College files for trademark on banned feathers
Michelle Ju & Joe Luppino-Esposito
Ass't Features Editor & Editor in Chief

Despite the College administration’s refusal to challenge the NCAA’s ruling against the athletic logo, The Virginia Informer has learned that William and Mary is now attempting to trademark the image of our two feathers, despite discovering them in the past and leaving them off the new logo revealed last semester.

Records with the United States Patent and Trademark Office indicate that on June 26, 2007, over eight months after President Gene Nichol declared to the College community that further action against the NCAA’s ruling would not be pursued, the College filed for a registered trademark of only the image of the two feathers, independent of the already-registered full logo.

In the e-mail from October 10, 2006, President Nichol stated that he did not want the College “to become the symbol and lodestar for a prolonged struggle over Native American imagery that will likely be miscast and misunderstood—

to the detriment of the institution.” Now, the College has put in a request to the federal government to protect its rights to the two feathers once and for all.

According to Director of University Relations Michael Connolly, “The College intends to hold on to the feathers trademark for the time being. It remains a registered trademark of the College. As a result, any person or any governing body to use it still must get permission from the College.” Though the feathers are currently being phased out of athletic logos, they are still “in use for such non-athletic purposes as clothing.” The College still wants to maintain control of its historic logo—not for long, though as the feathers are currently being phased out of athletic logos, they are still “in use for such non-athletic purposes as clothing.”

Our original logo, featuring both the “WM” and the two feathers, has been a registered trademark since June 4, 1991, and was unaffected by the change made over the past two years. Because the full logo remains a trademark of

FEATHERS

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State of the College
The full report: page 10

An independent publication at the College of William and Mary.
The common sense paper of record on campus.

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Inside campus bike theft
Page 8

BOV fails to act on Nichol
No decision on contract made, president’s future still unknown

Steven Nelson
Features Editor

An air of suspense accompanied reporters, students and others who waited outside a closed session of the Board of Visitors on Friday. The closed session, occurring in Blow Hall, was the last of this round of meetings, which spanned February 6-8. The session was closed to the public due to the discussion of personnel matters, an exemption contained within Virginia Freedom of Information Act laws.

Many on both sides of the debate on President Gene Nichol’s future at the College anticipated an announcement Friday, following the closed session. This anticipation proved unfounded, though, as no verdict was rendered for or against Mr. Nichol’s renewal.

Last semester, BOV Rector Michael Powell announced a comprehensive and public review of Mr. Nichol’s presidency, with a decision to be announced this semester on whether Mr. Nichol will be renewed for another term. His current term expires in June.

Meanwhile, pro- and anti-Nichol individuals have been recruiting up their efforts. On Thursday, February 7, four BOV members who are up for confirmation—John Gerdelman, Kathy Hornsby, Anita Poston and Henry Wolf—were summoned to Richmond by lawmakers skeptical of Mr. Nichol’s governance of the College.

Hours later, a pro-Nichol rally attracted hundreds of supporters outside of a board dinner at the Muscarelle Museum on campus.

Lawmakers in Richmond questioned the four BOV members on a range of recent controversies at the College, including the Wren cross, theBias Reporting System, a lost $12 million donation and a performance of the Sex Workers’ Art Show.

The night before the four BOV members were called to Richmond, BOV member Kathy Hornsby was unexpectedly present at a meeting of the board’s executive committee, presumably to be advised by other members as to how to respond to lawmakers’ questions.

Appointees made by the governor to the Board of Visitors are typically approved by the Virginia legislature without much skepticism. In light of Mr. Nichol’s public review, however, board members up for approval face increased scrutiny by many state lawmakers, including up- William and Mary graduate Delegate Timothy Hugo (R-Fairfax). Mr. Hugo proclaimed on

NO DECISION FROM BOV
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Sex Workers’ Art Show goes on amid controversy and protests
Jennifer Souers
Staff Writer

The Sex Workers’ Art Show has drawn high levels of attention and criticism in the past few weeks, culminating with its double performance on February 4. Several students decided to express their displeasure with the show during a protest held on the night of the event. Whatever their reason – religious or otherwise – students who were against the show shared a common goal: to make their voices heard.

The protest movement that established itself outside the doors of the University Center, the venue for the show, was peaceful. William and Mary police were present throughout the evening, keeping a close eye on both the protestors and the large numbers of students attending the show. Local news channels came and interviewed students protesting the show, later broadcasting those stories at the top of the news hour.

After being asked to move from the inside of the UC, students stood behind barricades, posting signs criticizing the show and quoting the Bible. “Flee from sexual immorality,” it says. “All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body.”

Students posted signs that read “WM is a College, not a strip club” and “I will report you to the police if you talk about sex.”

About 30 members of the local community came, including

SWAS PROTESTS
continued on page two

© Blake Lucas

The full logo remains a trademark of William and Mary. The logo in 1991, and was unaffected by the change.
Former Special Envoy Mitchell Reiss lectures on resolved Irish peace process

Kristin Coyner
Staff Writer

On Thursday January 31, former U.S. Northern Ireland Envoy Mitchell Reiss spoke at the William and Mary Marshall-Wythe School of Law, delivering a lecture entitled “The Northern Ireland Peace Process: How Pertinent is a Model for Other Conflicts?” This event complements the work of Mr. Reiss’ public remarks since his retirement from that post in February 2007.

Mr. Reiss joined the faculty in 1999 and is now vice provost for international affairs and a professor of law and government. His professional accomplishments include serving as director of the Office of Policy Planning at the US Department of State from July 2003 to February 2005. During January 2004 to February 2007, Mr. Reiss was President George W. Bush’s special envoy to the Northern Ireland peace process, working with the diplomatic rank of ambassador.

“Six Enduring Principles in Conflict Resolution” were laid out in the opening portion of Mr. Reiss’ presentation, each of which was discussed in the context of Northern Ireland. “The state must defend the hard-liners to peace,” was another such principle. Sinn Fein, a political party in Northern Ireland often affiliated with terrorism while pursuing Irish unity, was noted to have been the ultimate employer of constructive ambiguity. Mr. Reiss pointed out that, in the 1990s, Sinn Fein, in a move toward conflict resolution, many of whom have long-showed financial and political support for a peaceful Ireland. He noted how Irish-American involvement was a crucial factor in the rejection of Sinn Fein’s misuse of constructive ambiguity, which led, for many years, allowing for the misleading of other governments on its true intentions.

The second half of the speech concerned those principles useful for conflict resolution which were not adequately applied. One such principle largely absent from the peace process was that of constructive ambiguity. Mr. Reiss noted how criminal behavior, rather than terrorist acts, eventually became more of a danger. Out of 1998 Belfast Agreement, the IRA transitioning into organized terrorists, eventually becoming a proscribed entity. He furthered this argument, noting that this remains something that the government of Northern Ireland needs to address.

Lastly, Mr. Reiss noted that a truth and reconciliation effort is essential for a successful peace process in Northern Ireland. He stated, “No one party should manipulate the historical narrative,” maintaining that open reconciliation allows for all wounds to be catered to.

To the question as to whether the Northern Ireland peace process now stands as a useful model for other conflicts, Mr. Reiss seemed hesitant, asserting that the case of Northern Ireland was “in a class by itself.” He said that “few conflicts in the world like it.” The great American connection and long-sustained investment of prominent American political figures in more-encircumsed conflicts.

Mr. Reiss fielded a number of questions from audience members in the concluding portion of his speech, a great number of which stemmed from the content of his presentation. Manifestly, Mr. Reiss has established himself as a public servant, overseeing the end of a decades-long conflict which allowed for the structuring of an autonomous government led by both Protestants and Catholics. It will be interesting to follow Mr. Reiss’ career not only at William and Mary, but also in the national context. Presently, Mr. Reiss is serving as senior advisor to former Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney.

The Virginia Informer apologizes for the following errors in our Jan. 30, 2008 Issue:

On page one, in “Student charged with embezzlement,” William McClain (’08) was incorrectly listed as being the vice president of Beta Theta Pi fraternity. He no longer holds that position.

On page one, in “College lobbies city to deny student availability for proposed condo,” the article stated that Reed Nester, planning director for Williamsburg, approved that request before being killed in a fatal car crash. The developer for the units stated that the condo would not be available for rent and the City Council approved this plan.

The Virginia Informer would like to correct any facts printed incorrectly. Please submit all corrections via e-mail to editor@vainformer.com.

Mission Statement
The Virginia Informer is an independent, non-partisan, student run publication devoted to reporting the news to the William and Mary community. We exist to provide an alternative school sponsored news source. We do not, and never will, receive any financial support from the College of William and Mary or the University of Virginia. Any related entities are free to challenge the norm. We strive to inform and engage our readers via responsible journalism and in-depth reporting, while fostering open discussions on opinions that are often shut out by the campus establishment.

Swas Protest: Protesters from a wide range of groups show up in opposition continued from page one

members of the local Messianic Jewish community who joined the students throughout the evening praying, dancing, singing hymns and worship songs and reading Bible verses by the light of the closest street lamp. Supporters of the protesters brought hot chocolate and food; around 9:15 pm, one man brought fresh Domino’s pizzas to the remaining protestors.

Though the religious overtones of the protest had the potential for angering many in support of the show, no one got “too hand.” Before the first show, performers came out and took pictures of the signs and protestors. Students waiting in line watched, some of them tapping their feet or singing along to the music. And though people differed in opinion, both sides respected each other’s right to be present.

Everyone had their own personal reasons for protesting the show. Student protetor Michael Landis (10) explained his reason for protesting, saying, “the love of Jesus speaks to my life; I’m here to stand against those things that hurt people, but not to judge.”

There were other displays against the show through out the day. At an earlier prayer vigil to pray for the College in general, students said that as Christians they were not protesting the people in the show or the people coming to the show, but the idea that the show was represented. Students pulled together a small movement earlier in the day to bring light to the between the sex industry and domestic violence and sex trafficking, securing a feature in the Wesleyan newspaper. The free speech issue asked his congregation to question, when deciding whether or not to attend the show, if their actions would be in keeping with their beliefs.

‘Though the Sex Workers’ Art Show was held without any great disruption, there was still much controversy in its presence. Whether through peaceful prayer or protests reading “sex workers # art,” students’ voices were clearly heard.
On February 4 the Sex Workers’ Art Show (SWAS) came to campus and performed twice, at 7:30 pm and again at 10:30 pm, at the UC Commonwealth. Tickets, priced at $2, were sold out.

At its height, the line began at the doors of the UC Commonwealth and stretched back to the front of the UC. A large sign indicated that Virginia Attorney General Bob McDonnell prohibited recording of any kind during the performance, and all attendees were required to be 18 years of age.

Anne Oakley is the “founder, director, [and] road manager” for the show, and acted as moderator of commentary segments that followed the show. Ms. Oakley related that the show first performed at a Federal Appeals Court in 1982, and has since traveled to various locations across the United States, including the Supreme Court of the United States in Washington, D.C. She went on to relate that the show’s first performance was in federal courts of appeals. She went on to relate that the show’s first performance was in federal courts of appeals. She went on to relate that the show’s first performance was in federal courts of appeals. She went on to relate that the show’s first performance was in federal courts of appeals.

Ms. Oakley continued with a brief background of the multi-billion dollar sex industry in the United States. “We want to consume sex so much [as a society], but we want our product to remain anonymous….We [sex workers] are humanizing ourselves so we can begin to be taken seriously as people who deserve safety, dignity, and respect….” Ms. Oakley also reminded the crowd that the event was about to see “a censored version of the show, as requested by your College.”

The first skit was performed by Kirk Read, a gay male, who performed a monologue titled “The banality of banality.” He said that the audience was about to see it in “a censored version of the show, as requested by your College.”

The next skit was performed by the “best in burlesque,” Dirty Martini. According to the show’s organizer, Martini’s skit also discussed—with considerable humor—the difficulty he faced coming out as a gay male growing up in southern Virginia.

Mr. Read described C.J. as “the kind of guy you’d blow in a gay stag party, but that really works for me.” He explained his encounter with C.J. in graphic detail, and then encouraged the crowd to engage in a call-and-response, feigning orgasm.

After responding to questions posed by Ms. O’Connor, she took a series of questions from the audience. One of the first questions the audience asked was about the controversial Sex Workers Art Show. A crowd of mostly students heard Ms. O’Connor speak passionately about her feelings on the Supreme Court appointment process and her concern with the lack of education about the US Constitution. Ms. O’Connor opened the discussion by asking Ms. O’Connor a series of questions relating to her background and her experience with the appointment process.

Ms. O’Connor noted that, prior to her appointment, she had little understanding of the judicial level although she had served in all three branches of the federal courts of the Virginia state government. She also pointed to a similar lack of experience in the judicial branch when they established the judiciary as a co-equal branch of government, and recent controversies like the Terri Schiavo case threatened that independence.

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Nichol referendum struck down by SA

Alex Guiliano
Staff Writer

One of the major points of debate in the most recent Student Assembly meeting stemmed from the Student Impat on Gene Nichol (SIGN) Referendum Act. Under the SIGN Act, a referendum would be placed on the ballot during SA elections this spring as a means of gauging student support for the College’s embattled president. The measure, which was recently vetoed by SA President Zach Pilchen (’09), was once against brought to the table by its supporters who were looking to override Mr. Pilchen’s veto. Prior to the discussion between senators, Mr. Pilchen explained his reasoning behind vetoing the referendum. He reiterated his position that the Board of Visitors do not want a simple “straw poll” from students, and that a simple yes or no does not reflect the number of adamant supporters on either side.

Following Mr. Pilchen’s explanation and lengthy debate from various senators, SA Chair Matt Beato (’09) gave a passionate speech about his position on the issue: “I support referenda, I have never voted against referenda, and I don’t see why I should start now,” he explained. “This college exists to serve the needs of the people at this college, not alums or other individuals.” Yet, after much discussion, the attempt to override Mr. Pilchen’s veto fell short of reaching the necessary 2/3 majority with a vote of 10-9.

The influence of the Sex Workers’ Art Show on campus and its opposition by some of the College’s administration has not gone unnoticed by the Student Assembly. In response to some officials hinting that some administrative controls may be placed on SA funding in the future, the assembly passed the Funding Interference Act. The act’s purpose was to reaffirm the Student Assembly’s right to fund student activities, and called upon the College’s administration to acknowledge this right publically.

Finally, the Student Assembly decided to allocate just under $4,000 for the re-establishment of the popular Steer Clear program. Numerous senators brought up that many students had expressed a desire for the program to return, and after it passed almost unanimously, Mr. Pilchen stated, “It will now always be there.”

Exec focuses on student rights

Mike Crump
Staff Writer

The SA Executive reconvened for the spring semester ready for action. An important theme is protecting and strengthening student rights.

One major issue was the introduction of the Virginia House Bill 118. Critics of Bill 118 worry that if passed, it would take away from much of the College’s autonomy by forcing schools to report to the Virginia General Assembly, among other things, student activities and the allocation of funds.

The Exec continued their push of the importance of a student voice in Williamsburg through the voter registration drive. Concerns surfaced over the voting accessibility for students as election day in Williamsburg falls during the second exam week. In response to this, efforts were started to allow for student absentee ballots. The next few weeks, it was decided, would be critical in getting students the ability to vote.

In response to the College’s desire to be a closer part of the greater Williamsburg community, the Neighborhood Council was brought to campus last week. This meeting, held the morning of February 2 in the University Center, included community leaders and the city mayor and fostered greater communication between the town and the College. This meeting was the first of its kind to be held on campus.

Another important focus of the Exec is the allocation of funds for student transportation. The Communal Bike program was under intense scrutiny, prompting the question of restructuring. Executing the importance of the program, wanting to expand both the number of bicycle checkout locations and the maximum rental periods. But due to several issues with bike reliability, it is questionable if such efforts are worth the cost, according to members of the cabinet.

Exec’s most notable action for the evening included the successful restructuring of Steer Clear. Under new leadership, the student safe-ride program was expanded to operate until 3 am, allowing for a safe ride for those leaving the various dives as they close. Additionally, Steer Clear will now operate on Thursday nights as well as the normal Friday and Saturday. The most crucial change, however, allows for SA-funded salaries for drivers, freeing Steer Clear from the unreliability of volunteerism.

The Exec also tackled budget finalizing, event requests approval and communications with the Undergraduate Council on logistics involving the King and Queen’s Ball.
Philosophy professors strike back

Matthew Sutton
Managing Editor

The controversy over the Philosophy department continues to heat up as two professors, George Harris and Paul Davies, have filed complaints to the College’s Board of Visitors and an outside accrediting group. In an interview with The Informer, the two professors explain their grievances against an administration that they have labeled “hostile” to female and junior faculty.

Their complaints were rejected by the BOV and the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools (SACS), the accrediting board. BOV Rector Michael Powell claimed that the board would not intervene “in administrative and personnel matters involving faculty.”

This external review of the Philosophy department conducted by a team of four professors from outside of the College—Jodi Magnes, Benjamin Wright, Christopher Hartman, and Nicholas White—produced a report highly critical of the department, identifying several specific problems. It alleged that “the department’s attitude is particularly hostile to women, and sometimes perceived by women as being mistreated,” and to remedy these concerns, suggested that the department be placed in receivership under the Future of the department.

The pair has begun to make their case public through the local media. Messrs. Harris, Davies and Davies all argue that an external review of the department was not done. That report led to the replacement of its chair, Noah Lemos, and placement into receivership. The professors charge that the report slandered their reputations, as well as the reputation of the department when it claimed that Harris and Davies were “hostile” to female and junior faculty.

Their complaints were rejected by the “Informed Democracy plans to continue to provide public debates, but will not address openly the issues involved here, it sends a message to our students and faculty members that the external report is riddled with harmful and false accusations against them and their department.”

Strikwerda also rejected the report’s other findings, including cited concerns about the decline in student credit hours, the inaction of the Philosophy Club and the number of honor students in the department.

A little more than a week later he informed the department that it was being placed into receivership. Harris explained that he had been notified by PBS, focusing on a town on Long Island that has become overrun with illegal immigrants. The film focused on the town of Farmingville, a documentary produced by PBS, focusing on a town on Long Island that has become overrun with illegal immigrants.

Sociology Professor Deenesh Sohoni introduced the movie with a brief lecture on the history of immigration. Mr. Sohoni provided information about the history of immigration in the United States and gave perspectives on several of the controversies surrounding immigration. He also told the audience to remember that there are both push and pull factors for having immigrants come to the United States and that immigrants are real people.

The film focused on the town of Farmingville, New York, a community to which the immigrants had flooded. The movie showed both the perspective of the immigrant and the perspective of the local residents. While Farmingville provided a look at the day in the life of illegal immigrants, showing how they lived up on street corners to wait for every available break, they also worked for a day’s work. Additionally, some of the contractors were driven away when community members attempted to take pictures of them picking up the illegal immigrants.

Moreover, several community members were furious about the deterioration of their quality of life when

the immigrants came to Farmingville. Some of the parents no longer felt safe letting their children walk outside, other citizens were worried about overcrowded houses and streets, and some complained about being whistled at while in public.

These tensions reached a climax after a Farmingville resident was killed in a DUI by a drunken illegal immigrant. In retaliation, white supremacists assailed the mostly killed and due process are central. If the College chooses not to address openly the issues involved here, it sends a message to our students and faculty members that the external report is riddled with harmful and false accusations against them and their department.

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FEATURES

One tradition no one remembers

Steven Nelson  
Staff Writer

Many graduates share fond memories of their times at William and Mary. Some public figures do so in their own capacities, while many others profess their nostalgia for the College. Marking these conversations are students calling for the Fund for William and Mary. The Informer, however, was recently contacted by one alumna who privately shared a traumatic tale of how one Graduating class proceeded to understate drinking. According to the alumna, the school found “my presence alone encouraged drinking, despite the fact that none of my actions encouraged drinking. I did not purchase, purchase alcohol, pour drinks, encourage drinking or personally drink that night.”

“This was also my first offense with the school, so I went from freshman to being a Sophomore. I graduated near the top of my class—I was a very devout student, and really didn’t need something like this tarnishing my record. I had to write it on my resume forever. This is the reason to which a person voluntarily partakes. Our intention was not to force [freshmen] to drink, but to provide a safe atmosphere where they could have fun.”

I received with equal repugnance. “The sorority handed down even harsher punishments than the school, deciding all parties were guilty before the hearings were conducted. While most people were put on probation, members were suspended and terminated. Some seniors moved out of their house for the sorority. I was out of college because they living in the house jeopardized the sorority’s standing as Greek housing. By the time the sorority took action to give punishments, the remaining campus housing availability was extremely limited.

Ironically, I agreed to attend solely to be responsible, knowing I could ensure that a young girl got home from a party safely. I had believed remaining sober at the event would actually set an example for having fun without drinking. I felt unsure of the obligation to go out for fear of让我想起陆某人 who was not 21, and wasn’t hosting, was I personally responsible to make sure a girl got home from a party safely. I had believed leaving the sorority got around to giving punishments. The waiting and wondering was extremely stressful for all of us.”

The school found many older sisters guilty of alcohol violations, due to judicial policy interpretation which found them accountable for contributing to the sorority’s standing as Greek housing. By the time the sorority took action to give punishments, the remaining campus housing availability was extremely limited.

Ironically, I agreed to attend solely to be responsible, knowing I could ensure that a young girl got home from a party safely. I had believed remaining sober at the event would actually set an example for having fun without drinking. I felt unsure of the obligation to go out for fear of being caught. I was not to force [freshmen] to drink, but to provide a safe atmosphere where they could have fun.”

With years to reflect on the long past events, the former student maintains that “while the school and sorority found fault with my action, should the situation arise again, I can’t say making a different decision would sit well with my conscience.”

New logo will not appear on the College’s new Web site

Aimee Forsythe

Staff Writer

Information Technology is about to implement a new Web design for the College of William and Mary Web site, which, allegedly, is more user-friendly and ethically logical. The changes are still unsure how to work the new logo into this plan. Last November, Provost P Geoffrey Feiss asked Susan Evans, the director of Web and communication services, to head the project of redesigning the William and Mary Web site. In February 2007, the project was officially announced, and a committee was formed comprising Dean of Admissions Henry Bledsoe, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs Ginger Ambler, faculty from various departments, representatives from the Alumni Association and two current students. The idea was to update the eight-year-old Web site to look more aesthetically pleasing. Ms. Evans stated that the old Web site “look”—by making it fresh and easier to navigate.

Working with consultants, three different designs were presented. The committee liked the design for the William and Mary’s “reweb” Web site for people to explore and then post reactions. Ms. Evans says the feedback has been promising. They received responses from upperclassmen, freshmen, and current students, new admitted students and high school juniors. Around 800 people have visited the Web site, and they have heard only positive comments. So far, all comments have already been implemented into the Web designs. For instance, one person commented that there was too much text on the opening page for a layout to serve as “sister” sites. In response, photos were added and text was minimized, creating a more appealing homepage. There has also been some usability testing done, in which one is asked to find specific sites to see how navigable the new Web site is as a whole.

A key difference between this new Web site and the current one is that it will be run on a content management system, so that the changes to the Web site can be easily made online, instead of requiring software to update the site. It is also changing the organization so that locating information will be much faster. The new Web site will feature a more appealing homepage. There has also been some usability testing done, in which one is asked to find specific sites to see how navigable the new Web site is as a whole.

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Aimee Forsythe

Staff Writer

Information Technology is about to implement a new Web design for the College of William and Mary Web site, which, allegedly, is more user-friendly and ethically logical. The changes are still unsure how to work the new logo into this plan. Last November, Provost P Geoffrey Feiss asked Susan Evans, the director of Web and communication services, to head the project of redesigning the William and Mary Web site. In February 2007, the project was officially announced, and a committee was formed comprising Dean of Admissions Henry Bledsoe, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs Ginger Ambler, faculty from various departments, representatives from the Alumni Association and two current students. The idea was to update the eight-year-old Web site to look more aesthetically pleasing. Ms. Evans stated that the old Web site “look”—by making it fresh and easier to navigate.

Working with consultants, three different designs were presented. The committee liked the design for the William and Mary’s “reweb” Web site for people to explore and then post reactions. Ms. Evans says the feedback has been promising. They received responses from upperclassmen, freshmen, and current students, new admitted students and high school juniors. Around 800 people have visited the Web site, and they have heard only positive comments. So far, all comments have already been implemented into the Web designs. For instance, one person commented that there was too much text on the opening page for a layout to serve as “sister” sites. In response, photos were added and text was minimized, creating a more appealing homepage. There has also been some usability testing done, in which one is asked to find specific sites to see how navigable the new Web site is as a whole.

A key difference between this new Web site and the current one is that it will be run on a content management system, so that the changes to the Web site can be easily made online, instead of requiring software to update the site. It is also changing the organization so that locating information will be much faster. The new Web site will feature a more appealing homepage. There has also been some usability testing done, in which one is asked to find specific sites to see how navigable the new Web site is as a whole.

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Chief Challis defends actions of WMPD

Michelle Ju
Staff Writer

In a follow-up interview with The Informer, Chief of the Virginia Commonwealth Police Department Donald R. Challis defended the officer responsible for denying an escort to Maureen West (‘09), and challenged alleged misconceptions that plague the image of WMPD as being over-zealous, alcohol-blasting and, generally, heretics of dooms.

In November, less than 24 hours after the mugging of a student, two young females were denied an escort to the fraternityunity by two police officers. This raised serious eyebrows amongst the student body, some of whom questioned the WMPD’s commitment to student—particularly female students—safety. Mr. Challis fired back, maintaining that it is not the responsibility of the campus police to “haul” students to and from parties, which makes them liable for alcohol-related mishaps that may occur as a result.

He claimed that “[the girls] came up from the delis and asked for a ride to go to a party. We don’t give rides to parties—if they go home. Otherwise, all that we’ve done is haul people from party to party. So [the officer] said, ‘No, we don’t do that.’”

Mr. Challis also made a distinction between an occasion that would call for an escort and one that wouldn’t. “If someone says, ‘Hey, I need a ride to Preston Hall, we would do that.’ If you say, ‘I need a ride to the party,’ we don’t do that.”

In addition to this report, Mr. Challis said that the students were traveling in various groups that exited the delis together. “They were going down well-traveled areas. It was 10:30, so it wasn’t especially late at night. We tell people, ‘go where it’s well-traveled, go with somebody else,’ and they were doing those things. They came out of the delis, asking for a ride to a party. Now, what are we supposed to do with that? You want us to get into the business of having people parties? What if they’re already been drinking, and they go to the party and drink some more and get in trouble for a variety of reasons—we [would] have been a part of that.”

Mr. Challis also claimed he had not heard from Mr. West’s parents who had reportedly threatened to bring the matter to college officials.

In addition to providing his take on the incident, Mr. Challis disclosed his opinions on Alcohol Amnesty, a policy that encourages the College to provide medical assistance to inebriated students. According to Mr. Challis, the WMPD supports and respects this policy as a means for students to get the medical help they need. He added, “Most of the arrests that we make are because of behavior. If you’re out drinking, and we come across you, but you’re stumbling, and we see that you’re intoxicated, we can’t turn you loose. We can, but if something happens to you, we’re responsible. So, quite often, depending on how drunk you are, your options are the hospital or jail. Typically, when we get a chance to get somebody to a hospital, we’d much rather do that.”

Mr. Challis also expressed his mixed opinions on CopWatch, a student-led organization that actively ensures that campus police do not infringe upon the rights of students. While not averse to CopWatch, Mr. Challis mentioned the lack of cooperation students take in an effort to resist the police. When students under the influence cooperate with police by answering questions, the police are likely to release them out of good faith. “I have no problem with [CopWatch], except sometimes, students will hear them and won’t cooperate with the police when they stop them. We have nothing else to gauge their intoxication,” explained Mr. Challis. He added, however, “I know CopWatch is based on some very severe incidents in big cities where police did some things that were wrong. I don’t think we’re doing those things here.”

While the WMPD continues to receive resistance from student-led expressions of opposition, Mr. Challis maintained that “that is just part of the job.” He added, “the biggest part is just to let people know why we do what we do. If our want was to rack up numbers, how many arrests we make in one weekend, it would be a lot. There are a lot of things we see—we just don’t have enough people to act on. We don’t have the personnel to follow up on every criminal activity.”

Mr. Challis provided that the campus police provide as much leeway as possible. “We do a lot of things that we don’t get credit for. Nor do we want a lot of credit—we just want acknowledgment that we do take care of students—that we’re not out to get people. He also believes that students are capable of “socializing without getting in trouble. Drinking can be part of socializing, but that they’re being responsible and not drawing our attention.”

When asked about his reaction to a banner erected last year in the Sunken Garden that read “F–k the Police,” Mr. Challis answered, “We walked by and chuckled. We understand the culture. We’re grown-ups. We know students voice their opinions and that’s okay, as long as they know to call us when there’s a problem. We might change their opinions of us, and if we don’t, we’re still going to do our job.”

Mr. Challis concluded, “This is my fourth campus job. I worked at a Big Ten school in Iowa for seven years, a small private school for eight years called Saint Ambrose and then before here, I was at Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago. I have to say, we have the most polite students here. Even when we have to arrest, they’re good, saying ‘I understand’ and ‘Thank you.’ If they get sick in the car, they apologize for that.”

Alumni Spotlight: Aaron Peters (‘95) shares television writing experiences

Ilsa Tinkelman
Staff Writer

William and Mary alumnus Aaron Peters (‘95) made a visit to the college on February 1 to share his experiences as a writer and producer with current students and faculty members.

Although you may not recognize Mr. Peters by name, you have likely seen or heard of the productions he has been involved with. For example, the popular sketch comedy show Mr. Show with The Dixie Vines, and other comedy programs such as The Andy Dick Show and The Two Guys from Andover are all part of Mr. Peters’ resume.

During his visit, Mr. Peters collaborated with his audience to script a theoretical sitcom storyline, demonstrating how ideas for shows are formulated and organized. In just a few hours’ time, the group outlined a compelling and humorous episode of the would-be show, including a love triangle between characters played by Jason Bateman, Rachel Bilson and Parker Posey, and a cameo appearance by Derek Jeter.

This activity was followed by a question-and-answer session in which Mr. Peters discussed his personal experience in the business. His interest in writing and producing essentially began in his fourth year at the College, as a government major, when a family connection landed him with an internship opportunity on the show Late Night with Conan O’Brien.

While working on that production, Mr. Peters made a friend who led him to his next job as a writer for a sports game show, and he continued to develop connections with each and every experience that followed.

Mr. Peters stresses that self-motivation is key for students looking to break into the media business, along with putting yourself out there—getting your production heard or seen, even if it is not perfect. He also recommended being persistent and being willing to work hard, even if that means taking unpaid internships, sending out hundreds of resumes or getting doors slammed in your face—something, he said, to which he could personally relate.
College and police policies appear ineffective in significantly deterring campus bike theft

Kirk Vernegaard
Staff Writer

Bicycle theft is one of the most common forms of theft on campus, affecting a wide range of unsuspecting victims.

“Bikes are stolen for a number of reasons. Most of them are crimes of convenience, says one anonymous source, revealing his case on the issue: what might be perceived as theft is actually borrowing,” he said. “People take bikes when they’re drunk or late for class. It’s a form ofjoyriding. Ms. Police should lock their bikes up.”

The College takes steps to make sure bike theft remains infrequent. According to College policy, students are required to register their bikes with the William and Mary Police Department, a process which includes being given a bike-specific ID number and a decal which must be attached to the rear of the bike.

Sometimes such precautionary steps are not enough. Tim Adams (‘10) had a bike heisted from his off-campus residence and he recently spotted it outside an unspecified dormitory, locked and still new. Some are simply taken with no purpose, says Tim. Students sometimes find themselves not being able to recognize their bikes.

“Some police responses when they report missing bicycles, citing a lack of concern on behalf of the department. If the students forget to look up their bike completely, then the process becomes particularly frustrating,” says one anonymous source.

Some students seem frustrated by police responses when they report missing bicycles, citing a lack of concern on behalf of the department. If the students forget to look up their bike completely, then the process becomes particularly frustrating.

Bikes found leftover at the end of the school year are auctioned off by the WMPPD.

A member of the Honor Council said that while the council does occasionally deal with cases of theft, he “couldn’t remember the last time [we] dealt with a case of bike theft.”

For those of you who had the pleasure of attending one of two sold-out showings of the Sex Workers’ Art Show on February 4, you were probably disappointed by the fact that you did not get the fully uncensored, unadulterated, perfect performance that you had a Constitutionally protected right to see. After all, wasn’t it Thomas Jefferson who spoke fondly in his later years about “life, liberty and the pursuit of poon”? Not to get waist-deep in the Sally Hemings controversy, you are probably wondering what it was that Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Virginia or any member of the administration of the College of William and Mary.

Attorney General's Office.

Haulman: Being interrupted by a singing telegram—wonderful fun, but hard to get it together for the rest of the session.

Haulman: Fractional reserve banking with sufficient oversight and strong capital requirements gives central bankers powerful options for dealing with the economy.

Haulman: Many theories on the fringes of mainstream economics, there are elements of this view that is insightful—the role of banks and credit—but there are many important elements ignored. It also begins with the premise that unfettered markets will solve all. Yet we know from experience that this is not the case—markets fail for many reasons and not all are related to bureaucratic controls.

Haulman: Being adventuresome—travel, study abroad, take a course from every department at the College—and lead a purposeful life making the world a better place.

Professor Clyde Haulman may serve as chairman of William and Mary’s Economics department and as vice mayor of Williamsburg, but he is also ranked as one of students’ favorite professors on ratemyprofessor.com. Mr. Haulman has taught at the College since 1969. The Informer recently put some tough—and not so tough—questions to the one of William and Mary’s iconic figures.

VAI: According to RateMyProfessors.com, you are “a really nice man,” “a great professor” and “an interesting professor.” How do you come across such reviews?

Haulman: Teaching is great fun, but to make it work you have to work at it—I spend lots of time thinking about and talking with colleagues about how to present ideas and concepts, how to engage students with the material and how to keep it interesting.

VAI: What is the strangest thing that’s ever happened in a lecture that you were giving?

Haulman: I don’t have a favorite.

VAI: In your dream world: 100% specie standard, free banking, fractional reserve banking or 100% fiduciary standard?

Haulman: Fractional reserve banking with sufficient oversight and strong capital requirements gives central bankers powerful options for dealing with the economy.

VAI: Is the Austrian theory of business cycle just plain nuts or no?

Haulman: Like many theories on the fringes of mainstream economics, there are elements of this view that is insightful—the role of banks and credit—but there are many important elements ignored. It also begins with the premise that unfettered markets will solve all. Yet we know from experience that this is not the case—markets fail for many reasons and not all are related to bureaucratic controls.

VAI: Have you ever gotten into a fight?

Haulman: No comment.

VAI: What’s your best advice to college students?

Haulman: Be adventuresome—travel, study abroad, take a course from every department at the College—and lead a purposeful life making the world a better place.

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Mason School of Business raises Miller Hall

Chris Ours
Staff Writer

Current students at William and Mary are experiencing great changes in the campus’s contour. A new Integrated Science Center, the School of Education’s new facility, a parking deck, renovations to the Recreational Center and William and Mary Hall. Perhaps the most noticeable to those who once parked in the former Common Glory parking lot is Alan B. Miller Hall, the new site of the Mason School of Business.

The Mason School was recently ranked 17th among US business schools by The Wall Street Journal and a Harris Interactive survey. Construction of the colossal building began March 30, 2007, and is planned to be completed by June 30, 2009, through a project called G2X—short for “From Groundbreaking to Grand Opening.”

The final structure will comprise three floors and a partial basement, covering 163,000 square feet, including an electronic trading room, café, business library and fully landscaped courtyard.

Miller Hall’s namesake, Alan B. Miller ($58), served as a trustee of the William and Mary Endowment Fund and is a life member of the school’s President’s Council. Mr. Miller’s business success is evident by Universal Health Services, the Mason School of Business Foundation and private donations from individuals including Alan Miller, Chip Mason, Jim Ukrop and Jim Brinkley, among many others. Donors interested in having their name on a graduate wing need to donate $5 million, while for $35,000 a donor can have his name above an MBA team meeting room.

“[Miller Hall] is a new gateway to the world of commerce for the College, and a lynchpin for heightened competitiveness with the great business schools of the country.”

Dean Larry Pulley has called this building a “western gateway to campus.” President Gene Nichol, in his State of the College address, called Miller Hall “a new gateway to the world of commerce for the College, and a lynchpin for heightened competitiveness with the great business schools of the country.”

The constant challenge, however, is to maintain the identity of a small state school while competing in a growing market.

Be it an entry to William and Mary or an outlet to the world, the new facility seeks to further the advancements in business and provide William and Mary students with a high caliber of education and preparedness.

A virtual tour of Miller Hall can be viewed at http://www.masonbusinessschoolmovie.com.

New business building construction underway: The new Mason School of Business will cover 163,000 square feet and include many academic commodities, an improvement from Tyler and Blow Hall.

Dollars and sense for students: What the College’s 2006-2012 Capital Outlay Plan means for you

There is no hiding the amount of construction currently taking place around campus. Whether it’s the final completion of the Integrated Science Center’s main building or the first stages of the new business school, both the noise and grandeur of these projects are clear.

These projects only represent the first few steps in a much larger vision of construction that the College put forth in the 2006-2012 Capital Outlay Plan. The total costs of this plan are expected to exceed $298 million, with over $187 million coming from general state funds and over $111 million from non-general funds, i.e., tuition and private donors.

The plan is broken down into three phases. In the plan’s first phase, which is scheduled for completion by the end of this semester, over $109 million was appropriated for construction and renovation.

Within the first phase, $11.4 million was allocated from non-general funds for the construction of the ensemble practice facility on the northwest corner of Zable Stadium, also known as the Laycock Center. $83.5 million was committed from both state and non-state funds to acquire Williamsburg-Sentara Hospital and to build the new School of Education.

Nearly $35 million was allocated from state funds in the first phase to renovate and expand PBK Hall, but, given the fact no construction on PBK is currently underway, it appears as if those funds were not, or have not yet, been distributed.

The second phase of the Capital Outlay Plan, taking place from 2008 to 2010, is expected to cost nearly $412 million, with most of the costs comprising renovations. In this phase, $9.2 million has been allocated to equip and furnish the new Integrated Science Center, $22.2 million to replace a major section of underground campus utilities and $24.2 million to renovate the Campus Center.

The third and final phase of the plan, to occur from 2010 to 2012, is expected to cost almost $77 million. In this phase, nearly $28 million has been allocated to renovate William and Mary Hall, $5.9 million to design the third phase of the Integrated Science Center and nearly $13 million to renovate Tyler Hall. For more information on the specifics of this Capital Outlay Plan visit www.wm.edu/construction/vision.php.

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COME TO A MEETING:

Mondays 7:30pm Blair 201

Expanson: The College has directed a proposed $298 million at campus growth.

Ian R. Whiteside
Business Editor

Andrew B. Blasi, Jr.

Ian R. Whiteside
Business Editor

The Virginia Informer
Nichol gives second State of the College address
Names financial difficulties as significant challenge to future of W&M

Jennifer Souers
Staff Writer

On January 29, President Gene Nichol delivered his second annual State of the College address. While citing the College’s three main themes of teaching, research and service, Mr. Nichol also addressed the major challenge of the state budget cuts, promising a plan on how to proceed—by the end of the semester.

Though he stated that he felt the state of the college was strong, Mr. Nichol portrayed the financial situation as a major obstacle to overcome. Calling it a “daunting trial of inadequate resources,” the president announced that the state has allocated over $45 million for the new School of Education. He also said the final figures for the cuts in the budget for this year will amount to $2.5 million. Mr. Nichol said this would not be apparent in any faculty or staff salary increases next year, even though salaries are already below those of competing universities. “We have yet to achieve stable, competitive economic infrastructure that we require,” he explained.

He also mentioned that he and Provost P. Geoffrey Feiss are preparing to launch a new planning effort to reexamine the College’s purpose, mission and financial resources by the end of the semester. There was no mention of any specific goals.

Most of the speech consisted of laudatory pronouncements from the president. After being introduced by Ball Professor of Law and William and Mary alumnus Alan Meese (’86), Mr. Nichol took the podium in front of the audience at the University Center Commonwealth Auditorium that was far from full. He thanked Mr. Meese for his warm remarks and his service to the College, including his co-chairmanship of the Religion Committee appointed by Mr. Nichol at last year’s address. Mr. Nichol then began to discuss the recent events and awards that have been conferred on different members of the College. He cited the accomplishments of VIMS Professor Carl Friedrichs and senior Judd Kennedy, who was recently awarded the prestigious Wilkinson Scholarship—the first for the College in 15 years and the third in its history. He also cited the recent report that rated the College fifth among mid-size universities for volunteers for the Peace Corps.

The president also described some of the College’s most outstanding achievements, citing the new construction for the Mason School of Business, School of Education, the library at the Marshall-Wythe School of Law and the laboratory at VIMS. He pointed out that the College was among the top 20 universities for national research, had excellent graduation rates for athletes (nearing 100 percent), and the Business faculty was among the most respected in the nation. Mr. Nichol discussed the increasing diversity at the College due to the Gateway and Community College Transfer Programs and increasing numbers of international students.

Mr. Nichol announced that the College had been asked to hold the National Forum on Service Learning this March. The forum serves as an arena to help other universities effectively encourage college students to become involved in civic service.

Mr. Nichol announced the first annual Young Guardes Weekend, which is meant to bring back the more recent alumni to the College. He also brought greetings from Vice President for Student Affairs Sam Sadler who is recovering from an undisclosed surgery.

Additionally, Mr. Nichol told the audience that those applications that the College have risen by 6 percent this year.

In his closing remarks, Mr. Nichol said the College was dedicated to research, teaching and service with “deep and resolute commitments” and “traditions of rigor.” He also cited the “bonds of affection from tens of thousands of alumni.” Mr. Nichol concluded his 40 minute address by reaffirming a positive future of the College.

FEATHERS: College files for trademark to hold rights to “hostile and abuse” symbol despite denouncing its use

At Homecoming 2007, the Virginia Informer distributed 30,000 green and gold feathers to the crowd at the football game. For Homecoming 2006, two feathers adorned the front of the official t-shirt, with the phrase “Because some things are sacred.” This comes at a time when students are working to develop a new logo and students and alumni alike are petitioning to change the two-feather symbol.

“It seems like a contradiction of terms: why would they trademark a symbol after they’re done using it?” said Matt Beato (’09), one of the creators of the Facebook group “Students Against the New W&M Logos.” “We wanted to seize on student power and let students decide their own logo.” If that includes the feathers, the College should not be putting up an obstacle for us to do that, especially after everything that they have said against the old logo in the past.”

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Since 1978, the green-tipped, yellow feathers that once adorned from the William and Mary athletic image had left its mark on surfaces of coffee mugs, sweaters and windshields. In 2006, however, the NCAA ruling of the feathers logo as “hostile and abusive” to Native Americans caused the expunging of the College’s most enduring symbol, which embodied the College’s historical efforts as a primary foundation of education among the indigenous people.

Despite the feather’s lingering associations with its accompanying sports mascot, “the Tribe,” the NCAA’s ruling of the feathers logo as “hostile and abusive” to Native Americans caused the expunging of the College’s most enduring symbol, which embodied the College’s historical efforts as a primary foundation of education among the indigenous people.

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NO DECISION FROM BOV:
continued from page one

the floor of the statehouse that the College was “becoming a joke.” Critics of lawmakers like Mr. Hugo, Delegate Brenda Pogge (R-York) and Delegate Bob Marshall (R-Prince William) claimed this was a cheap attempt at political bullying, but, in spite of lawmakers’ demands, all four BOV members—Geddis, Hornsby, Poston and Wolf—were confirmed unanimously.

Students supporting Mr. Nichol’s renewal have been increasingly active over the past week, with many wearing shirts which state, “If President Nichol’s not welcome here, then neither am I.” The shirts were on sale for $5 in the University Center during the lead-up to the board’s session.

Mr. Nichol made brief remarks to the crowd of students, faculty and community members who rallied for him on Thursday. According to some present, the besieged president did not appear outwardly optimistic about his chances of being renewed.

Following an eventful week and the anticlimactic Friday meeting of the board, Mr. Powell was asked by reporters whether an announcement would be made in the upcoming days regarding the president’s contract. Mr. Powell smiled and cautioned not to expect any such announcement imminently.

Since the board did not reach a decision at this series of meetings, the April 17-19 session emerges as the likely time for a decision. The April meetings are the last scheduled before the expiration of Mr. Nichol’s contract.
Briefly...

Top upcoming events
Megan Locke
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

The Seams of Seapin: February 21-23, 8 pm, February 24, 2 pm, PBK Hall
William and Mary Theater will present The Seams of Seapin on February 21-23 at 8 pm and February 24 at 2 pm at PBK Hall. This comedy is about the Family Follies playwriting Moliere revolves around the clever servant Scapin, who mischievously helps two sons marry against the wishes of their fathers. Tickets are $5 for students and $8 for general admission.

American Gangster: February 23, 7 and 9:30 pm, UC Commonwealth
Movie lovers will be happy to hear that UCAB is screening American Gangster on Saturday, February 23 at 7 and 9:30 pm and Sunday, February 24 at 1 and 4 pm in the UC Commonwealth auditorium. This recent blockbuster chronicles the exploits of 1970s Harlem drug lord Frank Lucas, played by Denzel Washington. While Lucas smugly heroin into the US via service planes heading home from Vietnam, the down-and-out detective posing as a minor drug dealer pursues him. (See Right Out of the Movies by Timothy Knight (Harper Entertainment, $12.95).)

Student-written and directed plays: February 25-28, 8 pm, PBK Hall
Premiere Theatre gives audiences a chance to sample eight different student-written and directed plays on February 25-28 at 8 pm in the Lab Theatre of PBK Hall. Performances on February 25 and 27 will feature the original plays A Muffin and Omelet, Wounded, and Dr. Zombies. On February 26 and 28, the premiering plays will be All That Glittered Was Pinstripe Dress, As They Come for Me: Liquid Courage, and Dr. Pastello. There is a suggested $3 donation for tickets.

Pianist Di Wu: February 28, 8 pm, Ewell Recital Hall
Renowned pianist Di Wu will be holding a concert on Friday, February 28 at 8 pm at Ewell Recital Hall as part of the Ewell Concert Series. Ms. Wu debuted with the Beijing Philharmonic when she was only 14 years old, and has toured regularly in Europe, Asia, Canada and the United States. She has performed with the Singapore Symphony, broadcasts of the National Symphony Orchestra, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and the New York Pops. Ms. Wu’s concert at Ewell Hall.

The Finer Side:

Jennifer Souers
The Finer Side

The onset of Valentine’s Day can inspire a variety of emotions, ranging from lighthearted to panic over finding the perfect gift. Well, I’m here to help you out with the panic part. For college students, Valentine’s Day shopping can be a bit of a challenge. If you do not drive, your store options are severely limited; there is always the question of what the appropriate gift is for your significant other, and, if you’re like most of us at William and Mary, you do not have a lot of time to research and hunt down the right gift. So here are some suggestions that might make February 14 look a little less like the end of the world:

For the good friend, the sweet tooth or even yourself: Wythe Candy Store, the palace of all sweet indulgences in Merchant’s Square, has some cute and affordable delicacies for Valentine’s Day. Be sure to stop in here for small candy presents for friends or for the finishing touches on a present to your valentine. Some of their highlights include: Ghirardelli’s classic chocolate squares in different size heart tins ($11.99-$17.99); jelly Belly bagged treats (including Valentine jelly bean mix, sour xoxo’s, sizzling hearts, and RapidCorn, all $4.99); the classic NECCO conversation hearts (tin $3.99); and chocolate and candy lollipops ($0.69-$2.29). Bulk candy Valentine’s Day selections include peanut butter hearts, milk chocolate presents, bears and lips, cinnamon hearts, sour smoochi lips, gummi cherry hearts and valentine gummy bears ($4.99 - $8.99/lb.).

For the sentimental: Nothing is more romantic than preserving memories. Barnes and Noble in Merchant’s Square has several tools to help capture your favorite memories. Some of their highlights include a photo album, made with red suede and a crystal heart design ($9.95), and a journal, also made with red suede, a crystal heart design and silver trimmed pages ($7.95).

For the Tribelover: Valentine’s Day is no excuse not to show school spirit! There is plenty of pink William and Mary clothing at the bookstore (and don’t forget to show your student ID for an extra discount). Try checking out the Champion zip and pullover sweatshirt in pink ($49.98), t-shirts ($17.98) and a canvas bag decorated with a pink William and Mary logo ($19.98).

For the bookworm: Barnes and Noble has a wonderful collection of love- and Valentine’s Day-themed books. Some favorites include: Of Mattresses, Tights, and Other Compulsions by Giacomo Casanova (Penguin, $10.00); A Natural History of Love by Diane Ackerman (Vintage, $14.95); and Great Kisses… and Famous Liar’s Inc., $5.95).

Restaurant review:

Get a massive helping at Chez Trinh
Matt Pinsker
Food Critic

Upon entering Chez Trinh, there is nothing indicating that one is in a Vietnamese restaurant. The small and cozy restaurant of about 20 tables is practically devoid of any design. The establishment still looks very elegant, so it was with surprise that I realized you are expected to seat yourself. My table was already set up, with silver- and flatware and white linen. The server was a little overworked, but was on top of a glass covering which in turn sat on top of clean, some garnishes on top for presentation. The broth was clear, and just had a sampling of the salad, too much food! I only got through the first time since I started as food critic, some garnishes on top for presentation. The broth was clear, instead of yellow, and tasted a bit different than most egg drop soups, but was still very delicious. For an appetizer I ordered the spring roll ($1.75), and was still working on my soup when a single, good sized roll came out on a plate with a sweet and sour sauce with hot pepper bits on the side for dipping. It was a little greasy, but not so much that it was dripping oil. I sank my teeth into it, and it was absolutely fantastic. It came in a very large and very deep bowl, and was built in layers. On the top was a thin layer of tasty chicken covered with crumbled peanuts, which proved to be a very good mix. Underneath was a thick layer of thin, white rice noodles. The noodles were not all greasy, but were very plain. Underneath the noodles was a thin salad of bean sprouts, lettuce and basil leaves. For the first time since I started as food critic, I was unable to finish an entree; it was just too much food! I only got through the chicken and almost half of the noodles, and just had a sampling of the salad, yet there was still enough food left over for another meal. There was a little too much basil for my taste, but otherwise I really enjoyed the dish. To sum it all up, I really enjoyed my meal and the relaxing atmosphere at Chez Trinh. The restaurant is a good venue to visit with friends, and its quiet atmosphere makes it a suitable date location as well. Just remember that the portions for the entrees are absolutely enormous, so be sure you have a hearty appetite before taking on one of their dishes!

Chez Trinh is located at 157 Monticello Avenue behind Bloom, and across from Big Lots.
Film review:

Strong films yield strong Oscar nominations

In the decades to come, film scholars and historians will look back on 2007 as a year of nearly unprecedented quality in American film. Interestingly, this year’s race for the Oscars is a crowded field of masterpieces and masterful performances. On Tuesday, January 22, nominations were announced for this year’s Academy Awards. Leading the pack were: No Country for Old Men and There Will Be Blood, with eight nominations each. As always, there were surprises, such as, “La vie en Rose” being invited to the Best Actor field for In the Valley of Elah; but, there were also snubs, as many people expected Into the Wild or The Devil Wears the Dress to be included in the Best Film category.

Yet in the excitement of nominations, the big question remains: will the show go on? In the midst of the Writer’s Guild of America strike, it is questionable whether the Oscars will be proceeded as planned. It is still unclear if the strike will be solved by the time the awards are handed out on February 24. However, there is still plenty of time for the writers and producers to come to an agreement, allowing the Academy Awards to proceed with their ceremony. Until then, The Virginia Informer takes a look at the major categories and predicts the winners, while discussing who really should take home the statue for the highest honor in Hollywood.

Best Picture:

Who Will Win: The major guilds and critics associations have been fairly consistent this year in crowning No Country for Old Men as the year’s best film. The Academy should agree, as No Country is a quiet, dark masterpiece about the intersection of violence and American society filled with beautiful images and shocking yet impressive performances.

Who Should Win: This is tough category as all five films are very strong contenders. However, no film is as flawless as There Will Be Blood. Paul Thomas Anderson’s achievement that will be remembered for decades to come. It is a paradigm of American cinema.

Who Should Win: This is also the easiest category to say that without a shadow of a doubt, Mr. Day-Lewis gave the best male performance this year.

Best Actress:

Who Will Win: This is a category which is already decided. Cate Blanchett has won over her competition for her work in Michael Clayton. In the Best Actress field, Mrs. Christy should barely edge out her competition for her work in Away From Home, as a woman suffering from Alzheimer’s.

Who Will Win: Who Will Win: This is the most competitive category of the year. Ellen Page has been making headlines for her work in Juno, which is truly the best part of that film. However, the main fight is between Julie Christie and Marion Cotillard. Ms. Christie should barely edge out her competition for her work in Away From Home, as a woman suffering from Alzheimer’s.

Who Will Win: Who Will Win: This is the most competitive category of the year. Jennifer Jason Leigh is one of the best actresses of the year. However, the race is for No Country for Old Men. That makes the creepiest villain of the year in No Country for Old Men. Of the two, there is no doubt that Mr. Day-Lewis deserves every accolade.

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Who Should Win: Who Should Win: This is the most competitive category of the year. Unless people are still worshipping at the altar of Michael Clayton, this is the best of the night. However, the Best Actor field for No Country for Old Men is filled with masterpieces and masterful performances. On Tuesday, January 22, nominations were announced for this year’s Academy Awards. Leading the pack were: No Country for Old Men and There Will Be Blood, with eight nominations each. As always, there were surprises, such as, “La vie en Rose” being invited to the Best Actor field for In the Valley of Elah; but, there were also snubs, as many people expected Into the Wild or The Devil Wears the Dress to be included in the Best Film category.

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When it comes to the world of fine dining and cigars, there are a few things that seem to intimidate people pretty consistently. Sushi is one of them because it’s something that’s perceived as being different. But another. But the one that gets people really jumpy is tobacco—okay, I mean jumpy, but mean a little bit more. Tobacco, specifically cigar-smoking. When you think about it from the comfort of your easy chair, it doesn’t seem like something that you would get too excited about. But then, on the other hand, when you think about it, you get a little more excited, I think. The thing is that when you’re getting ready to smoke with a group of people, especially if they’re a group that knows what they’re doing, the whole experience can be a little scary for a beginner. In this article, I’m going to lay out a couple of pointers that should ease you pretty painlessly into the exclusive world of cigar-smoking.

First, let’s talk about how to pick the right cigar for you. Bars and restaurants will often have tiny selections, while tobacconists can overwhelm you with hundreds of different types that they offer. If you’re looking for a cigar that is appealing to you, your best bet is to talk to the salesperson that is assisting you to find the right fit. You should consider three major factors in making your decision. First, think about the length of smoke that you’re looking for. The average smoke time for a medium-sized cigar is about thirty minutes, but some longer, thicker cigars can last up to an hour. While most cigars last don’t last more than five minutes. Next, think about the intensity, or flavor, that you want. There are three major categories: mild, medium, and bold. Think of it like coffee, if you’re just starting out, you’ll probably want to go with something milder (cream and sugar) and gradually work your way up the line until you find the right intensity for you. Finally, be sure to consider price once you know what you’re looking for. Very fine cigars can be as expensive as $50 apiece, but most hover in the $10-$25 range. Again, if you’re just starting out, you probably won’t be able to tell the difference between a cigar on the lower end of this spectrum and one on the higher end, so when in doubt, err on the side of financial prudence. A solid request for a beginner on their first trip to the tobacco shop would be to ask for a mild to medium 30-minute smoke. I won’t make brand recommendations here; let your salesperson choose a good one for you. Many stores have specialty brands or sales that you work employees to take advantage of.

Okay, now we’re down to the evening of the smoke. The first thing you have to do is cut your cigar. The number one mistake that beginners make when it comes to cigar-smoking is over-cutting. No matter whether you use a punch, a guillotine cutter, a pocket knife, or (like me) your teeth, never take off more than an eighteenth of an inch (about the thickness of two credit cards). By cutting any more than that, you run the risk of your cigar’s wrapper coming undone, and that’s just not cool. Cigar lighting is something that people often get fuzzy about. Some refuse to use anything but wooden matches or small, striped tips of cedar wood, while in lighting up, claiming that lighter fluids leave a taste on the smoke. Others (me, again) find it easier just to use a conventional lighter. In either case, let your flame burn for a bit of time before touching it to your cigar so that the sulphur, butane or fluid can burn off first. When the time comes, never thrust your cigar right into the middle of the flame and start puffing away. This leads to embarrassing flaring up and can cause your cigar to tip over unevenly. If you’re one to start burning fast, try another. Cigar aficionados have the best lighting method that I’ve come across so far: just treat your tip of cigar like a marshmallow. Hold it about a quarter inch over the flame and slowly roll it until you have a solid, even ember all the way around the circumference of the tip. Once you’ve got this, pull a small amount of smoke into your mouth and then check the tip a second time to ensure that every thing looks good. While smoking, there are a few things that you never do never inhale (remember, cigars are to be savored for their flavor, not their nicotine content), never blow smoke anywhere near someone’s face (in the old days, this was tantamount to challenging them to a fight) and never grip your cigar out into an ashtray (when you’re finished smoking, just set your cigar down and allow it to cool, then push it into the ashtray). Some people will insist that to tap ash off of a cigar while smoking it is uncouth, but others (again, like me) feel that it is an essential part of cigar-smoking. You should never, at any point, let the ash pile up in a dish or ashtray with ash all over your chest. The most important thing for a beginner to keep in mind is that you should stop smoking whenever you decide that you’re finished. If your cigar starts to taste and smell a little bit weak, or if you feel a little queasy or you feel lightheaded, it’s time to throw in the towel. There’s no shame in not smoking a cigar down to the tip. In fact, many people who buy cigars hardly ever make it past the halfway point and set them aside halfway before setting them aside. However, once you’re done, you’re done. Saving a half-smoked cigar to relight later is not the best idea—the flavor will be totally shot and your smoke will taste more like charcoal than anything else.

So there you have it, a few bare-bones pointers and rules of thumb for a new and eager cigaer smoker. I hope you find this an interesting and useful guide and a starting point for your newfound passion. If you’d like to learn more about the world of cigars and cigar-smoking, take a short trip over to New Town and visit Connections tobacconist, located right across from the movie theatre and California Torrilla.

Musical sorority NKE seeks all lovers of sound

Chris Davis
Layout Editor

Setting it apart from social sororities, Nu Kappa Epsilon’s (NKE) mission of forming “close-knit relationships with other girls with a passion for music.” In addition, NKE holds a sister recital, a number of socials, and participating in a late night scavenger hunt. According to Vice President of NKE Ashley Whitehead, “By donating money earned through NKE-run talent outreach...”

R.C. Rasmus
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Book review: A rebirth of civic education and culture falls short

Jacob Hill
Staff Writer

Civic Education and Culture, edited by Bradley C.S. Watson, brings together a number of essays by contemporary philologists, philosophers and educators, mostly from speakers given at a conference given by the same name at Saint Vincent College in April of 2003. The book is divided into three sections: civic education and the Western tradition, civic education and the American regime, and civic education and the university. While the title and layout of the book appear to present a unified theme, the overall work contains everything from a philosophical discussion over the nature and effect of Kantian and Millian ethics, a discussion on the different arguments for and against the death penalty. Abigail Thernstrom presents the most valuable essay, titled “Closing the Racial Gap: Culture Matters,” in which she manages to tie both education and culture into a practical problem plaguing America. Other essays offer some interesting points, while others are written in a style that is almost inaccessible to anyone not trained in Hegel’s phenomenology of Spirit. Civic Education and Culture presents a few interesting points, but do not expect to be blown away.
Staff Editorials:

College to blame for SWAS controversy

Much of the controversy surrounding this year’s Sex Workers’ Art Show (SWAS) came not from the show’s content or from pressure from the General Assembly, but from a severe public relations mismanagement on the part of the College administration.

As reported in this issue of The Virginia Informer, SWAS was required to perform a censored version of the show. It appears that this mandate did not come from Richmond, as many believe, but from the school itself. Annie Oakley, the madam of ceremonies for SWAS, said during the performance that SWAS was required to produce “a censored version of the show, as requested by your College.”

This statement, if true, exists in stark contrast to President Gene Nichol’s statements throughout this controversy, having said that “censorship has no place at a great university.” The College—acting as one of the accused parties in a contract involving SWAS and its sponsoring groups—ultimately signed on to the contract preventing certain aspects of the show to be performed. In addition, Mr. Nichol wanted the show to be performed off campus at the Williamsburg Unitarian Church; these plans ultimately fell through, however.

The level of controversy surrounding the show has been compounded, not only by the content of the show itself, but rather by the bungling of this issue by the administration. Mr. Nichol and his underlings were not proactive about stopping the hemorrhaging of bad press from the College surrounding SWAS, and, as a result, this performance became a media circus. SWAS has come to William and Mary ever since Mr. Nichol took office—the administration knew what was coming.

This was a gigantic public relations failure. The administration allowed the media to run away with stories about SWAS, due mainly to an apparent dissonance from within its ranks as to how to handle the issue. Had the administration issued a constant, consistent and early response to its critics regarding SWAS, it may have prevented groups like the media, the General Assembly and others from painting the College in a negative light.

Needless to say, this is yet another example of the administration’s incompetence. It is an indication that the administration is tone deaf and out of touch, and, once again, the college community is hurt as a result.

“Needless to say, this is yet another example of the administration’s incompetence.”

BOV must act soon

Nichol’s State of the College proves he has too little to offer, too late

With the Board of Visitors (BOV) having their regularly scheduled meeting last week, it is expected that they announce their much anticipated decision on whether or not to renew the contract of William and Mary President Gene Nichol. Part of the reason for this expected decision came from the fact that Delegate Mark Cole (R-Spotsylvania) summoned four BOV members to Richmond and Thursday night’s pro-Nichol rally here on campus. In spite of this, the BOV failed to offer an announcement on Mr. Nichol’s fate at the conclusion of their meeting on Friday.

It is irresponsible for the BOV to take so long with this decision. The facts about Mr. Nichol’s presidency have been known for months and the review of whether or not to renew his contract has been going on since September. While it is important that a thorough review of Mr. Nichol take place, there is no reason that this issue has not been resolved by now.

If the BOV is going to choose to renew Mr. Nichol’s contract, they should make the announcement as soon as possible. This will allow for the College to focus on other important issues besides defending Mr. Nichol.

Mr. Nichol could not even plan a protest to our budget problems, resolving only to state that he hopes to come up with a plan by the end of the semester. The “on the jobs” training is over, and wastes more time than the College running in place.

Additionally, if the BOV is planning not to renew Mr. Nichol’s contract, then they should make that announcement very soon as well. This way, the search for a new president can begin immediately, so that adequate time is spent reviewing the candidates before a new president is inaugurated in July. Additionally, leaving Mr. Nichol’s contract status in limbo is unfair to the president by preventing him from searching for a new job.

Thank you from all of us at The Virginia Informer

The Informer is an independent publication and does not receive any public funding, unlike other publications at William and Mary. We would like to especially recognize some of our private supporters.

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To my classmates who don’t know anything

When I enrolled at William and Mary three years ago, I was excited about the prospect of earning a government major. I had always found politics interesting and looked forward to learning about new ideas and engaging in stimulating debate. I have not been disappointed by the coursework by the Government Department. I’ve taken very interesting courses covering a broad spectrum of topics from African politics, to political theory to the American legal system. Additionally, I’ve found most of the government professors at the college to be very competent and have demonstrated a great deal of knowledge and enthusiasm for their subjects.

There has been one aspect of my government major that has constantly bothered me, however. That annoyance is many government students seem to like to pretend that they know everything, when, in reality, they know very little about the topics covered in class.

This occurrence mostly comes out during discussions of the previous night’s readings. Here, these students can be divided into two groups. One of these groups consists of students who clearly did not do the reading. These students are still desperate to earn points towards a participation grade so they offer up inane comments trying to use as many big words as possible in an attempt to cover up their lack of knowledge. To illustrate their “points,” these students try to compare off-topic references, such as comparing every international conflict with the War in Iraq. This makes them appear not only extremely arrogant, but unintelligent.

The other group of people are those who have done the reading and feel a need to constantly remind the professor and their classmates of that fact. They will raise their hands multiple times and the first words out of their mouth are, “In the reading…” and they feel the need to include the phrase “the reading” in at least one of every two sentences. The ironic thing about these people is that most of their references come from the introductory sections to that reading and not from the actual material. This isn’t to say that healthy discussions cannot be valuable in learning the material, but discussion is essentially worthless without students contributing insightful thoughts about the material or offering some unique personal experience.

These people not only express their ill-informed opinions in class but they carry others with them to other conversations. One example occurs when I was having conversations about whether or not President George Nichol’s contract should be renewed. I have heard students articulate well-formed opinions on both sides of the debate, however, too often Mr. Nichol’s supporters are only able to defend him by saying “he’s funny” or “people who criticize Nichol are mean.” This isn’t to turn this piece into a debate on our president, but just to illustrate an example of how poorly these people argue their points.

Additionally, I don’t want to single out government majors necessarily, as I’m sure this phenomenon happens in several other departments, but this is just the one I which I have the most experience. So please, if you don’t have anything intelligent to say, don’t say anything at all.

All you need is love: the only way to treat pregnant classmates

Beth Zagrobelny
Copy Editor

When a friend told me that she had seen a pregnant girl at Quizno’s, my first thought was, “That’s wonderful!” The words came out of my mouth, and immediately, I felt bad and began a jumble of apology for the pro-life community, along with explanations. Luckily, my friend understood what I was trying to say.

As a pro-life advocate in a world where abortion can seem like the best choice for a college student, I want to be able to tell William and Mary women, it is possible. You CAN carry a child in this campus! Unfortunately, I don’t know that many women who would believe me. On top of everything that pregnancy entails biologically, there’s the stigma of being pregnant—and besides, it’s not particularly common, to say the least.

I personally have never met anyone at William and Mary who I know has had a child, but I’ve met women from other schools who have been pregnant, given birth and even raised a child while enrolled as a full-time student. I refuse to believe that William and Mary’s women are any less impressive. Of course, none of this means it would be easy to do. There are a lot of resources, however, that would certainly help the process, and of which most students are unaware. Beyond the Student Health Center, where could a pregnant student go?

First of all, the Health Center will help a woman figure out how to get prenatal care, although they don’t provide any. Secondly, there are two wonderful resources that every woman—and man—should know about, just in case. The first is the Catholic Charities Care Center. They provide counseling, resources and referrals of varying types. Most importantly, the vast majority of the time the care center is staffed by a group of the sweetest women in the world, who want nothing more than to love and to help people. Despite their associations with the Catholic Church, they staff has no overt religious agenda whatsoever. The second resource is CareNet, which provides pregnancy testing, counseling and parenting classes with a reward system of baby supplies, among other resources. Once again, the best part of CareNet is its caring employees, who focus on developing a personal relationship with the women and men who have come to them for assistance. Both places offer services to men, as well as non-judgmental post-abortive counseling.

I also had the privilege of recently learning about an international organization called the Nurturing Network (www.nurturingnetwork.org) that brings together women who need help with pregnancy and pregnancy-related issues. They work on a case-by-case basis to help each woman get exactly what she needs at that point in her life.

The Nurturing Network reaffirms for those who seek help that there are, in fact, people who want to help.

The groups mentioned here only help with the material aid that a woman needs; the other area in which a woman needs support comes based on the reaction of the community around her. This is where we truly fail women. On one side, there are abortion-rights advocates who offer them the idea of a quick fix, but, on the other side, there are rows of judging eyes, ready to condemn anyone for premarital sex. Where does that leave young, single mothers? Friendless, alone and scared. In order to make any progress, our society must accept, embrace and love mothers, no matter what their position is in society. That’s my challenge to the pro-life community, along with America as a whole.

We must start with love—non-judgmental, non-condemning love.
Charter Day Ceremony and awards:

Deputy attorney general praises public service and the College

Charlie Murray
Staff Writer

On Saturday, February 9, the College of William and Mary hosted alumni and former Deputy Attorney General of the United States James B. Comey ('82), who sang the College’s praises at the Charter Day ceremony.

Students, faculty, members of the administration and distinguished guests gathered this past Saturday for the 315th anniversary of the granting of the royal charter for the establishment of the College of William and Mary in Virginia. President Gene Nichol, Chancellor Sandra Day O’Connor and Rector Michael Powell were all in attendance.

Several awards and honors were presented at the ceremony. The Thomas Jefferson Award was presented to Professor David Holmes of the Department of Religion, in recognition of his more than four decades of service to the College. The Thomas Jefferson Teaching Award was presented to Professor Alexander Prokhorov of the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. The Thomas Jefferson Prize in Natural Philosophy went to Ashwin Ratnogi, who has maintained a 4.0 GPA as a mathematics and physics major, and who has recently become renowned for achieving the highest possible score on the physics GRE subject test. The James Monroe Prize in Civic Leadership was awarded to Wendy Chan for her work with orphanages and housing projects in Honduras and Guatemala. Honorary degree were presented to Harriet M. Fulbright, wife of the late Senator J. William Fulbright, for her work encouraging international study, and to James C. Reeves IV (’74) for his efforts to bring the history of George Washington to life at Mount Vernon.

Mr. Comey gave the Charter Day address. Mr. Comey said that “William and Mary lit a fire in me to do something in public service,” and encouraged other students to follow this path, saying he, “ached inside for those who have never tried public service.” He also argued against the prevailing sense in Washington that uncertainty in the legal profession is a bad thing. “Doubt is not weakness, doubt is wisdom,” he asserted. Mr. Comey expressed his belief that the “rule of law sets this nation apart. It is its rock, its foundation,” but also stated that in fields such as counter-terrorism there is often a collision between the “responsibility to protect people and the Constitution.” He argued that these issues require an open mind, willing to entertain a variety of different positions. Mr. Comey stated that it was at William and Mary that he was taught to “think broadly,” and the importance of expressing an idea clearly. He attributed much of his own success and passion to former professors and his time at the College saying, “I hope this amazing place can still inspire you.”

President Nichol has not joined with other college presidents in PCC

Nick Hoelker
Opinion Editor

Despite a reputation as a liberal president, Gene Nichol has failed to support his liberal backers on environmental issues. Mr. Nichol has not yet joined nearly five hundred of his colleagues in signing the Presidents Climate Commitment (PCC). The PCC calls on universities to become carbon neutral and reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. It also calls college presidents to use their leadership abilities to influence students and their surrounding communities to take up the cause of fighting global warming. Signing the PCC would also not come at an expense to the College, as the school would save on energy bills by making buildings more energy efficient.

In addition to not signing the PCC, the school has also failed in environmental sustainability. The Sustainable "Doubt is not weakness, doubt is wisdom."

Eco-friendly?: Despite student requests, President Nichol has not made any substantial moves to make the campus more “green.” A website redesign contract. This car gets approximately 15 miles per gallon in the city and 19 miles per gallon on the highway.

Perks for the president

Salary: $345,220
House: School provides
Transportation: School provides Jeep Grand Cherokee

E n d o w m e n t s
Institute gave William and Mary a ranking of D. in its college sustainability report card. Furthermore, Mr. Nichol and the administration received an F on a subtopic in the report card for making no formal commitments to sustainability despite multiple student requests, and the school was also cited for a lack of transparency in its endowment holdings.

Lastly, according to a December 21 Daily Press article, Mr. Nichol receives a Jeep Grand Cherokee as part of his

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