



the
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BRIEFS

On the cover:

VCU Cabell Library's Starbucks is ranked third among Aramark schools.

Photo by Chris Conway

Local & VCU

McDonnell asks Obama to view Louisa quake damage

Gov. Bob McDonnell is asking President Barack Obama to join him in visiting Louisa County – which was recently denied federal disaster aid – during Obama's swing state bus tour next week.

McDonnell, the chairman of the Republican Governors Association, writes in a letter to Obama that the visit to Louisa “would benefit your administration to understand the devastation brought on by this historic earthquake, and to see how the community's recovery will be hindered as a result of FEMA's denial of important emergency relief funds.”

Damage assessments for residential properties are nearly \$15 million, mostly in uninsured costs, McDonnell said.

FEMA's administrator said “Based on our review of all of the information available, it has been determined that the damage to dwellings from this event was not of such severity and magnitude as to be beyond the capabilities of the commonwealth, affected local governments and voluntary agencies.”

McDonnell, who declined to greet Obama at the airport during the president's last visit to Richmond in September, says he would appeal the “shocking” FEMA decision.

Brief by The Richmond Times-Dispatch

Va. man allegedly worked for Syrian intelligence

A Syrian-born, naturalized U.S. citizen has been indicted on charges of spying on U.S. activists opposed to the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and providing intelligence to that country's intelligence agents.

According to an indictment unsealed Wednesday, Mohammad Soueid (SWAYD) of Leesburg, Va., was arrested Tuesday and charged with conspiring to act in the U.S. as an agent of a foreign government. Soueid was scheduled to make an initial appearance in U.S. District Court in Alexandria on Wednesday afternoon.

According to the indictment, Soueid sent 20 audio and video recordings between April and June to Syrian's intelligence agency. They depict protests in this country against the Syrian regime, which has cracked down ruthlessly on anti-government protesters there.

Soueid is also charged with making false statements for allegedly lying about his activities for the Mukhabarat, Syria's intelligence agency, when interviewed in August by the FBI.

Brief by The Associated Press

Occupy Norfolk protesters begin camping downtown

A handful of protesters are camping in downtown Norfolk as part of the nationwide Occupy Wall Street political protests.

At least seven tents and an informational booth were set up at the fountain park off Main Street and Commercial Place. Occupy Norfolk organizer Rex Bonney says the group got a permit to camp there, between two national bank chains.

Bonney said 20 people slept in the park Monday after the city granted a permit for them to do so. They also have a permit to march at certain times, including a planned parade on Wednesday. The permits expire on Friday but could be extended.

Bonney says the group is part of a movement to “try to take out the influence of corporate money in our political process.”

Brief by The Associated Press

National & International

Senate Republicans vote to kill Obama's jobs bill

Senate Republicans have voted to kill the White House jobs bill despite weeks of campaign-style barnstorming by President Barack Obama across the country.

Forty-six Republicans joined with two Democrats to filibuster the \$447 billion plan.

That vote was not final. The roll call was kept open Tuesday night to allow Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H. to vote. But it would have taken 60 votes in the 100-member Senate to keep the legislation alive.

Anticipating defeat, Obama promised to try again in smaller bites. “If they don't pass the whole package we're going to break it up into constituent parts” and try to push them through separately, Obama told members of his jobs council.

Obama advisers said they were working with Senate Democratic leaders on how and when to break out separate aspects of the overall jobs bill for votes.

Brief by The Associated Press

Man pleads guilty to underwear bomb airline attack

Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab pled guilty on Wednesday to charges that include conspiracy to commit terrorism and attempted murder.

He's accused of trying to blow up Northwest Airlines Flight 253 with a bomb in his underwear on Christmas 2009.

The bomb didn't work, but Abdulmutallab was badly burned. Hours later in the hospital, he told the FBI that he was working for al-Qaida in Yemen.

Brief by The Associated Press

Death toll in Baghdad blasts jumps to 23

Iraqi officials say the death toll in a string of blasts targeting police in Baghdad has jumped to 23.

Two police officials say 13 people were killed in western Baghdad when a suicide bomber rammed a police station.

In the northern Shiite neighborhood of Hurriyah, nine people died when a suicide bomber also targeted a police station. And in western Baghdad, a parked car bomb targeting a police patrol exploded and killed one civilian.

Medical officials confirmed the death toll. All the officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

Brief by The Associated Press

BlackBerry outages spread to North America

Sporadic outages of BlackBerry messaging and email service spread to the U.S. and Canada on Wednesday as problems stretched into the third day for Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa.

The service outage, the longest in many years, added to RIM's woes.

In the United Arab Emirates, the two biggest phone companies said they would compensate their BlackBerry users for the mishap by giving them at least three days of free service.

One of the BlackBerry's big attractions is the BlackBerry Messenger, or BBM, which works like text messaging but doesn't incur extra fees. That service was affected by the outage, and to make matters worse for RIM, Apple Inc. is releasing software Wednesday for its iPhones that works like BBM. Competition from Apple is one of the chief causes of RIM's diminishing fortunes.

Brief by The Associated Press

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NEWS

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Cabell Starbucks ranked in top five among Aramark schools



Michael Pasco
Contributing Writer

Cabell's Starbucks is ranked third in Aramark's most successful Starbucks, beaten only by the University of Rochester (first) and NYU (second).

When compared with other Starbucks in the state, VCU's is in the top 10.

"In Virginia, we're the top," said Michael Martin, district manager of Aramark. "Any of our brother and sister schools, they're not even close."

According to VCU Dining Services' sales and customer services manager, Tamara Highsmith, the busiest days of the week for Starbucks are at the beginning of the week.

"You see a bit more of a dip on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and it picks right back up again on Sunday," she said.

"On the average, we get about 14,000 customers (a week)," said assistant director Dan McDonald.

According to Martin, Sergey Drobchenko, the manager of the Cabell Library's Starbucks, has a specific process that moves people quickly through the line in order to maximize the shop's efficiency.

"Starbucks has their way, but we prefer our way," Martin said in support of Drobchenko's system. "It has helped us a lot through the years."

One of the employees who previously worked under Drobchenko is now slated to become the manager of VCU's IHOP.

Back in 2004, the library coffee shop was a "We Proudly Brew" affiliate of Starbucks. It was such a high traffic area, the idea came up to expand it in order to have access to a full Starbucks menu.

A good week in 2004 gave the store about 13,000 transactions. With a full menu, a good week now is at least 58,000 transactions.

"We just did not expect it to go where it's gone today," Martin said. "Double (sales) became triple; triple became quadruple."

According to Martin, when VCU announced Starbucks' extended hours this semester, the store had ordered 420 sandwiches to get through the first week of classes.

By the second day of classes, Cabell Starbucks had 10 sandwiches left.

"Now (Drobchenko) is stocking about 2,000 (sandwiches) on hand, and we're selling about 100 a day," Martin said.

Starbucks now has the ability to provide warm food products with the installation of a new oven. VCU Dining Services is also looking to expand available seating in the future.

Cabell Starbucks is open until 2 a.m. when Cabell Library closes. **CT**

Cabell's Starbucks is ranked within the top 10 stores in the state and ranked third among Aramark schools in the country.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MEL KOBRAN



VCU launches largest food drive in history in honor of Rao's inauguration

Mechelle Hankerson
News Editor

In addition to typical inaugural celebrations for President Michael Rao, VCU is holding a university-wide food drive to benefit FeedMore, the umbrella organization for the Central Virginia Food Bank, Meals on Wheels and the Community Kitchen.

FeedMore serves an estimated 226,000 people in central Virginia and last year provided approximately 14.6 million meals to families and adults.

The Pound Out Hunger inauguration food drive aims to collect enough protein products – specifically, peanut butter and canned tuna – to provide for 500,000 meals. If the goal is achieved, Pound Out Hunger will be the largest food drive VCU has ever held.

The presidential inauguration planning committee chose a food drive because hunger and food supply to com-

munity organizations is an ongoing and critical need, especially after Hurricane Irene and during the colder months

of the year.

Kathy Earhart, a representative from FeedMore, said the fall is when a lot of food banks' supplies begin depleting.

"This time of year our stocks are very, very low," she said. "Protein is one of the most expensive things that we have to purchase if it doesn't get donated in order to meet our promises that we've made to the community to help deal with hunger relief."

Earhart said there are few large-scale food drives during the summer months, which leaves local food banks' supplies depleted. She also said that during the summer, children are out of school and parents who could rely on subsidized meals from the school system must provide two more meals a day for their children during the summer. Earhart said this also contributes to the depletion of food during the summer months.

"There's more of a need, and more people are needing food in the summer," Earhart said. "We get very depleted between not getting as much food donated and having a very high need during (summer)."

With the increased cost of peanut butter and tuna, these popular sources of non-perishable protein are also diminished. On average, FeedMore distributes about 650 jars of peanut butter and 960 cans of tuna each day through the food bank.

"Protein is the thing that's probably donated the least amount," Earhart said. Earhart added that a lot of the Richmond residents FeedMore serves are children, and because of this, protein is an integral part of FeedMore's donations to the community.

Peanut butter and canned tuna will be collected on both campuses, but for students who don't have spare peanut butter or tuna, they can do their part in Shafer Dining Hall. Dining Services is hosting their semi-annual "Waste Not, Want Not" week, when students are encouraged to eat as much as they want, but to try not to waste any food.

For every pound of food waste reduced, Aramark will donate a pound of food in support of Pound Out Hunger.

FeedMore is also accepting monetary donations through their website, but Earhart said in addition to tuna and peanut butter, supporters can also donate dried beans or soups with a protein source. **CT**

For more information on the Pound Out Hunger Food Drive, visit www.poundouthunger.vcu.edu. For a complete listing of other events in honor of President Rao's inauguration, visit 2011inauguration.vcu.edu.



Pound Out Hunger is focusing on collecting protein in the forms of dried beans, peanut butter and tuna.

VCU to inaugurate Michael Rao after two years of leadership



PHOTO BY BRIANNA TOWNSEND

President Rao visited this year's first SGA meeting to discuss his goals for the university with students, including his strategic plan, Quest for Distinction.

Mechelle Hankerson
News Editor

After two years, Michael Rao will finally be able to officially call himself VCU's president.

On Oct. 14, VCU will inaugurate Rao as its fifth president at the Siegel Center.

VCU's Board of Visitors set the inauguration date, and while there is usually a delay from when presidents begin performing their duties and their actual inauguration, VCU's executive director of university relations Pam Lepley told The Richmond Times-Dispatch that there has not been a president in VCU history that has taken as long as Rao has to be inaugurated.

Keeping with the theme of taking longer than average, the President's Office also has events planned throughout the month of October to honor Rao's inauguration.

In addition to the official ceremony honoring Rao, this year will mark the beginning of VCU's recognition of university scholars – undergraduate students who have completed 54 to 84 credits and showcase "outstanding academic achievement," according to a press release.

Although the inauguration ceremony is scheduled for Oct. 14 from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m., the VCU community has already started honoring Rao through a variety of activities including the largest food drive the university has participated in and a research lecture series that began Oct. 5. The last lecture of the series will be presented Oct. 18.

On Oct. 12, a ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held to unveil three solar arrays on the top of the N Parking Deck on the MCV campus.

The week of Rao's inauguration will wrap with Parents Weekend and an official open-house day for prospective students on Oct. 15.

Inauguration events will continue until the end of the month, with SportsFest at the Cary Street Gym on Oct. 28 and 29 marking the end of events honoring Rao's inauguration.

Teams of students will be able to register and compete against each other for a chance to have lunch with President Rao, among other prizes. **CT**

More information about inauguration events can be found at 2011inauguration.vcu.edu



CRIME LOG

10/6–10/10

THURSDAY, OCT. 6

Unlawful entry/possession of marijuana/resisting arrest 919 W. Grace St. – A complainant advised that an unknown male was in the apartment. The male was arrested for unlawful entry, possession of marijuana and resisting arrest.

Exposure At the corner of West Franklin and North Harrison streets – A text-a-tip was received concerning an unknown person exposing himself.

Drug offense At the corner of Hanover and Park avenues – A female student was arrested for possession of a schedule I or II substance.

Damage to state property At the corner of South Cherry and Cumberland streets – A female visitor advised that a state-owned vehicle damaged her vehicle.

FRIDAY, OCT. 7

Fire alarm Rhoads Hall, 710 W. Franklin St. – A female employee advised that an unknown person(s) falsely summoned a fire apparatus.

Alcohol violation At the corner of West Cary and South Pine streets – A female visitor was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Weapons violation At the corner of West Marshall and Belvidere streets – A male visitor was arrested for possession of a concealed weapon.

Exposure At the corner of West Franklin and North Harrison streets – A male visitor was arrested for two counts of indecent exposure.

Exposure At the corner of Pine and West Cary streets – A male visitor was arrested for two counts of indecent exposure.

SATURDAY, OCT. 8

Grand larceny Fine Arts Building, 1016 W. Broad St. – A female student advised that an unknown person(s) removed items from an unsecured location.

Alcohol violation At the corner of South Harvie and West Main streets – A female student was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Alcohol violation/disorderly conduct At the corner of South Morris and West Main streets – A male student was arrested for underage consumption of alcohol and urinating in public.

Assault offense/trespassing Monroe Park – A male visitor was arrested for resisting arrest and trespassing.

Grand larceny At the corner of North Laurel Street and West Cathedral Place – A male visitor advised that an unknown person(s) removed items from a secure location.

SUNDAY, OCT. 9

At time of press, no crime reports for this day were processed for viewing.

MONDAY, OCT. 10

Drug offense 108 S. Belvidere St. – A male visitor was arrested for possession of marijuana.

Alcohol violation Rhoads Hall, 710 W. Franklin St. – Two male students were arrested for underage possession of alcohol.

Alcohol violation At the corner of West Grace and North Lombardy streets – A male visitor was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol.

Compiled from
VCU Police reports

VCU RECREATIONAL SPORTS

www.recsports.vcu.edu

SWIM FOR THE GOLD

Ready, set, go! Splash into the competition and win prizes for swimming the distance! Swim 50, 200 or 500 meters at MCV; or swim 50, 200 or 500 yards at the Cary Street Gym. Record the distance and time you've swum each week and email your total to swimforgold@gmail.com. (If you swim multiple days each week, average your time). Prizes will be given for gold, silver and bronze winners. Come on out and swim for the gold!

Cost: FREE

Date: 10/24–12/18

Registration: 10/17–10/28. To register, email your name and T-shirt size to swimforgold@gmail.com by 10/28.

Location: Cary Street Gym and MCV Campus Recreation and Aquatic Center

Please visit our website at www.recsports.vcu.edu or call **804.827.0319** for more information.

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



SPORTS

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Men's soccer finds just enough toughness to overcome James Madison

PHOTOS BY CHRIS CONWAY

Jim Swing
Sports Editor

Dave Giffard stepped into the press box at Sports Backers Stadium sweating bullets down the front of his face.

Maybe it was the humidity, or maybe it was his coaching instinct setting in from the potency of the VCU men's soccer team's 2-1, grind-it-out victory over James Madison Wednesday night.

"It was a good night," he said. "I didn't think our performance was great, but it's always nice to get results and get what you need. JMU is a good team; they've been on a great roll here to start off the season so that added a little bit of extra reward to it."

And for Nate Shiffman, the reward was plentiful.

The sophomore midfielder took a pass from Jason Johnson and deflected it off of JMU's center back before trickling past the goalie to give VCU a one-goal advantage in the 64th minute.

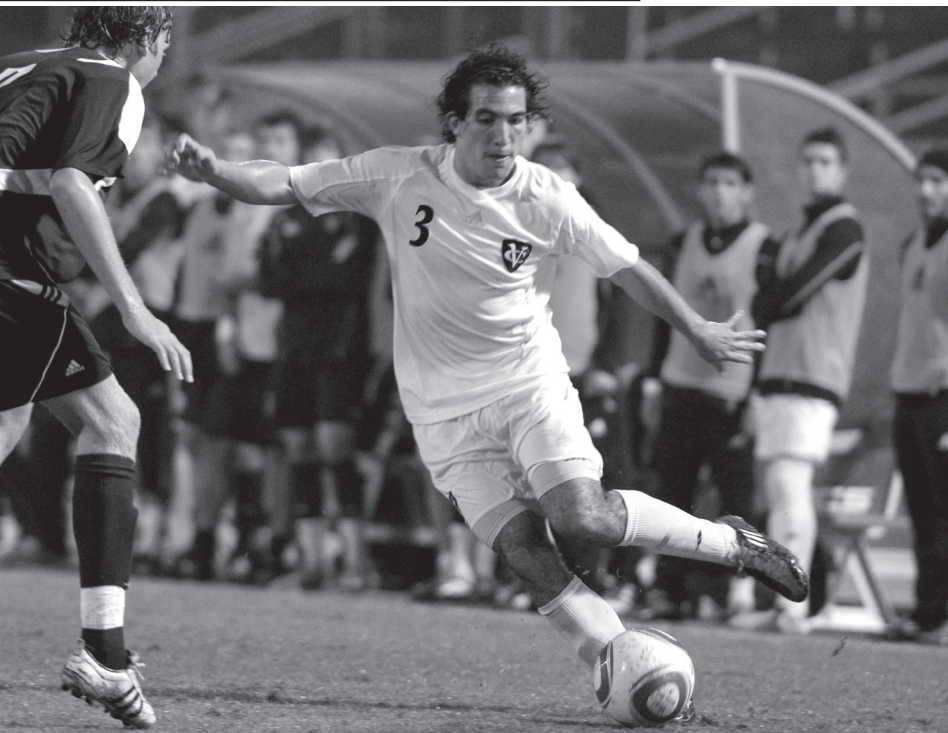
"It felt great," Shiffman said. "It's my first goal ... it's a good feeling."

Just nine minutes later, JMU would threaten.

VCU goalie Josh Pantazelos made a fingertip save on a shot from Christian McLaughlin from the middle, which toyed in front of the net before Juan Monge Solano dove in and swept it out of play.

From there, the Rams searched for a bit of insurance, and thanks to Johnson, they got it.

Johnson cleaned up a Joseph Habboush shot that clanked off the crossbar



with a header that cleared past the net-minder to give VCU a two-goal cushion.

Two minutes later, with just over 11 minutes remaining, the goal proved crucial.

JMU's Patrick Innes shot a rocket from the top of the box that sailed past Pantazelos to cut the VCU lead to one.

With 33 seconds remaining and time winding down, McLaughlin took a dangerous shot from the left side of the box, but Pantazelos was there for the save as he had been nearly all night.

For VCU, the win was all about being in the right place and having just enough toughness and scrap to pull out a win.

"We had guys in certain spots," Giffard said. "Especially in the back half of the team, that I think had just enough kind of toughness and fight to them and to kind of grind through on a night that wasn't our best night."

VCU was forced to combat JMU's aggressive style of play that accumulated 10 penalties on the night.

"I thought it was a bit of a dogfight; we fought hard, they fought hard – we just put away more chances than them," Shiffman said.

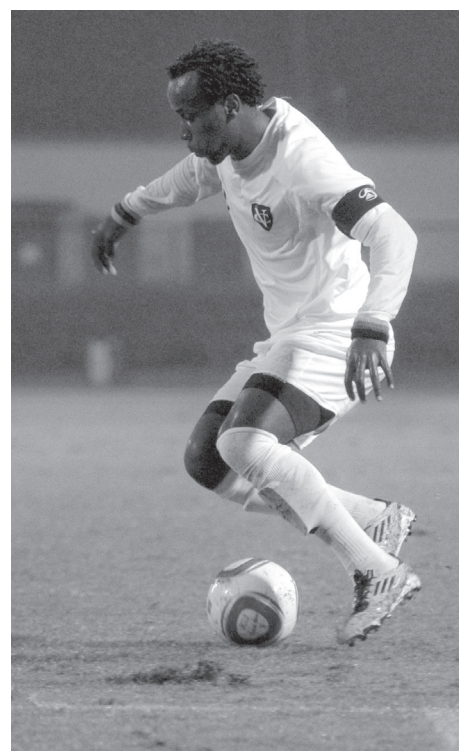
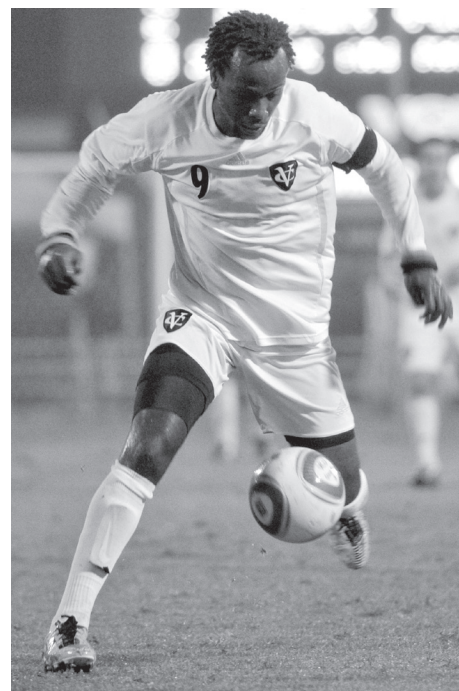
Aggressiveness has been the force to overcome for the Rams (8-5, 3-2) as of late, and now their resolve has them on a surge throughout conference play.

"I thought we pretty much countered their aggressiveness," Shiffman said. "It was a really big win for us so we've just got to keep it going, and hopefully we can keep the momentum going." **GT**

Top left: Sophomore Jason Johnson had one goal on six shots in VCU's win over James Madison.

Top right: Juan Monge Solano made a goal-saving defensive play late in the game Wednesday night.

Middle top/Middle bottom: Yoram Mwila produced four shots against JMU.





PHOTOS BY CHRIS CONWAY

Granados game-winner could be turning point for women's soccer

Quinn Casteel
Assistant Sports Editor

When Cristin Granados blasted the game-winning goal against Georgia State on Sunday afternoon with one second on the clock, co-head coach Tiffany Sahaydak said she “felt like we had just won a World Cup.”

For many, that kind of statement is obvious hyperbole, but Sahaydak actually knows what it feels like to win a World Cup. She was on the sideline when Brandi Chastain made the penalty kick to seal the Cup for the U.S. back in 1999.

Granted, the Chastain kick may be the most memorable moment in women's soccer history, but the Granados game-winner could prove to be the

defining moment for VCU this season. Sahaydak believes the team is finally back on the right track after scuffling for the first few games, and the Granados goal is indicative of that.

“To know that you have a team that doesn't stop, it was a great moment, probably the best of the season,” she said. “They're a very determined team, and they've been very persistent so it's nice to finally see the results and the confirmation that they are playing well.”

Since losing their first two CAA games to Northeastern and Hofstra on the first weekend of conference play, the Rams have been on a tear. In four CAA matches after opening weekend, they have gone 3-0-1, playing a scoreless tie with George Mason before winning three straight against Towson, UNC

Wilmington and Georgia State. Granados has scored in each of VCU's past three games, all of which have been wins over CAA foes.

Wilmington and Georgia State.

Sahaydak said the turnaround began after the coaching staff organized a team meeting two days after losing to Hofstra and falling to 0-2 in the conference. At that point, she felt a lot of the players were trying to do too much and trying to fix the team's problems by themselves. The purpose of the meeting was to bring everyone together and begin focusing on the team again.

“When things aren't going your way, people want to do it themselves, and that's something that can tear a team apart,” she said. “We talked about a culture of excellence, and I reminded them of that standard of always being your best. It was nice because it gave everyone a clear path again, and we were able to regroup and refocus.”

Since that meeting, they haven't lost a match and appear to be playing with a swagger they have not had all season. The defense has played with a synergy that simply has not been there, and a lot of that is because they have had more time to play together.

Senior Molly Allen has been a key member of the VCU back four for the past three years, but she missed the entire summer with a concussion. She has just recently gotten back to form and more importantly has developed chemistry with Karol Sanchez, a center back who transferred this year from

Costa Rica.

Carly Edgcomb, who starts at outside-back along with Allen, has come on as of late as well, which shows it is no coincidence that VCU has shut out its last four opponents.

Sahaydak believes the Granados goal could be the biggest moment of the season for VCU, and not just because it gave them the win against Georgia State. The lift that goal gave the team could pay dividends the rest of the season, as the Rams look to fulfill their postseason aspirations.

“I see us playing in the conference championship, and I honestly feel like we have a team that will play in the NCAA Tournament,” Sahaydak said. “That is our goal, and the whole team has been aware of that since the pre-season. It's a tough road but I know what this team is capable of.”

For a team with so much talent and a coach that has reached the pinnacle of the soccer world, it is no surprise that they have high expectations. But if they are to fulfill their ambitions, VCU will have to maintain this level of play as they enter the most demanding part of the schedule.

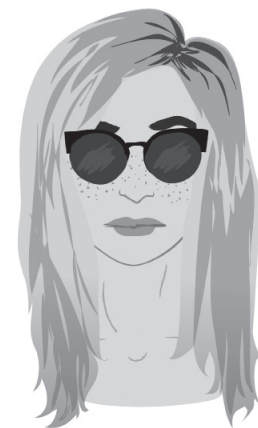
In the next two weeks they play their remaining five CAA matches against Delaware, Drexel, Old Dominion, William & Mary and James Madison on senior night to close things out. **CT**



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 University community
 for your support
 of our colonization.
 Your friendship and
 encouragement were keys
 to our success.

GO VCU!
GO ZTA!



WELCOME TO VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
ZETA TAU ALPHA



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SPORTS BLOG

Follow our new blog at tinyurl.com/ctsports

Upcoming events

Men's soccer

Saturday, Oct. 15
VCU vs. William & Mary, 7 p.m.

Men's tennis

Friday, Oct. 14
at UVa Fall Classic (Charlottesville, Va.)

Women's soccer

Friday, Oct. 14
VCU at Delaware, 7 p.m.

Sunday, Oct. 16
VCU at Drexel, 3 p.m.

Volleyball

Friday, Oct. 14
VCU vs. Towson, 7 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 15
VCU vs. Delaware, 7 p.m.

Field hockey

Sunday, Oct. 16
VCU at Columbia, 1 p.m.



By the numbers: fall sports

10-25-1

VCU fall sports' cumulative record in the month of September.

10-3

VCU fall sports' cumulative record so far in the month of October.

3

Number of games the volleyball team has won out of last four outings after losing six straight.

443

Playing minutes since the women's soccer team has given up a goal.

0

Goals junior transfer Kristin Carden has given up in her last four outings for the women's soccer team, making nine saves along the way.

11

Points freshman Cristin Granados and junior Courtney Conrad have combined for in the past three games.



SPECTRUM

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Annual jazz festival to return to Singleton Center

Cory Johnson
Staff Writer

Tonight, students and faculty of VCU Music's jazz studies program will perform at the department's 11th-annual Fall Jazz Festival at the Singleton Center for the Performing Arts at 8 p.m.

The concert, established in 2001 to commemorate the pledge of \$2 million to the jazz studies program at VCU, features students, faculty and guest artists in three sets: Jazz Orchestra I, Jazz Orchestra II and the VCU Faculty Jazz Septet.

This year's festival features three guest trumpeters: John D'earth, the director of jazz at the University of Virginia; Graham Breedlove, member of the Army Blues; and Taylor Barnett, a VCU alumnus who is pursuing his doctorate at James Madison University.

The first ensemble to perform will be the Jazz Orchestra II, or as it is commonly called "JO2," led by adjunct professor Bryan Hooten.

This ensemble is comprised mostly of younger, less-experienced players but has a big band style that Hooten hopes prepares the students for real world performing in any style.

"As jazz evolves and as time goes on, more and more styles start to get gobbled up by jazz," Hooten said, and his sentiment shows in his song selection.

The Jazz Orchestra II will be playing big band pieces by Count Basie, Thad Jones, a modern-samba arrangement of Duke Ellington's "Caravan," and even a composition written by guest artist Graham Breedlove.

The Jazz Orchestra I is led by the director of the jazz studies program Antonio Garcia.

"With jazz being the spontaneous nature of improvisation, it's just like a conversation around a table," he said.

The final set is performed by the VCU Faculty Jazz Septet. The repertoire for this group "tends to be a little more modern," said Garcia, who plays trombone in the ensemble.

While the music of other ensembles is picked by the director, the VCU Jazz Faculty Septet features a range of pieces from guest artists or recently produced pieces. **CT**

For more information on VCU Music's Jazz Studies program, visit <http://www.vcu.edu/arts/music/dept/study/jazz/index.html>



VCU Jazz students in rehearsal for Thursday's Fall Jazz Festival. The annual concert was originally established in 2001 to commemorate a \$2 million pledge to VCU's jazz studies program.

PHOTOS BY AMBER-LYNN TABER

Richmond Folk Fest to foster culture, musical diversity

Mark Robinson
Assistant Spectrum Editor

The Richmond Folk Festival will return to the riverfront this weekend to showcase the musical and cultural diversity that have endeared it to hundreds of thousands of patrons over the past four years. Although the festival has become an annual tradition in the past few years, its future wasn't always certain.

When the National Folk Festival departed Richmond in 2007 after a three-year stint, Lisa Sims, director of the Richmond Folk Festival, was unsure if the local replacement could build on the national festival's success.

In 2010, an estimated 190,000 people attended the three-day event. Sims attributes the festival's popularity to its location on the riverfront, quality of programming and its price point: free.

"Rather than becoming old hat to people, the festival is becoming more and more relevant every year," Sims said. "We've been pleasantly surprised with that."

With more than 30 groups performing on seven stages over a three-day span, this year's lineup will continue to foster the tradition of musical diversity that has brought the festival success in previous years.

Folk and traditional arts, as defined by the National Endowment for the Arts, are "rooted in and reflective of the cultural life of a community" — more simply, folk is the music of the people.

Although previous years' lineups have featured more go-go artists, Sims said the 2011 lineup incorporates more doo-wop and funk influences. This year's festival will feature performances by Larry Chance and the Earls, Magic Slim and the Teardrops with Big Time Sarah, and Funkadelic.

"These are really the artists at the top of their genre," Sims said. "These are the artists that have learned their art from the masters of it that passed it down to them; they're really experts in their art form."

Because Richmond Folk Festival is almost entirely funded through donations and sponsorships, volunteers are crucial to the festival.

Sims estimates more student groups have volunteered to work at the festival this year than ever before.

In total, more than 1,200 volunteers will lend their weekend to the Richmond Folk Festival, including VCU student organizations like Alpha Phi Omega, the Vietnamese Student Association and VCU's chapter of Circle K International.

Avanti Kollaram, President of CKI at VCU, said the community service group

decided to volunteer in support of The Children's Museum of Richmond, which will contribute to the festival's family area.

"When we found out about the Folk Festival, we tried to make a huge push for our members go," said Kollaram, a senior math major at VCU. "Aside from the fact that it's a lot of fun, we tried to tell them to go because there is a huge need for volunteers."

2011 marks the first year VCU has sponsored the Richmond Folk Festival.

"For a university, it is something they can participate in and express their commitment to community," Lisa Sims said of VCU's sponsorship. "It's very illustrative of how plugged into the community the university is." ❧

The Richmond Folk Festival will take place from Friday, Oct. 14 to Sunday, Oct. 16. Performances will be held rain or shine. For more information on the festival schedule, visit <http://www.richmondfolkfestival.org>.



Performers at last year's Richmond Folk Fest included blues bands, Brazilian capoeira dancers, a traditional Scottish band, and other international musicians and artists.

PHOTOS BY MEL KOBAN

Interesting People | Real World 27 edition

PHOTO BY MEL KOBRAN



Perhaps in an effort to assuage the sorrows of “Lincoln” casting call rejects, casting directors from Bunim/Murray Productions held an open call on Wednesday, Oct. 12 for housemates in the upcoming 27th season of perennial MTV reality show “The Real World.”

Any lucky applicants to make the cut would become one of seven individuals to gather in a house – this season’s location has yet to be decided – and have their every waking moment broadcast to the viewing public, with emphasis on the moments “when people stop being polite and start getting real.”

VCU psychology senior **TAYLOR SHERMAN** was among the line of hopefuls lined up outside the Hooters on Broad Street with a recent, non-returnable photo.

CT *You’re here for the Real World tryouts?*

TS I just thought I’d give it a try. I’m 24, so this is the last, like, cutoff year. You have to be 18 to 24, so I was like – why not?

CT *You must be a fan of the show, then.*

TS I was a fan of the old “Real World,” not so much the new stuff. But if I get in, I might be able to change that. Not be so catty, like all these other girls that are on now.

CT *Take it in a new direction, sort of.*

TS I’m gonna try. I wanna make it more positive than just about ... drinking.

CT *Tell me about the “new” Real World versus the “old.” Do you remember a specific turning point?*

TS I guess it was a couple of seasons ago when I got out of high school. I was watching it and seeing that it was just all about drinking, and partying, and not really focusing on ... what it should be focusing on, in your early 20s. ... I guess I feel like it’s not going in the best direction.

CT *How do you see yourself filling one of the Real World’s token roles?*

TS It’s really funny, because when I looked online to see what they were looking for, it was like, they want, like ... punk or emo or alternative or whatever.

Bunim/Murray Productions, Real World’s creators and in charge of casting, specified in an official release that “We look for characters from real life; people with strong personalities who are unafraid to speak their minds.” They also helpfully included the following list:

“This season casting directors will be on the lookout for applicants who:

- have challenges living an everyday life that most take for granted
- struggling with weight issues
- affected by a natural disaster
- products of home or alternative schooling or followers of unrecognized or non-mainstream belief systems
- elite athletes
- recent graduates affected by the economic downturn
- those involved with goth, emo or punk subculture
- members of a pro-abstinence organization
- those who are recently single due to a tragedy
- someone who has recently gotten out of the foster care system

• individuals who want to bring the spotlight of “The Real World” to a cause, condition, or social issue they care deeply about or are personally affected by.”

The release went on to specify that these qualities are not necessarily requirements, and that the show welcomes anyone “with a great personality and a willingness to share their life with the world.”

TS ...and I was like, well, I don’t really know if I fit that specific one, but I don’t know ... I thought maybe

I fit the one where they wanted people who were struggling or stuff like that. I’m a struggling 24-year-old senior who has to work 40 hours a week plus take a whole bunch of classes. So I feel like that should be broadcast, that a lot of people are struggling, especially college students. Tuition keeps going up, and the job rate keeps going down, and –

JMU student **REBECCA WERE**, nearby: No, it doesn’t. Major in hospitality.

TS ... I don’t want hospitality ...

RW S---’s goin’ up.

TS ...So, um. And grad school is super expensive. And to make any money in the major areas, you have to go to grad school ... All of my friends are working really crappy jobs, it’s ridiculous ... So anyway, I was like, I might as well try, at least ... I just hope that I do get picked. I hope it’s gonna happen so that I can make a positive change. I want to broadcast more things than just what people think of typical 20-year-olds.

CT *And they’ll have heard about you first from the Commonwealth Times.*

TS That’s great. **CT**

Applications are still being accepted via – visit www.bunim-murray.com/rwcasting for complete details on how you can apply.

Applicants are asked to bring a recent picture of themselves and photo ID. Applicants must also be above age 20, “and,” according to the Bunim/Murray release, “appear to be between the ages of 20 and 24.”



'Dance on Camera' film screening showcases array of styles

Samantha Foster
Contributing Writer

This past Tuesday, six short films selected by the New York Dance Films Association and VCU Dance's "Restaging 'Shelter'" premiered at the showing of 'Dance on Camera' film screening at the Grace Street Theater. The short films were selected for their portrayal of diverse dance styles across the world.

The first piece, "After the Water the Clouds," follows a woman as all the people she knows become mythical and surreal. "Bow," done entirely in shadows, attempted to capture the movement of folding origami through dance.

The third short, "Hoop," captured a woman dancing with a hula-hoop, but the supplemental ear-splitting music was disruptive and harsh.

"From Roosevelt to Brooklyn," a refreshing escape from its high-brow predecessors, only fell short in its brevity. Set to a fitting rock soundtrack, the piece depicted free runner Jesse La Flair running up the sides of buildings, only to backflip off of them.

The audience appreciaed the initial Irish violins and tap dancer in the dark pub of "Unsung." But the film departed from its initial cheer, and a woman singing solmenly to another woman dancing around the pub ended the piece.

"There is a Place" showed an impressive modern dance set to spoken words and a repetitive beat. The audience was entranced by the dancer's movement and the sounds of his hands and elbows hitting the large wooden table with which he danced.

"Slow Dance" followed a woman as she tried to move across a bar to meet a man in whom she is interested. Her movements, by far the most comical of the night, included hitting several men

in the head with beer bottles, flipping the bartender over her back and causing two other men to crash into each other. The audience was in tears laughing even as the credits rolled.

The main event of the evening, directed by Bruce Berryhill and VCU Dance professor Martha Curtis was the premier of VCU Dance's first documentary, "Restaging 'Shelter.'" The film follows the Urban Bush Women dance group and their artistic director, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, as she taught last year's VCU Dance students the piece "Shelter."

"Shelter" portrayed the concept of homelessness and being displaced in your world. The piece was characterized by a heavy use of drums and spoken word. The phrase "cause I ain't fled nothing, my country fled me" is repeated throughout the piece and is the basis for the work's message.

In this piece, Zollar says her art is serving a purpose by educating people on the feelings of being displaced, not just that people are displaced and homeless.

For "Restaging 'Shelter,'" current Urban Bush Women and former VCU Dance students, Bennalldra Williams and Samantha Speis, returned to teach the current dance majors the basics of getting in touch with their emotions and building the endurance necessary to dance with Zollar.

The goal of the documentary was to not only relay the message of "Shelter," but to showcase Zollar's artistic process.

In the end, the "Shelter" did exactly what it intended to do: show the audience how emotionally involved the dancers were in the piece. The audience treated the documentary as if it was a home movie. They cheered and laughed when the dancers they knew were interviewed and applauded after clips from "Shelter" were shown. **CT**



IMAGE COURTESY OF DOMINO RECORDS

Album review | Real Estate: "Days"

Sabrina Barekzai
Contributing Writer

From a seemingly bygone time and place of wasted summer hours and sunny-day joy rides comes "Days," the second album by psychedelic surf-pop quartet Real Estate.

The newest release from the New Jersey four-piece drops next Tuesday, Oct. 18, and is sure to garner them an even bigger legion of fans.

The 10-track album is comprised of lush melodies and wistful lyrics, woven together by bassist/vocalist Alex Bleeker, guitarist/vocalists Martin Courtney and Matthew Mondanile and keyboardist/guitarist Jonah Mauer.

Having toured with Pitchfork darlings Deerhunter, Girls and Kurt Vile previously, Real Estate received a small following after releasing their 2009 self-titled debut album. "Days," released at the time of year where everything

everywhere is pumpkin-flavored, is well-poised. Being at times melancholic and forlorn, the lyrics in "Days" are meshed with such bright melodies, it seems hard to decipher at first listen.

"Our careless lifestyle, it was not so unwise," sings Courtney on "Green Aisles." The songs on

"Days" are shimmering gems that harken back to the good ol' days, particularly in "Wonder Years."

What "Days" exemplifies is Real Estate's mastery of surf rock into a dynamic and refreshing sound: They sound like the Beach Boys, but at the same time, they don't sound like the Beach Boys.

Call it romanticizing wasted youth or a reckless ode to doing nothing, but "Days" remains a beautiful sun-soaked breakthrough for Real Estate and is sure to be one of the best albums of the year. **CT**

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OPINION

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Virginia's transportation crisis an opportunity to improve



ILLUSTRATIONS BY HANNAH SWAIN

"WE CAN ACCEPT THE STATUS QUO OF TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA, THEREBY ALLOWING US TO BE OUTSTRIPPED TECHNOLOGICALLY BY OTHER NATIONS AND HAMPERING OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, OR WE CAN USE THIS TRANSPORTATION CRISIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE OUR CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE."

Shane Wade

Opinion Editor

If you've driven for more than 30 minutes on I-95 or just down Broad Street, you're well acquainted with Virginia's crumbling infrastructure. Road surfaces are uneven, potholes are aplenty, and the fading paint on some roadways leaves drivers questioning whether they're in the right lane. Even around VCU, some crosswalk lights do not work, and maneuvering down

some streets to avoid potholes and dips requires creativity.

To give you an idea of how bad the situation is, according to VDOT, 1,116 lane-miles of Virginia Interstate highways, 5,032 lane-miles of the state's primary highways and 34 percent of the state's secondary roads are in poor condition. VDOT also found that 1,730 bridges are structurally deficient and in need of repair.

Added to the maintenance issue is the fact that building new roads and bridges is nearly impossible to do now

because the construction fund is being drained by maintenance. Gov. Bob McDonnell has plans to stop that drain, but Virginia needs to revamp the current transportation policy that is too heavily reliant on the oil industry, unstable politics and a changing transportation climate.

By 2017, when the funds for building new roads are drained completely, a significant portion of the cars on the road will be hybrids, electrical or solar-powered vehicles. But alternatively fueled vehicles aren't currently paying

their fair share of highway maintenance because they aren't subject to gas taxes that make up two-thirds of Virginia's transportation funding. In fact, Dominion Power offers discounts to people that drive electric cars.

If no plans are made to adjust this inequality, those wealthy enough to purchase electric or solar cars will be driving on the roads paid for by those that couldn't afford the switch. While I do advocate for the use of cleaner and environmentally sustainable fuels for cars, it's not reasonable that plans to



tax their usage haven't been discussed or debated by the state legislature yet. Just as we would encourage billionaires and corporations to pay their fair share of taxes, if gasoline-fueled cars have to pay an additional tax at their gas pumps, electrical cars have to pay an additional tax on their electric bill.

According to a 2010 survey by "Transportation for America," a coalition of organizations dedicated to changing transportation policies on the local, state and federal level, 58 percent of Americans are in favor of allocating funds to improve public transportation (buses, trains, rail, ferries and bicycle/

walking paths).

While we're considering the future of public transportation in the state of Virginia, we should deeply consider draw up plans to incorporate inter-regional and inter-city railways into our infrastructure. Anyone from Northern Virginia, D.C. or Virginia Beach that's driven home for break will tell you that the amount of traffic on the way to their destination is unbearable. By investing in rail stations, faster train technology and expanded bus routes, we'll be able to clear up much of that traffic congestion, making it easier and safer for people to commute.

There's two directions that we can go: We can accept the status quo of transportation in America, thereby allowing us to be outstripped technologically by other nations and hampering our economic development, or we can use this transportation crisis as an opportunity to change our current infrastructure.

Instead of investing in more roads for gas-powered cars, we can figure out ways to make alternatively fueled cars pay their fair share, make high-speed rail a possibility for travelers and commuters alike and promote an expanded public transportation industry. **CT**

Thursday, October 13, 2011

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ADAM STERN

SHANE WADE

Executive Editor

Opinion Editor

Richmond Folk Festival not just banjos and straw

Colin Hanniffin

Columnist

Richmond is gearing up for its annual foray into the exciting and refreshing world of folk music. Friday, the fourth-annual Richmond Folk Festival will kick off three days of folk. The festival, which offers free admission, showcases over 30 artists and is expected to bring over 200,000 visitors to Richmond.

The folk festival is one of the unique events that set Richmond apart. Born from the National Folk Festival, which Richmond hosted from 2005-2007 (The National Folk Festival moves every three years.), the Richmond Folk Festival not only delivers quality music, but



"You don't have to like the traditional American frontier folk music to appreciate the music that will be on display this weekend. You just have to love music and have an open mind."

a chance for Richmond residents and VCU students to experience the music that was a vital part of the early part of our country. While so many are familiar with today's hits that stream over the airways day in and day out, many haven't heard the tunes that will flow from the stages this weekend.

Many are quick to discount the festival, claiming they don't like the sound of the folk fiddle or the strum of the banjo. But those people don't understand what folk music truly is. While folk has been popularized as the music of Bob Dylan and, more recently, Conor Oberst, the true markings of folk aren't clever lyrics and simple sounds. Rather, folk music

is very much a cultural phenomenon. It's the music of a people the music the common people listened to and subsisted on, not the high-brow music of the upper class. Every culture has its folk music, from the music of the American frontier that we commonly refer to as folk, to that of sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Asia, or Western Europe.

The Richmond Folk Festival does its best to highlight all kinds of folk music. Yes, there will be the typical American staples of folk music – the fiddle, banjo and guitar. But there will also be music of Mexico, monks from Tibet, Chinese-inspired opera, funk and Irish folk music – and that's just the tip of

the iceberg. You don't have to like the traditional American frontier folk music to appreciate the music that will be on display this weekend. You just have to love music and have an open mind.

If nothing else, it's a chance to experience free, family-friendly fun and learn something along the way. I attended last October for the first time, and I immediately regretted that I didn't make the short trek to the waterfront in my first two years at VCU.

I saw a gentleman in his late 80s who made the trip from the mountains of West Virginia to play the songs he grew up with on his fiddle and a group that made the trip from New Orleans to

play the songs of the streets of the Big Easy. I focused on attending the acts I felt I would most enjoy and saw a number groups of which I have never heard, playing songs I've never known, and they were exceptionally good.

As you continue studying for your midterms this weekend, take a break and make your way downtown to the waterfront, and see everything the Richmond Folk Festival has to offer. Spend some time under the sun, enjoying the wonderful weather of fall, and listen to the music that helped establish cultures around the world. **CT**

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