Amid continuing problems with the budgets of Virginia colleges, Governor Tim Kaine is pressing for a new college in southside Virginia, named the New College Institute (NCI). In the executive summary outlining the plan, it is proposed that NCI will provide a solution to economic problems being created by the recent drop in manufacturing jobs opportunities, and the "high levels of out-migration among young people and those with transferable skills." NCI aims "to provide cost free (scholarship supported) education to qualified students." Its goal is to create a blend of higher university and vocational education with a focus on the residents of rural communities.

The budget also plans to annually spend $45 million on the renovating of the academic buildings and student residence buildings. No details are given on what scholarship opportunities will be provided to its planned 1,000 students. The budget also plans to allocate $14.5 million of the state budget to NCI. Both the Virginia House and Senate have reduced that figure by nearly half in their respective proposed budgets.

The planned source of this money. No details are given on what scholarship and funds are provided to the planned 1,000 students. The budget also plans to allocate $14.5 million of the state budget to NCI. Both the Virginia House and Senate have reduced that figure by nearly half in their respective proposed budgets.

What IS that? Continued on page two

Debate on illegals comes to W&M
Founder of “Minutemen” makes Williamsburg one of last stops before D.C. as national debate erupts

“MINUTEMAN” SPEAKS Continued on page two

The College is considering proposals that may force students to purchase the school’s health insurance, possibly in addition to private policies.
HEALTH CARE: College, students debate insurance policies

continued from page one

prevailing among the graduate students in attendance. These opinions were heard by Sam Sadler, who will be a major player in the decision making process. Miller knows that Sadler heard what the students have to say about the situation and said, “I’m just hoping that Sadler considers our opinion…but I’m under no illusions.”

There are positive and negative aspects of forcing all students to be covered under an insurance plan. “The college needs to have everyone on health insurance, it’s just safer,” said Britton. “In most instances students are not aware of what they are covered for. Some students have never read the policy and don’t know what to do with it.” The plan remains 100 percent of the costs expended at the Student Health Center, and, despite concerns some students have with the accessibility of the Health Center, Britton insisted that there are only three weeks of the year when doctors hold appointments for only one hour a day and that doctors are always on call. Furthermore, the insurance is accepted at all Urgent Care and Med Express facilities, so students can go there when the Health Center is unavailable. “I think everyone should have health insurance, and even if it’s a small policy, it’s better than nothing,” concluded Britton.

Miller stated that MEGA life is looking to expand its coverage and include more doctors in its network. As for mandating this health insurance, many are unhappy that it will force students who are already under a good insurance plan to switch over, and while you can use it as a Coordination of Benefits, combining the services of both insurance companies, it will be much more expensive. As of yet, the logistics have not been ironed out.

In terms of laying objections to rest, Quinlan maintained, “there’s really no easy answer….but I just don’t think that mandatory is the right way to go.”

Miller, though, stated, “the reason why I think this merits consideration is that if health insurance were to be mandatory in some form, it would make a significant impact upon the quality of life.”

Quinlan went on to suggest, “I think everyone needs to be made aware and then everyone needs to talk about it. It’s just going to take a while to hammer out the best way to receive student insurance policies.”

While Quinlan urges Sadler to keep the current insurance policy for another year in order to develop a more feasible plan for student health insurance, Miller called for action: “I don’t think it can stay the way it is, it’s rushing headlong into a crisis situation.”

“MINUTEMAN” SPEAKS:

Simcox addresses concerns about organization, makes clear that there is no racial motivation

continued from page one

Simcox stated. Simcox said that Mexico has asked the United States to allow it to process immigrants into America. Simcox had much to say on the subject of racism. Though he has been called a racist in the past, he believes that his views are not racist, but pro-immigrant. On the other hand, he did say that it is racist to allow immigrants to break American laws without punishment simply because they are not American.

Simcox addressed the McCain-Kennedy bill that would grant amnesty to illegals and make them pay a small fine. He said that the bill encourages immigrants to illegally cross the border and also shows disrespect for American sovereignty. He added that he has been in contact with politicians on Capitol Hill and given testimony on illegal immigration.

During the Q&A period after Simcox’s lecture, many students said they approved of his views and the way he has carried out his mission. Some said that there is ethnic stereotyping of Hispanics while they are living in America, saying that they are often pinpointed as potential illegal immigrants because of their ethnicity. Others asked Simcox what he thought about supposed racist comments by members of the Minutemen Civil Defense Corps. Simcox answered the questions respectfully and succinctly, showing a broad knowledge of immigration problems.
Open Minds, Open Dialogue: Students Voice Concerns and Suggestions at Forum on Sexual Assault

Stephanie Long

The administration’s worries regarding students’ ability to rationally discuss the sensitive topic of sexual assault on campus were dispelled today with the Forum on Sexual Assault, co-sponsored by The Alliance for Sexual Violence Prevention (ASAP) and The Virginia Informer. The forum, entitled “Open Minds, Open Dialogue” began with a presentation from the mediator, Susan Grover, a William and Mary alumna and Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA). Students were interested to know how the number of sexual assault reports at William and Mary compared to other colleges, to which Donna Haygood Jackson, of the Counseling Center, assured that they were equivalent to those found at other colleges and lower than the national average. She also added that because of the campus’s supportive community, “your numbers may go up, and in essence I want them to because that means we’re providing services to those people who would remain silent,” because, “the most important thing is for someone to be able to feel supported and believed.”

Questions were raised regarding how to prevent rape from occurring on campus. Panelists addressed positive actions that will be taken in the future, including Sexual Assault Awareness week with which many of the groups present will be involved, as well as the idea of increasing upper-classmen education regarding sexual assault, as per President Nichol’s wishes. This was affirmed by Kate Cunningham of Every Two Minutes, a rape education group, when she said, “We’re certainly working in that direction.” There seemed to be much hope among the crowd who proposed various items ranging from a campaign ban on alcohol on campus to lectures on responsible drinking.

There are many difficulties with taking actions to prevent rape because it is such a “delicate subject,” as Donna put it, but she asserted that “forums like this help to raise awareness and safety on campus. But ultimately the idea of personal responsibility to become aware was agreed upon. A thread of this came in the question of whether “it should mean something to be a great university today drew comments from the audience.”

There are certain actions the administration has been taking internally to be more competitive and have discussions in a meaningful way.”

The President, Nichol said that he had no agenda for the night, wanting only to greet students, welcome them back to the College, and engage them in conversation. As a new president, Nichol shared that he has often thought about goals, the future, strengths, and weaknesses of the College in the past year, greeted only by a silence from the “remembrance of his freshman seminar.” The students had many questions to ask.

“Where did the trees go by Millington?” Nichol answered that this summer is the scheduled renovation and expansion of the College’s science complex. He explained that the large building complex would be modernized and integrated over the next two or three years, with most of the renovation funds already raised. When students complained about the aesthetics of the area, he replied, “It’s all good in the long run, but it can be a pain in the ass in the short term.”

Other students raised questions about residence hall renovations, and the President explained that there is a schedule for dormitory renovations, but it is very different from student Dona Pugliese’s expectations. President Preston Hill in the wake of last school year’s fire threw the schedule off.

Regarding upcoming construction and expansion at the College, Nichol proudly announced that groundbreaking for the new Business School would be this summer. The Business School, privately funded by William and Mary alumni, will be founded by the Mason School of Business of Philadelphia. Major renovations will begin in fall at Sentra Hospital – the College purchased the building to house the School of Education.

Parking Services was a hot issue among students, following the discussion of the new construction. One student pointed out that the Barksdale ramps are almost complete, while the parking garage follows a slower schedule. Nichol promised that Barksdale construction was on schedule and that the doors will be open next school year.

He went on to say that parking is a more difficult issue, claiming “parking is hellish on any campus,” and the situation was much worse at Chapel Hill.

After addressing parking and problems with campus food, students presented heavier questions. When asked the strengths and weaknesses of the College, students immediately raised the concern that professors study independently to be more competitive, should students be doing so, cannot always uphold the unique engagement between students and faculty characteristic of William and Mary. Also, the question was raised of what it takes to be a great university today drew comments from the students. Nichol debated the importance of whether “it should mean something to be public,” where “great publics” (ostensibly...

Nichol answers students’ question on the fate of the College and campus issues

Mandie Constanzer

The Future is Now: Now that President Nichol has been inaugurated, students can see the future of William and Mary taking shape.

― Staff Writer

I

the lounge area in the upper level of the Tazewell building in the Randolph Complex, about 50 people convened on Tuesday March 14, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the College president, Gene Nichol. Settling in an armchair facing the crowd, Nichol said that he had no agenda for the night, wanting only to greet students, welcome them back to the College, and engage them in conversation. As a new president, Nichol shared that he has often thought about goals, the future, strengths, and weaknesses of the College in the past year, greeted only by a silence from the students. Nichol answered that this summer is the scheduled renovation and expansion of the College’s science complex. He explained that the large building complex would be modernized and integrated over the next two or three years, with most of the renovation funds already raised. When students complained about the aesthetics of the area, he replied, “It’s all good in the long run, but it can be a pain in the ass in the short term.”

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Nichol in Tazewell

continued on page sixteen
The Student Assembly Senate closed its 2005-2006 session by discussing Williamsburg voting rights, overriding President Ryan Scofield’s (’07) veto of the 2006-2007 budget, funding a zip line across Lake Matoaka, and encouraging college students to register to vote in the city of Williamsburg. Senators Matt Beato (’09) and Senate Chairman Luther Lowe (’07) have launched an accessible website, www.VoteInWilliamsburg.com, to encourage college students to register to vote in city elections. A William and Mary student, David Sivers (’07), is running for a spot on City Council in the May 2 election.

Additionally, Economics Department Chair and Vice-Mayor Clyde Haulman recently proposed that the city should buy properties that are currently available for rental and re-sell them to owners with the stipulation that they must be owner-occupied. This would significantly decrease the availability of off-campus housing for fraudulent address. Andrews actions have outraged senators, including Beato, who said the convenient timing of these restrictions was, “too coincidental to be a coincidence.” Lowe pledged to bring the issue before the City Council and state legislators.

Next, the Senate moved to override Scofield’s veto of the 2006-2007 budget. Scofield vetoed the budget on the grounds of a $1,045 line-item that funded recycling on campus. Scofield suggested that the money should come from the consolidated reserves instead of the general budget. However, after the Senate pointed out the consolidated reserves were nearly empty, the Senate overrode the veto by a vote of 14-1-0 with only Senator Richard Hinman (MBAA) voting no. Overriding the veto also meant that blue books would not be funded by the SA.

At the end of the March 28 meeting, Senator Sean Barker (’07) introduced a Bill to Encourage the Improvement of William and Mary’s Energy Efficiency. The Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC) made a presentation, demonstrating the several problems with the school’s energy policy which result in massive energy costs. Barker’s bill would have the Senate sponsor a program to attempt to raise $80,000 to make one academic building energy-efficient, which would then generate $150,000 in additional revenue per year to pay for the program and make the entire school more energy-efficient.

The bill passed 14-1-0 with only Hinman voting no. Senator-elect and SEAC Member Zach Pilkten (’09) praised the bill, saying, “The overwhelming passage of this resolution…should show the administration that this is an issue we students care about. Whether it’s our environmental ethic, our distress for wastefulness, or just an awareness of the all-too-frequent falling tuition costs, this is an initiative every sane person on campus can get behind.”

The first bill considered during the April 4 meeting was Senator Greg Tidick’s (’07) “Zip Line Act” to appropriate $650 from the consolidated reserves to operate a zip line across Lake Matoaka during the week of final exams. Despite much debate among senators, including Senator Scott Fitzgerald (’07) questioning its necessity, the bill passed unanimously, 15-0-0.

Following the passing of this bill, several senators left the room, thus breaking quorum and preventing the Senate from discussing other business.

The first meeting of the 314th Senate foreshadowed a much more contentious body for the 2006-2007 school year. The Senate was to elect a new Secretary and Chairman, but the Senators encountered SENATE RACE continued on page five

**Online SA updates**

Follow the continuing debate over the Senate Chair election and other SA news.

www.VAlniformer.com

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Reelected SA President sets agenda, fills cabinet positions with few new faces

Matthew Sutton

Staff Writer

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The graduation of the class of 2006 leaves several positions open in the SA Cabinet that Scofield and Norris can fill to reward supporters. New nominees for the various positions include: Cassandra Maitone (’07) for Academic Policy; Bradley Justus (’07) for Finance; Anna Bovill (’07) for Public Affairs; and Ben Bromley (’08) for Internal Affairs. Two cabinet members from this year have been re-nominated for re-election. Lydia Bailey (’07) again being tapped for Diversity and with legislators in Richmond. I want to continue to work towards this goal.”

The newly nominated Cabinet does not include many newcomers to the SA, as many of the positions are being filled by former deputies or others with Student Assembly experience. Matthew Dinan (’09) commented on the new cabinet, “I think it would have been good if there was more diversity and fresh blood to the SA, but the ones that we have are very eager to continue SA involvement with this issue. “The SA has made great strides over the past year within the City of Williamsburg and with legislators in Richmond. I want to continue to work towards this goal.”

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Stem Cell Research 101: Wesley J. Smith discusses bioethics

Stephanie Long

Wesley J. Smith, in his lecture “Biotechs: Creating A Disposable Case of People?” addressed a question, which bioethics has brought into discussion. As he puts it: “Does human life have intrinsic value simply because it is human? In other words, does being human matter?”

Smith, who is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute where he works as a special consultant for bioethics and culture, believes that it does. And thus he came to William and Mary to discuss his opinions regarding the topic. While the majority of his speech focused on the complications and controversies of stem cell research, he touched upon several important topics such as Terri Schiavo’s death, euthanasia, and eugenics—all of which pose many ethical questions.

In his speech, Smith dissolved many of the assertions made by those in favor of stem-cell research. “Embryonic stem cell research is controversial because in order to get embryonic stem cells you have to destroy the human embryo.” Embryonic stem cells are seen as more desirable than adult stem cells because, allegedly, they have the potential to form any tissue in the human body, and “in the long run they will prove more advantageous than adult stem cells because of that supposed capacity.” But Smith verified that, to date, only one type of cell has been created from an embryo, and there are over 200 types of tissue in the body. “So,” he said, “they are a long way from proving that it can create every tissue in the human body.”

Smith also discussed the fact that millions of eggs would be required to potentially help everyone who could possibly benefit from stem cell research or regenerative medicine. In order to meet this quota, many labs have been asking women to “super-ovulate, that is, they are given a hormone which would cause them instead of producing one egg to be producing ten or 15, that’s very hard on the body and it can lead to side effects such as death, infection, or ovaries the size of grapefruit.” It is because of this issue that both pro-choice and pro-life feminists have begun a group called “Hands Off Our Ovum.”

Smith also called to mind the possibility of our country going to more desolate countries and taking eggs and stem cells from natives of those countries, as was done in Africa in the hope of curing AIDS. And looking at another point in history, Smith made it known that, “in the late 60s and early 70s, live fetal experiments were done in this country, paid for by the government,” during which living people were being experimented on. All of these examples call into question just how far researchers would be willing to go in the future.

Ultimately, Smith’s opposition rests in the fact that all of these actions de-value human life. “This is not a right wing issue and pro-life feminists have begun a group called “Hands Off Our Ovum.”

In his latest book, A Consumer’s Guide To A Brave New World as well as his book Culture of Death: The Assault on Medical Ethics in America, Smith elaborates on his opinions regarding bioethics.

Is human life valuable just because it’s human?: Distinguished attorney and author Wesley J. Smith came to William and Mary to discuss the controversy surrounding bioethics and stem cell research.

—continued from page four

some bitter arguments.

First, Senator Beato was unanimously elected to the office of Secretary, charged with taking roll and recording votes after Senator Victor Sulkowski (‘07) withdrew from the race.

The Chairman election proved to be divisive and controversial. The candidates were outgoing Secretary and third-year Senator Joe Luppino-Exposito (‘08) and fourth-year Senator Scott Fitzgerald (‘07). Senator Ben Phillips (‘08) was nominated but withdrew his candidacy.

An 11-10 vote by written ballot in the open session was in Luppino-Exposito’s favor. It resulted from extensive closed-session deliberations and seemed to signal his victory. Immediately following the vote, Senators Shaffir Tannous (‘08) and Sulkowski, along with the executive’s Communications Director, Tom Moyer (‘07), declared that the vote had to be conducted by an open vote and in public as per the Freedom of Information Act, as the SA Senate handles public money. Thus the election was declared void after the votes had been counted.

Editor’s note: Senator Joe Luppino-Exposito is the Assistant Editorial-Chief of The Virginia Informer.
The success of the city and the College are intertwined. A healthy university contributes to a healthy community with each invested in the other. The College, through its endowment, is literally invested in the community through the New Town project. By targeting students directly through Haulman’s housing plan and the so-called ‘brothel’ rule, the city creates an “us against them” environment with students, resulting in calls for self suffrage in the city and even student candidates.

Perhaps by understanding the economic conditions created by demand for student housing those relationships can be improved. Students have to live somewhere. The College is either unwilling or unable to provide sufficient housing, requiring some students to live off campus, creating negative consequences. Students are loud, messy, transient, and keep strange hours (trust me, I am one), therein lies the problem. An interesting and noteworthy study on the impact of student housing on local markets was conducted by The University of York in December 2000. Since student populations continue to boom and colleges cannot keep up with demand, the reliance on off campus housing has also increased. This reliance creates unique student markets where “students were living in particular types of property, in geographically specific neighborhoods, and renting from landlords who would be unwilling to [rent to] other groups” according to the study. Landlords are confident about demand in this market, resulting in more supply, although it does not negatively affect other groups seeking housing such as low-income or young professional households. Few people want to live near a college; without excessively high demand the York study found “young professionals and low-income households tended not to be in competition for the same properties as students”.

A healthy university contributes to a healthy community with each invested in the other. How Communities Address the Problems of Student Living Off-Campus When considering such a plan, the tremendous impact students have on rental and property rates in the city must also be considered. Many more progressive, constructive strategies, if employed, would accomplish the dual goals of strengthening the relationship between the community and College while keeping students under control off campus.

The first and most important step in the process requires the city of Williamsburg and the College to realize that they need each other.

The Tribe 12...

What can the city of Williamsburg do to be more student friendly?

Doug Bunch, ’08:
Relax housing restrictions that target students. In addition, it seems like there is a surplus of police, and this is money that could be better spent elsewhere.

Sean Evans, ’09:
Relax public transportation and allowing students into city government.

Shuruq Fillo, ’09:
Before we can make any physical changes, we have to change the thoughts of the community.

Scott Firestone, ’08:
There should be less ‘hipper’ places to go within walking distance, or they should fix the bus system.

Jenny Geldermann, ’09:
They could actually have the buses come on time for once.

Ryland Greenhouse, ’07:
More college student entertainment within walking distance, like shops, restaurants and entertainment venues.

Ian Howley, ’08:
Openly involve students and the younger community in key decisions.

Bess Kaye, ’08:
Better public transportation and allowing students into city government.

Sarah King, ’09:
The bus system needs to be greatly improved, they’re always running late.

Salar Mohandesri, ’09:
Removal of the three person rule because it discriminates against students, especially since the college doesn’t guarantee on-campus housing.

Matt Whalen, ’06:
Let students vote in city council and especially mayor.

Jessica Zappia, ’07:
The three-person rule, noise ordinances and family residence percentage requirements should all be dropped. Also voter rights should be given to students.
“Revolutionary City” connects past to present

Colonial Williamsburg’s new program offers interactive history performance on DoG Street

Chase Coleman
Staff Writer

In its eternal mission to connect modern people to American history, Colonial Williamsburg has begun “The Revolutionary City,” a much anticipated program that runs every afternoon from approximately 2:30 to 4:30 on the Capitol end of Duke of Gloucester Street. The two-part event uses audience interaction and live acting to depict life in Williamsburg on the eve of and during the Revolution, 1774-1781.

On the first day of the program, titled “Collapse of Royal Government, 1774-1776,” visitors see the residents of Williamsburg dealing with increasing problems of British control, such as the dissolving of the General Assembly. Many of the scenes illustrate issues with which modern-day viewers are very familiar. Colonial men discuss the fine line between terrorism and fighting for liberty, and an unemployed carpenter debates whether or not to enlist so that he can provide for his family. From such portrayals, visitors see that the people of 18th century Williamsburg faced many of the same problems as modern Americans.

The second day, “Citizens at War, 1776-1781,” depicts Williamsburg during the Revolutionary War. After listening to a reading of the Declaration of Independence at the Capitol, visitors view vignettes concerning the effects of the war. Visitors experience both the lows, such as British occupation of the city, and the highs, such as the hope for separation of the church from the government. With an emphasis on the war’s effects on average citizens, the second day also emits a hint of modernity that connects visitors to the past.

“The Revolutionary City” often focuses on the common person of that era, and audience interaction plays a major role. In between staged events, the characters of “The Revolutionary City” walk through the town and talk with visitors about a variety of issues, including liberty, assistance from France, and even others’ inability to follow directions. During the scripted scenes, the audience often cries “Huzzah!”

Are the tar and feathers real?: Colonial Williamsburg’s new program features a unique combination of live action performance and education to engage audience members of all ages.

Chase Coleman
Staff Writer

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good news, and, at the end of each day, everyone marches in a procession.

Many guests believe that Colonial Williamsburg’s experiment with interactive education is a change for the better. Many families—which comprise the majority of the audience—welcome the participation, which is much more engaging for both children and adults. Employees of Colonial Williamsburg also are happy with “The Revolutionary City.” Master Silversmith George Cloyal, who helps fire the cannons at the end of the first day, calls the program a “tremendous success,” and he is glad to see the excellent turnout. Before the program started, there was some worry that the managed access of Duke of Gloucester Street would cause problems for joggers, but Cloyal, along with many others, say that this poses no hindrance.

Although many of the same characters play a role in both days, it is not necessary to see “The Revolutionary City” in chronological order, nor is it necessary to stay for the duration on each day. Since admission is free with a William and Mary ID, students can come and go as they please.

“Fired up” about cooking

According to the National Fire Academy more than 4,000 Americans die each year in fires and more than 20,000 are injured. Many of them might be alive today if they had only had the information they needed to avoid disaster. The following life-saving tips could make a big difference; by incorporating them into your life now, while the moment is still fresh, you could help save a life.

Did you know?
- 82% of all fire deaths occur in the home.
- Cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S. It is also the leading cause of fire injuries.
- Deaths due to fires caused by cooking are particularly preventable.
- Having a working smoke alarm reduces one’s chance of dying in a fire by 50%.

Following these simple fire safety tips can boost survival rates dramatically. Please share them with your readers because knowledge is the best fire protection.

Cooking Fires Life-Saving Tips
- Never leave cooking unattended.
- Always wear short, tight-fitting sleeves when cooking.
- Keep towels, pot holders and curtains, away from flames and heating elements.
- Clean cooking surfaces regularly to prevent grease buildup which can ignite.
- If a fire breaks out while cooking, put a lid on the pan to smother it. Never throw water on a grease fire.
- Heat all gradually to avoid burns from spattering grease. Use extra caution when preparing deep-fried foods.
- Never use the range or oven to heat your home.
- Double-check, ensure range and all heat producing appliances are turned off in the kitchen before you go to bed or leave the house.
- Make sure all small appliances are turned off.

Between January and February 2006, fire drills were conducted for the spring semester in all dormitories. All students that participated in the drills were warned that negligent cooking is the leading cause of fire on campus. During January to March 2006, reported 62 separate incidents of cooking fires; 12 from 92 reported fire incidents in 2006. Twelve of the 62 fire incidents reported to campus police in the last three months involved cooking. This number is still high but down from the 14 reported last year during this time frame.

Courtesy of the W&M Department of Fire Safety
New Chancellor offers advice to students

UCAB sponsors Q&A session amidst inaugural festivities

Gustavo Elias
Staff Writer

On April 7, newly appointed Chancellor Sandra Day O'Connor participated in a question and answer session at Phi Beta Kappa Hall. This UCAB sponsored event provided students with the opportunity to listen to what the newly appointed Chancellor had to say on a wide array of topics, including her past, her points of view and her advice to students. President Gene Nichol moderated the event.

One of the first questions asked by President Nichol was why did she want to become Chancellor. O’Connor playfully replied to the audience “Your President must have caught me at a weak moment.” She was on the court when Former Chief Justice Warren Burger was Chancellor at the College, and he would always talk about how much he loved the College. O’Connor had also served on the Board of Colonial Williamsburg in the past, given speeches at the College, and loved the charming town of Williamsburg.

O’Connor’s journey to the Supreme Court was filled with hard work and dedication. She described how hard it was for her to find a job after graduating from Stanford Law School in 1952. At one of her first interviews at a law firm, one of the first questions asked of her was how well she could type. The degree of gender equality there now did not exist fifty years ago. One of her first jobs was with a California law firm where she worked without pay until the payroll had money to pay her. Her love for solving problems for public interest superseded her need for money at the time.

President Nichol later tried to pry answers about her political stance on issues such as Affirmative Action and abortion, but to no avail. At one point, President Nichol asked, “Do you worry that Roe vs. Wade will be overturned?” with O’Connor’s response being “I don’t think I need to answer that question. That is a non-issue, I have already written about it.” When asked about the recent Supreme Court appointments, O’Connor admitted she wished a woman had replaced her, saying the country has lost ground with the lack of another woman on the court.

Later on the session, O’Connor discussed her personal life. She told the story of how she and her husband met at Stanford while proofreading a law paper together. Her heroes are her parents. She grew up on an isolated cattle ranch in Arizona with her father. She described her father as intelligent and fun to be with. She also looked up to her maternal grandmother, who would take care of her during the school year, since her ranch was too far from school. She loved outdoor activities, such as tennis and golf, although she says cattle ranch gifts aren’t supposed to play golf. For her, balancing family and work was difficult; she never had time for herself.

At the very end of the session, Chancellor O’Connor provided student with two very important pieces of advice: learn to read fast and write well. While she was on the Supreme Court, she had days where she had to read about 1500 pages of documents a day. She also said the most successful people were succinctly, quickly, and effectively. She encouraged students to parake in public service, saying that it is very satisfying work. O’Connor left the session on a positive note, reassuring students that “Life takes weird turns, and if you take those turns, you might like them.”

S4 rallies students for the privatization of Social Security

Nationwide student group draws bipartisan support

Nick Hoelker
Staff Writer

A new non-partisan group is appearing on college campuses throughout the country, encouraging the privatization of Social Security. The organization, Students for Saving Social Security (S4) was founded by Jonathan Swanson at Yale University and Patrick Witherell at Haverford College in March 2005. According to Jeremy Tunnell, the group’s Internet strategy coordinator, approximately two-thirds of college students nationwide support the idea of personal accounts, and consequently S4 has expanded to over 250 schools in all 50 states in the past year.

The organization encourages abolishing the current Social Security system and replacing it with one entirely based on personal retirement accounts. According to their website, www.secureourfuture.org, the current system will be facing a $4 trillion dollar shortfall in the next seventy-five years, which translates into over $25,000 of debt for the average worker. By reforming the system to use only personal accounts, the group has played an active role in encouraging both students and legislators alike to support the privatization of Social Security. S4 has brought in Social Security experts to give lectures and hold roundtable discussions at schools across the nation. Additionally, the group has called in Washington, D.C., and in summer 2005 held an event on Capitol Hill in which members met with senators to discuss Social Security reform. According to Tunnell, the organization will further focus on convincing members of Congress of both parties who are opposing personal accounts to reexamine their views.

At William and Mary, students have varying views about Social Security. When asked if he thought privatizing Social Security was a good idea, senior Steve Urciolo said, “No, I don’t. Such a system unfairly benefits the rich while placing an undue burden on the poor. Social Security may not have been meant as a means of subsistence, but the fact of the matter is that millions of elderly Americans rely on it to survive.”

On the other side of the argument, freshman Jacob Hill, who are opposing personal accounts to reexamine their views.

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On the other side of the argument, freshman Jacob Hill, who tend to have more at their point in life are taxing the youth, who tend to have less to subsidize their retirement. But it’s impossible to subsidize their retirement with Social Security. It’s merely an immoral tax scheme.”

If you would be interested in starting a William and Mary chapter of Students for Saving Social Security, contact their outreach director Evan Dent (evan@secureourfuture.org) or visit their website at http://www.secureourfuture.org to register.
Informer

The investiture & Inauguration of Sandra Day O'Connor and Gene R. Nichol

“Big Nick” and the cowgirl from Arizona: April 7, 2006 marked a historic day for the College. The rain held out long enough for the hundreds of students, faculty, staff, and campus delegates and other guests to witness the investiture of Sandra Day O’Connor as Chancellor of the College and the inauguration of Gene R. Nichol as our 26th president. Speeches were taken and the spectators tried their best to get that perfect photo of her “bling bling” as SA President Ryan Scofield (’07) so eloquently referred to her.

A reception followed on the opposite side of the Wren Building with O'Connor and her “bling bling.”  UCAB later sponsored a question and answer session with O'Connor and the opportunity to find out more about the new chancellor.

Typical Situation

I’m not sure what I expected at college, but it certainly wasn’t any of the things that have defined my freshman year: institutional arrogance; libraries overflowing even when exams were more than a week away; NoVa kids, swollen with the status quo, collars popped as high as their egos, espousing Christian conservation to agreeing ears.

Where, I ask you, are the bohemians? The wildly wide eyed starving hysterical naked students (that I, libidinous and Real Worlded, expected to see at satisfying intervals)?

We call ourselves a College, a place of higher education, but when the wildest things on campus are our beloved president’s unloved mullet, I say to you that we have failed.

We are the bitter bastard children of the College Board, deemed too dumb (or unconnected) for Harvard but too privileged for the "safety schools" that we chant derisively at football games, as our own student sections sit unfilled—the absences speaking louder than those who came.

I don’t know if God is dead, but Thomas Jefferson sure is, and—at the risk of iconoclasm—I don’t think he’s done anything for us lately.

Our bricks are less elegant than stagnant, and in the fetid waters of the Crim Dell spawn the students that smell of sameness. I was told, when I applied to the College, of the energy and talent of its students. And after my short time here, it seems to me that for the vast majority that energy is expended only into our academics. We are smart, to be sure: but our academics accomplishments are only surpassed by our abounding apathy.

Excuse my somewhat irrevant and depressing attitude, but frankly, we’re not providing the type of college education to make the $137,000 that myself and others pay worthwhile. It is used to instruct than much of what I've received here so far.

As secondary students, we are told tales about the wonders of college life. The interesting movies; the interesting people. The life experiences that are never to be forgotten. The incredible, life-affirming sense of freedom. So on and so forth, ad nauseum.

But what of that happens at the College? I ask you: have you ever heard of, much less seen, a campus as constantly active as this one? A professor of mine called it quiet—I will agree, if we use “quiet” in the same way that it is used to describe the grave.

I, for one, am tired of the chains of conformity (civilly, of course) that bind us as surely as Sally Hemmings. Colonial Williamsburg is not where the past lives: it is where the past retires and becomes senile. And if we—the young, with our boundless energy and potential—cry out for the College to embrace the future, perhaps we may be allowed to embrace the college experience too.
SOMETHING NEW IN A CITY THAT'S ALL ABOUT THE OLD.

A trip back to colonial times reveals a whole different world. But no place you visit is more unusual than the new Yankee Candle Williamsburg.

Beyond being one of the world’s largest candle stores with over 150 true-to-life scents, you can also enjoy treats, musical performances, candle making demonstrations and more.

Stroll inside Holiday Park, where it’s Christmas every day of the year. It’s always snowing, the ice pond is always frozen, Santa’s Workshop is always bustling and the holiday shops are always full of surprises.

**William & Mary students and faculty receive a 10% discount off their entire purchase with valid school ID.**

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Quite an unusual place.
How does W&M diversity stack up?

The Virginia Informer investigates socioeconomic and religious diversity on campus

Ryan Lintelman
& Chris Peterson
Staff Writers

I

It's sobering to look back on the 2005-2006 academic year, much ado was made about the College’s efforts to increase diversity on campus. In printed word and in speeches, campus leaders such President Gene Nichol and Dean of Admissions Henry Broaddus claimed the campaign was a step forward for the college.

A report on student body makeup compiled by the College’s Office of Institutional Research notes that only 5,171 students identify themselves as white, meaning that as many as 33% of William and Mary students are of minority backgrounds.

While such statistics do indicate progress in the area of ethnic diversity, they fail to speak to the larger question of overall variance within the student body. Evidence indicates that the College still has a long way to go in welcoming students of diverse economic and religious backgrounds in relation to its fellow universities.

The College’s recently announced Gateway Initiative, which will allow Virginia residents whose family income totals less than $40,000 a year to graduate debt-free through grants and scholarships, will allow Virginia residents whose family income totals less than $40,000 a year to graduate debt-free through grants and scholarships. This initiative is intended to help fiscally underprivileged students if cost of tuition is a factor in attending William and Mary.

Annual income below $40,000 matters to the College’s Office of Institutional Research for the 2003-2004 academic year show that 45% of the students attending the College declined even to apply for financial aid. Of the 3,106 students who did, roughly a third reported an annual family income of over $100,000.

Perhaps most telling, more students (446) chose to leave their annual income field blank—denying themselves a chance for need-based financial aid—than those who reported an annual income below $40,000.

The College—where the average total cost for a year of education, room and board and for an in-state student is $14,000 and $31,000 for non-residents—is in some ways hamstringing its financial dependence on the state government. William and Mary also lacks the $22.3 billion endowment that Harvard enjoys, $80 million of which it invests every year in its scholarship fund, according to the University's Office of Financial Aid. The College’s $409 million endowment pales in contrast even to the University of Virginia, whose $1.9 billion endowment allows a greater degree of independence from the state.

According to statistics kept by the OIR, the College also appears less religiously diverse than peer institutions.

Last year, 2,690 of the 5,673 undergraduate students enrolled at the College failed to specify a religious preference. Of those 2,983 that did, however, 86% affiliated themselves with some form of Christianity. According to the OIR’s report, only 33 students at the College identified as Muslims, 119 as Jews, 14 as Buddhists, and 56 as atheists.

Catholicism is the single most populous branch of Christianity on campus with 951 members, although Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians each boast over two hundred adherents.

These statistics—both in terms of students’ reporting a religious preference and in terms of reporting Christianity as their religion—are strikingly dissimilar from peer institutions. At Dartmouth College, less than 30% of the class of 2004 even chose to specify their religious preference.

Similar apathy was found at U Penn, where only 13% of the undergraduate population chose to identify themselves religiously. Of those students, 55% are associated with some branch of Christianity, while 10% are Jewish, 13% identified themselves as practitioners of “Eastern Religions,” and 12% are atheists or agnostics.

Perhaps an even more telling example of Christian predominance in the College’s student body is in the demographics of faith-based extracurricular groups. Of the 33 religious organizations on campus, 28 identify with a branch of Christianity.

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While comparing religious and cultural diversity, it’s always been a goal of our organization to do our part to educate and inform our peers about the views, perceptions and beliefs in Islam, a religion which demands tolerance of followers, teaching us to respect people and cultures for what they are.”

A sophomore member of the group, Mohammed S. Naoue, said that, while he feels “very comfortable as a Muslim [since] people respect my faith...I feel a lot of people are really not all that aware about Islam. It’s not a matter of religious tolerance, but religious diversity.”

While noting there are possible areas of improvement in interfaith relations, junior Paul Brockwell, a Christian member of M.S.A., said that, “it’s unfair to completely overlook the religious understanding around campus. There certainly are Christian groups less inclined to accept other religious traditions as legitimate, but there are also a good number of people dedicated to interfaith dialogue and understanding.”

Geoffrey Brown, the Director of the Judaic organization Balfour-Hillel, reports that there is “unequivocally no overt conflict between the Christian and [Jewish] groups. There’s a lot of outreachting between the groups to make an inclusive environment.”

However, Brown—who estimated the Christian population on campus is “closer to 75%, with many students just not specifying their affiliation or claiming to be ‘agnostic’—conceded that there were instances of interfaith “ignorance, rather than insensitivity” on campus.

William and Mary is becoming more diverse in a process likely to play out on a more visible stage in coming years.
The Big, the Bad and the Ugly: The Virginia Informer predicts the hits and misses of this summer’s anticipated blockbusters.

Joe Pirro
Film Critic

It’s that time of year again. School’s almost finished, the weather’s getting nicer, and the studios are rolling out tons of movies for the summer. Some of these films will be huge successes and some will be major flops - only time will tell. Before then, The Virginia Informer takes a look at what you can expect at the theatre this summer.

The Big:
1. Mission: Impossible III: The season starts out early with the third installment in the popular series. Tom Cruise is back in the director’s chair, what could go wrong? It's not like Tom Cruise is crazy or anything, right? Right? (May 5)
2. The Da Vinci Code: The ridiculously popular book by Dan Brown gets the big screen treatment with Ron Howard (May 19)
3. Cars: Pixar and Disney release their first film as a joint company and their first film together since November 2004’s ‘The Incredibles.’ With the voice talents of Paul Newman, Owen Wilson, and George Carlin and the writing and directing team from Toy Story 2, Cars should be another win for Pixar, the studio that can’t seem to do anything bad. (June 9)
4. Superman Returns: After a long absence from the big screen, the caped hero returns to the screen. Relative newcomer Brandon Routh plays Clark Kent as the film picks up after the second installment. We’ll just completely disregard the other Superman movies. (June 30)
5. Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man’s Chest: The second Disney release on the list has a lot of anticipation behind it. Will the reunited team be able to do it again? Will Johnny Depp be just as great as Jack Sparrow? Will the supposed surprise ending make the audience ready for the third movie in 2007? The answer to all three questions is probably yes. (July 7)


The Smaller:
1. Art School Confidential: Terry Zwigoff returns with his follow-up to Bad Santa. Of course, balderdash will ensue. (May 5)
2. A Prairie Home Companion: Directed by Robert Altman, this ‘adaptation’ of Garrison Keilor’s hit stars Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline, Tommy Lee Jones, Lily Tomlin, John C. Reilly, and Lindsay Lohan. Yes, you read that correctly. (June 9)
3. The Science of Sleep: Ready for another provocative brain teaser? Michel Gondry, the man behind Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind is back. (August 6)

Honorable Mentions: Honorable Mentions: Strangers with Candy, A Scanner Darkly

The Bad:
1. The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift: The first one? Bad. The second one? Atrocious. It can’t get better, and this one doesn’t even have the incredible acting talents of Vin Diesel and Paul Walker! (June 16)
2. Googled: A Tale of Two Kitties: Unfortunately, some idiotic producer in Hollywood decided it would be a good idea to spend money to make this movie. Nothing else even needs to be said after a little like this. (June 23)
3. Little Man: So Shuan Weyans is a criminal. But he really wants a baby, so he mistakes a man that looks like a baby for a real baby. And get this: the man that looks like a baby is placed by Marlon Wayans. Oh, get your Oscar ballots ready. (July 5)

So there you have it: a full season of some great movies, good fun and some true travesties. Have a great summer!

Students: Come worship at the Williamsburg Community Chapel

Sunday Services
8, 9:30 & 11 AM
Pickup at the College
In front of PBK and W&M Hall
9:10 for the 9:30
10:40 for the 11

3899 John Tyler Highway
Williamsburg, Virginia 23185
757-229-152
www.wcchapel.org

A taste of Asia in Williamsburg

Top’s China offers inexpensive dining for students willing to make the trip

Sheilbi Wilson
Staff Writer

You hear it all the time: “Williamsburg just doesn’t have any decent Chinese restaurants.” There is a wealth of other Asian-inspired cuisine restaurants – Chez Trinh, Miyako, Kyoto, and the like. Mongolian Barbecue is also a favorite with students, but most would say wish they was was another choice. Just this past week, however, I was introduced to Top’s China in the Williamsburg Crossing Shopping Center. It may be just what you’re looking for.

Top’s China looks like a hole-in-the-wall type of place, but don’t let that fool you. There are several tables available for dine-in eating and they have extremely quick service. There is a downside – Top’s doesn’t deliver, so if you don’t have a car, you will have to take the bus. They also don’t take credit cards – only cash or check. These facts aside, the food is inexpensive, allowing you to order several of your favorite items and still have money to spare.

Their menu has a wide selection of items that are broken down into about twenty different categories. They range from appetizers to soups to different meat and/or vegetable entrees and combination platters. Prices range from $1 to $21. The most entrees available for $4 to $7. Entrees come in two different sizes, pint or quart, and typically come with white rice. The combination platters come with an egg roll and pork fried rice. The menu also lists a wide variety of hot and spicy items, including spicy Sesame Chicken or Beef and General Tso’s Chicken or Beef. Top’s China is located at 5251-25 John Tyler Highway in the Williamsburg Crossing Shopping Center, right off Highway 199. You can also get to this location by taking the Red Line bus through Williamsburg Area Transportation. They are open from 11 AM to 10 PM Monday through Thursday, 11 AM to 11 PM Friday and Saturday, and noon to 10 PM on Sundays. Please call (757) 220-6868 to place orders or request more information.

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

On page eight, the headline on Ryan Lintelman and Chris Peterson’s article incorrectly suggested that incoming freshmen will be required to purchase IBM Thinkpad laptops. Students will be required to purchase laptops and Thinkpads are encouraged to standardize technical support.

The Virginia Informer would like to correct any facts printed incorrectly. Please submit all corrections via email to VAIinfo@wm.edu.
Oliver: College eyesore or modern masterpiece?

R.C. Rasmus

I'm not going to lie to you; the first time that I saw “Oliver” on his concrete pedestal next to Barksdale field, I thought that he was an air-conditioning unit. Or a generator. Or an electrical box. Long story short, it never would have crossed my mind that Oliver was a sculpture. Why? Because to an untrained eye he looks like a piece of industrial equipment. In reality, Oliver is the brainchild of Robert Engman.

The sculpture may look like a piece of machinery at first glance, but closer study shows that he is a marvelous piece of modern art. Oliver’s father, the sculptor Robert Engman, was the co-chair of the Fine Arts department at the University of Pennsylvania during the 1970s. In 1979, Engman decided to take a sabbatical from his work at U. Penn. and took up the position of “sculptor-in-residence” at the College of William and Mary. This meant that Professor Engman was required to teach only one class per semester, while the rest of his time was to be devoted to his own creative interests.

Engman began work on Oliver almost as soon as he came to the College. Even though he had worked in stone, wood, plastic, and glass, Engman decided that his next project was to be devoted to his own creative interests. Engman began work on Oliver almost as soon as he came to the College. Even though he had worked in stone, wood, plastic, and glass, Engman decided that his next project was to be devoted to his own creative interests.

Engman did was create a model of Oliver. He made a trip to the Uptown Theater in Washington, D.C. The Uptown is a relic from the 1970s, with brass railings, a recessed concession stand and nowhere to park. The theater is huge - I’m talking a 70 x 36 foot screen. It’s called “Industrial Technology Sculpture” and is brown rather than white.

One way or another, from now on, whenever you see William and Mary’s glorified kitchen whisk while taking the detour past the new Barksdale Dorms, you will know how to live the experience. It’s called “Industrial Technology Sculpture” and is brown rather than white.

When I went to a movie at New Town in Williamsburg or at the Hoffman Center up in Springfield I feel like I’ve stepped onto a sterile assembly line... Is this an experience? Is this an experience? Not for me.

The experience comes from being in the movie. Sitting back with a giant-sized Coke cup and a bucket of popcorn and letting the flickering lights wash over you isn’t enough. You need to wonder, to be engaged in the action on the screen. You need to forget that you’re sitting in a theatre and put yourself in the graveyard or the precinct or the island on the screen. You need to feel for characters the way that little kids do, to think of them as real people, think of them as friends and enemies. Then you’ll laugh. Then you’ll scream. Then you’ll be taking part in an experience. Clap when the experience back into the movie? I say bring back the experience. Clap when the movie’s over. Laugh when something is funny. Smile when little kids cheer. Maybe if each of us does our small part, we can put the magic back into movies.
The 2005-2006 school year is almost finished and will likely prove to be one of the most eventful in recent memory. The College has seen both triumphs like the transition of new President Gene Nichol and investiture of Chancellor Sandra Day O’Connor and tragedies like the sexual assault scandal in the fall and recent death of junior Zach Vaughan in an unfortunate accident on campus.

We at The Virginia Informer started this independent newspaper to provide the community with a real choice about the news that affects us all. We have provided hard-hitting and balanced coverage of the issues concerning the sexual assault crisis, specifically the Patrick Decker case, where a male student was charged with making a false statement, and the sexual assault scandal in the fall relating to campus safety and police misconduct on campus.

The Informer broke stories in the fall concerning sexual violence on campus, including the fact that the Assault Board hearing during Sexual Assault Board hearings to let the victim make a simple decision? The Defamation of Character suit will go to trial. The saying “Every person is innocent until proven guilty in a Court of Law” is being applied to this case; the basis being that the accused must be innocent since the Commonwealth declined to move forward with a criminal case. INVALID assumption! The criminal court Standard of Proof for determining guilt is “Beyond a Reasonable Doubt”. This differs greatly from the Standard of Proof for determining guilt in civil litigation, which is “Preponderance of Evidence”. A civil lawsuit may take 2+ years to resolve. What recourse does the victim have if the accused is found guilty in a civil court? Her college years have been plagued by a few who choose (and are allowed) to defame her simply because of the Commonwealth’s decision? The Defamation of Character suit and unnecessary media coverage is a shameful attempt to silence the victims. Unless the police change the victim with a false statement, there is very little probability that the Defamation of Character case will go to trial.

The Clery Act is the landmark federal law that requires colleges across the country to disclose information about crime on their campuses. The law is tied to participation in federal student financial aid programs. The general public is not aware that W&M staff were REQUIRED by law to notify the student body immediately that a rape had been reported to the police or risk being “fined” up to $27,500 by the US Dept of Ed.

In addition, Title IX prohibits sexual harassment, including sexual assault. The Federal Title IX guidelines clearly require that the school promptly investigate and resolve the situation, and mandate the Standards of Proof for a college trial. A letter from Sadler to the Community stated that the College employs a different standard of proof from that of the criminal code. By using a higher Standard of Proof, W&M may be in violation of Title IX Guidelines. In May 2004, the Office of Civil Rights levied a fine upon Georgetown University for several violations, including the fact that the Assault Board Standard of Proof was higher than set forth in Title IX.

Most rape cases are kept within the jurisdiction of the school and “deals” are made during Sexual Assault Board hearings to let the accused “off the hook.” Using an administrative solution to resolve and deter criminal actions is unacceptable. Rape should not be confused with sex. Rape is an act of empowerment. Rape is a crime. The College must react to a report of rape as it would to any other crime. Until they understand the complexities of this crime, no progress will ever be made to resolve this issue on their campus.

Susan Russell
Founder, uvavictimsofrape.com
Please don’t slam the door

Benjamin Farthing

In a few months I will send forms to Salt Lake City, informing them that I am ready to join the 60,000 young Mormons serving missions. I will then spend every hour of the next two years of my life improving my knowledge of spiritual matters, and sharing that knowledge with everyone who will listen.

My friends have pointed out that they will all have nearly graduated when I return. My academic advisor warned me that I will have to reapply for admission. My goal to publish my creative writing will get put on hold.

All of these things are certainly true, and yet they do not concern me much.

Keeping in touch with friends will not be difficult. Reapplying for admission turns out to be little more than filling out a few forms. Two years will give me plenty of time to distance myself from my writing and be able to edit it to perfection.

But these are not the reasons why I am not concerned about putting my life on hold.

I am not concerned because I believe in what I am doing. I feel that this is right, therefore everything else seems trivial.

Unfortunately, too many open, accepting, and tolerant people do not extend their openness, acceptance, and tolerance to religious matters. Too many people are nothing more than rude to missionaries. I have been told by people that what I am doing is not just foolish, it is offensive.

So why are so many people offended by missionaries? Aside from the common dinner interruptions, I have heard accusations ranging from saying that we are so insecure with our faith that we force others to join, to saying that we think we have to save everyone from going to Hell.

We proslytize for the same reason any other organization proslytizes. We have a message we want to share. We feel we have something that will improve peoples’ lives.

So if I end up in your hometown, realize that I am just trying to tell people about what is important to me. And please, don’t slam the door.

Students Defending Soldiers

Opposition to radical groups that disparage our troops at war

Jacob Hill

Guest Columnist

In recent days and weeks, this college has been plagued by a number of flyers by a radical leftist organization known as the Students for a Democratic Society. In showing their dissatisfaction with the ongoing war in Iraq, this group of new age hippies has resorted to morally reprehensible tactics in an attempt to elicit emotional responses from whatever audience they can gather.

Incapable of providing a cultured and intellectual response to conflict, this group resorts to posting flyers of murdered soldiers with emotional rhetoric such as “His girlfriend called him Freddy” “killed in the name of AMERICAN IMPERIALISM.” Continuing along this line, in order to make their presence known on campus, they resort to posting flyers with their initials along with the clenched fist of radical revolutionaries, racist black power organizations, and violent dictators.

During Admitted Student’s Day, a group of these radical hippies placed themselves in front of William and Mary Hall, broadcasting protest songs and holding up cardboard placards. While many new students were attempting to weigh their decisions of whether or not to come to an institution of higher learning, they were forced to get a dose of some of the more unsavory elements of this college.

Some may not understand how vicious and draftive this group’s chacurity really is. As the son of a military officer, who grew up surrounded in a military culture, a world traveler, and a decent human being whose mother taught him basic proper ethics, I have a better vantage point than most. The SDS appears entirely unaware that the 1960’s are long dead. They cannot seem to comprehend the fact that the current military is a professional volunteer service. None join under compulsion, and almost all feel a great sense of patriotism and duty. These people provide the most important service to any of us, protecting our lives, property and well-being from physical violence. All are fully aware of the danger of such a career.

Yet, they still sign up in amazing numbers, most citing the “old” approach is no longer working. It is time for decision-makers to adjust to the times and seek new solutions.

If the hidden goal of the leaders firmly in control of campus politics and policy is to continue racial disharmony so that a victim class can be maintained for political gain, we will be doing a great disservice to the memory of Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King.

Gary Aldrich and LeShawn Kee are from The Patrick Henry Center, Virginia, VA.
‘Cat Man’ Larry Smith offers fresh look at the Commons

Nick Fitzgerald
News Editor

Day-in and day-out, thousands of students are fed by the Commons Dining Hall, a.k.a. the Caf. Newly renovated for the 2005-2006 year, the Caf offered students better facilities, new menu options, and a friendly, enjoyable environment in which to eat.

Over the past year, however, the new Caf has come under fire by students. Many, whether it be in casual conversation with friends or written on the Caf’s official comment cards, have expressed concerns about portion size, student involvement and food quality. Complaints about portion size, meal plan policy, and Caf temperature are some of the biggest worries students share.

In an attempt to help get students’ questions and concerns heard, and to get some straight responses, The Virginia Informer secured an audience with local William and Mary celebrity and director of the Commons Dining Hall, Larry Smith—a.k.a. Caf Man.

Smith has become a legend in the minds of William and Mary students. Caf Man, known for his good-natured and mild-mannered demeanor and extraordinary amounts of paperwork he lies on a Caf table every day, was more than willing to participate in an exclusive interview with the Informer.

The Virginia Informer: Many students feel that the portions at the Caf aren’t enough. Some even claim that Caf workers have benefited from the new Caf by having more food to make. Is there any truth to these claims?

Caf Man Larry Smith: Each serving size is approximately four ounces, with unlimited seconds, thirds, fourths, fifths. We need to get the Caf patrons through the line as quickly as we can, especially because things are made to order. If we let all employees [give out as much food as they want right away], then food might run out. We control portions just so it’s just a practice, just a rule. You can come back as much as you want, and we will give you whatever you need. That no one can deny anyone food.

Informer: Is it true that football players are supposed to get bigger portions than other students do?

Caf Man: Never! A Caf employee was written up for that two years ago.

Informer: At the beginning of the year, students with the unlimited meal plan were able to swipe in other students who may have, for whatever reason, forgotten their card. This is no longer the case. Why?

Caf Man: The card was designed to be used in a different manner. That’s another thing, [like portion size], that can get out of whack.

Informer: How do you decide the menu for any given day? How much diversity is in the Caf menu, and what kind of healthy or vegetarian options are regularly offered?

Caf Man: About 85% of the menu is derived from student input, especially the comment cards. The menu is created in four week cycles, typed up, and put on a spreadsheet. So here [picks up spreadsheet] is the menu for the next four weeks. The only thing we do change occasionally is the fish. Maybe one week, salmon will have a great price. Almost 50% of the menu is made up from student input, the surveys that students fill out, and those comment cards. I read every one and try to do the best I can in responding to students’ concerns.

[As far as health food goes], to be very blunt, I think we have one of the best vegetarian stations in the country. We’ve maintained our own cycle; it’s very hard to duplicate this. We’re able to do this because of the size of the campus. We do half veggie, half Vegan. We get a lot of comment cards about the vegetarian station. It’s hard to please everybody.

And you know, 85% of our food is made to order fresh, every single day. All of our desserts are made in our bakery downtown; they start down there at 4:30 in the morning.

Also, everything here is done with manipulation — we don’t use butter. We also have a lot of brand name stuff. We don’t buy the cheap stuff. We do the best that we can to buy the best brands based names on our budget.

Informer: And what’s your story, Mr. Smith?

Caf Man: How did you end up here?

Informer: Well, after I graduated from college I played professional football in Canada. But I hurt my leg, and I got cut. I needed a job, so I joined the Coast Guard and became an officer. I was in Vietnam for about seven or eight years. I then became a customs officer in North Carolina. They sent me over there for training and I’ve been doing that for ever since—been doing it for 30 years. I’ve done food service at Columbia, Duke, and Sarah Lawrence. I have four children, all graduated from college, a great wife, great family. Williamsburg will be where my wife and I will retire. I’m 61 now.

Informer: One big complaint students have about the Caf is the temperature. It’s often very cold in the Caf, especially underneath the large vents.

Caf Man: I won’t dispute that at all! Unfortunately, it’s an adjustment that needs to be made by the contractor. Over the summertime they are going to adjust the whole thing. I also believe that you can fix this ASAP; but unfortunately it has to be adjusted by computers and everything. We aren’t going to do a job with that as fast as we can; it’s something that the contractors are working on.

Informer: What is your opinion of Curtis’ singing?

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NICHOL IN TAZEWELL
continued from page three

William and Mary lead academia by example of opportunity and education. The president said the College is unique by having the strongest educational experience because it is a small school with a public mission. He insisted that “great privates do not have to do what we do and great publics cannot do what we do,” and that “the truth is we do not have peers.” The College isn’t like UVA, Berkeley, or any private schools; instead, it falls in with Dartmouth, Princeton, and Harvard, but the College has a mission those schools do not.

Moving away from the College’s mission, a student brought up last semester’s sexual assaults and the lack of community discussion regarding the incidents. Nichol pointed out that the Fifth Amendment does not fit into the College’s judicial process the way it does in the federal system. The College judicial process is not meant to model the criminal justice system. It is meant to regulate activity that falls short of criminal behavior and is based on clear and concise evidence, not proof beyond a reasonable doubt. Upon reading of the Decker case, Nichol only said that although the Commonwealth will not prosecute, he still cannot return for this spring semester. Repeatedly saying, “I can’t comment on it,” Nichol claimed the Family Privacy Act limits how much he can say on the matter, a fact that left many students disappointed after emails promising discussion of the opaque issue.

Scattered questions addressed the inefficient use of energy on campus, the state of the athletic department, and past financial difficulties that affect renovations, such as fixing the Brafferton Building. Built in 1720, Nichol claimed that he can see through the bricks to the outside. Nichol tied these questions into his conclusion, which encouraged students to take steps toward meeting the future. The President called the student body and faculty “substantially, dramatically non-diverse.” Stressing the need for greater diversity, he reminded students that the College cannot be a world leader until diversity is achieved. Nichol told the students that William and Mary was “here to be someplace great.”

Join The Informer for an exclusive opportunity to taste Contra Cafe—the freedom fighter alternative to fair trade featured in our March issue.

Wednesday April 26 at the UC

Behind the Counters of the Caf: While most students only see the Caf while waiting online, reporter Nick Fitzgerald found out about life from the other side of the counter in his interview with the infamous "Cat Guy."