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Hundreds of protestors amassed outside the Virginia state Capitol on Saturday to denounce Dominion Power's Atlantic Coast Pipeline proposal and the recent Department of Environmental Quality permits allowing Dominion to dump as much as 350 million gallons of coal-ash wastewater into the James River.

SOPHIA BELLETTI
Staff Writer

Hundreds of protesters gathered at the Virginia General Assembly on Saturday to protest Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) permit allowing Dominion Power to dump as much as 350 million gallons of coal-ash wastewater into the James river.

The environmental group “No ACP” organized the event, “DUMP DOMINION: A march for our rivers!” More than 50 activists blocked vehicle access to Dominion Resources’ Tredegar Campus in Richmond, Virginia to protest the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

“If we didn’t believe we had a strong case we probably wouldn’t engage in this,” said Pat Calvert, the Upper James Riverkeeper at the James River Association.

Calvert said he believes there’s a strong chance the DEQ permit will be repealed.

“The James River Association likes to work things out and be reasonable and we’re not a group that has tended to formally appeal permits unless we really believe it’s necessary to prevent degradation to the river,” Calvert said.

The DEQ permit was issued Jan. 21 and allows coal ash dumping to take place from the Possum Point plant on the banks of the Potomac and the Bremo power station 60 miles upstream of Richmond. The permit also sets legal precedent for similar permits in the future.

Dominion currently has 11 wastewater ponds across the state, some of which are more than 50 —continued on page 2

Flint’s Republican Crisis

SRITEJA YEDHARA
Contributing Columnist

The crisis in Flint, Michigan has taken the media by storm. The political negligence of Michigan Governor Rick Snyder has led to severe and harmful lead pollution of the water — leaving thousands of people without access to clean drinking water.

The truth is this: the people of Flint do not need your outrage. They do not need your politics. They need to be able to bathe their children. They need to be able to drink a cup of clean water. They need their basic human rights to be upheld.

As we can expect with any serious situation during the height of a political campaign, the presidential candidates have jumped on the opportunity to express their concerns for those affected by the crisis. Candidates have also taken the chance to publicly denounce the government officials who failed to keep this problem from arising — or at least, the Democratic candidates have.

On Feb. 7, Hillary Clinton spoke at the House of Prayer Missionary Baptist Church in Flint. She’s continually urged Congress to help the people of Flint by passing a bill which would fuel a relief effort and provide supplies. Recently, Bernie Sanders raised the question of how this would have been handled had Flint been a primarily white community instead of a black one.

However, it should be made clear that before the presidential candidates inevitably turn this crisis into a bipartisan or race issue, which it very well may be, it is a sheer violation of government trust and even human rights by those responsible for the protection and well being of Flint’s residents.

The primary reason for this partisan split on the issue comes —continued on page 10

The Rams dominate with three-straight wins at the Stu

MARCUS BLACKWELL
Contributing Writer

With the support from a gold-out themed Siegel Center, the Rams defeated the University of Richmond 87-74 on Friday.

VCU welcomed cross-town rivals the Richmond Spiders to the Stu for their second match-up of the season. In the last meeting, VCU squeezed out a victory in a hard-fought overtime victory.

The Rams opened Friday’s game with a stifling full-court press to keep the Spiders from getting their offensive sets going early. Both teams had problems

defensively, and scoring went back and forth for the first 10 minutes of the first half.

The bulk of the Rams offensive contributions came from the bench. Junior forward Justin Tillman scored 15 points in the first half, shooting 7-10 from the field, while Jordan Burgess scored 11 points, shooting 3-4 from downtown.

Tillman was active early, sinking prolific dunks and maintaining a strong defensive presence. Richmond never held the lead in the first half, but the Spiders were able to keep it close. A T.J. Cline buzzer-beater from just inside

half-court cut VCU’s lead to four going into the half 42-38.

At the start of the second half, senior guard Melvin Johnson hit a deep three and began a 14-2 run for the Rams that would end up being the most important stretch of the game.

Johnson would tie B.A. Walker (2007 alum) for VCU’s all-time-leading 3-point list with 269. The catalyst to VCU’s success in the second half was their ability to out-rebound Richmond 41-21. This created second chance opportunities en route to a 17-point lead with a little over eight minutes left in regulation.

With five minutes remaining, the Spiders were able to cut the lead to 10, but VCU responded with three-straight 3-pointers from Johnson and Burgess to officially put the game away.

Junior guard JeQuan Lewis scored 13 points and dropped off 10 assists, registering a double-double. Senior guard Mo Alie-Cox also registered a double-double, scoring 12 points and grabbing 12 rebounds.

Alie-Cox said he felt the Rams’ rebounding was the deciding factor in the win.

“Attacking the glass was im- —continued on page 5



Junior guard JeQuan Lewis dribbles past Rhode Island defenders during their match on Tuesday, Feb. 16. The game ended 83-67, marking VCU’s 18th win before facing cross-town rival the University of Richmond Spiders at the Stu on Friday.

TheatreVCU feels the vibration

AUSTIN WALKER
Spectrum Editor

TheatreVCU’s latest mainstage production gives students the rare opportunity to watch their peers orgasm on stage.

“In the Next Room (or the Vibrator Play)” details the story of a Victorian-era doctor who utilizes the advent of electricity to treat female hysteria. The play opened last Thursday and explores topics of feminine sexuality and its notable absence of mention within society.

Jan Powell is the show’s guest director and the artistic director for Quill Theatre, the troupe that hosts Richmond’s annual Shakespeare Festival.

“I knew the show, I loved the show,” Powell said. “It’s hilarious, it’s heartbreaking, it’s provocative — but in a really powerful way.”

Despite the show’s overt sexuality, as evidenced by the conspicuous title, Powell said the production requires the audience to look between the lines.

Sarah Ruhl, the play’s writer, has created many works which examine similar topics and has been presented the MacArthur Fellowship and multiple Whiting Awards for her works. Powell said she was excited to direct a play by such a notable writer.

“It brilliantly uses this time when any malady a woman had could be diagnosed as hysteria,” Powell said. “This was a time when women’s sexuality, which is a very healthy part of being alive, was not considered something women had or owned or thought about, or —continued on page 8



In this section:
LGBTQ anti descrimination bill fails, measure to reduce student arrests, police privacy.

AP briefs

NATIONAL

Harper Lee leaves behind questions about her life and work

Harper Lee has died, but the conversation about her life and work has only begun. "I think the retrospective will be more useful than what was said during her lifetime, because there are a lot of things we can get down to that were impossible before," Lee's friend Wayne Flynt, an Alabama-based historian, told The Associated Press. Lee's death Friday at age 89 comes almost exactly a year after her publisher, HarperCollins, stunned the world by announcing that a second novel by the author of "To Kill a Mockingbird" would be released, ending what many believed was a permanent and much-desired literary silence.

Clinton edges out Sanders to win Nevada caucuses

Hillary Clinton seized the momentum in the fierce fight for the Democratic presidential nomination, turning back a challenge from Bernie Sanders in Nevada's caucuses on Saturday and pushing toward even friendlier primaries in the South. "The future that we want is within our grasp," the former secretary of state, first lady and senator told cheering supporters after her Nevada win. The numbers back her up in her second bid for the presidency. If Clinton solidifies her support among black voters over the next month and wins the Southern contests, she could amass a significant number of delegates in the push toward the 2,383 needed to win the nomination. There are more than 1,400 delegates at stake in states such as South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee and Louisiana, and depending on the outcome and proportional allocation of delegates, Clinton could build a comfortable lead. Wins also could drive superdelegates to her candidacy. She currently holds a sizable lead among those elected leaders and party officials.

Uber says suspected Michigan gunman was driver for service

A Michigan mass shooting could raise new headaches for Uber, the fast-growing ride-hailing service that's been dogged by controversy on the road to becoming one of the most valuable, privately funded companies in the world. Jason Dalton, the man arrested in connection with the Kalamazoo rampage that left six people dead, was a driver for the San Francisco-based Uber, according to a company spokeswoman. Authorities were investigating reports that he may have picked up at least one customer before he was stopped by police. Uber has been one of the most successful tech industry startups in recent years, as customers have flocked to use its smartphone app for hailing rides in 380 cities around the globe. The company says its drivers are independent contractors who use its app to help find customers and schedule trips.

LOCAL Police investigate double homicide in Richmond

Police are investigating a double homicide that occurred overnight in the city's north side in an apartment where a preschooler was also found uninjured. Richmond Police say they were called to the apartment complex on Chamberlayne Avenue at 3 a.m. Saturday and found a man's body in an interior hallway. The man, 40-year-old Cory J. Holmes of Richmond, had been shot multiple times. Police say he was not a resident of the complex.

Virginia Tech community copes with latest violent incident

As two Virginia Tech students face charges in the slaying of a 13-year-old girl, their classmates are repeating what they have said following other violent debacles in the last decade: The community is defined not by the horrific crimes themselves, but by the way its people pull together afterward.

Judge tosses lawsuit challenging schools' transgender policy

A judge has dismissed a lawsuit that sought to overturn protections for transgender students in Fairfax County Public Schools. Andrea Lafferty, head of the Traditional Values Coalition, and an unnamed student sued the county school board in December after the board voted to bar discrimination based on gender identity. Opponents of the policy said it would too easily allow boys to use girls' restrooms and vice versa. A federal appeals court in Richmond is deciding a case in Gloucester County where a student who was born female but identifies as male has been barred from using boys' restrooms.

BRIEFS BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Protesters, some of them children, play music, hold signs and banners protesting the dumping of coal ash waste water into Virginia water ways Feb. 20.

Hundreds protest Dominion permit

—continued from page 1 years old. Protesters marched Saturday for the DEQ to repeal the current permit and issue a revised one requiring new treatment standards for wastewater to drinking water. The march began with various speakers addressing topics of climate change and colonialism, eco-racism, Dominion and legislation, experiences in Flint, MI and other recent spills. Traffic formed on Tredegar Street as activists stretched large banners across the road and paraded large puppets around the scene. Two activists remained suspended from a pedestrian bridge with a banner reading "Stop Selling Our Futures" while a larger crowd occupied the access way below. Protesters chanted "Coal ash kills. No dumping, no spills." Lisa Thompson was amongst the concerned citizens. "They have issued permits that say the coal ash soaked water is safe to simply drain into rivers," Thompson said. "Those permits should ensure treatment of the water first before let into the rivers instead of leaving it up the Dominion's discretion to build filtering facilities and get it to drinking water qualities." Michael James-Deramo, present of the VCU chapter of the Virginia Student Environmental Coalition, organized a group of students to make posters the night before and march together Saturday. "Dumping coal ash can be very detrimental to not only the river quality but also to our drinking water," James-Deramo said. "This is putting that water at risk. The Department of Environmental Quality has taken very meager steps in making any regulations on Dominion's pollutants. According to Dominion spokesperson Rob Richardson, there was no other way to remove the waste water from the collection pond than dumping it into the James. "Dominion is filtering and treating this water, it's safe. its non toxic, it does not have

coal-ash in it, it's safe treated water," Richardson said. "We live in Virginia too, we use the river, we boat on the river, we swim on the river, we take our families to the river, we are aren't doing something that would harm the river." Police arrested two men and six women after protesters congregated on the Capitol steps for about an hour after the march while demanding a visit or phone call from Gov. Terry McAuliffe. One of the protestors was a VCU student reporting for the Capital News Service wire, a capstone journalism class at VCU.

Clinton, Trump maintain leads in Virginia

FADEL ALLASSAN
Print News Editor

Presidential hopefuls Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump have maintained their leads in Virginia despite losing ground to their competitors in recent months, according to a new poll by Christopher Newport University's Wason Center for Public Policy. In the democratic race, Clinton leads Sen. Bernie Sanders 52 percent to 40 percent among likely voters in the Commonwealth. Twenty-eight percent of likely republican primary-goers said they will vote for Donald Trump, compared to 22 percent for Florida Sen. Marco Rubio and 19 percent for Texas Sen. Ted Cruz. Rubio and Cruz significantly improved their poll numbers in the Commonwealth since the Wason Center conducted its previous poll in October. The senators then polled at 14 percent and five percent respectively. In the democratic primary, Bernie Sanders has experienced a similar rise in poll numbers — the Vermont senator nearly doubled his support among democrats in the state from 23 percent in Oct. "This reflects what we've seen nationally," said Peter Clerkin, Bernie 2016 Virginia state director. "As people learn who Sanders is, and hear his platform, they support him. His support in Virginia has only grown over the past several months." The poll data released Feb. 16 indicates the frontrunners were also viewed the most unfavorably by likely voters outside their party. 59 percent of likely Virginia vot-

ers have unfavorable views of Clinton, compared to 33 percent viewing her favorably, according to the poll. 64 percent have an unfavorable view of Trump while 30 percent favor the New York businessman. Rubio and Sanders were the most favored candidates among candidates from both parties. Rubio led the pack as the only candidate with positive net-favorability, 44 percent of voters viewed him as favorable compared to 39 percent unfavorable. Sanders led Clinton in the favorability department with 39 percent viewing him as favorable compared to 50 percent who viewed him as unfavorable. The poll indicated a widened gap between the top three candidates in the republican race and the three who follow them. Neurosurgeon Ben Carson and Ohio Gov. John Kasich are tied with seven percent of the vote. "While Trump is leading in Virginia, Rubio and Cruz are within striking distance," said Quentin Kidd, director of the Wason Center. "Carson, Kasich, and Bush are very long shots at this point, two weeks out." Trump continues to lead the republican pack in national polls. A Feb. 17 Fox News poll has the candidate leading with 36 percent of the republican vote. His closest competitor in that poll, Cruz, stands at 19 percent. The real estate mogul followed his third place finish at the Iowa Caucus with a sizable victory in the New Hampshire Primary, finishing with a 20 percent lead in the popular vote over Kasich. "Trump is able to relate to the average virginian the middle amer-



Republican presidential frontrunner Donald Trump addressed a packed crowd at the Richmond International Raceway during an October rally.

ican who is simply trying to work and feed their families and he's able to speak directly to people," said Corey Stewart, chairman of Trump's campaign in Virginia. "No one else has been able to do that. no one else has been able to obtain that much support and confidence to your average joe." The pollsters interviewed 735 Virginia voters from Feb. 3 to Feb. 14, 408 of those interviewed were on landline phones and 327 were on cellphones. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.3 percent.

BY THE NUMBERS

HOW VIRGINIAN VOTERS VIEW THE CANDIDATES

Clinton
59 percent – unfavorable
33 percent – favorable
Trump
64 percent – unfavorable
30 percent – favorable
Rubio
44 percent – favorable
39 percent – unfavorable

LIKELY VOTERS

Clinton: 52%
Trump: 28%
Bernie: 40%
Rubio: 22%
Cruz: 19%

POLL RESULTS FROM WASON CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY / CNU (FEB. 16)

Bill to reduce student arrest fails in Virginia House

ANDREW CRIDER
Staff Writer

The Republican-controlled House of Delegates killed a bill aimed at lowering the number of Virginia students referred to law enforcement in a 36-60-1 vote last week.

Bill patron Del. Dave LaRock, R-Loudon, said the proposed legislation was a reaction to the alarming rate of students who end up charged with criminal offenses in Virginia.

According to a study by the Center for Public Integrity, 16 per 1,000 students are arrested in Virginia in school for disorderly conduct, whereas the national average is six per 1,000 students.

HB 1134 would have prevented students younger than 14-years-old from being criminally charged for disorderly conduct while in school. Virginia currently leads the nation in the number of student arrests for disorderly conduct, according to the Center for Public Integrity.

“We simply are reaching a crisis here that has certainly human cost as well as financial consequences,” LaRock said. “Our prisons are full and we have a lot of people getting started in the criminal justice system at a very early age for relatively minor offense.”

According to LaRock, the reason why discipline is a problem for Virginia schools is due to the long list of potential violations, in addition to strict regulations for how each case is handled.

“Such a long list of incidents are requiring principals to report just about any incident that can be construed to be disruptive or potentially a violation of the law,” LaRock said.

LaRock also patroned HB 1132 with House Speaker William J Howell, R-Fredricksburg, and Chris Jones, R-Suffolk. HB 1132 would remove requirements that force principals to refer students to law enforcement.

“That bill was referred to the courts where the chances are it will never see the light of day again,” LaRock said. “The people who opposed it are afraid to make any sort of adjustments to the law that applies to school when some teachers are saying we are in crisis mode, and if you take away a lot of the tools, things will get worse.”

Last April, Gov. Terry McAuliffe appointed a cabinet level task force to find solutions to Virginia’s school-to-prison pipeline. Despite the lack of support in the legislature, Secretary of Education Anne Holton said the administration is dedicated to reducing student arrests.

“The Governor and I remain committed to addressing the critical issue of school discipline in the Commonwealth,” Holton said. “That is why the Governor launched the ‘Classrooms not Courtroom’ initiative, which seeks to reduce school suspensions and expulsions, referrals to law enforcement and the disparate impact these practices have on minority students and students with disabilities.”

The Governor’s initiative seeks additional funding for behavior programs in schools with high rates of disciplinary offenses.

“By working together, we can improve school safety, enhance learning time and ensure fair treatment for all of our students,” Holton said.

House bill could legalize service denial to gay, transgender individuals

FADEL ALLASSAN
Print News Editor

The Virginia House of Delegates passed a bill preventing the government from penalizing people or organizations that deny services to gay and transgender individuals and those who have premarital sex.

The bill, HB 773, which has been named the Government Non-discrimination Act on, Feb. 16 and will now move to the senate after passing the house in a 56-41 vote.

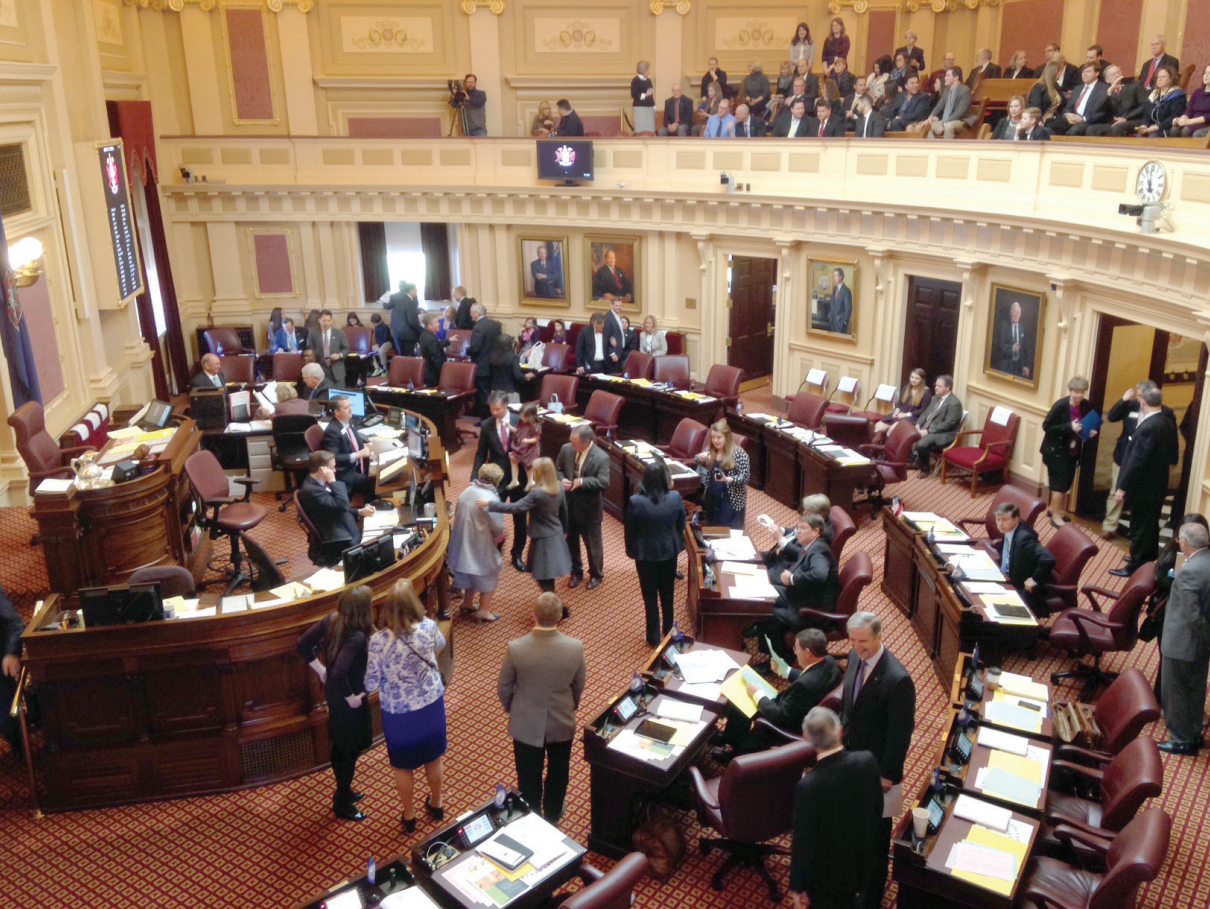
No democrats voted in favor of the measure, six republicans voted against the bill and three did not participate in the vote. Supporters are calling the bill a reasonable accommodation of faith, while critics say the bill essentially legalizes discrimination and opens the door for a broad range of consequences.

“This legislation gives state approval to discriminate against others. It sends a terrible message not only to people currently living in Virginia, but also sets an unwelcoming and hostile tone to people and businesses who might be considering relocating to the Commonwealth,” said Del. Sam Rasoul, D-Roanoke.

Rasoul said the law would mean businesses and organizations could be denied licenses and grant funding simply because of the proprietor’s lifestyle.

The bill’s patron, Del. Todd Gilbert, R-Woodstock, said the bill is critical to protecting the religious freedom of Virginia residents, which he feels is under attack. The bill would prevent State agencies from denying grants, contracts, loans, scholarships and tax breaks to an individual or company as punishment for discriminating against gays, lesbians and those who have premarital sex.

“Traditional religious beliefs regarding marriage and gender are under attack in the current cultural climate,” Gilbert said. “We wanted to ensure that the fundamental American principle of protecting religious liberty is upheld and respected, no matter the prevailing



Above, Va. senators gather on the floor before session; Gov. Terry McAuliffe vowed to veto HB 773, which would prevent the government from penalizing organizations who deny services to LGBT individuals, if the bill passes the senate.

This legislation gives state approval to discriminate against others. It sends a terrible message not only to people currently living in Virginia, but also sets an unwelcoming and hostile tone to people and businesses who might be considering relocating to the Commonwealth.

— DEL. SAM RASOUL
(D-ROANOKE)

mood of society.”

Gov. Terry McAuliffe vowed to veto the bill if it passed the senate and reached his desk for approval.

Traditional religious beliefs regarding marriage and gender are under attack in the current cultural climate. We wanted to ensure that the fundamental American principle of protecting religious liberty is upheld and respected, no matter the prevailing mood of society.

— DEL. TODD GILBERT
(R-WOODSTOCK)

“The Governor will veto this divisive and distracting bill and then get back to work building a new Virginia economy that is open and

welcoming to anyone who wants to live, work or start a business here,” said the governor’s Communication Director Brian McCoy to the Washington Post.

Del. Mark Sickles, D-Fairfax, who is openly gay, teared up as he gave a speech on the house floor before the bill was passed.

“Apparently, some people in our Commonwealth feel threatened by the full equality of others,” Sickles said. “Today, I tried to point out that Virginia’s business community does not share these views and it will be difficult to market our natural advantages if such a law were ever enacted. Thank goodness that Governor McAuliffe would never allow this to become law.”

VCU PD used evidence from camera system in more than 1,000 cases, 300 arrests

ANDREW CRIDER
Staff Writer

VCU Police has used evidence from its expansive camera surveillance system in more than 1,047 cases, according to an announcement last Friday.

According to the announcement, the high definition evidence collection system has aided in the arrests of 337 individuals, issuing 435 warrants and disproven false reports 29 times. The system is designed by SyCom Technologies, an area IT company, and coordinates between the VCU PD, facilities management and technology service.

In 2012, VCU administration began collaborating with the police department to implement a \$2.6 million upgraded system. The system has been in operation since August 2013 on both the Monroe Park and medical campuses.

“Potential Criminals should know we’re watching,” said VCU Police Chief John Venuti. “A substantial investment was made for this system and I believe it has proven to be an effective crime prevention tool and a law enforcement tool.”

Venuti said he believes the camera system has contributed to the drop in robberies since 2013, in addition to helping solve crashes, hit-and-runs, larcenies, bike and auto thefts and assaults.

Last Summer, VCU police and SyCom were awarded the Michael Shanahan Award for Excellence in Public/Private Cooperation by the International Association of

Chiefs of Police.

“We’ve got 50,000 sets of human eyes and ears watching our campuses and the cameras supplement a community that is already very focused on keeping VCU secure,” Venuti said.

BY THE NUMBERS

The high-definition evidence collection system has aided in:

337 arrests

435 issued warrants

29 disproven false reports

246 examples of evidence shared with other agencies

(i.e. Richmond Police Department)

“The system has also collected 246 examples of evidence shared with other agencies, including the Richmond Police Department.”

Richmond Deputy Police Chief Eric English said the VCU system has helped the RPD fight crime downtown, in the Fan district and along the VCU corridor.

“We actually ask for (VCU PD) assistance in several cases we have,” English said. “We have actually been able to solve quite a few cases whether we have a description of a suspect -- their camera system has been very effective.”

According to English, the cameras have cultivated a better partnership between VCU and Richmond PD.

“They have been right on point they haven’t stopped us from using it,” English said. “We don’t have primary access to it, so we just ask for their assistance in pulling up video and and they have been nothing but amicable to our request.”

Faculty director for public outreach for the Commonwealth Educational Policy Institute (CEPI) at VCU Robyn McDougale recently briefed members of Virginia’s legislature on poll data compiled by CEPI, which stated the majority of Virginians view police favorably.

McDougale said each time a police department incorporates additional forms of technology, such as cameras, they enhance their ability to capture, process and potentially utilize new information in investigations.

“I think the VCU Police Department’s willingness to get invested and utilize this camera system is really one of the reasons we continually see (the department) as a model campus police department around the country,” McDougale said.

McDougale noted the increasing trend in deploying camera systems at other departments, and said she believes that VCU PD is ahead of that trend.

“Using that on our campus is really a testament to why (the VCU PD) are always forward thinking and at the forefront of campus law enforcement,” McDougale said.

According to McDougale, the enhanced police surveillance is no threat to student’s privacy.

Senate bill would keep police names secret

MEGAN CORSANO
Contributing Writer

A bill exempting law enforcement personnel from the Virginia Freedom of Information Act passed the Virginia Senate in a 25-15 vote last week.

The bill, proposed by Sen. John Cosgrove, R-Chesapeake, would amend the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, which grants the public access to records of posi-

tion, job classification, official salary or pay rate, and allowances or reimbursements for expenses paid to any officer, official or employee of a public body.

If passed, the bill would redefine, “the names and training records of law-enforcement officers personnel records and excluded from mandatory disclosure,” according to the proposed amendment.

The American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia has taken

a strong opposition to the bill, according to Bill Farrar, director of public policy and communication of the ACLU.

“(The ACLU) opposes it because we generally side with open government and accountability for people who serve in public office,” Farrar said. “Regardless of who you or are what kind of job you have. “If you’re being paid with taxpayer dollars, your name and salary in-

—continued on page 4

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THE
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NEXTGEN GOP and Richmond Young Professionals host student debt forum

ALEXANDRA JOHNSON
Contributing Writer

VCU senior Zachary Hogarth said he estimates he'll have around \$37,000 in debt when he graduates this May.

"I'm afraid I'm going to spend my entire life working to pay off just four years of college," Hogarth said.

Hogarth was just one of many attendees at NEXTGEN GOP and The Urban League of Greater

Richmond Young Professionals (ULGRYP) joint forum on student debt at the state Capitol who expressed concern about the post-grad realities of accumulating student debt.

The forum, hosted earlier this month, was titled "The Student Debt Crisis - The Crippling Effects on the Millennial Generation." The discussion allowed members of the General Assembly to explain what is currently taking place to help Vir-

ginians relieve their student debt.

In 2004, the average student in Virginia graduated with around \$16,000 in debt — in 2014, that number had increased to more than \$26,000, according to The Institute for College Access and Success.

Sen. Glen Sturtevant, R-Richmond, said he not only continues to write checks every month for student debt he accrued in law school, but that he expects to still be paying off debt when his three children

are fully grown.

"Referring to this as a crisis is accurate," Sturtevant said, cautioning, "there is no silver bullet" to fix the growing problem.

Sturtevant said he attempted to help current college students by presenting a bill that would cap tuition increases at twice the rate of inflation, but the bill died on the floor.

VCU President Michael Rao, who was also at the forum, spoke at length about the rising cost of

higher education and insisted efforts were underway to find ways to help students.

"Cost containment has to be on our list and it is on our list," Rao said.

Rao said there were complications involved with a large institution's budget, but the main focus should be to ensure the university is moving in the right direction.

"(VCU is) doing everything it can to move those dollars towards

the mission and to the people who are at the center of that mission," Rao said.

Rao also touted VCU's "Do the math" campaign, which began three years ago and encourages students to take 15 credits each semester. The campaign's stated goal is to graduate students in four years with the least amount of debt possible, and saving students up to \$50,000.

How can the media better cover mass shootings in America?

LOGAN BOGERT
Contributing Writer

Media coverage of mass shootings may contribute to increased frequency of mass shootings, according to an article published by VCU department of psychology assistant professor Paul Perrin.

Perrin's article published in the I think it's a fine balance. How you play the story, where you play it, whether you use the picture of the shooter or the picture of the victims — I think that a lot of people have some disgust about seeing a smiley-faced picture of someone who's carried out a heinous crime.

— JEFF SOUTH
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
ROBERTSON SCHOOL OF MEDIA
AND CULTURE

latest issue of American Psychologist and states media professionals' portrayals of mass shootings lead to "mass shooting contagion."

A report by Arizona State and Northeastern Illinois University

last July indicated that anywhere between 20 to 30 percent of mass shootings were inspired by other instances mass shootings.

In 2015 there were 372 mass shootings in the United States, according to the Mass Shooting Tracker. Perrin's research draws on the World Health Organization's 2008 guide entitled "Preventing Suicide: A Resource for Media Professionals."

The WHO advises that the media take the chance to educate the public by using language that does not normalize the behavior, avoiding prominent placement of the story, avoiding details and descriptions and provide information on where to seek help.

"Recently, a parallel body of evidence has begun to accumulate showing that the same process occurs in mass shootings," Perrin said. "That each mass shooting has been shown unfortunately to spur future shootings."

Perrin said that for years, psychologists and most media professionals have known that media reports of suicides have been shown to increase rates of suicide among populations viewing those reports.

Jeff South, associate professor and director of undergraduate studies in the Robertson School of Media and Culture, said he agrees the media should not sensationalize or glorify the shooters anymore than the media should glorify or sensationalize suicide or the people



who commit suicide.

"I think the media have to report something," South said. "The method of death certainly can be omitted to the point at least that you're not providing a quick-start guide for somebody else to do the same thing."

Perrin said there is a difference between supplying the public the information it needs and provok-

ing a tragedy.

In Perrin's conclusion, he states psychologists need to use this research to educate media professionals about the potential for an increase in mass shootings and ways to avert it by "down-playing, instead of sensationalizing, these tragedies."

"I think it's a fine balance," South said. "How you play the

story, where you play it, whether you use the picture of the shooter or the picture of the victims — I think that a lot of people have some disgust about seeing a smiley-faced picture of someone who's carried out a heinous crime."

Senate bill would keep police names secret

—continued from page 3

formation should be available to the public," Farrar said.

Farrar said no state or government official should be given exemptions from disclosure.

Sen. Cosgrove said he introduced the bill as a way to protect the safety of law enforcement officials following a court ruling allowing Virginia Beach newspaper the Virginian-Pilot access to names and employment details while investigating if law enforcement personnel were being shifted throughout other localities.

"It used to be that there was a healthy respect for law enforcement," Cosgrove said to the Associated Press. "Now they've become targets of opportunity."

Style Weekly reports that Sen. Chap Petersen, D-Fairfax, opposes the bill, and thinks it would allow corruption among police. Other opposition comes from the Virginia Coalition for Open Government.

"You're getting paid by the public. You don't get to do that in secret," said Megan Rhyne, executive director of the Virginia Coalition for Open Government.

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sports



STAT OF THE WEEK
Women's hoops held GW to 2-14 shooting from 3-point range in Saturday's 79-68 win.

The Rams dominate with three-straight home wins

—continued from page 1

“Attacking the glass was important man,” Alie-Cox said. “We killed them on the boards last time, and this time they tried to match up with our small lineup, which was a mistake. We were just out there working together.”

Johnson led all scorers with 20 points. The sharp-shooter can add one more tally to his billboard on I-64, with VCU also selling out its 82nd consecutive home contest.

“I set two goals this year,” Johnson said. “To lead the team to numerous victories and to break the 3-point record,”

Johnson said to be number one in any statistical category at a school like VCU is “big time.”

“God willing, I make one more over these next few games,” Johnson said. “It’ll be great.”

Rhode Island Rams

Another sellout crowd came out to see the Rams take on Rhode Island in what was another great night for VCU. The Rams defeated RIU 83-67 in a game where the score didn't reflect VCU's easy maintain of control throughout.

VCU shot 53 percent from the field, making for back-to-back games going over 50 percent.

Johnson had another big night, scoring 19 points and dropping off four assists. Senior guard Korey Billbury scored 14 points and grabbed four rebounds.

Head coach Will Wade was proud of his team's performance throughout.

“Big Mo was good, the young guys were great and I've got lot of faith in them,” Wade said. “Hamdy looked good out there. For the most part, some of our guys just needed opportunity and tonight we played well as a team.”

The Rams now stand 20-7 (12-2 in the Atlantic 10). VCU returns to action on Feb. 24 when they travel north to face George Mason University.



Sophomore point guard Jonathan Williams has seen increased playing time since the Rams started using a four-guard lineup. The Richmond native is shooting 44 percent from the floor.

PHOTO BY BECCA SCHWARTZ



Junior chemistry major Cathy Phang withstood the wind in preparation to be the first in line for the University of Richmond game Friday evening. Phang decked out her tent in holiday lights and treated herself with an air mattress.

PHOTO BY NANCY GABALDON

Welcome to Wade's World

NANCY GABALDON
Contributing Writer

Die-hard VCU fans endured the cold Thursday night in preparation for the last men's basketball matchup of the season against cross-town rival the University of Richmond.

Given the nickname “Wade's World,” students dressed in their long johns and set up tents as early as Thursday afternoon outside the Siegel Center to claim spots in line. Overall, about two dozen students camped out.

The Rams returned the love when head coach Will Wade and the players walked out of the Siegel Center with boxes of pizza to award their most dedicated fans.

“The University of Richmond is our rival here and there's a lot of friendly competition,” said VCU senior Summer Griffin. “A lot of students want to come out here to get the best seats tomorrow morning and get in line after we break down the tents in the order of who got here first.”

Griffin said she had been camping out with her friends since Thursday, and that it was her first time camping out for a game. She said as a loyal fan and member of the Rowdy Rams Board, she wanted to encourage

other students to come out and support the team.

Campers weren't going to let the cold weather or their class schedules stop them from supporting their team, either. Ram fans came prepared with ways to keep their spots in line while still attending class.

“A lot of people will just have someone save their spot,” Griffin said. “They will be in pairs of two and switch off if you have go to class, the bathroom or food.”

I love the Rams, I love basketball and I just thought it would be a fun experience.

— CATHY PHANG

The cold weather wasn't much of a complaint after sophomore Cathy Phang decked out her tent with air mattresses, heated blankets and Christmas lights. Black and gold streamers also hung around her tent which sported an American flag inside.

Many campers came up with fun and innovative ways to make the best of the situation.

“I love the Rams, I love basketball and I thought it would be a fun experience,” Phang said.

Baseball ready to hit the mound



Head coach Shawn Stiffler is entering his third year at the helm, with a 105-71 record.

ZACHARY JOACHIM
Contributing Writer

VCU baseball’s 2015 season ultimately concluded with the program’s deepest post-season after a second-half surge propelled the team to their most successful spring to date.

Head coach Shawn Stiffler, however, was not among those who were shocked at the team’s late-season success.

“Consistent growth is not just championships and super-regional appearances,” Stiffler said. “I think those things are what people see, but the program has been growing and trending in the right direction for years now.”

The 2016 season is now underway, with loads of talent returning from the squad that coasted through the Atlantic 10 Tournament and finishing last season 40-25.

The real turnover from 2015 will be evident in the pitching staff. The Rams graduated eight seniors last year and apart from former VCU star shortstop Vimal Machin, all were pitchers. Heath Dwyer and JoJo Howie led VCU in wins last year with 10 and eight — both are gone. There is not a single senior arm on the 2016 roster.

Center fielder and all-around stud Logan Farrar clinched VCU’s first A-10 Championship with a jaw-dropping, diving catch still accumulating views on YouTube.

Power-hitting third baseman Matt Davis wowed fans all season with his consistency at the plate; the then-sophomore had

a .312 batting average and .457 slugging percentage.

Freshman-phenom and pitching staff ace Sean Thompson went 6-3 with a 3.48 ERA, and came up clutch in pressure-filled innings down the stretch.

A Dallas Regional title and subsequent trip to the super-regional round of the NCAA tournament capped off a dream season for the Rams.

Meanwhile, Stiffler said he has no mind for last year, as the team prepares for the quickly-approaching 2016 season.

“It’s not the job of this year’s team to replicate what we did last season,” Stiffler said. “They are their own individuals and I think that’s the first thing this team has to figure out — their own identity.”

We’re more focused on our player’s growth as people, and we feel the wins will come from there.

—SHAWN STIFFLER
BASEBALL HEAD COACH

Returning stars such as Farrar and Davis will be the anchors of a veteran group of position players in 2016. Senior outfielders James Bunn and Jimmy Kerrigan led the Rams in on-base-percentage last year, and will aim to provide consistent production at the plate. Both Bunn and Kerrigan also boast blazing speed in the outfield and on the base-paths.

Junior slugger Darian Carpenter led the team with eight home

runs in 2015. Senior outfielder Cody Acker caught fire down the stretch last season and could have a break-out spring. This group’s leadership may prove to be the key to VCU’s success in 2016.

“I’m excited for some of these older guys to take the team under their leadership, more so than I am about the numbers they put up,” Stiffler said.

As a result, there is a high expectation for sophomore Sean Thompson. The 6-foot-3, 190 pound right-hander can expect the amount of innings and Friday-night-starts warranted by a true college ace.

Behind him, juniors Matt Jamer, Jonathan Ebersole, Sam Donko, Brooks Vial, Matt Oxner and Luke Crabb will be asked to share a significant innings load. Seven underclassman-arms could also contribute.

“I’m looking to see how the pitching staff shakes out and how roles fall into place,” Stiffler said. “Watching some of these young guys get an opportunity to pitch in big games is what I’m excited about.”

Four VCU players were signed to a major league organization last year and the team sported a 3.0 GPA this past fall. According to Stiffler, this type of growth is what his program focuses on more than wins and statistics.

“We’re more focused on our player’s growth as people, and we feel the wins will come from there,” Stiffler said. “It’s my job to make sure we are prepared, if we play well enough, to make a run like we did last year.”

GAME STATS			
	VCU	vs.	Kennesaw St.
score	15		11
hits	11		18
Win: Brooks Vial (1-0)			Loss: Chris Erwin (1-0)
	VCU		Georgia St.
score	8		6
hits	10		12
Win: Sean Thompson (1-0)			Loss: Garrett Ford(1-0)

INFOGRAPHIC BY DESIREE CHOE



Redshirt-freshman Kelly O'Brien was part of the first ever women’s lacrosse signing class. The Rams play George Mason at Cary Street Field on Feb. 24.

PHOTO BY AL JONES

Woman’s lax gets walked by the Retrievers, suffers rough loss

SOPHIA BELLETTI
Staff Writer

VCU women’s lacrosse suffered a tough loss to head coach Jen O’Brien’s alma mater University of Maryland Baltimore County in the program’s first ever road trip.

UMBC scored three quick goals in the first seven minutes to give them the offensive advantage to start the game. VCU redshirt-freshman midfielder Sky Hyatt took a free position shot in the 10th minute, making the score 3-1.

The Retrievers responded with another three-goal run before Hyatt netted her second goal of the day to get the Rams back on the board with a score of 6-2.

UMBC continued on a strong offensive run, connecting on 58 percent of its shots. The Retrievers ended the half with a 14-3 lead over the Rams.

Throughout the first half and into the second, the Retrievers used ball possession

and hard cuts to the crease to keep the offense rolling, but VCU struggled to establish an attack going into their opponent’s territory.

The start of the second half paralleled the first.

UMBC set the offensive pace with a goal in the first minute from junior midfielder/attacker Jennie Milligan.

Freshman attack Molly Barcikowski scored her seventh goal of the season after four minutes of play and the score came to 16-4.

Freshman midfielder Ryann Shaughnessy scored her second goal of the season after receiving a pass from redshirt-freshman attack Megan Williamson.

The final score resulted in the Rams falling 20-5.

Head coach O’Brien said while the team was disappointed on a lot of fronts, they are happy to have this learning experience so early in the season.

“We will only continue to improve and grow,” O’Brien said. “This is a wonderful opportunity to do just that. The beauty of our sport is there is another day and another game.”

UMBC outshot the Rams 35-10 and won 10 ground balls while the Rams won three. VCU found the net on 1/3 of its free position shots and went 6-8 on clears.

The Retrievers played tough at the dot and won 24 draw controls while VCU won three. UMBC’s sophomore midfielder Caitlin Miller, who led the America East Conference in draw controls last season, brought in a game high of seven.

“UMBC has a rich lacrosse history and I am proud to have played for such an amazing program,” O’Brien said. “It was good to be back on the field that holds such special memories for me. I look forward to helping our players create memories of their own.”

VCU returns home to Cary Street Field on Feb. 24 against George Mason, with game-time set for 7 p.m.

Women’s hoops reaches the pinnacle



The Rams are 19-8 (8-6 in the A-10) going into the final stretch of the year. Two games remain on the regular season schedule: George Mason on Feb. 24 and at Davidson Feb. 27.

ERIKA ROBINSON
Contributing Writer

Women’s basketball is looking to end the regular season on a high note after experiencing both jubilation and defeat on the road last week.

VCU beat George Washington for the first time in program history, with a final score of 79-68 on the road Saturday.

A week prior, the lady Rams lost 62-50 against the University of Richmond Spiders on Valentine’s Day. The Rams opened the game with great energy and got out to an early lead, but could not overcome the hot shooting of Richmond junior guard Janelle Hubbard, who ended the day with 22 points and two steals.

Senior forward Adaeze Alaeze led the Rams, who tallied a near double-double with 14 points, eight

rebounds, four assists and a block. Alaeze was helped by junior guard Ashley Pegram, who contributed 10 points and six rebounds.

Although VCU out-rebounded the Spiders 40-32, the Rams’ poor shooting proved too much to overcome. The Rams went 0-7 from the 3-point arc, whereas the Spiders made seven 3-pointers.

Looking to bounce back from a loss to their rival, head coach Beth O’Boyle’s team traveled to Kingston, Rhode Island to play their next game on Feb. 17.

VCU defeated Rhode Island in a low scoring game of 49-36.

Despite the low score, the game marked a career night for Junior guard Isis Thorpe.

While Thorpe’s output was lacking, she entered herself into VCU history by scoring her 1,000th career point. Thorpe ended the night with three points,

two steals and two assists.

Thorpe attributes the success to the, “three G’s.”

“Three G’s,” Thorpe said, “Goals come from grind and God.”

Although Thorpe may not have played her highest scoring game, her teammates gave her plenty of support.

Alaeze gave the Rams consistent play with her efforts, contributing again a near double-double with 10 points and eight rebounds.

Sophomore forward Curteona Breeleom gave the Black and Gold the extra surge they needed to overcome the Rams of URI by scoring a team-high 15 points and grabbing six rebounds.

The Rams are currently tied for fifth place in the Atlantic 10 Conference, with two games remaining on the regular season schedule.

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ON THIS DAY...
in 2014, Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman Loera is captured in Mexico. He was the kingpin for a large drug cartel.



The Depot presents: “Materie: Studies in Texture and Fracture”



“Materie” is on display at the Depot until March 6. The exhibit features undergraduate student work in the VCUarts kinetic imaging, sculpture, photography and film departments.

KRISTEN LAIR-BAKER
Contributing Writer

Student work focused on expression through rough-cut textures, interaction, photography and more are currently on display at the Depot Gallery through March 6.

“Materie: Studies in Texture and Fracture,” features pieces from students in various VCUarts departments including kinetic imaging, sculpture and photography and film.

Photo student Nicholas Seitz currently has work displayed both in “Materie” and at the Page Bond Gallery’s “View Find 4” exhibit. Seitz said being able to display his work at VCU’s Depot gallery is a great privilege.

“It’s such a wonderful mix of studios, exhibition space, classrooms, multimedia spaces, informal work spaces and area for presentations,” Seitz said.

“The gallery has very interest-

ing opportunities for installation with both a formal ‘white wall’ as well as the ‘raw space’ with the original brick of the building exposed.”

Seitz’s exhibition piece includes a collection of handmade paper embedded in brick and concrete dust. Still life images of brick and cinderblock, which Seitz said are the result of a semester’s work in the lighting studio, are spread throughout the installation.

Exhibitions at the Depot Gallery consistently integrate interactive works with simple displays, and “Materie” is no exception.

Some of the installations are displayed on computer screens where viewers have the option to click, drag or follow along a wide range of graphics, while others are in the “raw space” where the interaction with the art is less defined.

Photo and film major Mark Peyton utilized digital printing

of a deflated inner tube to visually show the texture in his work “The Tube.”

Although attendees cannot physically touch the 2D image, the print effectively depicts the theme of texture and fracture.

UPCOMING SHOWS AT THE DEPOT

- March 24 – April 3**
Undergraduate Fine Arts, Design and Kinetic Imaging Exhibitions
- April 8 – 24**
MFA Thesis Exhibition, Round 1
- April 29 – May 15**
MFA Thesis Exhibition, Round 2

Theresa Pollak Project celebrates life of VCUarts founder

SOPHIA BELLETTI
Staff Writer

For most students, the name “Pollak” means the VCUarts building with a rooftop garden across from Christian’s Pizza — but to others, the name identifies an important feminist figure who helped establish Richmond’s art scene.

The Theresa Pollak Project, a combination of installations, clothing and accessories and

eventually a book detailing Pollak’s life and accomplishments, aims to regain recognition for the seemingly-obscure figure who founded VCUarts.

“She changed the course of history in our town,” said Bridget Gethins, a co-founder of the Theresa Pollak Project.

Pollak founded what would eventually become VCU’s School of the Arts, the Richmond Artists Association and received ac-

colades from city and university officials. She passed away in 2002 at the age of 103.

Gethins and her partner Keri Wormald are feminists, historians and artists devoted to sharing the story of Pollak to inform Richmonders and students at VCU.

“I want a sense of pride in the city of Richmond, generally for being the city of arts that it has become as a result of this woman,” Wormald said.

Gethins said she took an interest in Theresa Pollak in the late 1980s after watching Pollak and her husband speak at a panel at the VMFA.

After attending the panel, Gethins said she started researching Pollak and visited the archives at VCU. Eventually, Gethins convinced Pollak to let her interview her.

Gethins said their interview was shot in Pollak’s apartment and lasted two hours and ten minutes. Pollak talked about her life, how she started the art school and her interests in modern art.

“It’s a city of art and I don’t think Richmond itself has done a great job of letting the world know that,” Wormald said. “An

interesting narrative is the best way to involve people and bring them in.”

The project hopes to soon publish a book including excerpts from Pollak’s papers and

first-hand stories about Pollak from her mentors, students and colleagues.

“We see this project as an autobiography/biography,” Gethins said. “We’re going to print her

words. We’re annotating it, talking to the people she mentions.”

The project is accepting donations online to support the publication of the book.



Theresa Pollak passed away in 2002 at the age of 103.



Theresa Pollak was an influential figure in Richmond’s art scene who is credited as the founder of VCUarts and was the vice president of the Richmond Artists Association from 1958-1959.

Chris Scholar maintains Virginia’s music mogul legacy

MUKTARU JALLOH
Staff Writer

Former VCU student Chris Scholar, who goes by the stage name Scholar, has created a noticeable buzz with his debut album “Language Arts.” Scholar opened for Mindless Behavior on tour and has been featured in respected industry publications including Fader and Complex magazine in recent months. Currently, he is working on his sophomore album “Director’s Cut.” Since the mid ’90s, a swath of popular artists have emerged from southern Virginia’s music scene. The first was Richmond’s own R&B singer D’Angelo, who released his debut in 1995 before going on to claim four Grammy awards and release a total of three critically-acclaimed albums. A decade later, Tappahannock’s superstar singer-dancer Chris Brown followed suit when he entered the music scene. Petersburg’s Trey Songz released his debut album in the same year as Brown,

and Songz has remained one of the most successful music artists to date with more than 7 million album sales worldwide.

My professor wasn’t going to let me make up the midterm (...) I was supposed to meet up with L.A. Reid and Jermaine Dupri in New York with Sony.

—CHRIS SCHOLAR

Now, another Richmond native has set his sights on maintaining the impressive lineage of record-breaking Virginia artists. Influenced by the time he spent in church, Scholar said he began singing at eight years old. By the times he began his freshman year at VCU, Scholar was taking his music seriously and had cultivated a loyal internet following.

When one of Scholar’s music videos caught the attention of legendary music producer Jermaine Dupri, an instrumental figure in the careers of artists including Usher and Mariah Carey, Scholar said he had to make a tough decision. “I was supposed to take a midterm that day and my professor wasn’t going to let me make up the midterm,” Scholar said. “I was supposed to meet up with L.A. Reid and Jermaine Dupri in New York with Sony.” Scholar said he considers the encounter his introduction to the music industry, despite the meeting not resulting in an official signing. Shortly after, Scholar said he decided to end his time at VCU so he could focus exclusively on his music. “For me, it was a character builder,” Scholar said. “In high school, you learn about yourself but in college, you become free so that’s what VCU did for me.” Scholar, whose older brother also attended VCU, said his decision to leave the university wasn’t

an easy one, and he is grateful for his time on campus. “I think colleges are the middle ground because you’ve got students who have little brothers and sisters and spread the music to them,” Scholar said. “They can also do the same to the older generations so I feel as though it’s the perfect medium to push your music through.” By noting the influence and impact college can have with his music, Scholar also promotes the importance of education with his music. This process started with the creation of his stage name, which he said is testament to his respect for anyone willing to learn and better themselves. “Music is my education,” Scholar said. “Whether studying artists who are currently hot or older artists — the scholar element is basically just taking all of this knowledge and putting into my music.” With his upcoming album slated for an early 2016 release, Scholar said his new work is unlike anything he’s released before. Inspired by legendary artists

Nina Simone and Charlie Parker, Scholar said “Director’s Cut” is symbolic of his work being a creation that strictly embodies his point of view. “Considering the fact that I’m not signed to a major label yet, I think this is the perfect opportunity for me to just say what I want to say,” Scholar said. “When you’re younger, you have a lot of people in your ear and you’re afraid of perception and how you’ll look. Now, as an artist whose grown, I’ve realized that you can’t compromise your art.” With his eyes set on more shows in the near future, the possibility of a major record deal and the impending success of his new album, Scholar said he sees no bounds for the trajectory of his career and he looks to embrace the energy he’s been surrounded by. “As millennials, there are no more categories for us,” Scholar said. “I don’t think I’m in a certain genre. I rap sometimes. I sing sometimes. I dance. I just think people are embracing individuality more than ever before.”

Ram Reverb: “THE LIFE OF PABLO” BY KANYE WEST

JOSHUA BUCK
Contributing Writer

Normally this column is reserved for smaller releases, but this week I really couldn’t listen to anything other than Kanye West’s latest, “The Life of Pablo.” For the next couple hundred words, I’m going to set aside the incendiary and alarming behavior that West has exhibited over the last couple weeks, because stripped of this, “The Life of Pablo” is a fascinating example of art in flux. West has repeatedly referred to himself as this generation’s Walt Disney, which would make “The Life of Pablo” Kanye’s “Fantasia.” Just as Disney’s original plan for the concert film was to have it constantly changing with sequences added and removed and new collaborators joining the fray, TLOP remains unfinished. For better or worse, previously-released songs appear here in radically different forms. “Wolves,” which once featured Vic Mensa and Sia, now seems weaker with those participants’ verses swapped for a Frank Ocean outro. On the flip side, last fall’s “Fade” has transformed from its underwhelming low-key original incarnation and into a blistering house track. West himself has said that “Wolves” and several other tracks from the album are still being tinkered with, which is not surprising given the fact the album’s track list itself has publicly changed numerous times in the days leading up to its release. The album that hit Tidal wasn’t even sequenced the same as the one that played at its launch less than 72 hours prior. What’s happening here is a relatively unprecedented look into a major artist’s creative process. Tidal has referred to this as a “partial” version, with a final version set for release any day now — but it could be truly thrilling if that day doesn’t come at all. What if the album is never actually finished? Perhaps the previously released, highly touted Paul McCartney collaborations “All Day,” “Only One” and “FourFiveSeconds” make an appearance. Perhaps the back half of “30 Hours” transforms from a set of ad-libs into a third verse. The album as it stands is a masterpiece, but it could become transcendent by never standing still.

SOUNDS LIKE:
An R rated version of Inside Out

PERFECT FOR:
Feeling simultaneously vulnerable and invincible

Afghan Student Organization hosts film screenings and more

ADRIEL VELAZQUEZ
Contributing Writer

A student organization dedicated to providing a home away from home for students from the Middle East has been hosting movie screenings featuring explorations of Afghan culture. The Afghan Student Organization screened “Frame by Frame” in the Student Commons Theater earlier this month, and plans on hosting similar screenings in the future. “Frame by Frame” captures the essence that Afghanistan is a misunderstood, war-torn country with people, just like us,” said ASO president Aneil Tawakalzada. The 2015 documentary, directed by Alexandria Bombach and Mo Scarpelli, follows four Afghan photojournalists as they navigate an emerging and dangerous media landscape while reframing Afghanistan for the world and for themselves. The film includes intimate interviews, powerful photojournalism and never-before-seen archived video footage. “Frame by Frame” gives our members and the VCU community a sense of awareness as to what sort of impact the Taliban and other terrorist groups have had on the people of Afghanistan,” Tawakalzada said. Tawakalzada hopes the film will educate and help remedy the disconnect some students may have with the people of Afghanistan. “Being across the world and

sometimes limited to only being knowledgeable about what is shown in the media, it is easy to lump a whole group of people into ‘terrorism’ without fully understanding the situation in that country,” Tawakalzada said. The ASO is currently looking into acquiring the licensing for the 2010 film “The Black Tulip,” directed by Sonia Nassery Cole. Unlike “Frame by Frame,” “The Black Tulip” is not a documentary, instead depicting the fictional Mansouri family, who start a restaurant in Kabul. The film focuses on Farishta, a woman who runs the cafe which serves locals and members of the U.S. military. This angers the Taliban, who begin kidnapping and assassinating family and friends of the cafe. “The Black Tulip” and “Frame by Frame” share a common thread, though. The theme: terrorism does not affect only Americans. The ASO also hosts many fundraising events throughout the semester, including an event at Pie Five on Feb. 27 from 4 to 10 p.m., and an intercultural pageant in March. The organization donates 100 percent of the proceeds to Aid Afghanistan for Education, a non-profit organization that builds schools to help educate underprivileged women and children. To learn more about the Afghan Student Organization and their future events, visit their website or Facebook page.



The Afghan Student Organization hosts events year-round to raise awareness on campus and fundraise for various charities, including Aid Afghanistan for Education.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY THE AFGHAN STUDENT ORGANIZATION

Shaferbird Feature

Shafer Bird is part of the Mesh Media Network, a division of VCU Student Media. The Shafer Bird team works to bring the VCU community menu updates and original content, including reviews of on- and off-campus restaurants. www.shaferbird.com

Foo Dog for Thought [Japanese and ramen bar]

“Overall, Foo Dog strikes the balance of good service, prices and food that’s hard to find. For those who always wondered what a bowl of actual ramen tastes like, not just the packaged stuff, this is your chance to try.”

— NICOLE CAREY



PHOTO BY NICOLE CAREY

Foo Dog on Main St. allows customers to customize ramen bowls, and regularly hosts karaoke and trivia events.

what’s happening RECSports VCU

program details, rates, and locations at recsports.vcu.edu

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[Mar 16 register by 3/11]
- Lifeguard recertification**
[Mar 19 – 20 register by 3/18]
- U.S. Master’s Swimming**
[registration ongoing]
- Adult Swim Lessons Session 2:** Feb 29 – April 4
[register 2/15 – 2/26]
- Adult Private & Buddy Swim Lessons**
[registration ongoing]

- Wintergreen Day Ski Trip**
[Feb 20 register by 2/16]
- Day Cave**
[Feb 27 register by 2/23]
- Spring Break Trip to Utah**
[Mar 5 – 11 Cost: \$450]
- Day Hike**
[Mar 20 register by 3/15]
- Principles of Self Defense**
[Feb 24, Feb 25 or Feb 29]
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VCUarts students unhappy with facility conditions

SAMUEL GOODRICH
Contributing Writer

VCUarts students across different departments have expressed frustrations with the state of their learning facilities' sanitary conditions, including mold growth, and lack of adequate working space and resources for artists.

"A lot of the 'tables' we have to use in the classrooms at Franklin Terrace are just rolling carts with loose planks of wood on top of them," said Sarah Butler, a communication arts major. "Many of the stools have broken or unstable legs, or are too short or tall to sit comfortably at the tables."

Communication arts department chair Robert Meganck said the department is aware of the issues many students have expressed regarding the facilities.

"The physical plant has tried to address the problems we've had with mold," Meganck said. "Regarding our program, we have not been able to address the limited amount of space, the need for another lab and the need for larger classrooms to accommodate the size of our program."

Meganck said he brings all

issues he is made aware of to the VCUarts dean's office.

"We are constantly searching university resources to locate a more suitable space," Meganck said.

Ajee Heartsfield, a senior music major, said the department has a

A lot of the 'tables' we have to use in the classrooms at Franklin Terrace are just rolling carts with loose planks of wood on top of them.

—SARAH BUTLER

problem with students sneaking in and using the facilities, therefore leaving a deficit of practice space for music students.

"As music majors, we are expected to put in hours of practice a day, yet it's a struggle to even find a practice room," Heartsfield said.

Daryl Harper, the department of music chair, said that while no students have come to him recently, he does follow student comments

from course evaluations each semester and is aware of concerns expressed through that forum.

"Students can and do come to me, they can report to the administration in the music offices, or they can notify faculty," said Curt Blankenship, the music department's facility manager.

Celia Delahunty, a communication arts major, said she feels she's not being accommodated for her chronic disability, which she turns in the appropriate forms for each semester.

"I still have professors asking me to drop their classes," Delahunty said. "I feel that it's not fair how they only address my disability when it isn't bad and blame me for missing classes when I'm sick so often."

Delahunty said she has tried to speak with the program coordinator of communication arts, but has had to leave notes with her contact information for the communication arts coordinator multiple times.

"She hasn't answered my emails all semester, but all my professors expect her to know everything about the school which leads to them not helping me," Delahunty said.



AFO, art education, communication arts and kinetic imaging courses are taught at Franklin Terrace, but some students are frustrated with the lack of work space, resources and mold.



TheatreVCU feels the vibration

"In the Next Room" tells the story of Dr. Givings' wife Catherine, who is sexually restricted while her husband uses his vibrator invention to treat women for hysteria upstairs.

—continued from page 1

owned or thought about, or should think about."

As the show unfolds, Catherine, the protagonist and wife of Dr. Givings, is dissatisfied with the sexual performance of her husband while simultaneously intrigued by the clinical work he conducts the floor above their apartment.

Catherine notices that Dr. Givings' invention and use of the vibrator to treat women for hysteria and other ailments is met with much success upstairs while she is restricted in her sexual freedom just a floor below.

"I'm not the kind of person to get uncomfortable with these kinds of topics, I like to have fun with these kind of things," said Denver Crawford, the actor who plays Dr. Givings in the show. "Working on a show where I get to give multiple women many an orgasm is both frightening and a lot of fun."

Crawford credited Powell's direction for keeping the show focused, mature and intelligent.

Powell similarly said she was impressed by the great maturity and enthusiasm of VCU's actors.

"This is a cast of people, most of whom I'd never met before ... and the maturity level was astonishing," Powell said. "These are actors who will jump on the bed and have the orgasm."

Powell said the show goes beyond the shock value of its sexuality, however.

Working on a show where I get to give multiple women many an orgasm is both frightening and a lot of fun.

—DENVER CRAWFORD
DR. GIVINGS IN "THE VIBRATOR PLAY"

"There are gender issues, but it's not about heterosexual love," Powell said. "It's about women but it's also about men. It's really talking about that kind of all-encompass-

ing need ...and I think that's what makes the play very modern."

Powell said she was happy with the intellectual discussions she had with the cast about the social implications of their character's actions, and the importance of telling this story.

The play's sound director, Katharine Fraser, was the person tasked with creating the sound of the two vibrators used onstage.

"I had to look up so many different kinds of vibrators," Fraser said. "My search history is disgusting right now. I did some field recordings of real vibrators so that I could understand how the sound changed when it touches flesh versus when it's in the air."

The show promises to an experience full of social commentary, uncomfortable laughter and revelations about human sexuality and desire that, despite taking place in the late 19th century, are still applicable today.

"Oh, my parents are coming the show," said Katie Cairns, the assistant stage manager. "They're super excited about it."

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opinion

SGA funding policies harmful to students

HANNAH HUDDLE
Contributing Columnist

One year ago, I voiced my frustration with the SGA's approval process for student club funding, and I was astounded by the number of people who approached me to say they'd experienced similar issues.

While I was optimistic at the beginning of this school year, the SGA is yet again failing to schedule funding hearings to decide which student clubs will receive money, often less than a month before organizations need to know how much money they have to travel for events.

Although the SGA appropriations committee was doing better about seeing student organizations in a timely fashion in the fall semester, those elected to help their peers have begun failing them once again.

Cosplay Club is still waiting to be reimbursed more than \$800 from fall travel. We are also still waiting to hear back about travel funding for the Spring Convention, which is less than 30 business days away. We submitted our request Jan. 1, but I was told on Feb. 17 in an email that we will be seen within the next two weeks.

We are unable to use money we fundraised to pay for a room because we are still waiting for the reimbursement of more than \$800 from our trip in November, which is intended to cover the cost of hotel rooms for Katsucon.

Having a student body approve

club travel has continued to harm the very students they are aiming to help. It is also frustrating that those who are elected by students to help students will not give them any leniency despite annually changing policies, though they do nothing to speed up the process of the SGA.

Having a student body approve club travel has continued to harm the very students they are aiming to help.

Last year, the Cosplay Club at VCU was fortunate enough to be allotted some of the year's last available funding to travel to Katsucon, an anime convention at the National Harbor in Maryland.

Although the funding hearing wasn't until January — less than a month before the event — we managed to receive SGA approval just in time. This year, the club was approved to travel to the same event in the fall. Aside from the usual paperwork, a separate request form had to be submitted to the SGA 30 business days before the event as well.

Because all students traveling are required to have a 2.5 GPA or higher, our club waited to submit our paperwork until fall semester grades had been processed. The office we had to submit forms to was closed

over winter break and students went home for the holidays, so we turned in the required liability waivers on the first day of spring classes.

To our dismay, we were denied travel and therefore unable to use the \$1,088 the SGA gave us for the event. I was informed by the person in charge of paperwork that it would be unfair to make an exception because she had denied other clubs who were in the same situation. The fact that there were multiple organizations in the same situation only shows how serious of an issue this was.

We were also not able to re-apply for the money the SGA gave us to use toward future travel. In other words, the SGA gave us money, but by function of the funding process that money is unusable. We were not able to apply for the full amount to even cover hotels for a final event we wanted to travel to later this spring.

I do not have a problem with deadlines. What I do have a problem with is how time and time again clubs are penalized while the SGA leaves students hanging without an answer — directly affecting their wallets and planning for months.

I do not have answers, and am too busy arranging events for my club in addition to school and work, but something is in dire need or restructuring. Every year, more clubs are pushed away from using the funding they are entitled to as students who pay fees for club enrichment.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Unlike food, uterus are not intended to be regulated by the government — they belong to the human being they are attached to.”

— Emily Himes

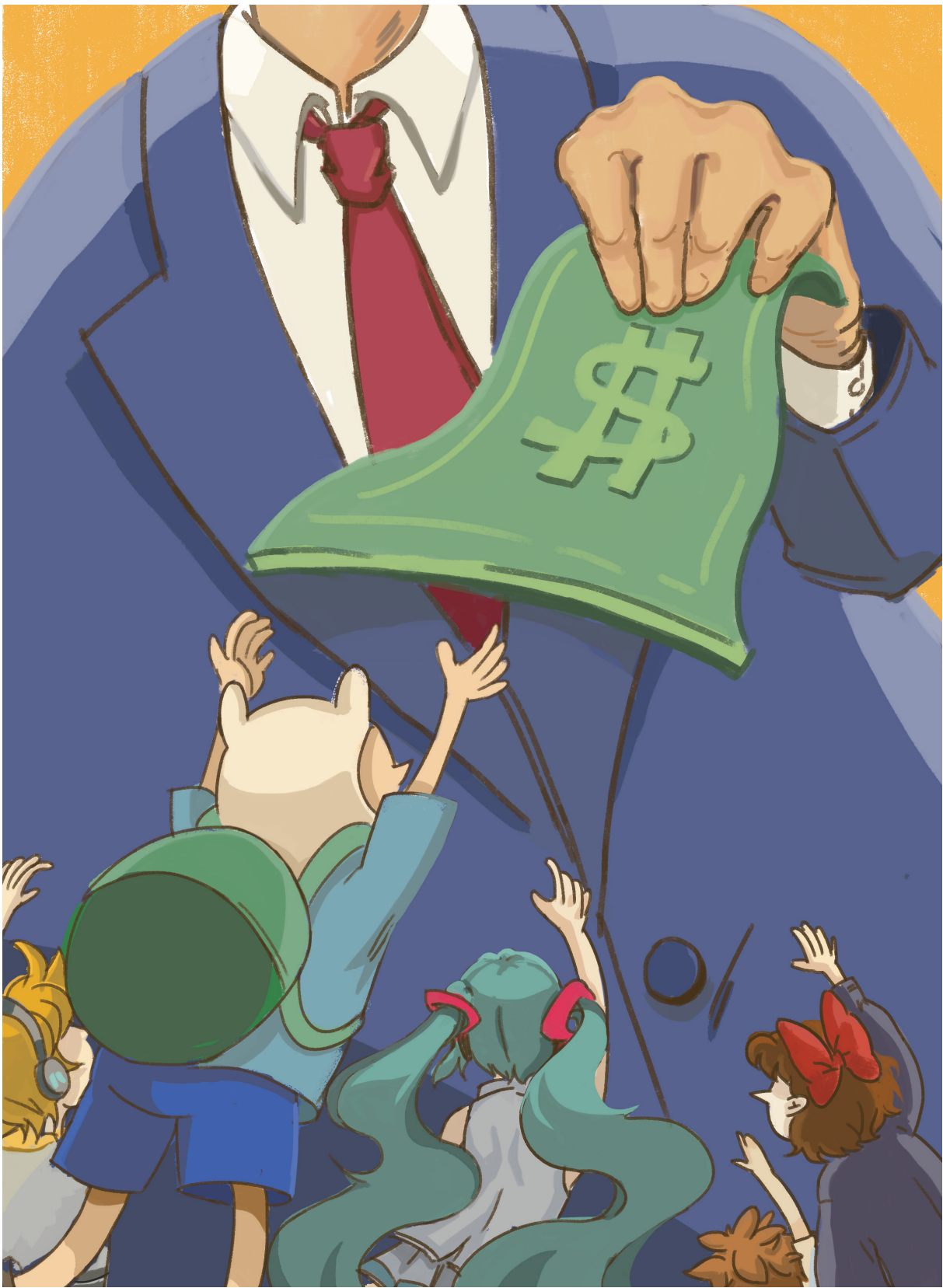


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ILLUSTRATION BY MEGAN JAMES

Women don't need your blessing

EMILY HIMES
Contributing Columnist

Reproductive rights for women are a constant source of debate amongst older, white, male officials. Politicians frequently deliberate, behind closed doors, the circumstances under which it is or isn't okay for women to have and enjoy sexual intercourse.

False and baseless claims about abortion and birth control seem to permeate these disputes before sweeping across the nation — ultimately creating hazardous conditions for women.

Two current examples: the recent CDC announcement warning potentially pregnant women about fetal alcohol syndrome, as well as the about an indefinite pregnancy ban in many Latin American countries due to the Zika virus epidemic. It wasn't the core information in these articles that really struck me, but the very intentional subtext.

The Center for Disease Control, a highly respected government institution, put out an infographic that listed risks that accompany drinking for women. This list included STDs, susceptibility to violence and unintended pregnancy, along with the explicit instruction to not enjoy both sex and alcohol at

the same time if birth control is not involved.

The CDC seems to have forgotten three things:

One, it is common knowledge that drinking when you're pregnant or trying to get pregnant is harmful to your fetus — the warning is required to be printed on all alcoholic drinks.

Placing unfair and unrealistic restrictions on vaginas is not what women mean when they tell men to “go all out” on them.

Two, alcohol does not cause STD's, pregnancy, or violence; men and women without self control do.

Three, women do not live their entire lives around the possibility of becoming pregnant — our function on this earth is not solely to reproduce.

The CDC isn't the only party guilty of viewing women as incubators.

Latin American countries, such as El Salvador and Columbia, have proclaimed unbinding

bans on pregnancy until at least 2018 due to the widespread Zika outbreak. The catch is that, due to a heavy Catholic hand, birth control is largely unavailable and abortion is strictly illegal in these countries. Women are just supposed to not have sex, regardless of relationship status, until 2018.

While Latin-American countries are experimenting with new ways to prevent the virus from spreading, they aren't focusing on the ones the virus is affecting: women.

Playing Dad and sending out a no-sex-order works just as effectively with Zika as it does with curbing teen pregnancy — not at all. The reality is women are just like men in that they will do what they want with their bodies, and if that means they want to have sex — they're going to have sex.

Feminists worldwide have shared their outrage regarding both situations, and rightfully so. Women can not, and will not, live solely to give birth; we do not prescribe to the “what if” lifestyle when it comes to our reproductive systems.

Unlike food, uterus are not intended to be regulated by the government — they belong to the human being they are attached to. Placing unfair and unrealis-

tic restrictions on vaginas is not what women mean when they tell men to “go all out” on them.

Instead of pretending sex is a primarily reproductive deed, why can't we drop the religious act and do what's best for our people and give them birth control? The United Nations has stated abortion is a human right, so why can't governments accept that? You don't “agree” with abortion so you're going to force a woman to birth a child with microcephaly? You want to please the Lord so badly that you won't let young women prevent the pregnancy you're going to shame them for?

Women don't need a reason or a waiver to drink or stay sober, to have or deny sex, to keep or expunge a pregnancy. It's our body, and therefore our personal choice. That's as far as the debate should go.

We can no longer use faith-based, spiritual rhetoric to support an outdated pro-life agenda or justify creating a dangerous environment for females by denying them birth control.

Save the speeches, the lectures and the sermons on the immorality of abortion and sex out of wedlock for your prayers.

It's 2016, and I cannot believe we still have to protest this.

Flint's Republican Crisis

—continued from page 1

from the fact that Governor Snyder is a Republican. Consequently, leading Democratic candidates to place themselves on the front line to express how terrible it is that ‘no one is outraged by this.’ People ARE outraged, just not those whose outrage would aid these candidates’ accusations of negligence.

Regardless of how candidates decided to speak out about Flint, neither has kept quiet about how this is entirely the fault of the Republican Party, rather than the actions of one member. Whether it's Clinton calling the Republican Congress’ inactions immoral or Sanders calling

for Snyder's resignation, the spotlight is now on the GOP.

GOP candidates have, in fact, been vague. When asked about the crisis, Marco Rubio simply responded that he was not briefed on the issue and therefore could not comment. He also added that this “is not the issue that, right now, (they've) been focused on.” The New York Times reports that Donald Trump has simply refused to comment on the issue.

The silence from the Republican candidates regarding this crisis simply proves that the candidates do not care about the people or the issue. In a time when people's lives are at stake and an injustice has occurred, the GOP has shown a whole lot of politics and not nearly enough humanity; this is not leadership.

If there had been a Democratic Governor in Michigan, would the Republican candidates have spoken

up? Would the Democratic candidates still have been silent on the issue, or busy pointing fingers?

These question may arise again soon as the city of Chicago is also experiencing a similar issue of elevated lead levels in their drinking water. Their Governor, Bruce Rauner, is also a member of the GOP.

For candidates who are so used to asking the question of “Where is the outrage?” we must ask not where the outrage is, but rather, where their morality is.

So, presidential candidates, if you're going to use these suffering people to get more votes, they deserve your help. If you're not going to address the injustice that has happened here, they still deserve your help. Millions of dollars raised for your campaign mean nothing if you can't spare a case of water.

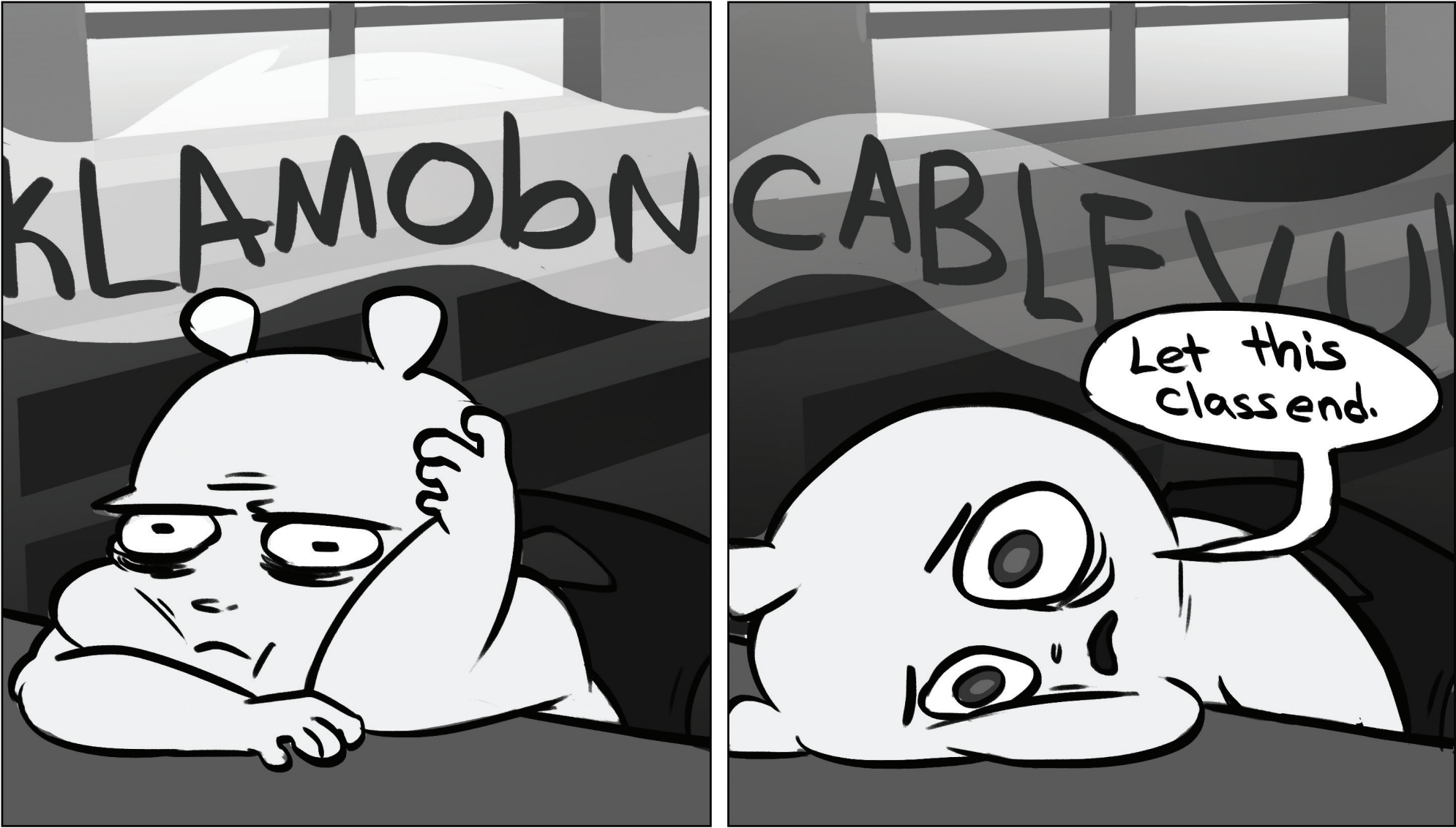


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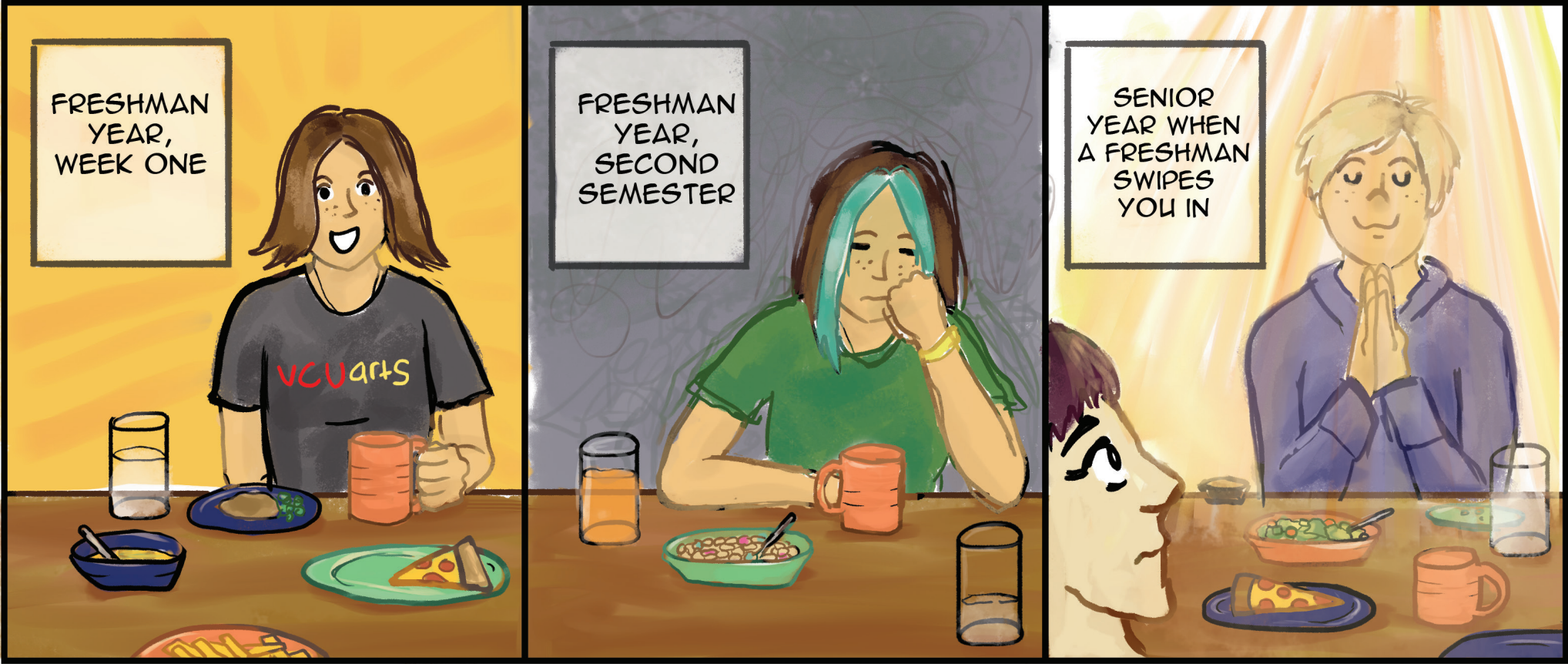
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