

## E-waste poses trouble for landfills, environment

Nan Turner  
Staff Writer

Students on campus last year may have noticed an influx of recycling bins and the propaganda to go green encouraging students to dispose of trash in a more eco-friendly way.

The university made a push to act environmentally-friendly, but what some students may not know is that good recycling practices do not end with bottles and cans.

Electronic waste, also known as e-waste, has become a growing problem in an age when electronics are used for shorter amounts of time. Accord-

ing to the Electronics Takeback Coalition, a San Francisco group that works for greater recycling awareness, the U.S. generated 2.63 million tons of electronic waste in 2005. Of that, only 12.5 percent was recycled and the rest ended up in landfills and incinerators.

John Burton, manager of Computer World on West Broad Street, thinks this is a statistic that is not only dangerous to our environment, but needs to change.

"A lot of heavy metals are in components of computers that could damage soil and poison water ba-

# news

sins," Burton said. "It would take several hundred years, but it would happen. That's why the state allows us to take it to a recycling plant where they break it into pieces and reuse it."

At Computer World people can recycle any old electronics such as computers, printers, old televisions, speakers and VCRs. Depending on the amount of recyclables on-site pick up may be available.

While Burton's specialty is electronics, he believes students should start going green by implementing other changes.

"They should look to see and be more aware of what can be recycled, which is basically everything," he said. "We have a recycle bin here not just for computers but for our own personal trash. We're a very environmentally conscious computer company."

As part of the cleaner earth movement, VCU recycled more than 33 tons of computers and electronics last year and 214 tons since 2000, according to the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

Steven R. Heinitz, recycling and reuse coordinator at the university told the Times-Dispatch that the biggest

goal was to keep the used machines out of the landfills.

Some students, like VCU junior Erica Jackson, agree with Heinitz's reasons for safely disposing of trash.

"I think now with everything going green and with our generation we use a lot of resources and everything so it's more of us using," Jackson said. "I think we should be the ones to recycle the most because it would have the greatest impact."

VCU junior Ray Kyle echoes her sentiments and says he would like to know what happens to the university's used equipment.

"It would like help the environment and make it a lot better to recycle," Kyle said. "By the school going green, they would be able to save more money than by like making that stuff over. They could just reuse it, so that would be helpful to the earth."

Both Jackson and Kyle have recycled printer cartridges, a VCR and an MP3 player. **CT**

*Used electronics can be dropped off at recycling centers throughout the city. To find more information on recycling around the VCU campus visit [www.vcu.edu/recycling](http://www.vcu.edu/recycling).*

## VCU police respond to 11 robberies over weekend

Thomas Dickson  
Contributing Writer

VCU law enforcement increased operation security levels after 11 people were robbed at gunpoint this past weekend, police said.

The robbery spree started on Friday Sept. 17, when four people were mugged within a 15-minute time span near the intersection of West Grace and North Lombardy streets. The robberies continued Saturday evening when a group of seven people were held up at gunpoint by three men near the 800 block of North Harrison Street.

The sudden surge of robberies has caused VCU police to step up its presence with saturation patrols into certain areas of campus.

"We are not going to make a determination on whether or not they are going to stop," VCU Police Lieutenant Nicole Dailey said. "We are going to step up our resources to try and make it stop."

The recent weekend crimes have affected students across campus.

"I'm much more worried than I was before," VCU senior Duy Nguy-

en said. Nguyen lives on the 1100 block of West Grace Street, just a few buildings down from the intersection where four people were robbed.

The street is not well-lit and most people do not hang out by the road, Nguyen said. The 11 reported robberies occurred in five different instances, but some robberies were not reported to VCU police.

One student, Quintin Fields, said he was held up at gunpoint on Marshall Street early Sunday morning. "I made myself as non-threatening as I could be," Fields said.

"Things go wrong all the time so why be stupid?" Fields called Richmond police at a later time to report the incident and told them not to respond.

VCU police recommend complying with the robbers, and to observe everything about the robbers so you can be a good witness.

"We'd rather you fare well," Dailey said. "And not get injured in the process of dealing with the robbery." **CT**



PHOTO BY THOMAS DICKSON

Thursday, September 23, 2010

[commonwealthtimes.org](http://commonwealthtimes.org) · CT3





# Second Haiti forum paints dismal picture, urges compassion

Catherine Leth  
Contributing Reporter

VCU's second Haiti Disaster Forum took place in the Commons Theater on Monday morning, acting as a follow-up to the first event that happened during the Spring 2010 semester. The L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs and the School of Social Work joined up with local non-profit groups to discuss how the situation in Haiti has developed since an earthquake killed 200,000 Haitians and displaced 1.5 million in January.

Dean Jim Hinterlong, from the School of Social Work, conveyed a message of moral responsibility, stressing that Americans must not feel detached from those who are suffering in Haiti.

"As you sit here today, in a climate controlled auditorium with these kind of seats, I'd like you to just understand the privilege that you have that brings you here today, and the extraordinary responsibility that places upon your shoulders," he said

in his opening remarks. "I always tell my students: Education is a slippery slope, because once you open your eyes and you come to understand your own circumstances, you can never go back."

A series of speakers emphasized the extremely poor living conditions surrounding Port Au Prince, the Haitian capital. Since there are fewer private buildings and a widespread lack of proper housing, women are being raped in tents and children are often seen begging on the streets.

"We are less concerned with the Richter scale magnitude as we are with the human consequences of what happened," the Director of the L. Douglas Wilder School Niraj Virma said. "That's what brings our fields together. At some level we are powerless at the enormity of this catastrophe, but at the same time this is a challenge for students and researchers."

Ben Blevins, Director of the Highland Support Project in Guatemala-

la, also cited the nation's lack of proper governing in recent years as a reason for the tragic conditions that have developed there.

"The disaster that happened in Haiti was not the earthquake, the disaster that happened in Haiti was policies that push the people into the urban area and have continued to strip the island of any self-rule," he said.

Reggie Gordon, CEO of the Richmond chapter of American Red Cross, explained the complications that arise when non-profit groups try to deliver aid to a nation in need.

Legal restrictions and lack of government infrastructure make creating shelter very difficult, and getting staff members and volunteers to Haiti has been a tough process as well.

"When you put people on a plane and send them into a disaster area, there is no food, there is no water, there is no shelter, so you are not prepared to live in those conditions. Then you get sick, then you have to get medical attention," he said. "So

it just makes it worse for the people who were there and in need."

Jean-Andre Constant, a Haitian social worker living in Virginia who lost family members in the earthquake, expressed "a loss of optimism". He described the crude organization of government officials in the face of Haiti's upcoming elections.

According to CNN, only 9 percent of the \$15 billion pledged from various countries has been delivered. Despite this, Constant remains faithful in Haiti's future, even if the path of recovery hasn't been the quickest or most efficient route thus far.

"Instead of blaming, instead of accusing, instead of having pity for the Haitian people, it is time for all of us to say 'we need to move from our comfort zone' and to commit to how it's possible to do something about it. It is a human duty," he said.

The forum ended with a poetry reading by Constant, and all participants were served a Haitian lunch. **CT**



PHOTO BY KYLE LAFERRIERE

CT4 · commonwealthtimes.org

Thursday, September 23, 2010





# Mayor hosts pedestrian safety forum in Byrd Park

Hillary Huber  
Contributing Writer

Mayor Dwight C. Jones held a public forum Monday night at Byrd Park for citizens to share ideas to make the city more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly.

The Pedestrian, Bicycling and Trails Planning Commission presented recommendations to Jones and the community about how to accomplish what they consider a serious safety concern.

“When I became mayor and visited other cities that had a real pedestrian-friendly atmosphere — biking paths, walking paths, accessibility to natural resources — I was determined that we were going to do that here in Richmond,” Jones said.

Amy George, who works in the Office of the Assessor of Real Estate for the city, followed Mayor Jones’ plan of action by raising awareness of the danger bikers and pedestrians have experienced in Richmond. According to her research, from 2004 to mid-2010, 196 accidents occurred involving pedestrians in the area.

Four other presentations were given, each highlighting ways to implement pedestrian safety with public policy and legislation, outreach and education, infrastructure and physical design, and economic development.

Suggestions included developing “complete streets,” which would provide designated areas for automobiles, bikers, and pedestrians. Another idea was to put a striped line in parking lanes to make drivers and bikers feel safer.

Popular ideas among the audience were creating a full-time position for bike, pedestrian and trail



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY KYLE LAFERRIERE

coordinator. The position would ensure that the recommendations would actually be implemented, and new ideas would constantly be developed.

The citizens at the forum were also supportive of the “Live Here, Bike Here” campaign, which Mayor Jones created. It would focus on attracting tourists to the area, beautifying bike and walking trails, and connecting popular Richmond sites, including Maymont, Byrd Park, VCU, and Carytown, to each other with bike routes.

Roads on the VCU Monroe Park Campus were on the list of roads to improve first, including Broad, Main, Harrison, Grace, Cary and Belvidere streets.

Monet Pringle, a accounting junior, said she wouldn’t dare ride a bike on campus. “I’m too nervous about getting hit,” Pringle said.

Carolyn Graham, the deputy chief administrative officer for Richmond City Human Services, said she thinks the recommendations made were mostly low key, and could be done in a relatively short time span.

“I’d love to see the safety pieces, marking pieces, and the signage, and the sidewalks cut properly, so that persons with disabilities and bikers can have an ease of access to the sidewalks,” Graham said.

The commission had citizens vote on which recommendations they thought were most beneficial, realistic, and logical for pedestrian safety. For updates on the development of pedestrian safety in Richmond, visit [www.richmondgov.com](http://www.richmondgov.com). **CT**

## Crime Log

Compiled From VCU Police Reports

### 9/18

At Barnes and Noble, 1111 W. Broad St., a male visitor was arrested for larceny of property with intent to sell, attempted larceny of property with intent to sell and obtaining U.S. currency under false pretenses.

At 810 N. Harrison St., four male students were robbed at an off campus location.

### 9/19

On the 300 block of Boyd Street, a male visitor was arrested for underage possession of alcohol.

On the 1100 block of West Franklin Street, a male employee was arrested for grand larceny.

At Rhoads Hall, 710 W. Franklin St., a female student was arrested for possession of marijuana.

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

On the 700 block of West Main Street, a male student was arrested for possession of marijuana and possession of marijuana in public.

On the 700 block of West Main Street, a female student was arrested for DUI.

On the 700 block of West Main Street, a female student was arrested for DUI.

On the 700 block of West Main Street, a female studenta was arrested for underage possession of alcohol.

On the 700 block of West Main Street, a male student was drinking while operating a motor vehicle.

At the Cary and Belvidere Dorms, 301 W. Cary St., a male student advised that he received a threatening text message from a unknown person(s).

On the 700 block of West Main Street, a female visitor was arrested for possession of a concealed weapon.

On the 900 block of West Grace Street, two female visitors were arrested for disorderly conduct.

### 9/20

At Grace Harris Hall, 1015 Floyd Ave., a male student was arrested for possession of an open alcoholic container in public.

### 9/21

At 729 W. Marshall St., a female student advised that she received threatening text messages from a known person.

At the VCU Police Department, 938 W. Grace St., two female students advised that they received threatening text messages from a unknown person.

At the corner of Lombardy and West Broad streets, two male visitors were arrested for possession of an open alcoholic container in public.

### 9/22

At 1400 Grove Ave., a male visitor was arrested for possession of a Schedule I substance, breaking and entering a vehicle, larceny with intent to sell, larceny of bank notes, petit larceny and possession of a concealed weapon.

At the corner of North Belvidere and West Leigh streets, a male student was arrested for possession of marijuana.







**VCU Graduate School presents**

# GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL FAIR



**\* Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup> \* 10am – 2pm \***  
**\* Commonwealth Ballroom & Richmond Salons \***  
(2<sup>nd</sup> floor – University Student Commons)



**\* Open to VCU & Richmond-area college students – *student ID required* \***

Contact Whitney Carswell for more information: [wcarswell@vcu.edu](mailto:wcarswell@vcu.edu)

#### VCU

Bioinformatics  
Department of English  
Department of Health Administration  
Department of Psychology  
Graduate Studies in Business  
Masters of Interdisciplinary Studies  
Preparing Future Faculty Program  
School of Education  
School of Engineering  
School of Medicine  
School of Medicine - Graduate Programs  
School of Pharmacy  
Wilder School of Government & Public Affairs

#### Institutions

American University  
American University International Service  
Corcoran College of Art + Design  
Duke University Fuqua School of Business  
Elon University  
George Mason University  
Hofstra University  
James Madison University International Programs  
James Madison University

Kaplan Test Prep  
Marymount University  
Midwestern University  
New York University Silver School of Social Work  
Old Dominion University  
Radford University  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Savannah College of Art & Design  
Shenandoah University  
The College of William & Mary School of Business  
The College of William & Mary School of Education  
University of Mary Washington  
University of North Carolina at Charlotte  
University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public & International Affairs  
University of Pittsburgh School of Information Sciences  
University of Richmond School of Continuing Studies  
University of South Carolina School of Library and Information Science  
Virginia Tech  
Virginia Tech MBA Program  
Wake Forest University School of Business  
Walden University

#### Law Schools

American University Washington  
Appalachian School of Law  
Boston University  
Campbell University  
Chapman University  
Elon University  
George Mason University  
George Mason University School of Public Policy  
Mercer University  
Penn State  
Regent University  
Seton Hall University  
Stetson University  
Temple University  
The College of William & Mary  
The Ohio State University  
Tulane University  
University of Baltimore  
University of Florida Levin  
University of Maryland  
University of Maryland School of Public Policy  
University of Richmond  
University of South Carolina  
Washington & Lee University  
Western New England College  
Whittier Law School

Widener University  
University of the Pacific  
Vermont Law School  
Villanova University  
Wake Forest University

#### Health-Related

Columbia University School of Nursing  
Drexel University College of Medicine  
Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine Admissions  
Georgetown University Biomedical Graduate Education  
Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences  
MGH Institute of Health Professions  
Northeastern University Bouve Graduate School of Health Sciences  
Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine Student Affairs  
Temple University School of Podiatric Medicine  
Universidad Autonoma De Guadalajara School of Medicine  
University of Maryland School of Nursing  
University of Pittsburgh Biomedical Graduate Programs

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

## OAP OCTOBER TRIPS

10/1-10/3

10/5

10/6

10/9

10/10

10/12, 10/26

10/16

10/17

10/19

10/22-10/24

Gauley River Rafting Trip

Kayak Roll Clinic

Canoeing under the Stars

Fallingwater Cascades Day Hike

Rock Climbing Day Trip

Climbing at Manchester Wall

Crab Tree Falls Day Hike

Half Day Canoeing on the Upper James

Kayak Practice Pool Sessions

Youghiogheny River Whitewater Rafting



**VCU Recreational sports**  
Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services  
VCU is an EEO/AA institution.

Please visit our website at [www.recsports.vcu.edu](http://www.recsports.vcu.edu) or call 804.828.6004 for more information.





# sports

## Women's soccer practices inner focus, preparation for in-conference game

Jim Swing  
Assistant Sports Editor

VCU's women's soccer team rarely sees enough practice time in between games. After coming off a 1-1 tie against Elon this past Sunday, the week is short yet again for the Rams, who are preparing for their first in-conference matchup of the season against the Northeastern Huskies (5-2) Friday.

With the match versus Elon falling on last Sunday, the team's short week began with an off-day Monday for the team to gain some rest leaving them only three days of training in order to prepare for the next upcoming match. Tuesday's training consisted of fitness related confidence building components such as one-on-ones to help improve on missed opportunities and build the team's confidence. Wednesday was a tactical day in which the team worked on strengthening plays and developing organization. Thursday, on the eve of gameday, the team will train lightly; going over tactics and building confidence in order to look sharp for Friday's game.

"We never get much practice during the week after playing on Sunday," co-head coach Tiffany Roberts Sahaydak said. "Three days of training is not a lot but that's all you get."

Roberts Sahaydak is known for developing a style of preparation in which the Rams focus more on improving themselves before a game rather than studying each individual opponent. "We respect all of our opponents equally so we don't adjust a ton for each separate opponent," Roberts Sahaydak said. "I think professionally you do that but with the amount of time you have with student athletes we wouldn't get a lot accomplished if we did."

Friday night's matchup will feature two teams that look a lot alike when it comes to the stats sheet. VCU is thriving in the shots on goal column, averaging 14.6 shots per game whereas Northeastern comes into this game averaging a very similar 14.4 shots per match. The Rams and Huskies have each netted 12 goals

so far this season; Northeastern averaging 1.71 goals per game while VCU is running at a pace of 1.5 goals per contest.

As VCU advances into conference play, leadership roles are beginning to emerge from a few of the Ram's younger players on the roster, and in a timely fashion. VCU has recently been led by freshman Bex Kunz (Boise, Idaho/Centennial) who is swiftly making a name for herself as the Rams second leading scorer with eight points on three goals and two assists. "We are very pleased with her," Roberts Sahaydak said. "We knew coming in she was a very versatile player."

Kunz was initially seen as a defender when she was recruited by the coaching staff but was moved to forward once the season began and has made a smooth transition into the position. Equally as impressive, freshman keeper Megan Lynch (Lake Mary, Fla./Lake Mary High School) has excelled at the goalie position having started in all eight of the Rams games this season and posting a mark of just 0.95 goals allowed per game. "I think it is a huge role to step into as a freshman because goalkeepers have to be leaders," said Roberts Sahaydak. "She has all of the older players playing right in front of her and she is doing a really nice job." Lynch will be challenged Friday night by a Northeastern team that has outshot their opponents 101-73 so far this season.

Getting off on the right foot in the CAA could be key for VCU who is looking for its fifth win of the season Friday night. "We are ready, the team and staff are ready and prepared," Roberts Sahaydak said. "This is the exciting part now." **CT**



**Junior defender Molly Allen has anchored the Rams defense in non-conference action, helping the team to four clean sheets in eight games heading in to this weekend.**

ILLUSTRATION BY CHRIS CONWAY





**24 N. Boulevard**  
**3 BdRm 2 Bth**

Hardwood Floors, Balcony, Washer/Dryer  
No Application Fees or Security Deposit!  
Receive a \$100 AMEX with Lease Signing  
(877)372-9586 • [Richmond.leasing@campusapts.com](mailto:Richmond.leasing@campusapts.com)

**PIERCE ARROW**  
**PROPERTIES**  
a campus apartments community

# SEND US YOUR PICTURES

PHOTO OF THE WEEK AT  
THE COMMONWEALTH TIMES

SEND SUBMISSIONS TO:  
[commonwealthtimesgraphics@gmail.com](mailto:commonwealthtimesgraphics@gmail.com)

# ADULT SMOKERS

*Participate in a tobacco-related research study*

## EARN UP TO \$100

- Men & Women 21 - 54 Years of Age
- Must Smoke Popular Brands of Cigarettes
- Studies Available: September & October

**TEXT "COC" TO 94797 or**  
**CALL 1-800-9267-COC TODAY!**

visit us at [www.consumeropinioncenter.com](http://www.consumeropinioncenter.com)

**Call Us:**  
Monday thru Friday  
8 am - 8 pm

**consumer**  
**opinion center**  
600 block of n. 5th street  
richmond, va 23219

## Does your current banking relationship leave you with less money?



## You belong with us at Virginia Credit Union.

Fewer fees, good rates  
and helpful service.

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

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



**Virginia Credit Union**

[www.vacu.org](http://www.vacu.org) • (804) 323-6800

Federally insured by NCUA.





sports



# Rooted to Richmond

Adam Stern  
Sports Editor

## CAA extends their stay in the Capitol City

The proof is in the profit.

Colonial Athletic Association Commissioner Tom Yeager made as much clear to naysayers when talking about the conference's decision — made in a joint announcement with Richmond Mayor Dwight C. Jones two weeks ago — to extend the CAA's men's basketball tournament's stay with the city two more years.

The announcement means the league's showcase event will be staying in the Commonwealth's capitol until at least 2014. It also means the conference's resident conspiracy theorists — fans from fellow universities who have a long-held belief that VCU gains a true and tangible advantage because of the tournament's proximity to the campus — can once again start assembling accusations.

But to those that say the CAA continues to stay in Richmond because of their longstanding connection to the city — the confer-

ence has held the men's basketball tournament at the Richmond Coliseum for 21 straight years — Yeager has a message.

"I'd say it was the opposite," Yeager said in response to the notion that the conference extended the tournament's stay in Richmond simply because of tenure. "This wasn't an extension because we've always been here; this was an extension because we've been successful here."

What's the proof?

Even with concerns that the Coliseum is becoming decrepit and outdated, the CAA has reported record numbers of attendance over the last four years, including 44,000 total fans at this past year's event. Additionally, the city has pledged improvements, be they at the Coliseum or at another site in the city, to address the institutional issues.

It also doesn't hurt that Richmond is almost

ROOTED IN RICHMOND continued on CT11

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK JEFFRIES

Thursday, September 23, 2010

commonwealthtimes.org · CT9





continued FROM CT9

Credibility did play its part in the process though. The city's relationship with the conference — whose headquarters are located in Henrico County — meant that when negotiations started, the CAA knew Mayor Jones meant business. The city has already begun improvements on the Coliseum, including replacing almost all of the lower-bowl seats and are awaiting results of a \$150,000 privately-financed study for options for the Coliseum before making more compelling — and costly — decisions. "They followed through on what they said they were going to do, and we believe them," Yeager said.

Of note as well is the fact that statistics back up the absence of advantage. Sure, VCU naturally draws a larger crowd to the tournament every year because of its proximity, but if you look in the record books, the crowd may be having less of an effect than skeptics claim. The four times VCU has won the conference's crown jewels (1996, 2004, 2007 and 2009), the Rams entered the tournament as the No. 1 seed.

"The advantage comes in if you're seeded 6th and you keep winning," Yeager said. "When you come in as a No. 1 or 2 seed, there's an expectation you're going to be [in the final] Monday night to begin with."

The city is also working in conjunction with the conference to continue improving the most critical aspect of any college basketball tournament according to Yeager: the fan experience. Something resembling a "Tournament Alley" is in the works with plans to expand activities from 6th St. to Broad St. which would extend to the Marriott Hotel/T-Miller's Sports Bar.

Such events would surely do little other than elevate the tournament's importance in a city that already comes out in droves to support VCU. But if someone thinks that, if the tournament did eventually move, Rams fans would cease to show up, Assistant Athletic Director Mike Ellis disagrees.

"I think [having more fans show up] is really the only place the university enjoys an advantage," Ellis said. "But if this tournament was being held in Baltimore, and the Rams were playing Monday night [in the championship], there would be a lot of black and gold in that building too." **CT**

# Women's soccer CAA report

## Player of the Week:

Amy Turner, So., Defense, Hofstra - Turner scored the game-winning goal for Hofstra and led a defense that posted back-to-back shutouts against two regionally ranked opponents last week in Columbia and Princeton.

**Rookie of the Week:** Zoe Doherty, Jr., Forward, George Mason - Doherty registered two goals including the game-winner to lead George Mason to a 4-3 win over UMBC last Wednesday.

## Standings (as of 9/21/10)

1. Hofstra 0-0 6-1
2. Georgia State 0-0 6-2-1
3. Northeastern 0-0 5-2
4. **VCU 0-0 4-2-2**
5. George Mason 0-0 4-3-1  
William & Mary 0-0 4-3-1
7. Towson 0-0 4-3-2
8. Delaware 0-0 4-4  
Drexel 0-0 4-4
10. James Madison 0-0 4-4
11. Old Dominion 0-0 2-3-1
12. UNC Wilmington 0-0 3-5

## Weekend Fixtures:

### Fri. Sept. 24:

William & Mary at Towson, 4 p.m.  
Old Dominion at George Mason, 6 p.m.  
**Northeastern at VCU, 7 p.m.**  
Delaware at UNC Wilmington, 7 p.m.  
Drexel at Georgia State, 7 p.m.  
Hofstra at James Madison, 7 p.m.

### Sun. Sept. 26:

**Hofstra at VCU, 1 p.m.**  
Old Dominion at Towson, 1 p.m.  
Northeastern at James Madison, 1 p.m.  
Drexel at UNC Wilmington, 1 p.m.  
Delaware at Georgia State, 1 p.m.

William & Mary at George Mason, 2 p.m.

## Notes:

- All 12 CAA teams will open conference play this weekend, games will be on Friday and Sunday.
- Five CAA women's soccer teams were among the top 10 in the NSCAA Mid-Atlantic regional rankings released on Sept. 13. Hofstra topped the CAA in the poll at No. 2 with William & Mary at No. 5 and James Madison at No. 6. Northeastern and VCU ranked No. 9 and No. 10 respectively.
- Three CAA women's soccer players were among a select group of 45 named to the Watch List for the Hermann Trophy which is awarded to the nation's No. 1 player at season's end. Chosen were George Mason senior midfielder Omolyn Davis, Northeastern sophomore forward Devin Petta, and James Madison senior midfielder Teresa Rynier.





# spectrum

## Fall Block Step Show's 25th anniversary VCU's must-see fall semester event

Nick Bonadies | Mark Robinson  
Spectrum Editor | Staff Writer

The Fall Block Step Show is celebrating its silver anniversary this Saturday at 6 p.m. at VCU's Siegel Center. The self-proclaimed "biggest step show in Virginia" will top off a spirited Fall Block week and mark 25 years as one of the fall semester's biggest VCU events.

At Fall Block — a long-running VCU tradition — teams from each of the National Pan-Hellenic Council fraternities and sororities, led and choreographed by a "Stepmaster" or "Stepmistress," perform and compete in an all-out step competition.

What's at stake for the winner? "You get cash money for your chapter," said senior Morgan Saunders, Fall Block planning committee member. "And bragging rights — and a sweet trophy."

There are nine historically Black Greek Letter Organizations (BGLOs) that make up the National Pan-Hellenic Council, commonly referred to as "The Divine Nine." Ties to one or more of these organizations may be found in many college-educated black families in the United States.

Monday marked the start of Fall Block with a kick-off event held in the Commons Plaza: the Fall Block Planning Committee sponsored a Richmond area High School Step Show that followed that evening. The 12-hour marathon CAA blood drive challenge on Wednesday was hyped by the free ticket to the step show given to each 25th donor every hour.

When the first Fall Block happened 25 years ago, it was "A small show — not many people," said Saunders, a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha. But now, Fall Block Step Shows typically pack the 7,500-seat Siegel Center. The trend is expected to continue this year with the buzz surrounding the

anniversary. There is expected to be high support from the VCU Greek community — and also from anyone on campus interested in a good show.

"It's more than just a step show, it is truly a performance," Saunders said. "Every chapter puts on their own unique show."

This year's theme is "stepping through the decades" — perhaps exemplified by the Alumni Step Exhibition on Friday night at 8 p.m. at the Commons Plaza, which will feature alumni members of past NPHC step teams. The event is meant to "commemorate old school steppers and the Fall Block legacy."

"It's so broad," Saunders said of this year's theme. "There's so much you can do with it — a lot of the step teams are excited, because it's not so narrow." This fall's theme was announced last April so that the teams would have plenty of time to prepare. "We pretty much stay here all summer and plan for Fall Block," Saunders said.

Saturday night won't conclude with the step

show: an after party is scheduled at the Greater Richmond Convention Center. Tickets have been on sale in the Break Points Game Room in the University Commons since Sept. 1. The after party tickets, at \$20 per VCU student, are more expensive than the actual performance.

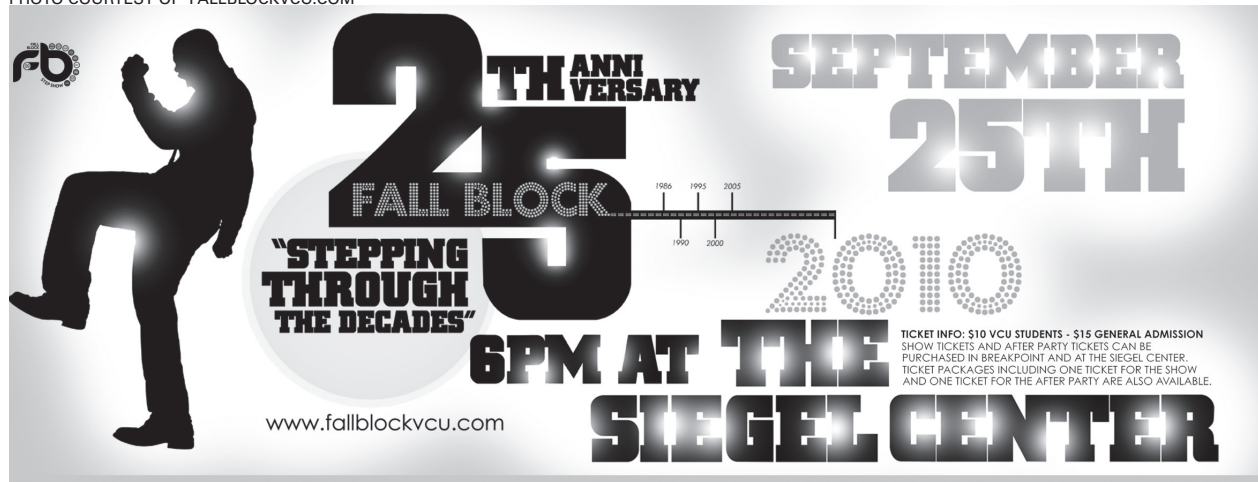
In addition to the proceeds from ticket sales, The Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention provided a \$3000 grant to fund the event. (One Fall Block poster reads, "No stirring or mixing here, just stepping. This is my plan for Saturday night. What's yours?")

According to Saunders, alcohol abuse/misuse awareness is a "significant part" of the message the NPHC and ABC support.

Saunders believes that this year will be "bigger and better than ever before. We're gonna hit this 25th anniversary with a bang." **CT**

*Tickets are on sale now for the Fall Block Step Show and Fall Block Step Show after party in the Breakpoint Games Room in the University Commons, \$10 for VCU students, \$15 for general admission. Visit [www.fallblockvcu.com/home](http://www.fallblockvcu.com/home) for more information about the week's events and ticket sales.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF FALLBLOCKVCU.COM



## Welcome to Video Game Club: the first rule of Video Game Club is ...

Zaynah Akeel  
Staff Writer

Patrons of Strange Matter on Sunday afternoon may have noticed the looming group of people lining the walls of the back hallway, where the arcade games are located. The Video Game Club of VCU held their VA Fighting Game Monthly Tournament, where gamers competed in Super Street Fighter IV for a monetary prize. The group was quiet as they concentrated on the games and who was moving on to the next round.

Thursday, September 23, 2010

"Organizing gamers is like herding cats," said founder and president of the club Robin Palm, who is a grad student in the Wilder School at VCU. While new or prospective members come and go, Palm said attendance at regular meetings holds at around 20.

Initially known as the "Fight Club," Video Game Club has branched out a great deal since the early days when it only focused on fighting games. Palm hopes to institute a classics game night (for games like Pong,) a casual game night (for games such as Mario Kart and Rockband, which as Palm puts it, "everyone and their mother plays,") a group dedicated to Starcraft and even a group dedicated to appreciation as video games as art, which Palm described as a kind of book club.

Palm has been running tournaments since 2001, although the club's partnership with Strange Matter began in March of last year. The club comes to Strange Matter every Tuesday for half price burger night and to play games — "which," Palm said, "is beneficial and tasty."

The club even has input on which new arcade games Strange Matter acquires.

Tournaments are often held every month during the school year, the last being held in July. Tournaments don't just attract students, however; people have been known to come from as far as Washington D.C. and Maryland.

Palm hopes that one day the club will be able to send participants to The Evolution, the national tournament held in Las Vegas, NV.

"It's mainly for people to come out and meet real people, play the games that they love, and network ... and the money's nice too," said VCU Computer Science major Matt Jordan.

Palm also emphasized the ability to interact with other people while playing fighting games. Palm said fighting games are the type of game "that benefit the most from human to human contact," Palm said. "Playing online just sucks because you can get laggy connections — other games like Halo you can

VIDEO GAME CLUB CONTINUED ON CT12  
[commonwealthtimes.org](http://commonwealthtimes.org) · CT11





# Concert series at Singleton attracts big names in classical music



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLAREMONTTRIO.COM

**Mechelle Hankerson**  
*Staff Writer*

The Mary Anne Chamber Concert Series will begin its annual round of classical chamber concerts this week at the Singleton Center, beginning with the Claremont Trio on Saturday Sept. 25 at 8 p.m.

The New York City trio – based near their namesake at Claremont Avenue – features violinist Emily Bruskin, cellist Julia Bruskin and pianist Donna Kwong.

The trio formed in 1999 at the Julliard School and has since been awarded for their work, including being the only piano trio to win the Young Concert Artists International Auditions.

The Rennolds Concert Series presents a number of concerts – this season, there will be six concerts – for a discounted price: the cost for full-time VCU students is \$10.

According to Susanna Klein, Rennolds Series board member, VCU strings coordinator and violin professor, the series was created to “bring great chamber music to Richmond.”

The concert series doesn’t stop at just the six Saturday-evening concerts, but also has a teaching component for high school, VCU and other college students, as well as the Richmond community: One artist from the series teaches a free master class that is open and free to the public.

This year, cellist Zuill Bailey will present a master class on April 1, 2011. Bailey grew up in Northern Virginia in a family of musicians, including a pianist mother and violinist sister. Bailey regularly participates in outreach programs in an effort to make classical music accessible to all people, especially children.

*All concerts will be held at the Singleton Center and tickets are available at the VCU Music Box Office. General admission is \$32; for senior citizens and VCU employees, \$28; for full-time VCU students, \$10. **CT***

PHOTO COURTESY OF STAFANIE BATTEN/sbb birdlegs

# Guest artist to choreograph for VCU Dance

**Julie DiNisio**  
*Contributing Writer*

On Sept. 24 and 25, the VCU Department of Dance and Choreography will welcome Stefanie Batten Bland and her New York and Paris-based dance company, the sbb Birdlegs. The performances will be held at 8 p.m. at the Dogtown Dance Theatre at 109 W. 15th Street.

Company director and founder Bland has worked in a variety of different companies over the years, some of them international, and has also done commercial choreography. Some months ago, she appeared as a guest choreographer on the Polish version of “So You Think You Can Dance.”

Bland says of herself and her company on her website, “I am what I am, my identity is diverse and we are a flock of differences.” The site also states that the company’s goal is to meld two continents of dance by “mixing the subtleties of Europe with American self-confidence.”

Bland took on the name “Birdlegs” due to her self-described “skinny, bony legs.” “I love it, it came from my dad’s legs,” she said. “And I’m passing it on.”

Bland recently created a new performance called “Terra Firma” while working as a NEW Fellow at Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York. (NEW, which stands for New Essential Works, is an apt title for her brand of contemporary chore-

ography.) Coming from the Latin phrase meaning “solid earth,” the dance explores the theme of being “in transit when we don’t know what our destination is.” Bland and company will perform “Terra Firma” in their routine at the Dogtown Dance Theatre.

While in Richmond, Bland will make a residency at the VCU Department of Dance and Choreography, setting a performance called “Room with a View” with VCU Dance majors. The dance will be performed at the VCU Dance NOW concert in February.

Bland was invited to choreograph at VCU by Dr. James Frazier, the Chair of the Department of Dance and Choreography. Frazier called Bland “a wonderful example of what can be achieved.” “She has an impressive professional background, and the fact she is an American living and working in Paris is intriguing,” Frazier said. “I like for VCU Dance majors to be exposed to a range of artists and to get a sense of the many possibilities there are for them to work nationally and internationally.” **CT**

*After the Friday evening show, a Q&A session will be held in both English and French. Tickets \$10 for students (\$20 general admission) and seating in the historic Dogtown Dance Theatre will be limited.*

CONTINUED FROM CT11

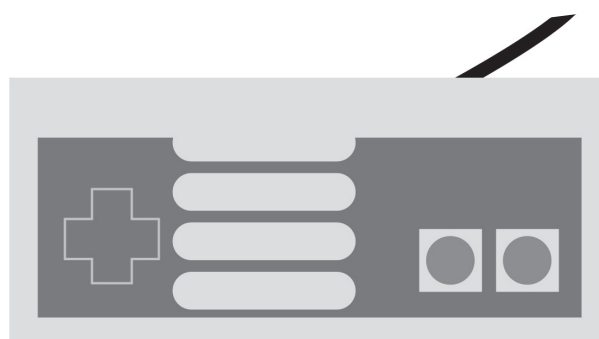


ILLUSTRATION BY HANNAH SWANN

play great online, because you can chat with people online, you can play in your underwear, but fighting games are different.” **CT**

*Palm asks that anyone interested in the Video Games Club sign up through their myORGS@VCU page. Anyone interested in the club or tournaments can check them out on Facebook, by searching either “VCU Starcraft” or “VCU Fight Club” — they also post events on their myORGS page.*





# Film review: 'Machete,' bloody and gruesome in all the best ways

Jordan Wilson  
Contributing Writer

The action/revenge genre has far more to offer in the way of satire than the zombie genre, as proven by director Quentin Tarantino's superior half of "Grindhouse," the double feature extravaganza directed with Robert Rodriguez. The seed for "Machete" grew from one of many fake movie trailers cushioned around Grindhouse's main events.

At first glance, I realized that the trailer resembled the exact plot of Antoine Fuqua's "Shooter," released the same year as "Grindhouse." Now Rodriguez has expanded it to 105 minutes and added more plot threads and characters, and though it's brutally self-aware and bizarre, it's much more fun for it — not to mention a better movie than "Shooter."

Machete (Danny Trejo) is a Mexican ex-federale turned day laborer. There is a sizzling controversy in Texas over the waves of illegal immigrants crossing the border, and because it's an election year, Senator McLaughlin (Robert De Niro) is campaigning against the "infestation" in the name of America, the land of the free and home of the brave. In one of many gems in the casting, Don Johnson from TV's "Miami Vice" plays Lt. Stillman, the ruthless leader of an underground

organization that specializes in gunning down immigrants trying to cross the border. The Senator is associated with this organization, and regularly joins Stillman on his hunts in the desert.

Standing around waiting for work, Machete is picked up by Michael Booth (Jeff Fahey,) a man in a suit with a briefcase full of cash. He offers Machete the case in return for one job: He must kill Senator McLaughlin. He gives him a do-it-or-die ultimatum, so it's a job he can't refuse. Of course, Booth is just as seedy and sleazy as he appears, and Machete is betrayed and left for dead. He then seeks revenge against his betrayers in some of the bloodiest and (in some instances) most creative ways in film's recent memory — having seen this movie, audiences will never forget the length of a person's large intestine.

There is an opposing force to Stillman's called the Network, fighting for immigrant rights and joining Machete in his quest for revenge. The Network, led by a mythical figure called She, is aided greatly by a taco stand operator named Luz (Michelle Rodriguez.) Also, watch for Immigrant and Customs agent named Sartana (Jessica Alba,) Machete's priest brother (Cheech Marin,) and mega drug lord Torrez (Stephen Seagal, another casting gem.)

Every once in a while, a movie comes along that shows you images that you could never have anticipated or conceived on your own, but that you maybe could have dreamt one night after eating too many sweets or hallucinogens before bed. "Machete" conjures up an abundance of such images and then some. It surpasses the absurdities that were present in his previous "Grindhouse" effort, "Planet Terror," and there is more to appreciate in the way of political satire. How often is it you see Lindsay Lohan in a nun's uniform gunning down a crowd of rebels, or Cheech Marin getting crucified? It's all very cartoonish, but in the best way possible.

The script by Rodriguez and his cousin Alvaro is hilarious, and contains some terrific one-liners. The movie was shot and edited in a much cleaner fashion than the trailer was, and in that sense Rodriguez steps slightly outside of the "grindhouse" barriers. Rodriguez' band Chingon provides an awesome soundtrack, and it is great to finally see Trejo take on a starring role. He has always had a great presence on screen, and to see him take the spotlight and splatter it with his enemies' entrails is great fun. And of course, Machete always gets the girls ... always. **Grade: B+ CT**

## Chrisette Michele

THURSDAY OCTOBER 7 2010 8PM  
**LIVE IN CONCERT**  
@Landmark Theater

**GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!**  
from any Ticket Master Outlet or  
[www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com) ticketmaster

## JAGGED EDGE



**Special Performance**  
from  
**Peterburg's Own**  
Rodney "Soulsinger" Stith

**WITH GUEST HOST**  
**DEE DEE RENEE &**  
**MITCH MALONE**

**Special Appearance by Comedian Antoine Blackman**  
Tickets from \$25



Tickets On Sale Now  
[www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)  
**JADUBB Enterprises**

Visit us online [www.jadubbenterprises.com](http://www.jadubbenterprises.com). For ticket purchases call (800) 745-3000



# opinion



## What in God's name?

John Richardson  
*Columnist*

On Sept. 26, the Westboro Baptist Church, with their usual hate-mongering signs, will picket various Richmond areas for the second time this year. More importantly, they will grace the VCU Commons Theater later that evening to engage in a mock trial of their upcoming Supreme Court case in which the Rev. Fred Phelps and other members of WBC are being tried for staging a protest outside a military funeral of a Lance Cpl. Matthew A. Snyder, holding signs reading “Semper Fi, Semper Fags” and “God hates dead soldiers.”

In 2006, when Albert Sydnor, Matthew Snyder's father, brought charges of defamation, invasion of privacy and intentional infliction of emotional distress against Fred Phelps and two of his daughters, the court awarded Snyder \$10.9 million in damages. The 4th Circuit Court of Appeals overturned the judgment due to violation of First Amendment protections on religious expression. Snyder then petitioned the Supreme Court, which agreed to hear the claim on October 6, 2010. To prepare for the upcoming court case, Margie Phelps, the WBC's lawyer and daughter of its founding minister, will debate against William H. Hurd Esq. at the VCU Commons Theater this Sunday, Sept. 26 at 4 p.m.

The court previously stipulated that the church members' speech is protected, “notwithstanding the distasteful and repugnant nature of the words ... As extreme as they may be, they are to be taken in terms of religious expression. This is not the type of language that one is going to assume is meant as a statement of fact.”

It is obvious they use shock value in their condemnation of the government, American soldiers, Jews, Catholics, Muslims, homosexuals and President Obama. Point-in-case: their two websites: Godhatesfags.com and Jewskilledjesus.com.

In my opinion, we could all do with less hatred in our lives. And most people will agree the WBC is disrespectful. But legally, it's a bit more complicated. Respect isn't a law. Opinions aside, the question at hand comes down to a First Amendment conflict. Does the WBC's freedom of speech infringe on Snyder's freedom of religion and peaceful assembly, and does a funeral constitute a “captive audience” privy to state protection from unwanted communication?

This is a landmark case for the Supreme Court, but it is also an issue of serious concern for every citizen who holds dear the traditions of our democracy. It tests our ability to stomach the nega-

tive side effects of living in a free country that allows this type of religious extremism to continue.

So, when the WBC arrives on the streets of Richmond this Sunday don't forget that the best way to practice democracy is to go about one's own business. Don't give them the time of day. When they picket outside of St. Paul's Baptist Church, West End Assembly of God and Trinity Baptist Church as they announced they would, don't give them the satisfaction of a counter-protest. Don't play their game. But if the urge to confront them becomes overwhelming, do what VCU students did during the WBC's last visit — picket with signs of nonsensical statements such as “I Wear Band-Aids” or “This Sign Is Neon” — which mocks how nonsensical the WBC's own signs are and avoids engagement. Since the WBC measures success on the amount of attention they receives, the less engagement, the better. For them, any press is good press.

Richmond should treat the WBC like playground bullies — ignore them and they'll go away. Give them the satisfaction of your cries, and they'll keep coming back. **CT**



# Stewart, Colbert summon the youth

Robert Showah  
Opinion Editor

When cable news has reduced our political discourse to trash television and the American public's exposure to the political election season is poisoned by the shrillest, most radical voices, there are only two figures that can always help us surrender a few chuckles: Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert.

On Thursday Sept. 16, both late-night satirical news hosts announced Washington rallies, both taking place on Oct. 30. The rallies are planned together, though they are role-played as rival events. Colbert's rally, titled "Keep Fear Alive," purposefully conflicts with Stewart's "Rally to Restore Sanity," which is targeted towards rational people with lives, the "70-80 percenters" as Stewart called them, that are in contrast to the fringe minority that dominates the media's coverage.

It is not a surprise that Stewart and Colbert's rallies have resonated with a younger demographic, a social-network generation that began spreading news about the rallies instantaneously. Just over six days after The Daily Show and The Colbert Report posted both events to Facebook, 133,000 people had confirmed that they would be attending. Of course, there is the possibility a large number will not show up (like any

Facebook event) though there is a great probability that this rally will blow the turnout of any Tea Party rally out of the water. An ironically hilarious one-up.

This begs the question as to whether this is simply a rally to watch Stewart and Colbert crack jokes, or if people truly believe in the message Stewart is communicating.

VCU, one of the more liberal universities in the state—lest we forget VCU's last trek up to Washington, when about 22 members from VCU's Queer Action participated in the National Equality March last October alongside 200,000 other activists—is an audience tailored for Stewart and Colbert.

Students are attending for many reasons. Some would like to see Stewart and Colbert in person because they do not often perform

outside of their shows, or are going because their friends are going. Many students plan to attend because despite the comedic undertones and while they may or may not like either comedian's program, they are sickened by the radical, spotlight-on-the-few approach that has occupied the national conversation on critical issues.

Despite the reasons, this has already become the talk of the country among the youth, but especially in Virginia due to its proximity. Perhaps it is too early, but as this rally nears it would not be a stretch to predict that nearly every student in Virginia will know at least one person attending.

Even though liberal-leaning Stewart's idea is to unite people against outrageous rhetoric—even those that defame Republicans—questions

linger as to whether the rally may impact the congressional elections held three days after the rally, and whether it will energize young voters who typically vote Democratic to hit the polls.

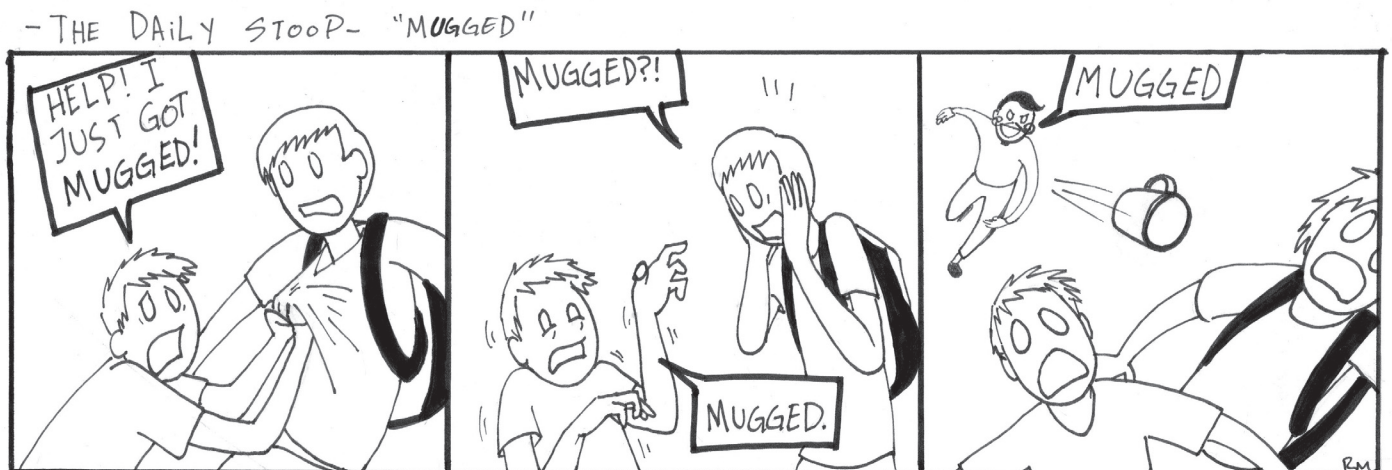
And of course, how the media will cover the events is important, if they cover it at all. This is a particularly difficult position they have been placed in. Do they cover a rally that has a massive crowd and valid message but with a whopping satirical nuance, or do they not send out the helicopters to show off the crowds because that would further legitimize Stewart's anti-cable news message? It is something to think about. Nevertheless, in the time it takes one to read this column, about 100 additional people have confirmed that they will be attending. **CT**

## comics

### Forget Fairytales Christine Stoddard



### The Daily Stoop Rachel Maves



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

#### Add Your Voice

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

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

ERICA  
TERRINI  
Executive Editor

ROBERT  
SHOWAH  
Opinion Editor

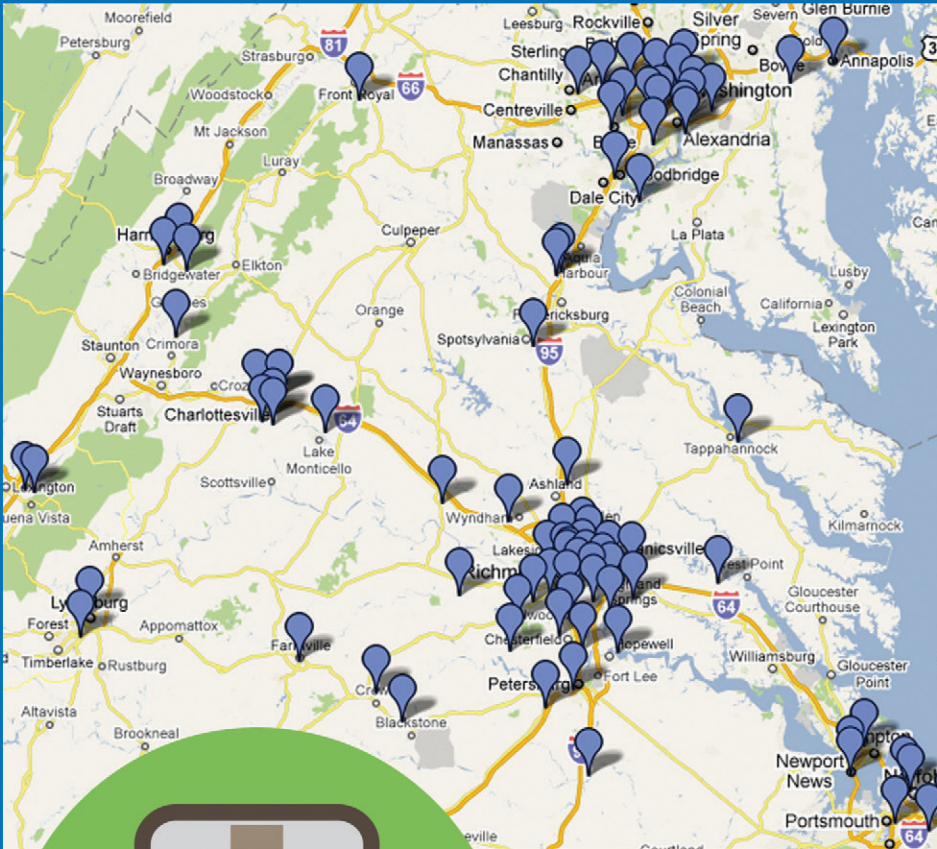
the  
**ct**

Thursday, September 23, 2010

commonwealthtimes.org · CT15



# VCU's social network for carpooling and road trips!



# VCU



## Have a car?

Zimride lets you offer the empty seats in your car to other students looking to share a commute or road trip. Just post your ride and Zimride does the matching. You save money and help the environment at the same time!

## Need a ride?

Zimride is a private network for VCU, and it's free to use! Whether it's a ride to campus or a trip to the beach, Zimride will match you up with a VCU Ram driving the same direction. Post where you need to go today!

COMING SOON

<http://zimride.vcu.edu>

COMING SOON

Call Miriam Maddux, ombudsman and transit services coordinator at 804.828.2421 for more information.