



THE BASKETBALL ISSUE

FINAL CHAPTER



Redshirt-senior guard Marcus Evans and coach Mike Rhoades are in their last season together. Photo by Alessandro Latour

From Rice to VCU, Rhoades and Evans make no excuses

NOAH FLEISCHMAN
Sports Editor

THEY STEPPED OFF THE PLANE in Columbia, South Carolina, last March and something felt different: Coach Mike Rhoades and redshirt-senior guard Marcus Evans were in town for the NCAA tournament.

The two looked at each other. No words were said, but the message was clear: “We made it.”

Evans and Rhoades had talked about this moment since their days at Rice and had finally achieved the goal of making the big dance.

It was a long road to the tournament — especially for Evans, who overcame two Achilles tears and a postseason injury — but their goal was fulfilled.

Now, after four years on the court and about six of knowing each other, Rhoades and Evans are entering their final season together.

RICE

After being recruited by VCU when Rhoades was an assistant in Richmond, Evans followed him to Rice after Rhoades received his first Division I head coaching job.

When Evans arrived in Texas, he and Rhoades set a goal.

“I told him we were going to play in the NCAA tournament and I said that when we were at Rice,” Rhoades said. “From our first day at Rice ... that’s what we were pushing towards and we were getting closer.”

Evans had a breakout freshman season for the Owls, being named C-USA Freshman of the Year and First Team All-C-USA. He followed up his freshman season with another All-C-USA selection his sophomore year.

“We threw him in the fire as a freshman at Rice and said that we were going to build a program at Rice on him and his class,” Rhoades said.

VCU

When Rhoades accepted the job to coach the Rams, Evans said the team at Rice knew he was leaving for his dream job.

For Evans, who followed Rhoades to Richmond, it was a chance to play closer to home and for a coach who had been by his side since the beginning.

“I was up in the air about where I was going, but I knew I kind of wanted to be closer to home and I wanted to play in a program that was making the tournament,” Evans said. “As I went throughout the process, it kind of made sense that VCU checked all those boxes.”

Playing in the Siegel Center last season was not the first time Evans stepped foot on the floor on the Rams’ home court. The two met on the floor of the Siegel Center during Evans’ sophomore year of high school at a team camp.

“He had a lot of energy,” Evans said. “It was early in the morning and he was hyped up so I knew he was a crazy guy in a good way. I just knew he was a guy that a lot of players connected with.”

ONE AFTER ANOTHER

The Chesapeake native transferred to VCU after his sophomore season and had to sit a year per NCAA transfer rules. During his redshirt season, Evans tore his left Achilles, but he used the year to recover and didn’t miss a game.

In June 2018, Evans tore his right Achilles playing pickup basketball, putting in jeopardy the beginning of his junior season.

“It was now he was going to miss games,” Rhoades said. “All he wanted to do was play and put on a VCU uniform, he was so excited to do that. That really took everybody for a loop, but man he came back so quick and he didn’t miss a game.”

To everyone’s surprise, Evans returned for the Rams’ season opener last year against Gardner-Webb, a mere five months after his injury. He played nine minutes and logged 9 points in the contest.

Evans said the support from Rhoades took off the pressure to return to the floor.

“The biggest thing he did was giving me reassurance,” Evans said. “I was fighting so hard to get back for the first game, and he just kind of helped take the pressure off of me basically, saying ‘take your time, we’re going to be fine.’”

Rhoades said Evans leaned on his faith, his family and the team to return so quick last season.

See **EVANS** on page 6

“To beat Marcus Evans, you’ve got to kill him.”

Stories of the week

NATIONAL: A federal judge refused to dismiss the City of Chicago’s lawsuit against actor Jussie Smollett, who claimed to be a target of a hate crime.
INTERNATIONAL: CNN reported at least 11 people died in Chile over the weekend following violent protests regarding living costs and inequality.

UndocuRams gather for 'I Stand With Immigrants' Day, supporting undocumented VCU students



UndocuRams model their T-shirts reading "I Stand With Immigrants," which they gave out during Tuesday’s event. Photo by Wessam Hazaymeh



Students wrote messages on sticky notes in support of immigrants at the Compass during Tuesday’s event. Photo by Wessam Hazaymeh

HANNAH EASON
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After immigrating to the United States at eight years old, VCU senior Yanet Limon-Amado is advocating for the rights of undocumented students. She founded UndocuRams, a community support group that aims to secure financial aid for undocumented students at VCU. The group is raising money for a community-based scholarship for undocumented students at the university. “We just really don’t know what’s

going to happen next,” Limon-Amado said of the current political climate surrounding immigration. “If we can do something, even at a really grassroots level, it’s something being done.” Tuesday was the fourth annual “I Stand with Immigrants Day.” UndocuRams participated — along with more than 185 colleges and universities across the country — with an event in the Compass that gave attendees the option to write why they choose to “stand” with immigrants. In November, the Supreme Court will begin hearing oral arguments to weigh the legality of the Trump administration’s decision to terminate the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, also known as DACA.

of people don’t know,” Pasche said. “They think that we get handouts and free tuition when in reality we don’t get in-state tuition, and we have to pay out-of-state tuition.” To offset tuition costs, UndocuRams is raising the money for two \$1,000 scholarships; each will be given to undocumented students next semester. The group has raised more than \$500 so far. Limon-Amado says the establishment of a scholarship was one of her proudest moments since starting the organization. “It’s all community,” Limon-Amado said, “which is even more beautiful.” This semester, the University of Virginia began providing financial aid to in-state undergraduate students with DACA status.

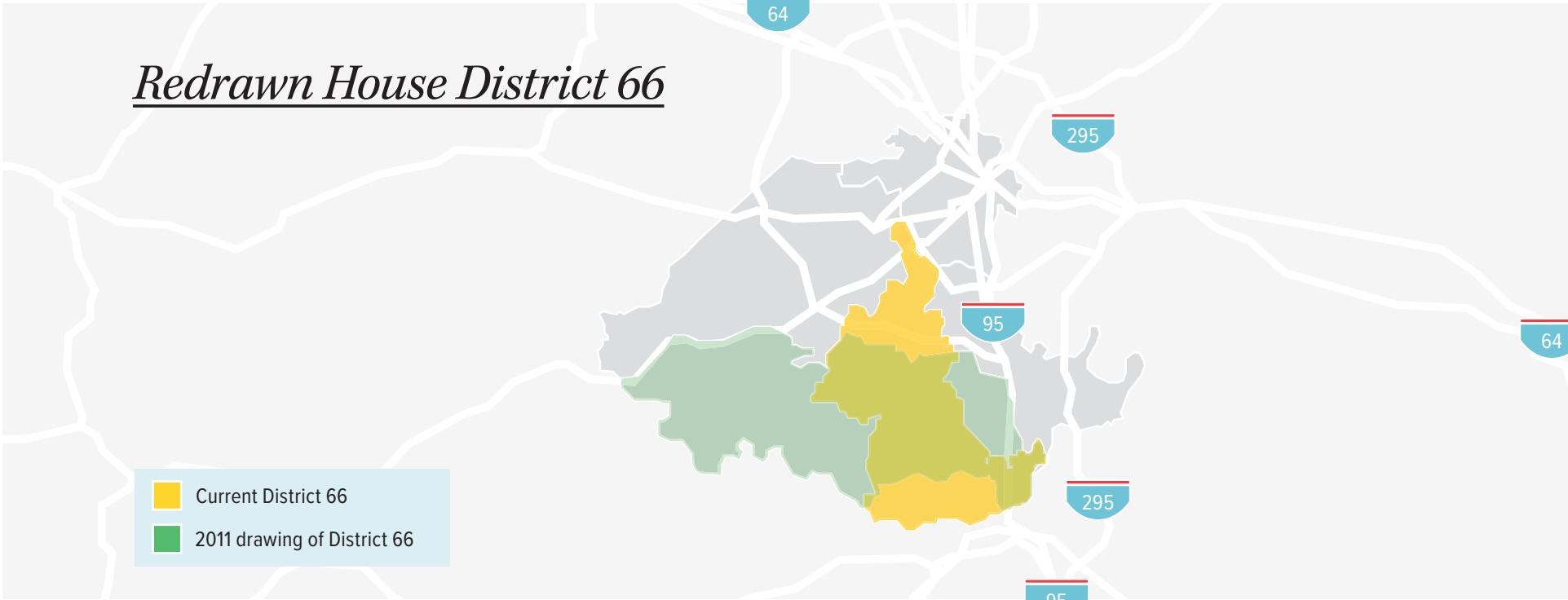
According to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, it is up to individual universities to decide admission policies for undocumented and DACA students, the Daily Progress reported. “If they can do it and they are super conservative, then there’s no reason for basically a liberal arts college that’s super progressive not to be able to do it,” Pasche said.

“

We just really don’t know what’s going to happen next. If we can do something, even at a really grassroots level, it’s something being done.”

Yanet Limon-Amado,
UndocuRams founder

Part of UndocuRams’ activities includes talking to the VCU administration about the “daily life” of undocumented students, Pasche said. First-generation college student Luis Hermenez said he came to the “I Stand With Immigrants Day” event to promote his culture. “We are out here to promote the immigrant part of VCU,” Hermenez said. “All of us that come from immigrants, such as my family and I, we’re just out here trying to promote our families, promote us as a culture.”



Infographic by Andy Caress

Alumna outraises Va. House Speaker in 66th District

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POLITICAL SCIENCE ALUMNA SHEILA Bynum-Coleman outraised Speaker of the House of Delegates Kirk Cox — her opponent in the race for the 66th District — by more than \$200,000 last month thanks to large out-of-state donations.

According to campaign finance reports filed with the Board of Elections, Democrat Bynum-Coleman raised \$436,814 in September with 304 donations, and Republican Cox raised \$195,339 with 183 donations. Independent candidate Linnard K. Harris Sr. raised \$504 last month, totaling four donations.

Last month, Bynum-Coleman surpassed Cox with out-of-state contributions totaling \$344,925. The top two donors were Everytown for Gun Safety, an anti-gun violence group — which donated \$126,000 — and Emily’s List, whose mission is to elect pro-choice Democratic women. The group donated \$125,000.

Bynum-Coleman’s largest in-state donation was from Michael Bills, a multi-millionaire who is now the largest individual campaign donor in Virginia and has vowed to donate money to candidates who are not accepting money from Dominion Energy.

Cox raised \$14,000 in out-of-state donations in September. Cox’s largest out-of-state contribution derived from the Asian American Hotel Owners Association based in Georgia, which gave \$5,000.

His largest in-state contributions were from the Virginia Automobile and Truck Dealers PAC with \$20,000, and Altria Client Services LLC with \$15,000.

As of Sept. 30, total donations for the campaign season for Cox and Bynum-Coleman totaled more than \$1 million each, with Harris raising almost \$11,000.

Cox will be defending three decades of incumbency after illegal gerrymandering caused some Virginia districts to be redrawn, including his own, making a victory for the Republican uncertain.

Now, Bynum-Coleman and Harris have a shot at unseating Cox in the Nov. 5

election, according to the Virginia Public Access Project, or VPAP. For 29 years Cox has held the 66th District, but after it was redrawn for being illegally gerrymandered to concentrate black voters, the Republican-leaning district has shifted party favorability by 32 points.

Bynum-Coleman says social media, mail lists and donations nationwide have been driving her campaign.

“We’re knocking on a lot of doors and we have a very large grassroots campaign,” Bynum-Coleman said.

On June 26, 2018, Democrats in the House won a lawsuit against district maps made by the Republican party, which found 11 districts were racially gerrymandered. This resulted in 25 districts being redrawn, including the 66th.

The race for House seat 66 has become one of the most competitive races in the state; if Cox does not win the election, he will no longer be the House Speaker.

If the election flips the majority party in the House, Virginians could see the first Democratic Speaker of the House in 19 years.

Cox, a former history teacher in Colonial Heights, was unanimously voted the Speaker of the House in January 2018. According to his website, Cox has focused on providing aid to veterans, active-duty military and their families, creating jobs in Virginia and supporting Virginians with disabilities.

Madelyn Purcell, a resident of Cox’s district and VCU alum, believes Cox has a good chance of winning the race thanks to his history in the district.

“I just think that he has done an awesome job,” Purcell said. “I remember him always being involved and actually caring about the issues for this district and really taking people’s thoughts and suggestions to heart.”

Cox’s stance against the legalization of marijuana is one issue Purcell does not agree with.

“With everything that’s been going on with the counterfeit THC carts, it’s time for the government to step it up and make it legal and regulate it,” Purcell said. “That’s the only way that people aren’t going to die and you’re going to be able to control what is put in there.”

Cox did not respond to three phone calls and two emails requesting comment.

Bynum-Coleman said criminal justice reform, gun violence and

healthcare were the most polarizing issues in her district during this election.

“Virginia has a very latent and egregious problem with incarcerating children of color in schools and the numbers in which we incarcerate black adults,” Bynum-Coleman said.

Independent candidate Harris is fighting for more accessible benefits for disabled veterans and providing resources for the homeless population, like transportation to and from shelters.

“It takes forever for disabled veterans to actually get their disability,” Harris said. “The first time I tried to get my benefits it took two years. ... It shouldn’t take that long

to make a decision.”

His website says he supports tax reform that will “protect the middle class,” affordable healthcare and better pay for teachers and police officers. Harris said he believes the Second Amendment should be upheld, with the exception of assault weapons.

“I would first start by taking the assault weapons out of peoples hands, period,” Harris said. “I’m not trying to take handguns or take the right to defend yourself or your family away from you. I’m willing to defend my family too, but I’m not going to walk around with an assault rifle on my shoulders or sit on my porch with an assault weapon.”



(R) Kirk Cox



(D) Sheila Bynum-Coleman



(I) Linnard K. Harris Sr.

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Men’s basketball season ticket price raised by 5%

NILE MCNAIR
Contributing Writer

The men’s basketball season starts Nov. 5 in a game against St. Francis, but attendance could be affected by an increase in the price of season tickets.

Prices for season tickets increased this year from \$475 to \$499 per ticket. Kevin Jackson, associate athletic director for external operations, says the reason for the increase is the one additional home game this season.

All season ticket purchases require a donation to the Ram Athletic Fund, and different donation amounts determine access to special seating, A-10 and NCAA Tournament ticket availability, away games and special events.

“Season tickets revolve around donations to the Ram Athletic Fund, all those donations allow you to sit in a certain area,” Jackson said. “Afterward, the ticket price is the same price no matter where you’re seated in the arena bowl.”

Benefits associated with season tickets include pregame areas with food and beverages for some ticket holders based on donation amounts.

“Another main benefit with us being downtown is that season ticket holders are the only ones who can buy a season-long parking pass,” Jackson said. “They’re either parking at one of the surface lots next to the building or the Bowe or Broad street parking decks.”

Many men’s basketball fans think that home games are some of the biggest events the city has to offer, including VCU alumnus Nicholas Hooks.

“There isn’t much that Richmond has to offer so a lot of people seem to [be] at VCU



Season tickets rose by \$24 to \$499 this season, due to an additional home game. CT file photo

“

I wouldn’t buy it for the price of it. I understand it’s your school and as ... alumni you’re supposed to support, but for \$500 a season ticket is a bit overpriced.”

Elisha Dukes, VCU student

basketball for that local entertainment,” said Hooks, who graduated in 2018.

A price increase in season tickets has some holders questioning if season tickets are worth it.

“I wouldn’t buy it for the price of it,” said Elisha Dukes, a VCU junior. “I understand it’s your school and as ... alumni you’re supposed to support, but for \$500 a season ticket is a bit overpriced.”

Season tickets guarantee the chance to experience the men’s team in action every time they play at home. Alumnus Joshua Towne says this experience is one of the main reasons he got his season tickets this year.

“I got my tickets due to my friends going to games, and I missed that school spirit that VCU gives,” Towne said.

There was a total of 5,000 season tickets before they were put on sale in July. Currently, there are less than 400 season tickets remaining, and that number is dwindling.

If the remaining season tickets aren’t sold, they will be broken down and offered as individual game tickets. Single-game tickets went on sale Oct.16.

To purchase tickets, visit vcuathletics.com/tickets, call the ticket office at 804-828-RAMS or email tickets@vcu.edu.

Virginia DMV increases staffing as Real ID deadline approaches

JIMMY O’KEEFE
Capital News Service

After noticing his driver’s license was set to expire, Loudoun County resident John Akins paid a visit to the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles on Friday. This time he obtained a Real ID-compliant driver’s license — a new requirement for many Americans.

Virginians have until Oct. 1, 2020, to acquire a Real ID-compliant driver’s license or ID if they would like to travel by plane or access certain federal facilities. As the deadline approaches, the Virginia DMV has increased staffing at customer service centers.

“We’ve had more than 700,000 Virginians already receive a Real ID,” said Matthew Butner, a Virginia DMV spokesman. “The main driver I think is the air travel piece.”

It is optional to acquire a Real ID, but federal agencies will not be able to accept non-Real ID licenses or IDs after next year’s deadline. Access to Transportation Security Administration security checkpoints will require either a Real ID or a passport for domestic and international flights. Some military bases already require a Real ID for access.

The Real ID Act, which was passed by Congress in 2005 at the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission, establishes minimum security standards for state-issued IDs, such as driver’s licenses.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, the security standards

required for the Real ID itself and the process of obtaining it include: “Information and security features that must be incorporated into each card; application information to establish the identity and immigration status of an applicant before a card can be issued; and physical security standards for facilities where driver’s licenses and applicable identification cards are produced.”

Akins, a computer engineer, said he knew Real ID is intended to provide an increased level of security when traveling, but that the look of his new driver’s license and the process for obtaining it weren’t drastically different than the previous procedure.

“This process wasn’t unlike any other time I’ve renewed my license, although obtaining a Real ID-compliant license required an in-person visit to the DMV,” Akins said. “I was surprised to see that the only discernible difference between my original driver’s license and the Real ID license was a small solid black circle with a star in the center, in the upper right corner of the license.”

To meet the demand for the new IDs, DMV has increased staffing at service centers. The organization also has expanded its mobile outreach program, which travels throughout the state providing Real IDs.

“We also have added DMV Connect teams, which are doing a ton of work for us,” Butner said. “These are two-to-three person teams, they have a laptop, a camera, and a signature pad and they can go out and do any DMV transaction other than testing and vital records.”

DMV Connect teams typically go to places that lack easy access to DMV



Virginians have until Oct. 1, 2020, to acquire a Real ID-compliant driver's license of ID to travel by plane or access certain federal facilities. Photo courtesy of Capital News Service

customer service centers, such as rural areas. Recently, teams have been working in densely populated areas where customer service centers are already busy.

Earlier this month, Gov. Ralph Northam announced the state has been issuing Real IDs at all Virginia Department of Corrections facilities to formerly incarcerated people.

“We are fully committed to ensuring returning citizens have access to the support they need to successfully reintegrate into society,” Northam said in a press release. “Having identification that is Real ID-compliant will be a valuable tool in reducing recidivism and helping them start out on a positive path upon release.”

Butner encourages Virginians who still need to obtain a Real ID to do it sooner than later.

“We are seeing increased wait times, and that’s just simply due to the volume of customers that are taking advantage of Real ID,” he said. “It’s only going to get more crowded as we head towards Oct. 1, 2020 ... don’t wait until the last minute.”

Obtaining a Real ID requires the following:

- One proof of identity and legal presence
- Two proofs of Virginia residency
- One proof of social security number
- Current driver’s license, if seeking to obtain a Virginia driver’s license for the first time.

Stat of the week

Men's basketball was ranked No. 25 in the AP preseason top-25 poll on Monday.



Freshman guard Bones Hyland was the highest-rated recruit VCU signed since senior guard De'Riante Jenkins in 2016.

Photo by Alessandro Latour

After a life-altering house fire, Bones Hyland draws strength from losses

RYAN GRUBE
Staff Writer

WHEN HE SMELLED THE SMOKE, Bones Hyland was lying on his bed, watching the Kansas-Duke Elite Eight game on his laptop and FaceTiming a teammate. That Sunday, which he spent with family and friends like any other, Hyland's Wilmington, Delaware, home was engulfed in flames.

He had to act quickly as black smoke filled the house. Hyland was forced to jump out of his second-floor bedroom on March 25, 2018, as his grandmother and two baby cousins remained trapped inside.

Although a neighbor and his friend were able to catch the top half of Hyland's body, his right knee slammed into the brick stairs below.

Hyland's grandmother and cousins were rushed to nearby hospitals, where his "Mom Mom," Fay, and cousin Maurice later died.

The months that followed were some of the toughest times for the freshman guard. Doctors feared his playing career could be over, and he couldn't stop thinking about the losses to his family. He couldn't even bring himself to attend his grandmother and baby cousin's funerals.

Luckily for Hyland, he was only diagnosed with a torn patellar tendon. But, the six-month recovery process still took a toll on him.

"They [the doctors] came back into where I was in the room, and they said it was going to be six months, and I broke down," Hyland said. "When they told me

that, I broke into pieces because it was the game I loved."

Hyland said his determination powered him through his recovery. The idea of not returning to his old form never crossed Hyland's mind.

"Just being able to bounce back from that, and get back on the floor when people thought I was done, it proves a lot," Hyland said.

Hyland's first return to the court was a memorable one. He showed out in an event he hosted called Tressi Day, a streetball game named after his group of friends, at Prince's Park in Wilmington.

Hyland called the experience a huge stress relief because the fans who attended weren't expecting him to suit up.

"It felt really good out there. There were a lot of people who came out," Hyland said. "It was just like a surprise — I came out and I played. It felt like I was myself again."

Hyland has used the tragedy to improve himself on and off the court. He said the fire and its aftermath gave him a better outlook on life.

"It made me become a better man because it helped me visualize things better, as far as what I was doing and what I was playing basketball for," Hyland said. "It really helped me grow and become more mature, and just help me become a leader."

A few months later, in September 2018, Hyland narrowed his list of colleges to seven. Hyland committed to the black and gold on June 4. Listed as the No. 64 ranked player in the 2019 class by 247Sports, Hyland became VCU's highest-ranked recruit since senior guard De'Riante Jenkins in 2016. For

Hyland, the decision to pick VCU was an easy one.

"I came on a visit, and it was just the love and the energy they had towards me," Hyland said. "I had almost every school in the country contacting me, but VCU always stayed around and always stayed loyal to me."

There's no telling what Hyland's ceiling is for the black and gold, or what his exact

“

It made me become a better man because it helped me visualize things better, as far as what I was doing and what I was playing basketball for.”

Bones Hyland, freshman guard

role will be for Rhoades this season. But, if one thing is for certain, Hyland will be playing for his grandmother and cousin whenever he is on the floor.

"I actually got a tattoo just as a reminder for them. Every time it feels as if I can't go anymore, I look at my tattoo," Hyland said. "That's the reason who I am doing it for. They're just always in my heart."

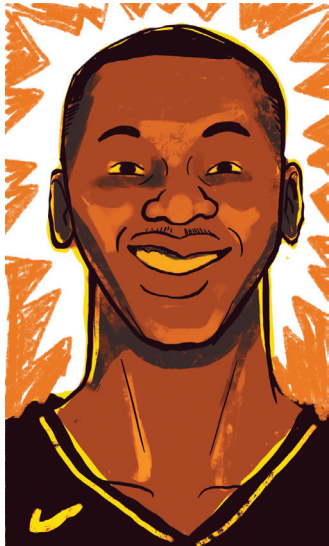
MEET THE PLAYERS

This season’s men’s basketball squad brings experience and youth to the Siegel Center

ADAM CHEEK
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TRENTON FISHER
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Illustrations by Sammy Newman



DE'RIANTE JENKINS
0 - SENIOR G

Jenkins heads a returning class of nine players, with the senior guard coming off a season in which he started all 33 games. The 6-foot-5 Jenkins racked up 20 double-digit scoring games and led all black and gold players with 63 buckets from beyond the arc. His average of 11.3 points makes him a solid player to have on the floor at any time — he’s started all of the Rams’ 66 games since he was a sophomore.



MIKE'L SIMMS
1 - SENIOR G

The Richmond native returns for his third season of play with the Rams. The 6-foot-5 guard has appeared in all 66 games since he arrived at VCU. He scored double-digit points four times last season, including 15 in 18 minutes during the Rams’ Dec. 30 win over Rider.



KESHAWN CURRY
11 - SOPHOMORE G

After the Jacksonville, Florida, native made 15 appearances off the bench for the Rams in their 2018-19 campaign, he’s solidified his place on the roster as a solid shooter and a quality guard. Curry’s season-high 8 points in December came off a 3-for-3 shooting day from the paint, and he racked up a shooting average well over .500 in almost 30 attempts. Look for Kyrie Irving-esque antics from the guard who wears the same number as the NBA star.



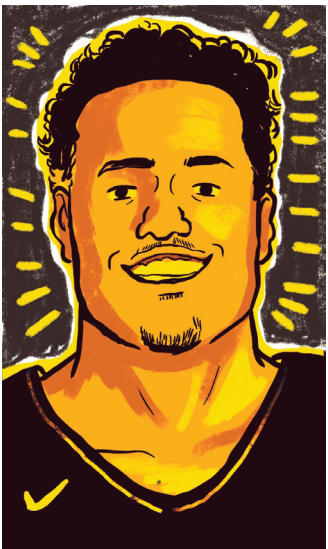
TRE CLARK
12 - FRESHMAN G

One of four freshmen on this year’s team, a combo guard, Clark brings dynamic scoring ability and adds depth to VCU’s roster. Following his breakout summer of 2018 playing AAU, recruiters began to notice Clark’s skill. During his senior year in Covington, Georgia, playing at Newton High School, he averaged 20 points, six rebounds, and three steals. He led his team to a 22-8 record and a run in the State Tournament..



MALIK CROWFIELD
13 - SENIOR G

Last year, Crowfield averaged 3.7 points and 1.6 rebounds and shot a team-best 37.6% from 3-point range. He posted double figures on four occasions, including his best game against cross-town rival Richmond, where he finished with 14 points. His development over the past three seasons has seen an already gifted shooter expand his skillset. His biggest asset is the sneaky athleticism he poses at 6-foot-4 and his ability to drive to the basket at any time.



MARCUS SANTOS-SILVA
14 - JUNIOR F

In 2018 Santos-Silva proved to be the Rams’ most improved player. Starting all 33 games, he also posted double-double numbers a team-high six times. One of the most skilled left-handed players in the nation, Silva’s rebounding ability and his excellent passing make him one of VCU’s key players.

EVANS

After adversities, the Rhoades-Evans duo begins their final chapter

Continued from front page

“When you have adversities like that, you have to lean on something,” Rhoades said. “For him to be ready and be even stronger this year it’s just an acknowledgement for him to know that hey, ‘I got through a lot of stuff, we can do this and now we can do it together.’”

Evans played in all 33 games last season despite being in recovery from the Achilles injury for most of it. Just when he was almost 100%, he got injured again, and this time it was his knee.

In the Atlantic 10 tournament against Rhode Island, Evans rose up to attempt a layup and came crashing down to the court. His screams silenced the Barclays Center in Brooklyn as training staff tended to him.

The injury was diagnosed as a deep bone bruise and hyperextension, but it was painful for Evans to put weight on his knee.

Less than a week after he sustained the injury, Evans suited up and played in the NCAA tournament against UCF.

“In the A-10 tournament when he went down, I really thought it was a major knee issue,” Rhoades said. “He wasn’t 100% in the tournament, but just to see him fight back and say ‘We’re going to play in the tournament together, coach’ was a tribute to him.”

Evans wore a padded knee brace in the game he worked toward his entire collegiate career, playing 26 minutes and recording 6 points.

“It was hurting from the jump, damn near every step I was taking,” Evans told The Commonwealth Times in March. “But we worked so hard to get to this point, I wanted to try to give whatever I had to help this team win.”

‘TO BEAT MARCUS EVANS, YOU’VE GOT TO KILL HIM’

If nothing else, Evans and Rhoades have one thing in common: competitiveness, as individuals and with one another.

For Evans, it’s winning every play at practice like it’s a game, Rhoades said. For Rhoades, it’s his persistence and dedication with everything he does, Evans said.

“Everything he does, he wants to win — he wants to beat you,” Rhoades said. “I always say to beat Marcus Evans, you’ve got to kill him because he’s going to keep coming at you.

Rhoades’ dedication is just like the players’ on the court, Evans said. It’s easy for them to connect with Rhoades because he has the “fight in him” like the players do.

“He’s a guy you kind of have to give some respect for because in his way, he’s not going to be told no, he can’t do it or his way doesn’t work,” Evans said. “In his mind, if he believes in his team and the system he has, it doesn’t matter what the media says.” Rhoades has not kept Evans on a leash

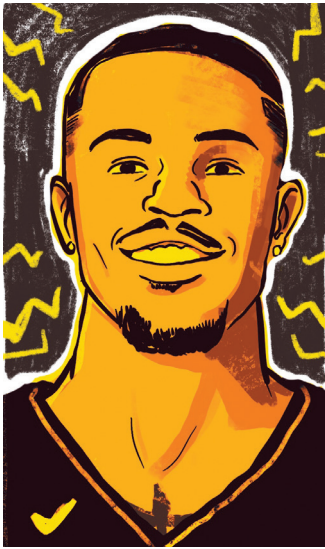
at all during their time together. Instead, he allows him freedom on the court, which Evans said helped him grow as a player.

“I think after that it was kind of understanding,” Evans said. “I knew the level of trust he had for me, and I knew what he expected from me.”

The trust and freedom that Rhoades bestowed to Evans in their first two years together resulted in Evans scoring 1,000 points before coming to Richmond.

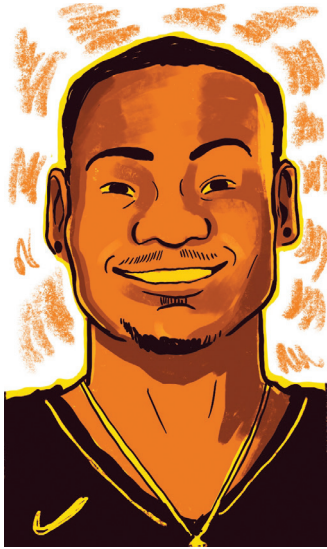
Although Evans suffered multiple injuries last season, he fought through both and accomplished the goal of making the NCAA tournament that he and Rhoades set for themselves years ago. For Rhoades, it demonstrated his attitude and coaching philosophy of not making excuses for anything.

“You go through a lot of tough ups and downs, and we did it at Rice and we did it at VCU,” Rhoades said. “But we’re going to make no excuses, don’t complain about it, just keep finding a way — and we made it.”



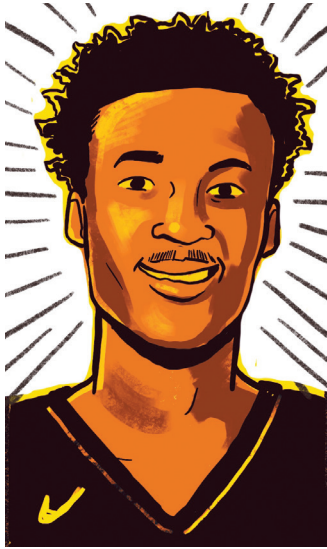
MARCUS EVANS
2 - REDSHIRT-SENIOR G

The comeback story of 2018, Evans bounced back from two Achilles tendon tears — barely a year apart — to lead the Rams to the Atlantic 10 tournament and an NCAA tournament berth. Evans was named to the All-A-10 Conference First Team, averaging 13.6 points, 3.2 assists and 1.9 steals last season. He drained at least 20 points five times on the season and had four or more steals three times. Keep an eye on that No. 2 jersey. Fans will be seeing a lot of it this year.



COREY DOUGLAS
4 - JUNIOR F

The 6-foot-8 Louisville, Kentucky, native is the second-tallest player on the roster, and he makes the most of his height advantage. A prolific shot blocker — he led the team with 51 last year — Douglas made 10 starts in 33 appearances, shooting .511 from the field. He continues to play under Mike Rhoades after beginning his college hoops stint with Rhoades at Rice. Douglas produces well off the bench and is a quality starter. Expect him to start more games on the floor in 2019-20.



NAH'SHON "BONES" HYLAND
5- FRESHMAN G

Hyland is a four-star recruit who arrived in Richmond electing to play for VCU over suitors such as UConn and Boston College. The Wilmington, Delaware, native averaged almost 30 points in his junior and senior years at St. Georges Tech and led his team to the DIAA Boys Basketball Tournament semifinals. Hyland's impressive resume also features his title of 2019 Delaware Player of the Year and two selections to First Team All-State.



VINCE WILLIAMS
10 - SOPHOMORE F

A southpaw sophomore from Toledo, Ohio, made an immediate impact last season. Williams' 34 steals ranked third among all VCU players, and he drained a season-best 13 points against Charleston in December. Three of those steals came against rival Richmond in March, and Williams added 6 points, five assists and five rebounds for an impressive slash line. The three-time Toledo Blade Boys Player of the Year led St. John's Jesuit to a 90-17 record during his high school career.



ARNOLD HENDERSON VI
15 - FRESHMAN

Henderson didn't have to travel far to find a good collegiate fit for his skill set. A Richmond native, Henderson averaged 10 points as a senior at St. Christopher's and made 34 3-pointers for the Saints. He converted on 88% of his free throws. As a preferred walk-on, Henderson will add depth to VCU's skilled guard corps.



HASON WARD
20 - FRESHMAN F

Another freshman, Ward, brings two high school state championship titles to Richmond all the way from Massachusetts. Last year as a senior at Springfield Central, Ward averaged 10.5 points, 6.3 rebounds and 2.2 blocks. His 7-foot-4 wingspan allows for an excellent set of skills on both sides of the ball. His elite shot-blocking ability will be one of the best attributes he brings to the Rams.



JARREN MCALLISTER
21 - FRESHMAN F

As a three-star recruit in 2018, McAllister was known for his high motor and athleticism. McAllister chose VCU over the likes of Virginia Tech, Wake Forest and others. Along with being a two-time all-state selection and 1,000-point scorer, he led Massanutten Military Academy to a state championship game appearance in 2017. His skills will fit in well with VCU's up-tempo system.



ISSAC VANN
23 - REDSHIRT-SENIOR F

As a 33 game starter for VCU last season, Vann posted 10.8 points, third-best on the team, along with about four rebounds per game and swiping 40 steals. He also posted double figures on 16 occasions. His physical style of play makes him a huge asset for VCU's rebounding ability. He also can connect from long range, making him someone every opposing team will have to plan for.

Rams in the Pros

ANDY RIDDLER
Contributing Writer

TROY DANIELS

Daniels enters his seventh season in the NBA and his first with the Los Angeles Lakers. He just finished a two-year stint with the Phoenix Suns where he averaged 8 points and shot almost 40% from 3-point range. He appeared in two preseason games this season and looked sharp for the new-look Lakers, averaging 9 points with two 3-pointers.

TREVEON GRAHAM

This offseason, Graham was part of a slew of deals that sent him to the Golden State Warriors and then to his current team, the Minnesota Timberwolves, the next day. Graham has a chance to start for the

Timberwolves on opening day after averaging 10 points and shooting 50% from 3-point range.

BRIANTE WEBER

After working out with NBA teams this summer, Weber opted to head overseas and sign with the Boulogne-Levallois Metropolitans in France. Through four games, he is bringing to them what he brought to VCU every time he put on the black and gold — hounding defense. Weber is averaging more than four steals per game so far, including two games in which he recorded five steals.

JUSTIN TILLMAN

In January, Tillman signed with the Memphis Grizzlies G-league affiliate, the Memphis Hustle. He appeared in eight games for them and averaged al-

most 9 points. Then, Tillman took his talents overseas this summer and signed with Hapoel Galil Gilboa in Israel. They have only played one game, but Tillman helped carry the team to victory by scoring 24 points on 12-15 shooting and 11 rebounds. He looks to be a key piece for them this season.

MICHAEL GILMORE

This summer, Gilmore found a new home to take his talents to after his return to VCU for his senior year: German professional team Phoenix Hagen. Gilmore is already making an impact for his new team with 11 points in 20 minutes against the PS Karlsruhe Lions on Sept. 28.

JEQUAN LEWIS

Lewis started for the Goyang Orions in the Korean league last year, where he averaged 14.5 points and 5.8 assists. He then

moved to Greece to play for Kymis where he averaged almost 13 points and 5.7 assists. At the end of August, it was announced that he was going to be joining his third team in less than a year when he joined PAOK in the same Greek league he was previously in. He is averaging 8 points and six assists so far with a game-high 10 assists in their first win of the season.

MO ALIE-COX

The continued growth of Alie-Cox is apparent with every snap he plays. He has become a dynamic run-blocking tight end for the Indianapolis Colts in his third year with the organization. Last year, he saw his first snaps during a regular-season game and was quickly making highlight-reel grabs, including a one-handed touchdown catch against the Oakland Raiders in his fourth career game. This year, he has logged four catches as the third-string tight end for the Colts.

Rams gear up for 2019-20 campaign

JOE DODSON
Contributing Writer

After posting the biggest turnaround in D-I last season, women’s basketball is still hunting for more.

Last season, the focus for the Rams was defense as they ranked nationally in multiple categories. But this offseason, the focus was on something else: offense.

“We always want to be really solid defensively,” coach Beth O’Boyle said. “We talk about wanting to be able to create chaos on the defensive side, and really play at a high intense pace on the offensive side.”

O’Boyle wanted her team to focus on raising their offensive numbers while maintaining their intensity on the defensive end. VCU ranked fourth in the nation in scoring defense, limiting opponents to just 51.1 points per game last season.

The Rams also held opponents to an average of 32.8% from the field, and just 25.5% from beyond the 3-point point line.

O’Boyle laid out a goal to have the most free-throw attempts in the league after the Rams shot 68% from the line.

“That’s something we’ve been working on a lot, from summer into the fall and now practice,” said O’Boyle. “Hopefully we see some improvement in the numbers on the offensive side.”

O’Boyle said another goal for the team this year is to work on developing a self-designed culture for the team. She also said the program is player-driven, meaning the players lead the team and its expectations.

Those expectations include winning the A-10 in both the regular and post-season, along with earning a trip to the NCAA tournament.

Last season, Tera Reed earned First Team All-A-10 honors after leading the team in scoring, averaging 12.5 points. O’Boyle has seen Reed benefit the team in other ways, too.

“She’s a player that has led us in scoring, but then can also rebound for us and help us a great deal on the defensive end,” O’Boyle said. “She’s just a multilayered player. She’s just gonna fill that stat sheet because she can do a little bit of everything.”

Despite having the best season offensively for the Rams in terms of scoring, Reed believes she has even more to offer this season.

“This year, I want to make all-defensive team, and all-conference first team again,” Reed said. “I want to get my average up scoring. ... And my rebounding has to get up.”

VCU struggled several seasons ago when it had one of the youngest teams in the conference. Now, the group is older and more experienced.

Senior center Danielle Hammond had the highest field goal percentage in the conference last year while averaging 10 points for the Rams. Junior guard Taya Robinson received A-10 Defensive Team honors last year, made the Third team All-A-10 and led the team in rebounds.

VCU only lost one home game last season, for which O’Boyle credits the fans and the Peppas. Reed feels an advantage when playing at the Siegel Center, which she has seen grow during her career.

“It’s home,” Reed said. “We’re used to it, we love it. ... Our fanbase is growing, it gives us confidence.”

That confidence will be necessary as VCU heads into a tough non-conference schedule that includes matchups against Seton Hall and Cincinnati. Reed views these games as a way to prepare for a potential NCAA tournament bid.

“It’s gonna be a real challenge, and we’re definitely looking forward to it,” Reed said. “It’ll help us in getting to the tournament.”

O’Boyle looks forward to conference matchups against Dayton, George Washington and Fordham, which beat VCU in the A-10 championship game last season.

“Every week, I love the idea of competing,” O’Boyle said. “In the A-10 we have some great natural rivals. When we play that school right down the street that’s always a big one for us.”



Senior guard Nyra Williams logged 134 points last season. CT file photo

Women’s basketball prepares to replicate last year’s success

RYAN GRUBE
Staff Writer

When women’s basketball entered the start of last season, no one knew what to expect from the 2018-19 Rams.

VCU was fresh off a mere seven-win season, but the squad was picked to finish sixth in the 2018 Atlantic 10 preseason poll.

While the Rams returned key pieces from a young 2017-18 team — including five returning freshmen — expectations were tempered for the black and gold prior to last season.

Now, as VCU heads into its 2019-20 campaign, all eyes are on head coach Beth O’Boyle’s crew.

The black and gold unleashed a 17-win improvement in 2018-19, earning the resilient bunch a share of the conference regular-season title with Fordham.

Junior forward Sydnei Archie says she and the rest of the team welcome this season’s high expectations.

“I feel really good about the direction the team is headed,” Archie said. “I think we had a good end of the season last season, and I think everyone is coming in hungry and ready to go.”

Archie and company will be looking to avenge a disappointing end to their 2018 conference tournament run — a journey that ended with a loss to Fordham in the A-10 Championship game.

O’Boyle, who was named A-10 Coach of the Year last season, said while their season was historic, they would have liked one more win to get to the NCAA Tournament.

“We had a great run, got all the way to the championship game, and then unfortunately came up short against Fordham to get that bid,” O’Boyle said. “It was an exciting year, and I was really proud of our team effort.”

Archie said the team is taking cautious measures to ensure they don’t replicate last year’s A-10 tournament finish.



Junior guard Taya Robinson averaged 9.9 points last season. CT file photo

“We’re just focusing on making sure our conditioning is up there, so we’re not burning out towards the end of the season,” Archie said. “Just remain strong so when that tough game comes at the end of the season, we’re all going to be ready.”

Archie is one of several juniors and seniors who make up a veteran-oriented roster for VCU this year. The Rams didn’t graduate any players after last season.

O’Boyle said the veteran leadership is essential for her squad, given what they would like to accomplish this season.

“It’s great all of a sudden to have juniors and seniors, the pace and the competitiveness that you have to come into practice

with,” O’Boyle said. “To accomplish anything great, we have to make sure that we’re being very consistent with that, and I think they’re really motivated to do that.”

The black and gold have been a popular pick to equal last year’s success. O’Boyle said her staff is working hard to make sure their win total carries over from last season.

“I think it’s really just a focus for us about our culture, and our players getting ready to practice really hard and intense so when we get to games, they’re easier,” O’Boyle said. “We just keep trying to put them in a position to make sure that we’re being really competitive.”

Archie says she has high hopes for the squad in 2019. The junior said she would like to see the Rams capture the A-10 title and advance to the NCAA Tournament.

As for anyone who says last season was VCU’s ceiling, Archie says the team is prepared to silence the naysayers.

“Just wait on it because this season, we’re not coming to lose,” Archie said. “We’re coming to go in and take whatever we lost last year.”

The Rams open the season at home against Appalachian State on Nov. 5 at 11 a.m.

A walk down the street:

How Hason Ward was introduced to basketball

BEN MALAKOFF
Contributing Writer

He was walking down the street in a country he had never been to, basketball in tow. That’s when freshman forward Hason Ward was spotted by someone in a white Lexus rolling past him down the Massachusetts road.

The car came to a stop after passing the 6-foot-9 Ward, and slowly moved into reverse.

The driver was Darryl Denson, Springfield Central High School’s basketball coach. Denson asked Ward who he played for and what experience he had. Ward was never on a team in his home country of Barbados. The family vacation to the U.S. ignited his basketball career.

“[Denson and my father] were just talking and talking and he came to the house a couple of times he got turned down,” Ward said. “And then he just kept coming back. Everything just went from there.”

Ward returned the following year, moving from Barbados to live with his aunt in Springfield, Massachusetts.

The idea of basketball stuck out to Ward, but he had never played on an organized basketball team growing up.

“When I first moved here, I basically didn’t even know what basketball was,” Ward said. “I just knew that I wanted to play basketball.”

Ward played for Central Springfield High School during his sophomore season, competing in the starting five.

The first practice was a shock for Ward. The drills made him tired, and Ward was not accustomed to being pushed this hard.

But Denson continued to make him work harder.

“He [kept] telling me ‘run to the court,’” Ward said. “‘Get the ball.’ I was surprised myself that I ran there. ‘Dunk it. Go back again. Dunk it.’ Coach looked at one of the players and said, ‘You think he will get accustomed to it?’”

Ward did, and he was known on the team as the dunker and shot-blocker, a title he earned after he blocked 22 shots in a single game during his junior year.

“That was an out of city game too, so they didn’t know who I was,” Ward said. “When they kept putting up the shots, I kept swatting it. And they just keep going and going, so I just keep swatting it.”

A career night for Ward started to put him on the map for D-I college recruiters. But he was still unsure about how the college recruitment process worked. When his first college scholarship was extended to him, Ward said he did not understand what the offer was.

“I was on the phone with the coach and he was just talking to me,” Ward said. “He’s like, ‘Yeah, so I’m offering you a full scholarship.’ I was like, ‘OK, thank you.’ And it just happened.”

It was Ward’s mom who helped him do the research and pick VCU from other offers, which included Georgia, Virginia Tech and Rutgers. She researched what each school had to offer, Ward said.

With the college basketball season right around the corner, Ward has settled into Richmond and has become close with his



Freshman forward Hason Ward moved from Barbados to the U.S. before his sophomore year of high school. Photo by Jon Mirador

teammates. Whatever they do, they do as a group, Ward said.

“[They] try to help me feel at home,” Ward said. “And I do feel at home, I feel like this is the place I was supposed to be at.”

Just over three years after picking up a ball and dribbling down the street in Massachusetts, Ward still has to do some walking down the road. Only now, it’s walking down Broad Street to the Siegel Center.


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On this day

In 2015, Adele released her single “Hello,” which became the first song in history with more than a million downloads in its first week.



Kevin Richardson, left, visited VCU on Tuesday to share his life experiences with the Richmond community in a lecture hosted by the Activities Programming Board and moderated by APB Lectures Co-Coordinator Barrett Miller. Photo by Jon Mirador

Member of the Central Park Five recalls ordeal, speaks on exoneration

IMAN MEKONEN
Spectrum Editor

Kevin Richardson, a member of the Central Park Five, visited VCU on Tuesday to discuss his life experiences in a lecture and Q&A hosted by the Activities Programming Board.

This group of five African American and Hispanic men, including Yusef Salaam, Antron McCray, Raymond Santana and Korey Wise, were wrongfully accused of the raping of Trisha Melli, a jogger in Central Park in 1989. The members of the group were exonerated in 2002 after a confession from Matias Reyes.

Richardson was the youngest of the group — at just 14 years old — when all five were accused of rape. He then spent more than five years in prison for a crime he did not commit.

The case was recently turned into a four-part Netflix series directed by Ava

DuVernay, “When They See Us,” which was nominated for 15 Primetime Emmy Awards.

Here are the highlights from the event’s Q&A that was moderated by APB Lectures Co-Coordinator Barrett Miller. Responses have been edited for space and clarity.

Richardson on the documentary “The Central Park Five” and the Netflix series, “When They See Us”

The doc broke down different things about how the ’80s was with racism and things like that. Netflix and “When They See Us” is a whole different piece. It’s on a whole other stratosphere because now, it’s reaching the youth. And Netflix — A lot of people watch Netflix you know, and it has grabbed their attention. And now, our story has become so relevant, and it was 30 years ago. People like my man here [Miller] and people that’s younger in age. They’re now connected

to it, and that’s a beautiful thing. So I think that it’s important to watch the doc and then come right out and watch “When They See Us.” There’s a lot of emotion with it, but I feel like it’s necessary to do so. So I love both of them. “When They See Us” wouldn’t be here without “The Central Park Five” in the beginning, so I love both of them.

On instilling change with the upcoming election

If we want to change, we have to vote. I know people say that and it’s so cliché. No, you don’t understand voting. ... Our forefathers ... lost [their] lives for us to vote. Before, women could not vote. People with a criminal record could not vote. The first time I got to vote, I voted for everything. School lunch, everything, because I was robbed of the opportunity. So, I think that there’s still hope, you know, and there has to be hope. It has to get better from what it is now. Because trust me, you don’t want to go backwards — backwards through time, if you get what I’m saying. You don’t want to go back, sort of like a slavery type of situation, and it’s kind of stemming that way. So I really think you need to vote, first and foremost.

If the prosecutors/accusers ever apologized after the exoneration

To answer that one quick for you — No. ... The prosecutors, the D.A. ... They didn’t think our story would come out. They’d never thought that we would arise from the dirt. So they didn’t want to apologize, but it’s okay. Do you know why? Because I don’t think they could sleep at night. No human could sleep at night knowing that they did. ... Linda Fairstein, what happened to her — that was the community. Liz Lederer, she used to teach at Columbia. The students and faculty came together to get her fired. Actually, she quit before that. So, as far as saying sorry, we not even waiting for that. We’re just doing what we have to do.



Students gathered in the Commons for the event. Photo by Jon Mirador

On therapy post-exoneration

It’s still a process. It’s an everyday process actually. We all [Exonerated Five] suffer from PTSD. That’s a real situation. Going through this — me speaking and traveling — that’s my therapy. Going down and seeing people and ... love that we’re receiving, it helps us out a lot. You know, ‘cause in prison you see none of that. You certainly receive it afterwards, so it’s very hard. I have my time and I have my moments and I’m real. I’m human, you know. I have times where I’m just crying by myself. My mother and my wife asks ‘what’s wrong.’ But she can’t help me because I have these things that have happened to me, and the 14 year old is coming back out. When I first seen “When They See Us,” I see my 14-year-old self in my man Asante Blackk, who played me. So, you know, it’s real. But there’s still hope. It’s still a process every day.



Kevin Richardson discussed his experiences in the prison system. Photo by Jon Mirador



Illustration by Lauren Johnson

The evolution of men’s basketball uniforms

MILAN BREWSTER
Contributing Writer

Over the decades, men’s basketball uniforms have evolved into different styles and iconic looks that reflect their respective time periods and the status of the team. Through NCAA tournaments, conference games and Black and Gold scrimmages, the basketball team have suited up to represent VCU with their vibrant colors of black and gold.

1960s

In the 1960s, the white uniforms consisted of a brief short with a track-style jersey. Embroidered in retro-style lettering on the front of the uniform was the iconic

“Rams” script. The uniform was complete with a pair of knee-high wool socks and white high-top Converse.

1970s

A decade later, the white uniforms consisted of the “Rams” letters stitched on the front with a black line down the side. The team still had the track-style jerseys but switched the Converse for low-rise white Nike tennis shoes.

1980s

The 1980s had a black uniform with the brief style shorts still in trend. Now, “VCU” was embroidered on the front at the left end of the shorts. The front

of the jerseys spelled out “Virginia Commonwealth” with the players’ numbers in the middle in white and yellow lettering.

1990s

Longer shorts were introduced in the 1990s. The logo and the players’ numbers were screen printed in black on yellow jerseys. The team left the tube socks in the ’80s for mid-calf socks. The uniforms were decorated in gold fabric with a black and white border around the jersey and shorts.

2011

The year VCU went to the Final Four in 2011, the team had black Nike

uniforms that were loose fitting with a yellow stripe down the side. The VCU letters were embroidered on the front in gold with an NCAA patch stitched in the top left corner of the jerseys.

TODAY

The current uniforms are white and black with yellow seams bordering the entire uniform. The uniforms contain accent colors of gold and black around the short and neckline of the uniform. The new jersey gives off a traditional look of the track-style frame, and the shorts contain the Ram shield logo on the left side.

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“American Gothic” will be on display at its closing show on Nov. 2 from 5-7 p.m. Photo courtesy of the Rump Gallery

‘American Gothic’ explores gritty fantasy of rural America

KATHERINE NOBLE
Contributing Writer

Solid white walls. Dark exposed beams. Thin minimalist frames surrounding shots of crumpled flags and blue skies.

The Rump Gallery’s inaugural exhibit, “American Gothic” — from artists Jessica Taylor and Riley Goodman — is a dreamlike display, featuring almost mundane-looking photographs of rural American life.

“I think the rustic nature of the garage itself lends well to the work that Jessica and I have been collaborating on,” Goodman said.

Both Goodman and Taylor are VCU alumni with degrees in photography and film.

The exhibit focuses on Southern rural white America, a markedly different demographic than the neighborhood the Rump inhabits, Highland Park, which is historically African American.

But beneath the surface imagery, it is a reflection on the opposing fantasies and realities of the American South. It’s also set in a backyard shed.



The Rump Gallery hosted its inaugural exhibition, “American Gothic,” by alumni Jessica Taylor and Riley Goodman on Oct. 12. Photo courtesy of the Rump Gallery

“I think it was really awesome to see that people were actually willing to come out to a shed. ... We probably had 50 or 60 people, and then we had a bonfire.”

Kim Peters, Rump Gallery co-founder

“My work intersects with Jessica’s in our mutual examination of the romanticism and realities of American history along with the country’s current climate,” Goodman said. “When combined, our work really plays well off each other in an analysis of the striking moments of reflection between the turbulent scene in the country.”

The Rump Gallery is a repurposed shed that has been restored and converted into a gallery space by alumni Noah Hook and Kim Peters, who both graduated from VCU in the spring. The two hope their space can serve as a way to connect local communities more directly to art.

Goodman says he was drawn to the Rump by the unconventionality of the space, along with its emphasis on connection and support within the VCUarts alumni community.

“I think this space is unique because it is ... the investment of Noah and Kim, along with the desire to represent work by Richmond-based artists and VCUarts alum,” Goodman said. “I think there’s, unfortunately, a real disconnect between the arts scene in Richmond and its support of recent VCUarts alum.”

Hook and Peters chose “American Gothic” not based solely on the art itself, but also for the initiative the young artists display.

“Riley and Jessica have both been super responsible and super proactive and they just have that will and that want and they’re both very active in the art community,” Peters said.

Peters said one of Taylor’s pieces that really spoke to her was a photograph that she put concrete on and stacked on top of cinder blocks.

“A lot of their work also speaks about decay and the decay of the American dream or fantasy, and how the reality of America is rapidly changing,” Peters said.

Taylor’s work fixates on gun violence, and on intergenerational trauma. Goodman’s focus is on mythologies and folktales, in an effort to understand elements of history.

Both artists bring seemingly mundane subjects to the forefront, painting them in new lights, bestowing beauty and complexity upon the simple and rural.

The Rump Gallery hosted the opening of “American Gothic” on Oct. 12. Peters said the opening was a success and she was impressed by the level of engagement and the conversation that occurred.

“I think it was really awesome to see that people were actually willing to come out to a shed,” Peters said. “We probably had 50 or 60 people, and then we had a bonfire to go along with it.”

The event drew out a wide range of people, including VCUarts faculty and students.

Goodman said the opening went well. “I really love the informality of the site and an ability to talk about our work with former classmates, current VCUarts students, and those in the community.”

Hook said he hopes this gallery will help connect people throughout the art community and that more people will be inspired to start places like the Rump with their own available resources.

The Rump Gallery will have its closing show for “American Gothic” Nov. 2 from 5-7 p.m.

UPCOMING EVENTS

See something

SAT. 10/26- SUN. 11/10

Garden Glow at Maymont

The Japanese Garden at Maymont will display light shows in the garden, including waterfall shows, lantern demonstrations and colorful light sparkles illuminating the area. For more information, including ticket pricing, purchasing and event times, visit or call 804-358-7166, ext. 310. To buy tickets, visit Maymont’s website.

Times vary. Maymont (1700 Hampton St.) Prices vary.

SUN. 10/27

‘Dracula’ screening at the Byrd

The Byrd Theater will present a screening of the 1931 classic, “Dracula.” The film will accompany three other films — “Creature From the Black Lagoon” (1954), “Frankenstein” (1931) and the “Bride of Frankenstein” (1935) — as part of the Byrd’s monster movie marathon. The ticket for this film will be valid for all of the films.

5 p.m., The Byrd Theatre & Foundation (2908 W. Cary St.) \$5

Do something

THURS. 10/24

Karaoke Night at Rams Lounge

The Wellness Resource Center is hosting an alcohol-free karaoke night in the Commons. Costumes are encouraged. To sign up and request songs, contact Kendyll Graham at grahamk4@vcu.edu or 804-828-7815 or visit The Well’s website.

6-9 p.m., Rams Lounge, University Student Commons (907 Floyd Ave.) Free.

SAT. 10/26

Canal Walk Pumpkin Patch & Harvest Boat Rides

Riverfront Canal Cruises will host an eerie canal cruise on the Kanawha Canal with neighboring events such as a pumpkin patch, boat rides and trolley hay rides. To register, visit the event’s website.

11 a.m.-4 p.m., Riverfront Canal Cruises (139 Virginia St.) Ticket prices vary.

Learn something

THURS. 10/24

‘The Black Angels: A Nurse’s Story’ screening

The College of Health Professions is presenting a free screening of the documentary, “The Black Angels: A Nurse’s Story.” The film follows the story of 300 black nurses who were hired during the tuberculosis outbreak in 1929.

For more information and to RSVP, contact Patricia Porter-Mayfield at plporter@vcu.edu or 804-828-3290.

Noon-2 p.m., College of Health Professions Building, (900 E. Leigh St.) Free.

SUN. 10/27

Figures of Freedom Downtown Walking Tour

The Valentine is hosting a tour of Shockoe Bottom and a discussion of freedom, early indigenous inhabitants and the history of slavery in Richmond. The tour begins at the Valentine First Freedom Center and is family friendly with a scavenger hunt. To purchase tickets, visit thevalentine.org.

10:30-11:45 a.m., Valentine First Freedom Center (14 South 14th St.) Tickets are \$15 for adults.

FRI. 10/25- 11/20

Shadows of Shockoe Ghost Tour

Haunts of Richmond will conduct a ghost tour of the city with shared stories of ghost appearances in the area. The event will also take a historical trip through Shockoe Bottom. For more information on ticket prices, visit haunts-of-richmond.com.

7 p.m. & 8 p.m., 20th & East Main streets.

CT Opinions

Quote of the week

"God gave women intuition and femininity. Used properly, the combination easily jumbles the brain of any man I've ever met."

— FARRAH FAWCETT

Women's basketball deserves more recognition

TAGWA SHAMMET

Opinions Editor

If you haven't guessed it already, this week's issue is all about basketball, a sport famously known for its big-name players like LeBron James, Stephen Curry, Kobe Bryant and so many others. Here, at VCU, basketball is practically everything for sports fans.

On Oct. 12, the VCU basketball season began. The annual Black and Gold scrimmage welcomed our five new men's freshman players. The excitement was undeniable as the players rushed the court, greeted with cheers and roars from the crowd.

Per usual, the team played a 26-minute game against one another. However, what the scrimmage lacked was a 26-minute women's game. That's right, the women's basketball team was not highlighted during this scrimmage. Surprised? I'm not. The women's team and its new players were only brought out during halftime like prized toys who didn't have talent to show.

This was an odd move from VCU Athletics. Many neighboring state schools, such as the University of Virginia, host similar scrimmages. Unlike VCU, UVa has an equal playing opportunity for both the men's and women's teams when it comes to preseason scrimmages. See, at UVa, they seem to have an understanding that the women's team is just as important as their men's team. I guess VCU didn't get the memo.

I was a Rowdy Ram my freshman year. For those of you who aren't aware, the Rowdy Ram membership gave me first dibs on



Illustration by Sammy Newman

all men's games. However, it didn't extend to women's games. In fact, the women's games don't even require the purchase of tickets; VCU students are just required to show their ID upon arrival. Why? Because VCU Athletics is well aware the women's team won't ever sell out a stadium. This fact is due to the lack of recognition and promotion of the women's team.

The lack of respect given to the women's team is completely undeserved. These women work just as hard as the men's team. They leave their blood, sweat and tears on the court, the same as the men do. Yet, we never seem to hear about the successes and talents so everly present in the women's team.

Ladies, it's time to take back our well-deserved recognition. To the VCU women's basketball team, you are the greatest athletes in your field. Don't allow anyone else to tell you otherwise. Last season, women's basketball

“

Ladies, it's time to take back our well-deserved recognition. To the VCU women's basketball team, you are the greatest athletes in your field. Don't allow anyone else to tell you otherwise.”

Tagwa Shammet,
Opinions Editor

swept through the A-10 conference. Unlike the men's team, the women made it all the way to the final game against Fordham. Junior forward Sydnei Archie told The Commonwealth Times that she and the rest of her team were wildly excited for the new season. As am I — I am beyond prepared to see these women dominate the court with the same elegance and command they did last season.

Nevertheless, as members of the VCU community, we need to start cheering on our ladies. It's no longer acceptable to sell out the men's games and leave the Siegel Center empty during the women's games. Last season, the women's game against La Salle on Jan. 8 had an attendance of only 412 people. Meanwhile, the men's game on Jan. 9 had an attendance of 7,637 — completely sold-out.

Let's take VCU versus Richmond for example, a game that is incredibly popular due to our proximity to the university. Well, while the men's game on Feb. 13 unsurprisingly sold out, the women's game on Feb. 9 sold only 2,033 tickets. How can we expect these ladies to crush their opponents if we can't even show up to support them?

VCU basketball fans, start showing up for these skilled and accomplished women. Let's relay to them that we care about their successes, that we will cry with every loss and scream with every win, the same way we do with our men's team. VCU Athletics is a community full of brilliant student-athletes who defy the odds of managing both schoolwork and their passion at once. It's time to give these ladies the recognition and support they deserve.

Tea Time with Tagwa: Gina Rodriguez and the N-word

TAGWA SHAMMET

Opinions Editor

Tea timers, let's have a chat. Today, I want to help set the record straight — a record I thought was already straight, but obviously I was wildly mistaken.

The N-word.

My fellow black readers, bear with me as we have a conversation we've had countless times. My non-black readers, read my words carefully and comprehend what I'm saying. Ladies and gentlemen, for the last time: If you're not black, don't say the N-word.

Celebrities, that goes for you too. Gina Rodriguez, honey, what are you doing? For those of you who don't know, the "Jane the Virgin" star was caught saying the N-word in a video. And she wasn't even caught; Rodriguez exposed herself by posting the video to her story. After outrage, Rodriguez posted another video on her story, apologizing for her actions.

On behalf of the black community, apology not accepted. Rodriguez gave such a half-assed apology, I was almost more offended by the apology than her saying the actual word.

"I'm sorry if I offended anyone by singing along to a song I love, a song I grew up on," she said in the video.

Girl, I don't care what you love, and I don't care what you grew up on. Matter of fact, I don't care if you have black friends or grew up in a predominantly black neighborhood. I'm doing the arithmetic and I'm struggling to find the correlation between your upbringing and your pass to say the N-word. So, now y'all don't know how to appreciate black culture without offending the black community?

And, what do you mean "if" you offended anyone? Huh? Hon, you did offend someone. You offended an entire community. A community that lifted you up as a Latina actress and rooted for your rise. Don't act like you don't know the gravity of the N-word and the weight it carries. Own up to your mistakes: Your apology should've said, "I'm sorry for offending you all with my ignorance and bigotry." I would've gladly accepted that apology.

What's really getting to me is the reaction to this situation. Non-black people of color are running to Rodriguez's aid. One tweet I saw read: "cancelling this girls career over a fucking LYRIC? you all can talk the shit you want, call me ignorant but there is a huge DIFFERENCE between 'n***a' and 'n***er.' one is a prejudice word and the other is a slang term, but y'all aren't ready for that conversation."

First of all, you are ignorant. So, take a seat with your uninformed behind. Also, saying "but y'all aren't ready for that conversation," doesn't make you woke. You're still a bigot. My favorite thing is the author of this tweet isn't even black. Who are you — a non-black POC — to tell me — a black person — I don't have the right to be upset over the usage of a term meant to degrade and dehumanize me? Girl, you're the one who isn't ready

for this conversation; seeing how it has absolutely nothing to do with you.

You don't get to direct where my anger goes, especially when it comes to a term that holds generations of hate and distaste. A term that's thrown around to make my people feel like the scum at the bottom of a shoe. We have decided to reclaim that word in order to beat our oppressors; that doesn't mean you can say it too.

Stop telling me I need to get over things, that it's just a word. But most importantly, stop trying to tell me there's a difference between the N-word and the N-word with a hard "R." I'm aware. Seeing how I've been called both in a negative manner, I'm aware. This has nothing to do with you, so again, stay in your lane.

For the final time: If you're not black, stop using the N-word. Stop using it to mean "buddy," just say "buddy." Stop singing it in songs; you know how to filter your words. Stop saying you have black friends who let you say it or that you grew up with black kids. You cannot say it.

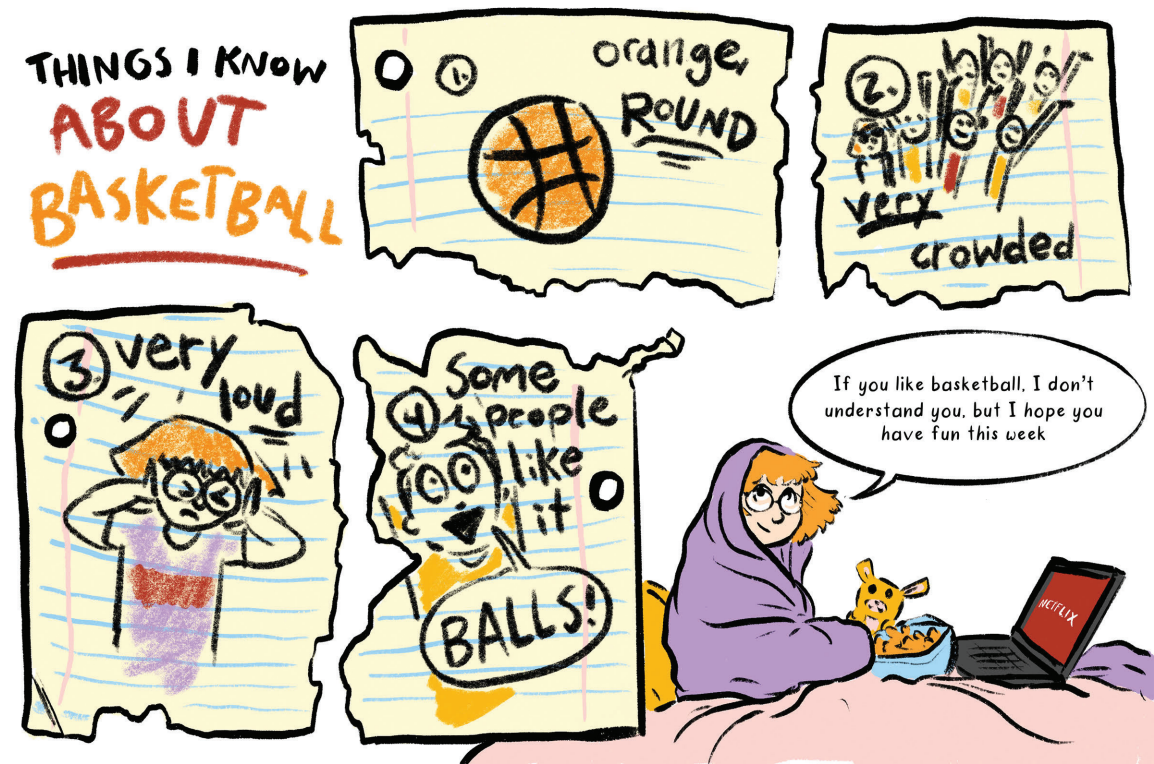
Since none of you non-black people have dealt with the aggressions, stigmas and hate that come with the word, you cannot say it. Period. And that's the tea.



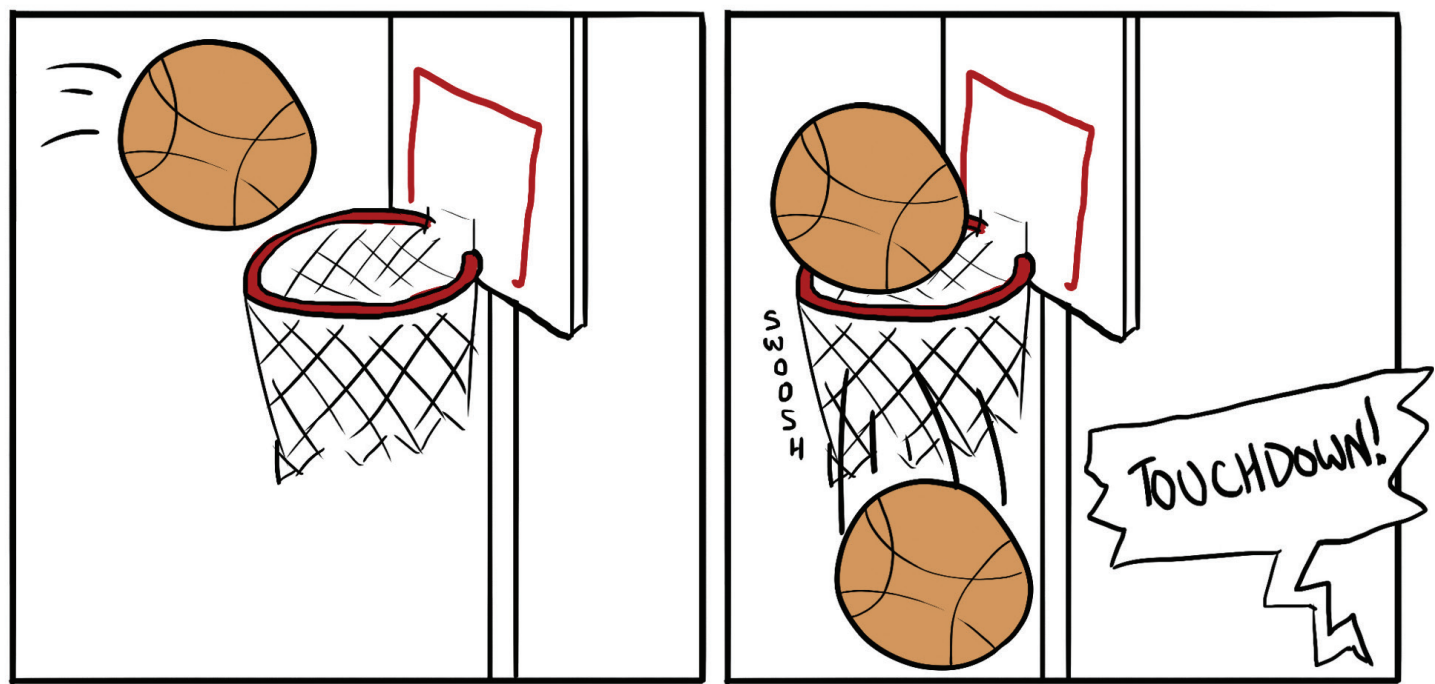
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CT Comics

Things I Know About Basketball by Ellie Erhart



Sports by Lake Mannikko



Basketball. by Erin Joo



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CT

Puzzles

For answers to this week’s puzzles, check commonwealthtimes.org/puzzles every Friday at noon.

Los Angeles Times

Crossword Puzzle

Edited by Rich Norris and Joyce Nichols Lewis

- ACROSS

1 Dojo maneuver

5 Guitarist Joe of The Eagles

10 Wilts

14 Start of an incantation

18 The last Mrs. Chaplin

19 Slow down

20 Shiraz’s land

21 Trickle

22 Awesome product component?

24 Awesome mattress covering?

26 Step on it

27 Stuck a fork in

29 Glenn Miller Orchestra singer Ray

30 Immortal name in dance

32 Ultimatum word

33 Staring-into-space experiences

34 DEA agent

36 Court game word

39 Routine

40 Stubborn critter

43 Awesome plumbing connector?

48 Tiny toiler

49 Fall collection?

51 More consequence?

52 Poetic adverb

54 “___ & Basie”: 1963 jazz collaboration

55 “True Detective” actor McNairy

56 Bump from the schedule

60 Peacock’s pride

64 QVC sister channel

65 Shot in the arm

66 Wall St. trader
- DOWN

1 Movie mogul Harry and sportscaster Linda

2 Lift

3 Checked out at the library

4 Ease, as symptoms

5 Ring org.

6 Scythe blade shapes

7 Starbucks serving

8 Bar word meaning “cup” in Danish

9 Sage and thyme

10 Pro or con

11 2000s Yankee nickname

12 Sign of something missing

13 Unkind look

14 Whitish

15 Tailgate party recyclable

16 Campaign poster word

17 Most pertinent

22 Org. in Clancy novels

23 Wheel inventor

25 Govt. agency that aids entrepreneurs

28 “Get lost!”

31 Hosp. readout

33 Bolivian export

35 Units of resistance

37 ‘80s-’90s Compaq laptop model

38 Prepare sans oil, as a movie treat

40 Israeli leaders?

41 Betray

42 Soldier, at times

44 Electronics whiz

45 “Mending Wall” poet

46 Wrinkle remover

47 Continues

48 Supplier of bills

50 Seductress
- 53 Far from fragrant

57 It may be skipped

58 Security rounds

59 Locks

61 Bellow title hero March

62 One looking for a switch, maybe

63 Those, in Tijuana

65 Coastal California scenic attraction

67 Basenji and Borzoi

69 Flips

70 Katherine of “Suits”

71 Edible seaweed

74 1970 Kinks hit

77 What’s more

78 Like Miss Congeniality

79 Writer Bagnold

83 Trouble

84 Prominent, after “on”

85 “... but it’ll cost you”

86 ___ tax

87 “The Bourne Identity” malady

89 Assist

90 Test for M.A. seekers

92 Yeshiva leaders

95 One involved in a speculative “bubble”

97 Fix, as a hem

98 AIDS-fighting drug

99 Salon overhaul

101 Bridge positions

102 Novelist Shaw

103 Actress Davis

105 Kipling’s “___-Tikki-Tavi”

106 Less well

107 Word of support

109 Small change

110 Bothers

111 Critter on XING signs

114 Notable time

116 Word of reproof

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Contact Domonique Lee @ leeds3@vcu.edu

Off To A Good Start by Gary Larson

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Sudoku

By The Mepham Group

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

Complete the grid so each row, column, and 3-by-3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9. For strategies on how to solve Sudoku, visit sudoku.org.uk

		1			3			
	9	2		6				
	7	6	4				2	
				1	8			
9	8						1	4
			3					
	1					5	7	
				5		2	8	
		3	9			4		

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