College’s rankings begin to fall

History shows that where Nichol goes, loss in fundraising, prestige follow

Nick Hoekler
Online Editor

From substantial drops of U.S. News and World Report’s rankings to a federal injunction, Gene Nichol compiled a controversial record leading other public universities prior to coming to William and Mary.

From 1988 through 1995, Nichol was the dean of the law school at the University of Colorado at Boulder. U.S. News and World Report did not compile comprehensive law school rankings until 1994, so it is difficult to assess Nichol’s overall performance. However, according to the Colorado Daily, in 1996, immediately after Nichol left the law school, the American Bar Association threatened to strip the school of its accreditation. According to the current law dean, David Getches, this was because the law school’s facilities had become overcrowded and outdated due to a lack of funding. Getches explained that this was due to a Taxpayer’s Bill of Rights, which makes it impossible for the Colorado legislature to operate at a surplus and very difficult to raise taxes. Nichol failed to secure any additional funding from the state legislature for the school.

The dean following Nichol attempted to get the legislature to fund improvements and the legislature initially agreed but later rescinded that promise, causing the ABA to threaten to revoke accreditation after being horrified that a state could place such little emphasis on higher education. The problem was finally

NICHOL’S HISTORY continued on page five

Housing costs to rise 7.75% for 2007-2008

Chase Coleman
Staff Writer

Nearly three days after the March 29 Student Assembly elections, the results, which were accidentally lost the night would have meant that the Pilchen/Hopkins team was, at first, “unable to certify a winner” but did so the next day.

In the last race to be certified, Matt Brown led Shariff Tanious by a single vote for student president of the Student Assembly, the results for all SA election

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The Informer investigates ROTC credits issue - Pages 2 and 14
Joe Pirro previews summer movies - Page 13

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The common sense paper of record on campus

SA election comes to belated conclusion

Stephen Dause
Staff Writer

Nearly three days after the March 29 Student Assembly elections, the results, which were accidentally lost the night after the elections, were retabulated from a raw data log, and the results for all elections were eventually certified.

As The Virginia Informer projected, Zach Pilchen and Valerie Hopkins were elected president and vice president of the Student Assembly. In other races for Senate and Undergraduate Council, incumbents finished strong, most of them retaining their seats.

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Not lousing for long: Rising housing costs and online lottery add more concerns for students.

PILCHEN/ HOPKINS WIN

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The common sense paper of record on campus
ROTIC: Full and fair treatment?

William and Mary does not award full academic credit for military science courses; story attracts more negative national media coverage

Steven Nelson
Staff Writer

The SA Senate has taken action where college administrators have not, unanimously passing the “full and fair treatment for ROTC cadets” bill on March 27, advocating that the College administration grant full credit for courses taken for the Reserve Officer Training Corps.

As the bill reads, the administration is recommended to implement changes so that ROTC cadets earn at least three credits per semester and have all credits earned count towards the 120 needed for graduation.

Other Virginia schools such as the University of Virginia, James Madison, and George Mason all give full credit to ROTC. According to bill proponent and ROTC cadet Matt Pinsker ’09, “Military science is the only program on campus where not all credits count to what is needed to graduate.”

“Currently, a ROTC cadet will take 19 courses over four years, and get just 14 credits, and only six of those credits count to the 120 needed to graduate,” says Pinsker. The bill advocates not only a change in policy, but that retroactive credit be enacted so that “all students currently enrolled in the College of William and Mary are affected by the changes.”

“A current policy has adversely affected ROTC cadets, forcing most to take more courses than other students, while plumping some into last minute desperation near graduation.”

Senior Megan Barron was unaware of the College’s ROTC policy and thought she was set to graduate with 125 credits, “then I was emailed this spring - the spring of my graduating year...I was short one credit.”

“I was thankfully able to scramble for credits I needed for graduation” says Megan, who adds: “to think that ROTC, which has made me better prepared for the world than any other course I have taken would be an obstacle to my graduation seems crazy.”

Josh Geiger ’08 echoed her sentiments, stating “ROTIC is a class/sport/part-time job/mentoring program/career skills program which takes up a huge chunk of my schedule without the school officially recognizing the effort.”

Apparently the SA Senate agrees, yet the Educational Policy Committee, chaired by Professor Ray McGoo, has to meet on the issue to make a recommendation. According to McGoo, “this topic is currently in discussion between the College’s administrators and the ROTC administration.”

SA President-elect Zach Pitchen, who co-sponsored the bill in the SA Senate with Matt Beato ’09 and Joe Lupino-Exposto ’08, voiced his support for changes saying, “issues like the full and fair treatment of ROTC cadets need to be discussed first and foremost with the professors who teach those classes, and only then brought to the attention of the larger administration.”

Pitchen added, “our administration is establishing two liaison positions to the Faculty Assembly so that the lines of communication between students and faculty are strengthened, and both groups have a method through which they can raise concerns to the other.”

Though a student administration grant has been elected, William and Mary has again attracted National attention due to an unpopular administration policy, with Pinski appearing on the G. Gordon Liddy radio show, which has a weekly audience of 1.75 million, to plead his case. Pinski has also been invited to appear on the Hannity and Colmes show on the FoxNews channel. It appears that on this issue, however, that there is strong, broad-based support for change, which will likely influence college decision-makers.
Students report lack of availability at Counseling Center

Stephanie Long
News Editor

After two negative experiences with the Counseling Center, one William and Mary student, who wished to remain anonymous, reported her disappointment with the availability of counselors to students who need help. This sentiment was quickly echoed by other students.

Two sides:

While Chemerinsky argued for a complete separation of church and state and agreed with President Nichol's decision to remove the Wren cross, Guinness called for civility, recognizing that Nichol's decision-making process was flawed, and that the old policy only needed tweaking.

Students have complained of lack of availability at Counseling Center

Dr. Crace admitted that because of this, they have tried to increase outreach to students via regular appointments twice a week, and the center has four same day appointments open every day, contrary to what the student was told, which fill up faster some days than others. If you leave your name every day you call for one of these appointments for three days you will be worked in as soon as possible. There is also one immediate crisis hour allotted for students who state that their situation is urgent, which is then confirmed by the immediate crisis counselor. Crace explained that any student who knows he or she will be in a crisis situation will be seen either that day or the day after.

Dr. Crace and the center adopted a tripartite system, admitting students via regular appointments two weeks in advance, same day appointments, and immediate crisis appointments. Crace stated that the center has four same day appointments open every day, contrary to what the student was told, which fill up faster some days than others. If you leave your name every day you call for one of these appointments for three days you will be worked in as soon as possible. There is also one immediate crisis hour allotted for students who state that their situation is urgent, which is then confirmed by the immediate crisis counselor. Crace explained that any student who knows he or she will be in a crisis situation will be seen either that day or the day after.

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The Senate considered many referenda put on the ballot for the March 29 elections. One of the most debated questions that made it on the ballot was one that asked whether the disparity in representation of undergraduate females in the Senate led to inadequate representation of students. Sponsor Meghan McCarthy ('07) and co-sponsor Sarah Rojas ('10), the only two undergraduate females in the Senate, announced their plan to use this referendum as part of an awareness campaign to encourage women to run for Senate. A couple of members of the public had come to speak on the bill and encourage McCarthy and Rojas in their effort to get the bill passed, which it was, 18-1.

The Voter Registration Act was also passed by the Senate. Its purpose is to fund a voter registration drive, now that students who are eligible to vote in Williamsburg, that would hurt the case for the loss of elections results, called the count of 311 to 310. However, Elections Commissioner Sadler on revising the judicial council hopes that a hybrid system will better suit the administration. His proposed method would have judicial council candidates apply and go through a screening process before being elected by their peers.

Outgoing Senators Blais and Morris then had their Consolidated Reserve Dividend Act heard. Had it passed, it would have allocated currently unused money from an SA consolidated reserves fund back to students.

"There's a lot of good ways to give it back to students in more creative ways than this," said Senator Brett Phillips ('08), who noted that although spending was down this year, that was probably partially because of a hesitancy to spend due to overspending last year. Senator Rojas noted that the effort to reform and improve the Health Center might end up costing a lot of money, and such programs that would better serve students than giving back what would amount to be slightly less than $15 per student.

"The only bill heard at the last Senate meeting before the new SA officers and Senators took over was the Ironic Funding Act. Sponsored by Senator Sean Sheppard ('07), it funds a Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) regional conference on local activism, appropriating $750 from the Student Activities Consolidated Reserves. The convention will be focusing on how to effectively lobby local and state governments with the theme of ‘keeping it local.’"

Editor’s Note: Senator Joe Lappin-Esposito is Editor in Chief and Senator Andrew Blais is Business Editor of The Virginia Informer.
VP of Development: W&M to regain $500M goal by June 30

Nick Fitzgerald
Executive Editor

Vice President of University Development Sean Pieri stated firmly in a phone interview with The Virginia Informer that he is “100% confident” William and Mary will “meet and exceed…[the $500 million fundraising] goal by the June 30 deadline.”

As Pieri explained, “We announced on Charter Day that we had surpassed the campaign total, and we had $502.7 million as of December 31.” This statement was true as of the end of 2006, but the fund total dropped below the $500 million level after a wealthy donor, James McGlothlin (’62), revoked a $12 million donation in March of 2007 because he was upset about President Nichol’s handling of the Wren cross debacle. Although Pieri did admit a $12 million gift was revoked from the fund total, “we [Development] never confirmed it was Jim McGlothlin.”

When asked at what level the fund was currently sitting, Pieri simply stated, “I don’t know where we are.”

Pieri, in reference to the fact that some donations have been withheld as a result of the Wren cross controversy, stated that “it’s not uncommon for someone to get upset about what’s happening at an institution,” and therefore withhold funds. He did say, “My concern is that students who were upset by the removal of the cross, and there was a check in there for $25,000. Were they upset?”

Yes, but not to the point where they are withholding their giving. Those that are closest to the institution aren’t saying that they are withholding funds.

“No donor has every right to determine how and when they wish to make a philanthropic gift,” Pieri said. “I personally don’t hold anything against the donor [who revoked the $12 million]. I understand the decision.”

Pieri explained that there are typically four ways of making a philanthropic donation to the College: a simple cash donation; a pledge given over a certain period of time, during which time there is always a possibility of revoking the pledge, a real estate gift, such as a trust; and other long-term revocable gifts such as those drawn up in wills.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE GATES (’65) TO SPEAK AT COMMENCEMENT

Andrew B. Blasi Jr.
Business Editor

On May 20 William and Mary will say goodbye to the Clinton administration, and on May 20, 2007, current US Secretary of Defense, Robert M. Gates (’65) will help send them off, as Gates will be the keynote speaker for the commencement ceremonies.

Named the 22nd US Secretary of Defense on December 18, 2006, Robert Gates replaced Donald Rumsfeld as the head civilian director of the United States Military. In an official press release by the College, College President Gene Nichol stated, “Bob Gates’ service reflects the compelling tradition of leadership that is the hallmark of our service—including past U.S. presidents and one of our notable sister public universities in College Station, Texas.”

Nichol was referring to Texas A&M, at which Gates was president prior to being named as head of the Defense Department. In addition to an address by Secretary Gates, alumnus William M. Kelso, director of archaeology for the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities and the Jamestown Rediscovery Project, and William T. Coleman, Jr., former secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation and noted civil rights advocate and legal scholar, will receive honorary degrees at the ceremony. William and Mary Chancellor and retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor will also be in attendance.

Gates’ dedication to service also took form during his years at William and Mary. As an undergraduate, he was an active member of Alpha Phi Omega, the service fraternity, and served as the group’s president during his senior year. While at the College, Gates also served as a dormitory manager and helped entering students become acquainted to the College as an orientation aide. Gates was also active in the Young Republicans and served as business manager of the William and Mary Review, a literary and art magazine.

A native of Kansas, Gates earned his master’s degree in history from Indiana University and his doctorate in Russian and Soviet history from Georgetown University. He and his wife Becky have two adult children.

Nichols History:

Record at Colorado, UNC is lackluster

Chancellor and retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O’Connor will also be in attendance.

The Virginia Informer apologizes for the following errors that appeared in our March 2007 Issue:

The photo on page seven should be credited to Long Vinh. The photo on page nine should be credited to Ian Whiteside.

The Virginia Informer would like to correct any facts printed incorrectly. Please submit all corrections via email to editor@vainformer.com.
College withholds all professor evaluations from public and students

Dean says they provide feedback for granting tenure, pay raises for faculty

Nick Hoelker
Online Editor

As every William and Mary student knows, the last week of classes is often spent filling out professor evaluations. Students never get to see the final result of these evaluations, but nevertheless they play an important role in the determination of a professor’s salary and tenure. According to Edward Pratt, the College’s Dean of Undergraduate Studies, these evaluations, which are mandatory for all departments and professors, are given to each individual department upon their completion. How they are used are up to each department, but generally the department chair, a personnel committee, or a tenure committee will use these evaluations in giving a professor an annual merit evaluation. These merit evaluations are then used to make decisions about tenure and salary increases. Pratt stated that if a tenured professor receives consistently poor evaluations, the department chair may intervene on a higher level than just offering a smaller pay raise. Along with the students’ evaluations, a professor’s scholarship and publishing are also involved in judging merit.

Pratt also stated the professor evaluations are not available to students or members of the public. According to Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council Staff Attorney Alan Gernhardt, this is acceptable under Virginia state law. Pratt added that there was no particular reason that the evaluations were private and could not recall any recent discussion on the issue. Pratt mentioned that he believed the issue had been brought up in the past and the faculty decided against making the evaluations public. Pratt also stated that the merit evaluations of professors are also not available to the public since they discuss personnel files, but faculty salaries are public record.

Pratt added that there are no formal mechanisms for students to learn about professor quality and that most students just rely on word of mouth. Students can use the professor rating page on http://sin.wm.edu or third-party Web sites such as http://www.ratemyprofessors.com.

Carefully Random

Current weathervane atop Wren Building just one of many

It is one of those symbols of the College that catches your eye but at the same time is not often given much thought. It is out there in plain view, but finding its history takes some searching. It is—drum roll, please—the weathervane on top of the Wren Building. When pondered for a few minutes, the weathervane elicits several provocative questions: How long has it been there? Were there weathervanes before it that the current one replaced? Why on earth was the year 1693—important for obvious reasons now—so important back when it was originally put up there, anyway?

The weathervane on the center of the building now is the most recent of four to six (I’m not making this up, I promise) weathervanes that have been on top of the Wren Building, famous for being the educational building in continuous use in the country and, yes, for burning down three times.

The original weathervane, seen in a c. 1740 Bodleian copper plate, existed at least until 1856, at which point it was so damaged that it was likely replaced, according to an unpublished 1968 architectural report on the Wren Building by M.C. Savedge. Its replacement did not last long, however, as the second fire of 1859 destroyed the cupola supporting it and the weathervane itself. For a short period of three years, one and possibly two weathervanes were on top of the Italianate towers that were added in the 1859 rebuilding of the building but removed after it burned down again in 1862. After 1867, a new, 18th-century style wrought-iron weathervane along with a new cupola was there. It had the date of 1728 on its flag, marking the year of the completion of the building after the first fire in 1705.

The weathervane that you see today is a result of the renovation of Colonial Williamsburg in 1928, at which point it was decided that the date of the College’s founding, 1693, was much more significant and ought to replace the 1728 flag currently on the building’s roof.

So, there you have it: The current weathervane on top of the Wren Building is but one of many that has graced the building’s roof but is the first to have the year 1693 written in its flag. How’s that for carefully random?
If walls could talk:
Building of first president one of jewels on campus

Chase Coleman
Staff Writer

Opened in 1935, James Blair Hall, at times called the “Ivy Tower,” has served a variety of functions at the College, elegantly offering space for academic and administrative purposes. The title of James Blair was not given to the building until 1968: before it was named Marshall-Wythe Hall, named after Law Professor George Wythe and one of his students, Chief Justice John Marshall. The new building, according to a 1934 edition of The Flat Hat, was “practically a duplicate of modern Tyler and Washington halls,” measuring 92 feet wide and 150 feet long. The versatile structure housed administrative offices, including the president’s and registrar’s office, the Department of Jurisprudence, later renamed the Marshall-Wythe School of Law, and the School of Government and Citizenship. By the time of its official dedication in 1937, Blair Hall also held the economics, government, history and sociology departments.

Contributing to the war effort, the College began housing the Navy Chaplain’s Training School 1943, located on the second floor of Blair Hall. Although the school forced some classes to relocate, it only remained there for two years, graduating 2,722 chaplains. By 1946, no longer housing any academic departments, the building was officially named after the College’s first president, Reverend James Blair. Although the president’s headquarters had moved to the new Hall, Blair Hall held most administrative offices until the early 1990s, the most significant of which were the Office of Residence Life, and the registrar’s and treasurer’s office.

The Blair Hall most students know today is the result of a $5.2 million renovation ending with a rededication ceremony in 1996. Now, flanked by an August statue of the revered himself and the stately Tyler Family Garden, James Blair Hall houses the Departments of Philosophy and History, and contains some of the finest rooms on campus. B

Students challenge Bechtold’s objectivity

Anti-Israeli-US bias said to heavily interfere with class

Nick Hoelker
Online Editor

Doctor Peter Bechtold may be one of the most accomplished professors at the College of William and Mary, but some students of his accuse him of being biased.

According to his website, http://www.drbechtold.com, Bechtold has trained over 11,000 United States Department of State employees, has done extensive research in 25 Middle Eastern countries, is fluent in four languages, has been interviewed on CNN and NPR according to Bechtold himself, cannot make it through a conference on the Middle East without constantly stopping to say hello to a policymaker or four-star general that he knows personally.

Despite his credentials, some of his students are greatly divided over the fairness and quality of his teaching, in particular his class on Middle Eastern Political Systems and a seminar on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Most of these criticisms start with the views on Israel that Bechtold expresses in class. One student of his, who asked not to be named as he is currently taking his class, felt that Professor Bechtold was so biased against Israel that he, as well another student from the class, referred to Bechtold as “The Führer.” This student also pointed out examples from his class on Israel such as, “It is absolutely not true that Israel has anything to fear from the countries that surround it.”

Wald Kildani (’17), a student in the class who supports Bechtold, justified the professor’s remarks by saying that Israel is certainly more powerful than its neighbors as they have a much larger military and are most likely in possession of nuclear weapons. Kildani, a Jordanian student by heritage, disputed the depiction of Bechtold as anti-Israeli, of he said that Bechtold is not anti-Jordanian despite pointing out ugly parts of Jordan’s history with Israel, which Kildani was not familiar. Students also have complained that the readings for the course were generally biased against Israel.

Bechtold often assigned readings from The New York Times or transcripts from NPR that cast Israel in a bad light. Additionally, the only assigned textbook for the seminar on the Arab-Israeli conflict is Jimmy Carter’s controversial book Peace Not Apartheid, which led to the resignation of the Carter Center Board because they thought the book was unfairly biased against Israel.

Bechtold often acts a referee and allows students to discuss articles that students find on their own about topics presented by Bechtold. Bah also stated that for Bechtold’s East and Middle Eastern topics that Israel is only one of many countries in the Middle East and Bechtold spent much time covering that country as the others in the region.

Other student concerns centered over Bechtold’s treatment of the United States, the war in Iraq and the Bush presidency. According to several students, Bechtold has made remarks such as “A lobbying group came up with the Iraq War,” “Yale is a bad school because George W. Bush went there,” “Canada resents the Bush presidency. According to several students, Bechtold often acts a referee and allows students to discuss articles that students find on their own about topics presented by Bechtold. Bah also stated that for Bechtold’s East and Middle Eastern topics that Israel is only one of many countries in the Middle East and Bechtold spent much time covering that country as the others in the region.

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King & Queen Ball

boasts a royal history

Megan Locke
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

The King and Queen Ball is a more recent tradition that some might think. The first King and Queen Ball was held in April 1993 as a celebration of the College’s 300th anniversary. Members of the Pershing Rifles performed a tercentenary salute at the ball in honor of the occasion. The ball was popular enough that it soon became an annual event at William and Mary. It is the latest incarnation in a series of spring formal dances that have been held at the College since dances become a popular school-wide activity in the 1920s. Right before the King and Queen tradition started, a President’s Ball was held in the late 1980s in the Sunken Gardens around the same time of year. For the first few years the King and Queen Ball was held in the Wren Courtyard, rather than in the Sunken Gardens as it is today. Students made a formal entrance into the ball by walking through the Wren building, a ceremonial gesture echoing other traditions such as the convocation ceremony and graduation. Similar to later balls, huge tents were set up and a live band provided the music. In 1999, due to space limitations, the event was finally moved from the Wren Courtyard to the Sunken Gardens.

Some popular traditions that take place during the King and Queen Ball are a toast by the current president of the College and the singing of the alma mater by a cappella group. In the past, the President’s House has been opened up for tours before the event. However, one ball tradition that is no longer observed is a drill performance by the Queen’s Guard. The Queen’s Guard used to perform during the ball, but in 2001 college officials decided to cut their presentation because the increasing number of ball attendees made the drill performance unsafe.

The King and Queen Ball has frequently been subject to the typically unpredictable weather of April. In 1997, thunderstorms caused the festivities to be moved to the Chesapeake rooms in the University Center. The rooms were soon filled over the fire code limits, and a rotation system was created in order to let everyone have a chance to dance. In 2005, rain made the Sunken Gardens too soggy to support a dance floor, so the ball was relocated to William and Mary Hall. The tents and lights were still used to decorate the Hall, and no one let a little April shower ruin the fun.

This year’s King and Queen Ball will be held on April 27. Students will be looking forward to celebrating traditions and creating new memories at the ball, and of course, hoping for good weather as well.
In Support of Women: 2nd annual SFL concert

Jon San
Features Editor

On Tuesday, April 3, the William and Mary Students for Life held their 2nd annual “In Support of Women” concert. The event took place at Lodge I and featured the female a cappella group Passing Notes, as well as Homebrew favorites Nick Summit and Mike Smith. The concert was free, although donations were proceeded benefiting two local pregnancy care centers—were appreciated.

Katie Poandl, the president of SFL and a senior in college, started the concert last year with the hope of aiding local care centers. “Care centers give women financial help and emotional support, the lack of which often is the reason behind many abortions,” said Poandl.

Beth Zagrobelny (‘09), who occupies the Public Affairs position in SFL, mentioned that the impetus behind the concert was twofold. “First, we are presenting our mission statement which is to provide women with alternatives to abortion. Second, we want to benefit the care centers and raise awareness for women on campus that these centers exist,” said Zagrobelny.

Williamsburg does, in fact, have two pregnancy care centers. The first, Catholic Charities of Eastern Virginia Pregnancy Care Center, is located at 1315 Jamestown Road and offers a variety of counseling services, baby supplies, and adoption planning for pregnant women. Care Net Pregnancy Resource Centers, of 117 Old Colony Lane, is similar in nature but also provides post-abortion support and a 24 hour pregnancy help hotline.

Many SFL members are volunteers at these care networks. Laura Buchanan, a freshman member of SFL and care center volunteer, said, “In addition to providing literature for pregnant women at these centers, we also assist any women that may have questions, and provide advertising.”

The “In Support of Women” concert is an especially important advertising event. SFL provided free food as well as a raffle in exchange for any sort of donation. The concert was well-attended, attracting many passers-by who stayed for a musician while enjoying a Quizno’s sub. In between the musical performances were short PowerPoint presentations that highlighted the duties of the care centers and the mission statement of SFL. One of the emcees, Andrew Sturr, kept the mood light, announcing that he was present simply “because [he] love[s] women,” a statement that generated some audience laughter.

The concert was well attended, attracting many passers-by while enjoying a Quizno’s sub. In between the musical performances were short PowerPoint presentations that highlighted the duties of the care centers and the mission statement of SFL. One of the emcees, Andrew Sturr, kept the mood light, announcing that he was present simply “because [he] love[s] women,” a statement that generated some audience laughter.

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The concert, which is the last major event for SFL this semester, ended a busy school year for the pro-life group. Throughout the year, SFL has hosted speakers such as Bobby Schindler, the brother of Terry Schiavo, Janet Morana of the Silent No More awareness campaign, and many others.

New clubs provide alternatives for students

Stephen Dause
Staff Writer

Students who enjoy a good game of ping pong, a board game or two, or anything with to do with needles and yarn now have no trouble finding friends, as three new clubs have recently been formed targeted towards those demographics: The Table Tennis Club, the Board Games Club, and Stitch ‘n Bitch.

Gaelle Nohot Allen and Caleb Platt started holding table tennis club meetings this semester, during which members take turns playing on the one table they currently use in Yates basement. They hope to get multiple tables installed in the Recreation Center soon, but conversation with Recreational Sports staff has been slow.

“I also have plans to hold tournaments within our club dedicated to the art of board game-playing in August, and a few months later, ten to fifteen people meet every Tuesday from 7:30-9:30 p.m. in Millington 30 to play everything from Clue to Rummikub. They also have plans to have some sort of tournaments in the future.

On the less competitive side is the Stitch ‘n Bitch club, whose dedication is to all “knitters, crocheters, spinners, quilters, cross-stitchers or any other kind of needleworker,” according to its Facebook group. Gladly willing to teach anyone their ways, they meet Thursdays at the Daily Grind at 5:30.

“Because [he] love[s] women,” a statement that generated some audience laughter.

Lending a helping hand

Painting with a smile: Freshman Lauren Appel helps paint the roof of a house in Williamsburg for the “Paint the Town” project in May. From the roof she could see thousands of hubcaps that littered the yard which the owner used to collect and sell.

Dollars & Sense for Students: Summer Job: Save, not spend

Andrew B. Blasi, Jr.
Business Editor

According to the latest 360 Youth College Explorer Study from Harris Interactive, college students in the United States will return to campus with over $122 billion in summer job earnings. With the average working student earning $645 per month during the summer, the strength of our purchasing power cannot be denied or ignored.

In response to the survey results, John Geraci, Harris Interactive’s VP for Youth and Education Research, stated, “What we see from the study is that, contrary to common perception—maybe even their own perception—college students are not poor. They have considerable discretionary income, and are already paving their way toward financial responsibility and independence. College students today are smart, value-conscious consumers, heavily weighing cost and quality in their purchasing decisions.” Geraci also added that, “College students are not only a viable bunch, but important beyond their numbers.”

The reason why many of us may not perceive college students as having great personal wealth, in spite of the findings of the survey, is precisely that: we spend too much (if not all) of what we earn. It would be one thing if our earnings were spent toward paying for our education, but as one survey demonstrates, a large sum of money earned by college students over the summer is discretionary and consequently spent on items that are not necessarily needed. In pursuit of offering my fellow William and Mary students the best possible advice and with the understanding that an economic recession is very likely within the next few years (as we begin to enter and advance in a difficult job market), I highly recommend you consider saving rather than spending your discretionary income earned this summer.

I understand this practice may be very difficult, especially if what you earn is simply placed into a free checking account and impulse spending is just a piece of plastic away. However, there are ways to put your earnings safely away from both investment loss and your credit card limits, not only saving your money but also earning a high interest return. Such options include Money Market funds (better option) and Certificates of Deposits (CDs), both of which are easy to obtain from local and online banks at no charge. Think of them as options that reward you just for saving and with no risk. Remember, the more you save, the more options you have (for buying a car/home to weathering an economic downturn) in the future and the better off you will be.

Editor’s Note: The information in this article is for informational purposes only and neither The Virginia Informer nor the author of this article provided certified financial advice. Please consider speaking with a financial advisor or another trusted individual before making any financial decisions.

Games for the bored: Three new clubs on campus provide an eclectic mix of activities for students. Table tennis, board games and knitting are now available in an organized form for interested students.
A whole new world: Studying in Jordan
Retelling of the experience is a useful tool for appreciating American freedoms and institutions

Joe Luppino-Esposito
Editor in Chief

When I came back on campus this past January to start the second semester, I ran into Rob Landicho, a fellow member of the Class of 2008. Rob and I were both Resident Assistants on the same staff last year. I told him that I had not seen him in a while, and I found out why: Rob had gone abroad for the fall to the Middle East.

After the usual pleasantries and questions about the trip, Rob volunteered, “There are some things that are tough getting used to again.”

“Like what?” I naively asked.

“Like seeing women’s faces.”

Needless to say, I was floored by the comment. I wanted to learn more, so I recently followed up with Rob regarding the trip and his experience.

Rob spent much of his time in Amman, Jordan, living on the west side of the city with a family that owns a hair salon. His hosts are ethnically Lebanese, and had moved to Jordan from Palestine. Extended family arrived often seeking shelter after their homes had been destroyed in war.

War and violence was almost laughable to many people there, Rob observed. They said that joking about it was the only way to get through it.

It was clear to him right away that the emphasis was on the family and on religion, though his hosts would be considered much more secular than most in Jordan. “Their faiths and beliefs were still very important,” Rob explained, “but they did not adhere strictly to it as many others did.”

The most conservative observers of Islam were found in the eastern part of Amman. It is dominated by Iraqi and Palestinian refugees. There are many camps set up that do not accommodate the constant influx of foreigners to their land. Those living in the east were also very poor and lived in terrible conditions.

I have never once been confused for a women’s-libber, but I was inspired to take up the cause for the women of Jordan and the other nations Rob visited. In east Amman, all women, those of which were permitted to be out in public, wore a complete black covering, with only eyes showing. This included a glove on each hand.

The west was far better, but tank tops and skirts were still very few and far between.

The presence of Islam permeated the experience, even in the west where Rob spent most of his time. Rob visited during Ramadan, the holiest of days in the Muslim faith. This meant a stringent observance to the rules. “It took me a long time to adjust,” said Rob. Eating was not permitted during daylight hours, though Rob did tell me that he occasionally smacked a bite to eat after secretly locking himself in his room.

And even when fasting ended at sundown, there were still dietary restrictions. “Alcohol isn’t against the law, but my host family, and most families, would not allow it,” Rob said. “If I wanted to get a beer I would have to go out early enough in the evening to not smell like it when I came home.” There is virtually nowhere for the general population of Jordan to sit down for a drink of alcohol, only small bars in the international hotels which most natives did not frequent.

In a stark contrast to the American university scene, dating and couples being seen in public were non-existent. Rob “dated” a girl while abroad, in that he was permitted to speak to her, with her parents present.

Though the government of Jordan is officially a constitutional monarchy, there are some elements that make one think of totalitarianism. Palestinians are not permitted to run for office or be in any part of civil service. That is why the family owns their own business. The society, being based in Islamic law, means that freedoms are severely limited. Juxtaposed to these limitations are the influences from the west. “Most people here can differentiate between the US government and the American people,” said Rob. “The Lebanese are very fashionable, and they see music videos and want to wear the same clothes as rappers do.”

It was much different when Rob stayed with the Bedouin in the desert. “They have nothing and they are happy with nothing,” Rob said. He stayed with a sheikh who was the patriarch of the town. It was with the Bedouin that women’s rights were all but non-existent. “I never saw any of the wives of the sheikhs, I just knew where they lived with the children.”

He assisted the Bedouin men by waking up at 4:30 each morning to herd sheep until noon, when it was far too hot to go on. Once inside the tents, as the heat rose well over 120 degrees, Rob listened in on the men’s discussion on Islam. “Of course,” Rob said, “they kept trying to convert me.”

“The innate condition of being a human is universal and that is something that everyone should keep in mind when talking about the Middle East,” Rob told me. “It may be a different culture and different set of values, but a lot is still the same.”

Even so, I personally have trouble seeing that as Rob shared his experience. What the people in Jordan would consider “everyday life” we in America would see as wholly unjust and against all tenets of our system of free will. Even as the listener to the story, unable to experience what Rob did, it became clear to me the harm is caused on individual rights and liberties.

What was perhaps the best part of Rob’s story was that even putting aside the playful want to look like an American rap star, many people of Jordan want to come to America. It is our perception, here, that our way of life is damned by the east. Instead, it is something that most can only dream about.

S o maybe Rob is right in saying that there are some innate parts of the human condition. Despite what we know about cultural relativism and different values and belief systems, the ability to freely choose them is something that most members of the world community do not have, but they desperately want it.

That’s something to think about next time you see a woman’s uncovered face.

All photos on this page are courtesy of Rob Landicho, taken during his time in Jordan in fall 2006.
College “wins” Campus Outrage Award

Amanda J. Yasenchak
Editor Emerssion

On April 2, only a day after April Fool’s Day, the Collegiate Network announced its 11th Annual Campus Outrage Awards. The Collegiate Network came to William and Mary to present Gene Nichol with the first place award.

“We use the awards to shed light on the most outrageous instances of intolerance and intimidation on college campuses, and to let conservative students know they are not alone in battling political correctness on campus,” said Stephen Klugewicz, executive director of the Collegiate Network, and 1989 graduate of the College.

At a ceremony in front of the Wren Building, students and passersby gathered to hear the announcement of the awards. Five universities from across the country were chosen for the award. The Collegiate Network presented a statue of a court jester to the winners.

Klugewicz and several Virginia Informer staff members who had nominated William and Mary for the award, attempted to present Nichol with his statue, but he was not on campus. Klugewicz and other staff members saw Nichol in the Wren Building and told him about the award, Nichol declined to take a picture with the statue.

William and Mary won first prize, although Klugewicz noted that Nichol had declined to accept the award, saying he was not in his office at the time. When Klugewicz and other staff members tried to present the statue, Nichol declined to take a picture with it.

The University of Virginia won fourth prize for trying to dissuade state law. In Fall 2006, Virginia voters had approved the Virginia Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI), which outlawed affirmative action and racial and gender preferences in many instances, including college admissions. University of Virginia President Martha Pollack stated that the university would fight the MCRI in courts, and the admissions committee pushed through as many minority applicants as possible before the MCRI took effect on December 23, 2006.

The fifth and final prize went to San Francisco State University, whose College Republicans (CRs) chapter sponsored an anti-terrorism rally in October 2006. Participants stepped on effigies of Hamas and Hezbollah flags, which they were unaware said “Allah” written on the bottom.

CAMPUS OUTRAGE AWARDS

continued on page sixteen

Informer

For those of you who don’t care, Her Britannic Majesty Royal Majesty Queen Elizabeth II will be visiting Williamsburg for the upcoming Jamestown 200th anniversary. This is an event that will be commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown settlement. In honor of this milestone, the state of Virginia has created the Virginia Informer, a newspaper that speaks for the people of Virginia.

The Virginia Informer

The Virginia Informer

Swimming off the deep end:
The Queen visits Williamsburg

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The Virginia Informer

The Virginia Informer

Nick Fitzgerald & Matthew Sutton
Humor Columnists

The Queen visits Williamsburg

The Queen visits Williamsburg

The Queen visits Williamsburg

Professor Profile:

Dr. John Griffin

a leading brain in the neuroscience department

Gustavo Elias

Staff Writer

Students at William and Mary know all too well that no matter how interesting a class’s topic may be, it is the professor that makes or breaks the class for them.

When it comes to biology professor Dr. John Griffin, the enthusiasm he injects into his neuroscience classes is contagious. That is what makes him one of his classes so appealing to biology and neuroscience majors alike.

Dr. Griffin has been teaching here at William and Mary since 1999. He holds an undergraduate degree in biology from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and a Masters and Ph.D in physiology from the Ohio State University. Following his doctorate, he received a postdoctoral research fellowship and teaching assistantship at Harvard University. Following his fellowship, he accepted a brief stint as an assistant professor at Sacred Heart University, Griffin arrived here at the College of William and Mary as an assistant professor.

His path to becoming a neuroscientist was not as simple as his resume suggests. While attending UNC-Wilmington, Griffin planned a career in marine biology.

One summer working at the world renowned Cleveland Clinic completely changed his professional ambitions. Cleveland Clinic neuroscientist Karen Barnes had asked Griffin to join her sailing team. It also just so happened that he had been looking for a job so Dr. Barnes offered him a position in her neuroscience lab.

Even though only a summer job, Dr. Griffin’s interest in neuroscience blossomed inside the laboratory. After returning to Cleveland the following summer, Dr. Griffin chose neuroscience over marine biology.

Here at William and Mary, Dr. Griffin researches an area of the brain called the hypothalamus. One familiar function of the hypothalamus is internal body temperature regulation. Specifically, Griffin describes that his research “looks at how we initiate and deal with a fever.” Another aspect of his research involves looking at endogenous pyrogens, a fever inducing substance produced by the body. Griffin currently has his undergraduate students in his laboratory, has received funding from both the National Science Foundation and the National Institute of Health, and frequently publishes papers in scientific journals.

The neuroscience program, the largest interdisciplinary major at the College, continues to grow and attract many students. The complex nature of the brain can be seen in the latest issue of Teen People. Neuroscientist Stephen Pinker, a Harvard professor, argues that the origins of the visual cortex to a political scientist discussing the “political center” of the brain’s cortex. The number of majors at the College has shot up in recent years from only 20 students in a graduating class to about 55 students this past year. According to Dr. Griffin, “students go on in many different directions such as medical school, law school, business schools, or even getting a masters in public health.”

Besides neuroscience, one of Dr. Griffin’s biggest passions is sailing. He grew up on Lake Erie and his grandfather was a sailor. As his parents enjoyed sailing as well, it was only natural for Dr. Griffin to pick it up. He continued sailing at UNC-Wilmington, with Dr. Barnes during his summers at the Cleveland Clinic, and even today as coach of the Williams and Mary sailing team. Sailing also holds special memories for Griffin because he met his wife while sailing in Boston. Dr. Griffin explains that out on the water he is “a big competitor,” and he “hates to lose.”

In between teaching, researching, sailing, and a busy schedule, Dr. Griffin enjoys being a thoroughbred racehorse that races at Colonial Downs. The Griffins enjoy the social aspect of horse racing, especially the opportunity to meet new people. Dr. John Griffin is truly one of the most accomplished professors at William and Mary.
Satire for the smart:  
An evening with Christopher Buckley

Chase Coleman & Chris Davis  
Staff Writer & Design Editor

Satirist Christopher Buckley spoke at Phi Beta Kappa Hall on April 3 to an attentive audience of both students and non-students. After his humorous lecture he answered a few questions from audience members. After a brief introduction, Buckley jumped into his topic for the evening: the importance of writing a new book and the problems associated with this process. This may seem like a rather bland discourse, however, with an audience expecting the full force of a masterful comedian, Buckley did not disappoint.

After listing failed and comically mistranslated titles, Buckley then told the audience his many ideas for the title of a collection of essays that he was going to have published. After each suggested title, most of which were quite comical, Buckley explained its significance and why it was rejected by the publisher. In this way, Buckley was able to tell a number of stories to his listeners, summarizing witty essays and amusing events of his life. The subjects of Buckley’s numerous anecdotes ranged from an insult exchange with Tom Clancy to an international incident because of an article written by him for the New York Times. After his humorous lecture published. After each suggested title, most of which were quite comical, Buckley explained its significance and why it was rejected by the publisher. In this way, Buckley was able to tell a number of stories to his listeners, summarizing witty essays and amusing events of his life. The subjects of Buckley’s numerous anecdotes ranged from an insult exchange with Tom Clancy to an international incident because of an article written by him for the New York Times. After his humorous lecture

Pessl’s language is often overwhelmingly beautiful and her plot is charming and clever throughout the first two thirds of her book. However, following in the footsteps of the less-than-strikingly elaborate. Rushing to the set, we encountered with audience members.

A reception and book signing followed the lecture, during which Buckley talked personally with audience members.

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Hollywood comes to Williamsburg

One student’s taste of not-so-glamorous stardom as a part of HBO’s John Adams series

Braun Katz  
Guest Writer

On May 29th, 2007, I woke up at approximately 5:30 am. Having not seen early morning for months, this was a significant shock to my body. Begrudgingly rolling out of bed, I proceeded to don myself in an outfit far from regular - knickers, an overcoat, and a three-cornered hat. Little did I know that a job as simple as being a movie extra could consume an entire 12 hours of my day.

I was offered a position as a movie extra, a soldier in the Continental Army, in the upcoming Tom Hanks HBO mini-series about John Adams, through my involvement with the college’s own Revolutionary War reenactment group. Arriving on set at around 6:30, accompanied by a cohort of ten other William and Mary students, I was greeted by an extended amount of waiting. We waited for an hour, nosing on stale bagels, until wardrobe and makeup deemed us worthy of their precious time. Hours upon hours later, after suffering an innumerable amount of hair pins and an elaborate transformation into disease-ridden Continental soldiers, we finally were ready for filming. At the set, we were literally told by wardrobe to roll around in the dirt to create a scene of battle fatigue. The set, built in Colonial Williamsburg at the public hospital, proved strikingly elaborate. Rushing to the set, we encountered with audience members.

A reception and book signing followed the lecture, during which Buckley talked personally with audience members.
Nooks and Crannies of William and Mary
The mystery of the Missing Coat
Losing and finding the Arms of the College of William and Mary
R.C. Rasmussen
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Most students at this university pass by the stone-coat of arms at the entrance to New Campus without even giving it a second glance. Perhaps they don’t know just how much history the arms of the College of William and Mary have behind them. Looking into the symbol’s past yields some very intriguing information.

For example, ever recall seeing a dome here at the College of William and Mary? Me neither. Then why is there a dome on the coat of arms? What if I told you that this college has not just one, but three official coats of arms, and that the one we now know, love, and treasure was only put into use 85 years ago? Did you know that the arms of the College are legally protected? It’s all true, a part of the interesting and mysterious history of the College of William and Mary’s most unique and cherished symbol.

The College was granted a coat of arms on May 2, 1694 by Henry, Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of England to the Kings of Arms, to be used “in any whatsoever cause and business belonging to them and their successors.” It was the first and only of the three royally chartered universities in America to receive such an honor, likely as a result of a request from James Blair to the Bishop of London, and cost the College £45. The official warrant describes the blazon as “Vert, a College [sic] or edifice maso[d] argent in chief, a sun rising or the hemisphere proper, as in the margin [sic] heretofore is more plainly depicted.” Translated, this means that the arms show a college or stone building towards the front on a field of green, with a sun overhead.

Since the first College building was not completed until May 2, 1694, the College was granted a coat of arms on May 2, 1694. The first coat of arms very likely just created a fanciful architectural structure to stand for the College itself. No one knows exactly what inspired this design, but John Phillips, director of the alumni house, speculated in 1986 that it was perhaps based on the London skyline as it looked in the late seventeenth century, replete with the towers of Parliament and the dome of St. Paul’s Cathedral.

The College’s coat of arms, today called either the “original” or “colonial seal,” looked very similar to the version that the university uses today. The only differences are that the “colleges” structure on the “colonial seal” had fewer stories and a couple more windows than the present one, and was portrayed not as flat and symmetrical, but as a three dimensional building facing off towards the left, and was often accompanied by a Latin legend around its edge reading “Collegii Guilielmi et Mariæ in Virginia.”

The College used this “colonial seal” continuously until 1784, when, probably due to anti-British sentiment following the Revolutionary War, the official coat of arms was abandoned and was replaced by a new College seal. This second seal, often called the “temple,” “Jeffersonian,” or “erroneous seal,” was thought for a long time to have been designed by Thomas Jefferson himself while he was serving as governor of Virginia in 1779. Today, most scholars believe that the seal was most likely designed by a William and Mary law professor named George Wythe. This second “temple seal” shows a Roman temple with a long-rayed sun shining over it, a phoenix (another treasured College symbol) rising out of its ashes on the steps, a frieze over the temple reading “Temp. Minervae,” the College’s most important subjects, “Medical Arts, Natural Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Logic, History, and Scripture, and History, and Logic” engraved in abbreviated form on the temple’s pillars and steps, and the date 1693 featured prominently toward the back. For the next 138 years William and Mary used this blazon as its seal, and, as Donald J Sweg put in his excellent 1976 history of the symbol “Vert, A College,” “its authenticity was never questioned.”

I was not until 1922 that a medical doctor from Boston named Howard M. Buck began corresponding with William and Mary librarian Earl Gregg Swem about the origins of the College’s official coat of arms. In 1930, armed with a 1749 surveyor’s license stamped with the original colonial seal (which, fortunately enough, was found in a second-hand copy of Don Quixote by Mrs. Henry Leiby of Vennor, NJ, in 1926), Buck contacted the British College of Arms about the official rendering of William and Mary’s coat of arms. For the cost of £20, Buck procured a color reproduction of the seal hand-drawn by the College of Arms from the original artist’s manuscript. Buck then had the facsimile of the reaffirmation of the College’s warrant for its coat of arms is regularly presented to retiring members of the Board of Visitors. This design, called the “new seal,” was adopted for regular use around 1930. There is no record of the BOV voting on such a change, apparently because it was the result of an executive decision made by then-president of the College J.A.C. Chandler. J.T. Baldwin, a professor of biology at the College in the ’30s wrote that “students didn’t seem too concerned” about the change.

The design of the “new seal” has varied slightly, sometimes showing the sun with a human face or having highly embellished floral patterns incorporated as a part of the border, but for the most part this is the one that most William and Mary students recognize today. It is featured prominently on College merchandise and correspondence, is on the school ring, and hangs proudly over the entrance to Tucker Hall on Old Campus, and will be incorporated as a part of the border on New Campus. This version of the College’s arms was even trademarked in 1990 in order to protect its integrity during the College’s celebration of its 300th anniversary in 1993. However, vestiges of the “temple seal” remain hidden around campus. When you get a chance, look up over the entrances to Chandler and Jefferson Halls. You might just see a remnant of the coat of arms’ second incarnation.

Improvahon: It’s all fun and games for 12 straight hours
Megan Locke
Assistant Arts & Entertainment Editor

Enjoying half a day of non-stop fun can be a good cause during William and Mary Improvahon Theater’s annual Improvahon. Every spring, the members of IT host twelve straight hours of improvised games and skits in order to raise money to support Avalon Women’s Shelter.

Funds come from local businesses and private donations that are collected prior to the event. The show is then divided into hour-long segments according to long segments according to previously announced topics, which can range from slapstick comedies to improvisational theatre, musicals, and short-form games. One special event that always takes place during Improvahon is the alumni hour, in which former IT members take the stage and give the current members some time to rest. Throughout the twelve hours, raffles are held for audience members. “People often ask us if every member of IT stays at Improvahon for the entire 12 hours,” says Hannah Ayers (‘08). “There’s no rest for improvisers; we all stay there the entire time. But it actually goes by surprisingly fast, at least for the performers!”

Previous Improvahons have led to unforgettable memories for both the performers and the audience. One event during last year’s Improvahon that several IT members recall was the worm bucket: for every $100 audience members contributed, three IT members actually had to hold it there while performing a scene. As Adam Miller (‘08) explains, “Things turned into a bidding war as Brian Sallade’s (‘06) family members paid money to decrease the number of worms we would have to hold in his mouth while his girlfriend’s family paid to increase the number of worms.”

Ayers was one of the IT members who participated in the worm game. “It wasn’t much of a scene, you know. Just the crowd going ‘I can still taste it,’” Ayers says. “We may very well have another one this year, but you’ll have to come to see it.”

Even amidst the flurry of activities IT is involved in during the year, the Improvahon is one of the biggest highlights for members. Olivia Lucass (‘08) favorite part of Improvahon is “spending 12 straight hours improvising! It’s a huge rush and the time goes by pretty quickly.” Improvahon is a special treat for audience members as well, since some improvisers are only played at Improvahon. Even those who regularly attend IT events will definitely have something new to see. Some audience members enjoy Improvahon so much they stay for the entire 12-hour run.

Improvahon may be the final big IT bash this school year, but there is a lot to look forward to in the upcoming fall semester. IT will be performing at orientation in the fall, and will also hold auditions for new members in September. During fall break, the members plan to travel to Chicago to attend improv workshops and watch shows at Improv Olympic and Second City.

“IT has had a great year,” says Miller. “This was my third year performing with the group and it’s almost impossible to compare one year to another. One of the coolest parts about improv is that any show we perform will never be performed again. It’s ephemeral, and that’s how the group itself operates too. We have no overarching goals except to share a bit of laughter with people from time to time.”
**Film Review:**

**The summer movies preview**

Joe Pirro tells you what he knows you’ll see, what you should see, and what you should avoid from now until the fall semester.

It’s almost summertime, and there’s really no better time of the year. Classes will be finished, the weather will be consistently better, and Hollywood will be trying to grab your attention and get you into the local multiplexes. Many of these movies will be huge successes and make tons of money, while others will turn out to be massive flops. Before these films are released the *Virginia Informer* takes a look at what Hollywood is sending your way this summer.

Everyone is going to see these movies:

1. **Spider-Man 3**: The season begins early with the release of the third installment in the very popular Spider-Man franchise. Tobey Maguire returns as the web-slinging hero, though this time, he has three villains to battle, along with some inner demons of his own. Mark it down now, Spidey is back. (May 4)

2. **The Bourne Ultimatum**: This misses by a hair, but the team behind “The 40-Year Old Virgin” returns after their critically and commercially successful Steve Carell film. The plot follows a woman who decides to have a baby after a one-night stand leads to an unexpected pregnancy. (June 1)

3. **Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer**: This is a great example of a popular series that is extremely well-done. Matt Damon returns as the man without a past, who is racing against time to discover who he truly is. (August 3)

4. **Becoming Jane**: Anne Hathaway tries to win an Oscar in a biopic based on the life of Jane Austen. James McAvoy from *The Last King of Scotland* plays her love interest. (August 3)

**Critics will like these movies, and so should you:**

1. **Kung Fu Panda**: This may seem an unlikely choice, but the team behind “The 40-Year Old Virgin” returns after their critically and commercially successful Steve Carell film. The plot follows a woman who decides to have a baby after a one-night stand leads to an unexpected pregnancy. (June 1)

2. **A Mighty Heart**: Directed by critically acclaimed Michael Winterbottom, the film is based on the life of Daniel Pearl, the Wall Street Journal reporter who was captured and killed in Pakistan. (June 22)

3. **The Incredibles**: Without a doubt, this is considered the biggest failure of the summer. (July 4)

4. **Daddy Day Care**: Someone in Hollywood thought they’d make a sequel to “Daddy Day Care.” However, they couldn’t even convince Norbit himself, Eddie Murphy, to do it, so they convinced Cuba Gooding, Jr., that he would probably win another Oscar for this “movie.” Please, please, no one go see this movie. (August 10)

So, there it is. There’s a summer full of hits and extreme misses. Enjoy your vacation and your time away from Williamsburg.

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**Live Performances**

The Williamsburg Symphony presents Subscription Concert #4

Wed., Apr. 18 and Thurs., Apr. 19 at 8 p.m.

Tickets: $37, $27. Advance tickets available through the Symphony; call (757) 229-9857

WTVD–Tide radio’s Skookum Music Series

Carbon Leaf in Concert

Sat., Apr. 21 at 8 p.m.

All seats $17

The College of William and Mary Music Department presents

An Evening of Jazz with the W&M Jazz Ensemble

Wed., Apr. 25 at 8 p.m.

General admission $8, Seniors/Students $5

Hospice House and Support Care of Williamsburg presents

Emil Israel Chudnovsky: Violinist

Fri., Apr. 27 at 7 p.m.

All seats $35

The Williamsburg Women’s Chorus and Choraliers present

A Salute to American Music

Sat., Apr. 28 at 7:30 p.m. and Sun., Apr. 29 at 2 p.m.

General admission $12, Students $5

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**April Schedule**

**Movies**

**College of William and Mary’s Hillel Chapter’s Israel Festival presents Janem Janem**

Tues., Apr. 24 at 7 p.m.

All seats $2

**The Curse of the Golden Flower (R)**

Sat., Apr. 28-Wed., May 2

6:45 and 9 p.m.

Apr. 28, 30-May 1 screening room (35 seats)

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**Kimball Theatre**

*Come to the Kimball Theatre on DoG Street!*
**Letters to the Editor**

**Dear Editor:**

I have just read your editorial in the March 2007 edition. You have captured very nicely the remaining issues left over from the infamous Wren Cross controversy. Clearly, the so-called “compromise” is an unsatisfactory solution to the overall issue of the Wren cross, and was nearly outlined to fail in the article by Nick Hoelker in the same issue.

President Nichol made an extremely poor decision in trying to be the sole arbiters and executor to remove the Wren cross. His rationale that the cross somehow causes the Chapel to be “unwelcoming” and not “open” to all students does not hold water.

Scores of alumni have completely refuted that argument, but Nichol just couldn’t bring himself to admit that he had made a mistake and return the cross to the chapel. This arrogance is costing the university dearly, has brought too much unneeded and unnecessary negative publicity, and the aftermath and all that it portends will linger for years to come.

It has left an unfavorable impression, at least in the minds of thousands of alumni, and the question of ever trusting this president again ended up with probation from the College and the traditions at William and Mary.

The only way for the College to escape this downward spiral is for the BOV to announce that we want to move on with a new leader and allow Nichol to finish out his last year, if he so chooses.

The next president should be an alumna, or, in the least, someone much more closely connected to the College as a faculty member or alumna. He or she needs to be someone who understands the community and the traditions at William and Mary. The president should also be more business savvy--as the College needs to be more financially stable to continue expanding at its current rate - as well as be more adept in handling the politics required of the leader of a public university.

Nichol’s deficiencies are clear, and it is now time to part ways with him, or suffer the further decline of our beloved and illustrious College.

Allen R. Elkins
Williamsburg, VA

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**Letters to the Editor**

**Dear Editor:**

I read it, and it is usually available in the Barnes and Noble student bookstore. I hope that you will continue to review this cross issue and keep the student body, at least, informed of any other developments in the situation.

Allen R. Elkins

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**Letters to the Editor**

**Dear Editor:**

There is an ever-growing list of individuals at the College who have not been given the credit they deserve.

The College’s academic policy towards ROTC students is reprehensible. William and Mary is alone in its shocking disregard for the work and dedication of our ROTC students; in fact, we give the least amount of credit hours of any major university in Virginia.

Robert Trumpler’s article is mandatorily four hours per week of physical training in addition to their regular college classes; the College does not view such work as worthy of a respectable amount of academic credit.

ROTC students are struggling to balance their so-called “real” academic work with the strenuous and challenging duties they are volunteering to perform as part of their ROTC training. After spending hundreds of extra hours, including extra-credit assignments, working hard to finish their ROTC instruction, working harder than most students ever will at this College, they are told that all their work has barely earned them a semester’s worth of credit.

It is nothing short of amazing that most ROTC students find the imperative will and ethic to complete their requirements for graduation, considering how poorly they are rewarded by the College.

William and Mary needs to seriously consider the message we are sending not only to the public, but to our student body. Many of these students are willing to serve in the U.S. armed forces including deployments to Iraq – although they do not have to. Yet, to the administration, such self-sacrifice and love of country is denied recognition.

The argument that the Wren Cross somehow causes the Chapel to be “unwelcoming” and not “open” to all students does not hold water.

Scores of alumni have completely refuted that argument, but Nichol just couldn’t bring himself to admit that he had made a mistake and return the cross to the chapel. This arrogance is costing the university dearly, has brought too much unneeded and unnecessary negative publicity.

Send comments to: Editor, Informer, PO Box 1380, Williamsburg, VA 23187 or e-mail: informer@wm.edu
A thank you from all of us at The Virginia Informer

The Virginia Informer would like to thank all of our supporters and advertisers who made the publishing of this issue, and all issues for the last two years possible. The Informer is an independent publication and we do not receive any public funding, unlike the other publications at William and Mary.

We would like to especially recognize some of our private supporters.

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Mr. and Mrs. Charles Cauthen

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New lottery will cause more headaches, not less

Students at this College are familiar with stress. It’s something most of us know full well we were signing up for when we chose to enroll here. Everyone is faced with the rigors of William and Mary’s tough academic curriculum, and most students are involved with enough extra curricular activities to make their lives a nonstop blur.

Keeping that in mind, let us consider the College’s decision this semester to introduce a new online lottery system for on-campus undergraduate housing.

The new process, which will take place from April 16 to April 26, replaces the old system, which massed students at Trinkle Hall on one dreaded weekend each April to “streamline” and “simplify” the housing selection process. One is only homophbic if he exhibits actions which can be described as promoting or engaging in an unwarranted or irrational fear of homosexuals. This is a confusion sense way of understanding homophobia, as it leaves open the possibility that, while no one is justified in hate, moral and ethical questions about homosexuality can best be answered by individuals on their own.

It would appear, then, that one can disagree with others on the morality of an actively homosexual lifestyle without references to bigotry or, as was the case in my particular Safe Zone session, “crazy religious people”—which, perhaps ironically, does not sound particularly accepting or tolerant to me.

Speaking of acceptance and tolerance, I found it quite strange that Safe Zone labeled both of these terms as safe and free for all members of our campus community.

The people behind this program wish to make activists out of those who attend its training sessions—this conclusion is inescapable.

Fighting for, however, is the transformation of this growing world—but, instead, activism on behalf of the homosexual—or, more precisely, the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (GLBTQ) community.

Safe Zone training program proves to be presumpitious

Safe Zone is a national and campus program designed to “reduce homophobia, transphobia, and heterosexism on our campus and thereby to make our campus a safer and freer environment for all members of our community regardless of sexual orientation.”

To me, homophobia is an unwarranted and irrational fear of gays. Dictionary.com happens to agree with me: “An unreasoning fear of or antipathy toward homosexuals and homosexuality.” Yes one is only homophbic if he exhibits action, which can be described as promoting or engaging in an unwarranted or irrational fear of homosexuals. This is a confusion sense way of understanding homophobia, as it leaves open the possibility that, while no one is justified in hate, moral and ethical questions about homosexuality can best be answered by individuals on their own.

The time-block structure of the online lottery also makes for a much more chaotic and uncertain selection process. Instead of each student being assigned to your time block, you have the exact same opportunity to secure any given living space. This might not be a problem for students who live in the dorms and for undergraduates, especially seniors battling for coveted spots in the Lodges, Laidwell, or Jamaestown, making the outcome of the process extremely complex and uncertain.

Fôrman, however, the online housing process takes out one of the most important characteristics of the previous system—the human element. Students will no longer be able to interact with other students at the lottery, which has served as an important factor in helping many students find their ideal living conditions. There are numerous stories of undergrads finding an upperclassman at lottery with which to room, or to switch rooms with in order to get the room they’re looking for. That will obviously be impossible during the online process.

This system clearly had good intentions, but sadly it does not look like any of them will actually be realized. The housing lottery has become more stressful, more complicated, and most of all chaotic—not less. I sincerely hope that this analysis is incorrect, and that somehow the outcome will amaze students that find it to be a significant improvement over the old system. It just does not seem very likely.

Safe Zone and the New Process

The housing lottery has become more stressful, more complicated, and most of all chaotic—less. But, in the point of view, this is “nurture.” Nurture “assumes that gay/lesbian people are indivisible in our society. They view gays/lesbians with genuine affection and delight, and are willing to be allies and advocates.”

This unwarranted advocacy is, ultimately, what Safe Zone wants. The people behind this program wish to make activists out of those who attend its training sessions—this conclusion is inescapable if one reads the Safe Zone literature.

This call to activism, however, is overreaching to the point of presumption. To make our campus a “safer and freer environment for all members of our community” is an extremely noble and worthwhile goal. To be able to get 100% of campus to treat everyone with equal dignity and respect is worth fighting for. What is not worth fighting for, however, is the transformation of this worthy ideal into a brainwashing session.

We would love to see Safe Zone be more inclusive by focusing its goal of equality activism if it is truly committed to making all students gay and straight equals—members of our campus community.

The people behind this program wish to make activists out of those who attend its training sessions—this conclusion is inescapable...

Nick Fitzgerald
Executive Editor

The Virginia Informer is a nonpartisan group, with pending 501(c)(3) tax status.

Alex Mayer
Opinion Editor
What’s on tap
Mandie Constanzer & Amanda Yasenchak
The Virginia Informer

And now for something completely different, a piece about foam, good-looking ladies and gents, and college antics: a piece about . . . beer tasting? This pint-sized article will be a recurring piece, since there never seems to be a lack of people willing to help with taste-tests. So, without further ado, The Virginia Informer presents “What’s on tap.”

Like any experienced William and Mary student, thoughts of frosty pints guided us directly to the Green Leafe Café, home to approximately 30 beers on tap. The Green Leafe kindly played host for two over-21 thirsty Informer staffers and provided us with eight samples of their most popular drafts.

Mandie’s recommendations for the “dark” stuff:

**Legend Brown Ale:**
This beer is from Ashburn, Virginia. This beer is golden brown in color, has a moderate degree of carbonation, and has a bit of a dark aftertaste and is not overly heavy.

**Dominion Irish Red:**
This is a reddish brown beer, darker than the Legend Brown Ale, but with the same moderate carbonation. The Dominion Irish Red is smooth and sweeter than the Hop Pocket, with fewer hops. All in all, a very flavorful beer—great for Mug Night.

Amanda’s recommendations for the “light” stuff:

**Domion Oak Barrel Stout:**
The last beer I sampled was another from the Old Dominion Brewing Company in Ashburn. This beer is very dark in color, with a very smooth, fine carbonation. It has a nutty flavor from the malt, with other flavors woven in to create a satisfying dark beer without the heaviness of Guinness.

**Bavik Pilsner:**
This was very mild and smooth, very light in appearance. It has a very light bitterness, almost no aftertaste. It is very similar to Bud Light although it is technically not a “light” beer (Bud Light is actually the only truly light beer that the Green Leafe keeps on tap). But if you like light beers and want to try something different, Legend Lager is for you.

**Birk Pilzner:**
This is a Belgian beer, very light in color. It is more full-bodied than the Legend Lager, with more bitterness in both the taste and aftertaste. Even so, the bitterness is not overpowering. This is ideal for someone who wants something a little more substantial than the Legend Lager, but does not want to go for the darker beers that Mandie was tasting.

**Paulaner Hefeweisbier:**
This is a light-colored German beer with a fruity flavor. The Green Leafe serves it with a slice of lemon. This is a popular choice among customers, but I didn’t particularly care for the fruity taste. If I wanted a fruity alcoholic beverage, I would prefer a hard cider, rather than a beer with a shot of citrus. But judging by the numerous pitches of this beer being poured the night we did the tasting, you may have to judge for yourself.

**Woodchuck Amber Draft Cider:**
This was very sweet. It tastes like apple juice or apple cider with a very subtle kick. Unlike some of the popular malt liquor drinks, such as Mike’s Hard Lemonade or Cider, or the fruit-flavored Smirnoff Ice series, you could easily drink the Woodchuck Cider without tasting the alcohol. It is produced by the Green Mountain Cidery in Vermont, and is made of apples and fermented champagne yeast. This is the perfect drink for someone who does not like the traditional taste of alcohol or wants a break from beer.

***Editor’s Note:*** The Virginia Informer would like to thank the Green Leafe Café and its knowledgeable staff for the free samples and information. We do not endorse underage or irresponsible drinking. All Informer staff members involved in this column are at least 21 years of age.

Global warming?

**Light or dark:**
Mandie (above) tries dark beers.

**Weapon of choice:** The Green Leafe features over 30 beers on tap.

**Frost-covered tulips**

An inconvenient sight: Frost-covered tulips found subathing in the 30 degree temperatures on campus on April 7.

**Shelbi Wilson**

Food Critic

I am sushi. I am sure other students share this same passion and have discovered that the sushi on campus just does not cut it. Mongolian Buffet and Lenny’s Gourmet both have good sushi, but they still fall short. Based on a recommendation from a professor, I decided to try Williamsburg Soya and see how it compared to other locations.

Soya has a wide selection of sushi, which includes the usual favorites such as California (crab and avocado), Dragon (fried shrimp and cream cheese), and Hamachi (yellow tail) rolls. Other interesting rolls include Mirugai (giant clam), Tamago (egg omelet), and Chesspeake (crab cake) rolls. Their menu includes over 40 different rolls that range from $2.95 to $8.95 based on ingredients. Some menu items such as giant clam, lobster tail, and sea urchin are market priced. I recommend the New York (spicy tuna with shrimp tempura) roll—I love spicy food and this was almost too much to handle, in a good way.

In addition to sushi, Soya offers appetizers, hibachi, and select “kitchen” items. Appetizers include salads, edamame, and various seafood dishes (both fried and broiled). For those with small appetites, these options may be the perfect meal. Item ranges from $2.95 to $15.95. The larger entrees are either hibachi or kitchen items. Hibachi dinners include vegetables, chicken, beef (NY strip or Filet Mignon), seafood (scallop, shrimp, or lobster), or combinations of these and range in price from $9.95 to $26.95. Kitchen items include Katsu, Teriyaki, Yakisoba, and Donburi style dinners. These range from $9.95 to $19.95 depending on your selection. This restaurant was a great recommendation and I hope that students will make the trek from campus to Soya to see what it has to offer. The service was excellent and the food was wonderful. I am only sad that I did not discover it sooner.

Williamsburg Soya is located at 4511 John Tyler Highway in the Farm Fresh shopping center. Their lunch hours are 11:30am to 2pm Monday through Friday; dinner hours from 5pm to 9:30pm Monday through Sunday. For more information, please call (757) 229-1212 or visit them online at williamsburgsoya.com.

Tired of Lodge One sushi? Check out Williamsburg Soya

**Rachel Brown**

Opinion Editor

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