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THE RING-TUM PHI.

MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2005

BY THE STUDENTS AND FOR THE STUDENTS SINCE 1897

VOLUME CVII, NUMBER 22

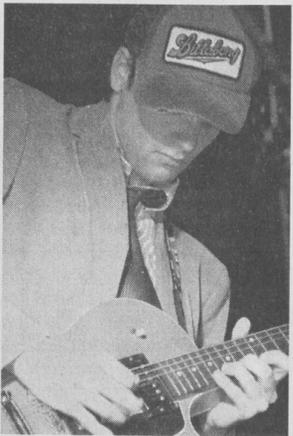
WHAT'S INSIDE

The envelope please...

And now, the moment we've all been waiting for... the Fancy Dress theme revealed on page 2.

Friday night fights

Eight bands faced off on Friday night with a thousand bucks at stake. Check out page 4 for a rundown on who rocked and who did not.



HOT TICKET

The British are coming

Everyone's favorite British dame returns in the zany "Bridget Jones: Edge of Reason," which will be playing in the Commons Theater on Mon., March 7, at 7:00 p.m., and Tues., March 8 through Fri., March 11, at 9:30 p.m.

Back by popular demand

"Jacob's Ladder" returns to the stage to bring back the bluegrass music that secured their Battle of the Bands victory last Friday. The band will play at Jordan House on March 11 at 8:00 p.m.

Secret garden

Zach Braff's trippy "Garden State" runs in the Commons Theater at 7:30 p.m. on Fri., March 11, and on Sat., March 12. Admission is free, but contributions are welcome.



SIMPLE LIFE

Feng-Shui your Room

Create a peaceful place to escape from the everyday stresses of life. Though these are small steps, in doing them, you will be inches closer to reaching the Tao of W&L.

■ Try some green: A bamboo plant brings prosperity and grows neatly in a glass bowl with water and marbles.

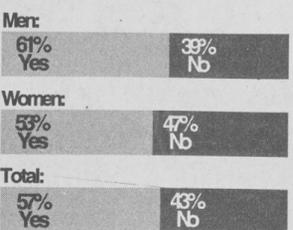
■ Don't cut corners: According to the Feng-Shui belief, this leaves room for bad spirits in your space.

■ Let in the light: Try to open your blinds and let the sun shine in for at least a few hours each day. Also, try hanging a crystal in each window. This helps dispel evil before it can enter the room.

A creative study space can help you improve your grades. Remember, everything's better when everything's zen.

QUICK POLL

Q: Have you engaged in premarital sex at any time, including any time prior to your coming to W&L?



72 students polled, 36 male, 36 female. Poll has 95% confidence in a +/- 5% margin of error.

W&L to jump on satellite bandwagon

By Chris Lauderman
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Consideration of a Washington, D.C. satellite campus that will provide W&L with a physical presence in the nation's capital, increasing the school's visibility, somewhere in the next two to ten years, was announced in the strategic plan.

The administration selected Washington because of the critical mass of W&L people in the city, its international position, and its interdisciplinary nature. Students can be exposed to many elements such as policy, art, and science.

Both the city and northern Virginia suburbs are being considered for the location. Joe Grasso, Vice President for Administration, sees the program starting as a pilot program where we lease a space.

But Provost Thomas Williams said that is not the only option. Buying a building in DC, where real estate is booming, might be a better investment for the University than stocks or other investments.

The site would have an on-site director. An idea is to have room for approximately 30 student residences and two to three efficiency apartments for faculty, alumni, and guests.

One key question is whether the

university can create a curriculum for students to be at the DC center for as long as a full semester. Williams said his immediate vision for the center is not one where students would spend a semester, but that is a possibility down the road.

The Law School has the most expansive plan for utilizing the DC center at this time. In fact, the idea of a satellite campus came up six years ago in a separate law school plan. The initial idea is to give students the chance to take specialized courses and have internships in a metropolitan area, not unlike Cornell Law School and others. Law School Dean David Partlett said that the DC center gives W&L a chance to expand its curriculum in the areas of administrative and constitutional law.

According to Williams, potential uses by the undergraduates at the DC center include the journalism department allowing students to intern for six credits. Three credits would be given from a journalism professor teaching in a classroom and three credits would be given by a newspaper such as the *Washington Post*.

Teacher education students, because of W&L's location, cannot do a practicum or student teaching in a private school. The DC center would give students achieving their education certificate a place to stay and teach in an urban district.

Currently, the Washington Term program uses classrooms in another university's D.C. center. A Washington center would give the department classroom space and a place for students to stay while interning in the spring. Shepherd students would also have the opportunity to live in the center while they worked in their summer placements.

University of California, Stanford, William and Mary, Amherst, Boston University, and others all have a satellite campus in the DC area. Grasso and Williams both said that there are many models on which to build the program in DC.

According to the administration, having a satellite campus is becoming more and more common, especially for a school in a rural area.

"It is not unusual anymore for a school of our quality," Grasso said.

This proposal, like all others in the strategic plan, is not set in stone.

"This should be widely discussed and carefully considered," Grasso said.

Despite the fact that it is not yet permanent, the DC center is a high academic priority for the school.

"DC is not just the center of government," said Larry Peppers, Dean of the Williams School. "We see it as a resource we can tap into regardless of discipline."

WANTED: Student input

The administration made clear in a press conference held last week that student input is wanted in the strategic planning process.

Students have several different options to express their views to the administration. There is a drop box online at <http://strategicplan.wlu.edu>. This student forum has already been used by about a dozen students and the information has been taken in by the administration.

If there is student interest, more open forums can be held to discuss the different task force reports. In the preliminary stages of planning, however, students did not take advantage of this option.

A third option is to e-mail Provost Williams directly.

"Students should, indeed, take this information seriously," Williams said earlier in an interview with the *Phi*. "We want to know student views on all these proposals, and want as well to have original ideas from the student body."

—Chris Lauderman

Phi Beta Kappa honors new members

By Katherine Shell
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Phi Beta Kappa welcomed 44 new members into its chapter in Thursday's Lee Chapel ceremony. Robert Wilson '73, the editor of Phi Beta Kappa's *The American Scholar*, was honored as the speaker for this induction.

The scholars are selected for their "dedication to education and involvement in support of [W&L's] liberal arts mission," said Brian Richardson, head of journalism department, in his welcome speech. The society was chartered on W&L's campus in 1911 in recognition of excellent scholarship on campus.

Richardson also said that these students promote W&L's ideals of excellence and scholarship, and give the "assurance that reputation will endure."

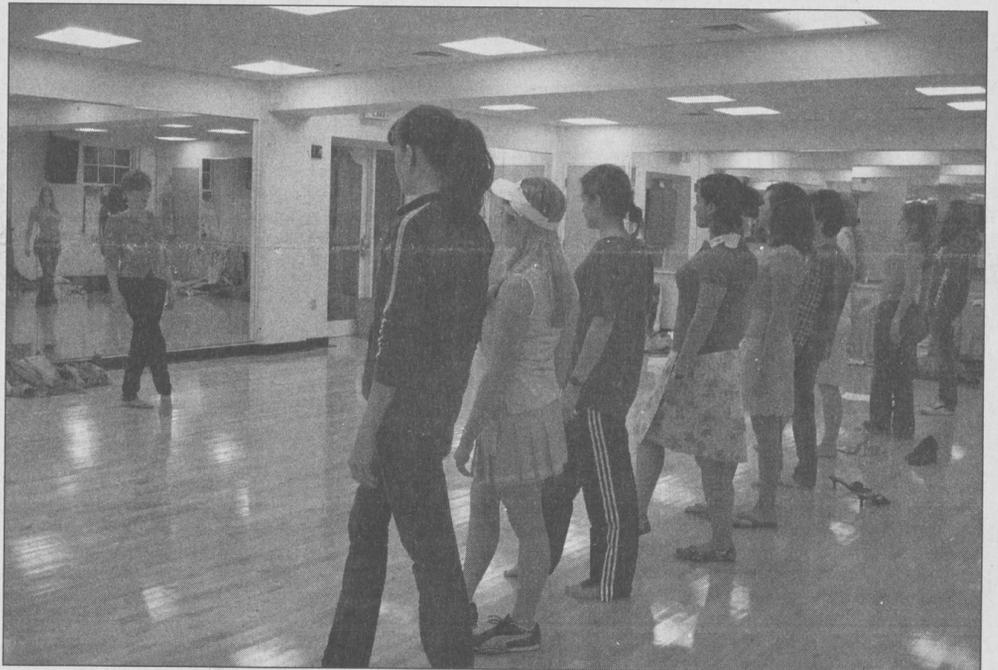
Three students were honored in absentia from the class of 2004: Ellen Carothers, Jackie Green, and Jaime Muscar.

Twenty-two seniors were added to represent the class of 2005 in Phi Beta Kappa: Sarah Berhalter, Kristen Brown, Hans Carlson, Derek Colla, Laura Farrell, William Fox, Courtenay Glisson, Edward Irby, Tiffany Jenkins, Wesley Kimmel, Christopher Lee, Chia-I Lu, Elizabeth Murphy, Tom Pickering, Anne Rochfort, Kim Sanford, Kiersten Schmidt, Norman Senior, Liz Tessier, Timothy Waddell, Katie Wall, and Emily Wolfing. One senior was absent on a job interview, and one graduated in December. Four seniors who were elected last year, but were abroad during the Convocation, were honored this year: Wesley Bell, Richard Busby, Peter Djalaliev, and Kelley Magill.

Twenty-three juniors were also elected: Ligia Medina, Vanessa Arness, Halin Bareke, Melissa Clarke, Jonathan Cochran, Elizabeth Davis, Jessica Good, Stephanie Hannon, Courtney Harrison, Amanda Hughes, William Huntington, Adam Jarczyk, Angela Kim, Matthew Layton, Nikita Liamzine, Amy McCamphill, Matthew Null, Christie Palazzolo, Jon Philipson, Lee Rasamny, Benjamin Skrodzki, Elizabeth Twentyman, and Emily White. Several were studying abroad during convocation and will be honored during next year's ceremony.

Sergey Kvasnyuk was given the Phi Beta Kappa Sophomore Award, given to the sophomore with the highest academic average during the first four terms at W&L.

Wilson was inducted as an honorary member and spoke to congratulate the new members.



Catron and fellow models learn the proper stance the night before the show.

EMILY HULEN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Beautiful inside and out

By Katherine Greene
STAFF WRITER

It takes a special kind of woman to turn her own personal suffering into a successful foundation to help others.

Heather Owens, an abuse victim, is the founder of Beauty Revue Against Violent Encounters (BRAVE), which held its premiere events at the sorority houses and Evans Hall this Saturday.

"We decided we needed to make a difference," said Owens, "and our goal is to raise awareness, not just money."

Owens got started on this mission a year ago, after years of hearing the heart-wrenching stories of her clientele at A Positive Image Spa, her business on Main Street.

"Over 75% of the women coming into my spa had [abuse] stories they were willing to share," Owens said, "It's overwhelming how many of these women there are."

Lindsey Duran, '06 Law, helped to organize the BRAVE events this weekend, including the Day of Beauty and the Fashion Show. She said, "In [Owens's] line of work, she has seen a lot of abused women...it just ran the gamut of people in bad situations."

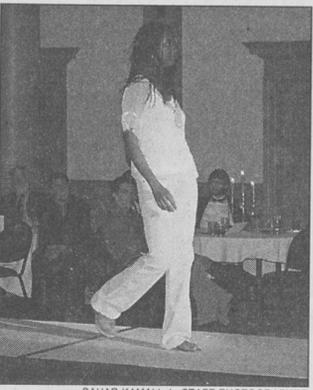
Owens, a former makeup artist from New York City, says that women don't just come to her to feel relaxed. "They come to feel better about themselves," she said, "because their self-esteem has been destroyed."

"People had no place to turn," said Owens, who accuses both the community and authorities in Lexington of denying the problem and refusing to help victims



Above: Owens gives a local woman a make-over at the Theta house on Saturday. Below: Khady Mbaye, '05, struts the runway.

EMILY HULEN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



SAHAR KAMALI / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

of domestic abuse. "These women are unable to stand up comfortably and not feel ashamed...the abuser should be made to feel ashamed, and the law in this town won't help."

The Day of Beauty event took place at the sorority houses, a location which was chosen for its convenient proximity to both campus and so many women.

Fitness classes, including a basic self-defense course, were held in the Kappa Kappa Gamma house and a silent auction of donated gift baskets was held at Kappa Delta. Both Kappa Alpha Theta and Pi Beta Phi hosted local aestheticians including Owens herself as they gave massages, manicures, and makeup lessons.

The fashion show, held later in the evening, featured items donated or borrowed from several boutiques in Lexington, as well as some in Charlottesville and Staunton.

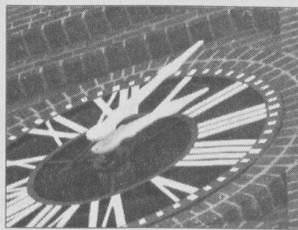
Bethany Catron, '05, participated in the fashion show as a model. "[Heather] has a lot of experience," she said, "and she makes us feel a lot better about [being in front of everyone]."

Owens said, "This has become a turning point in my life," of the events on Saturday. "W&L has been such a great help to my cause, in a community that has the attitude that abuse doesn't happen here."

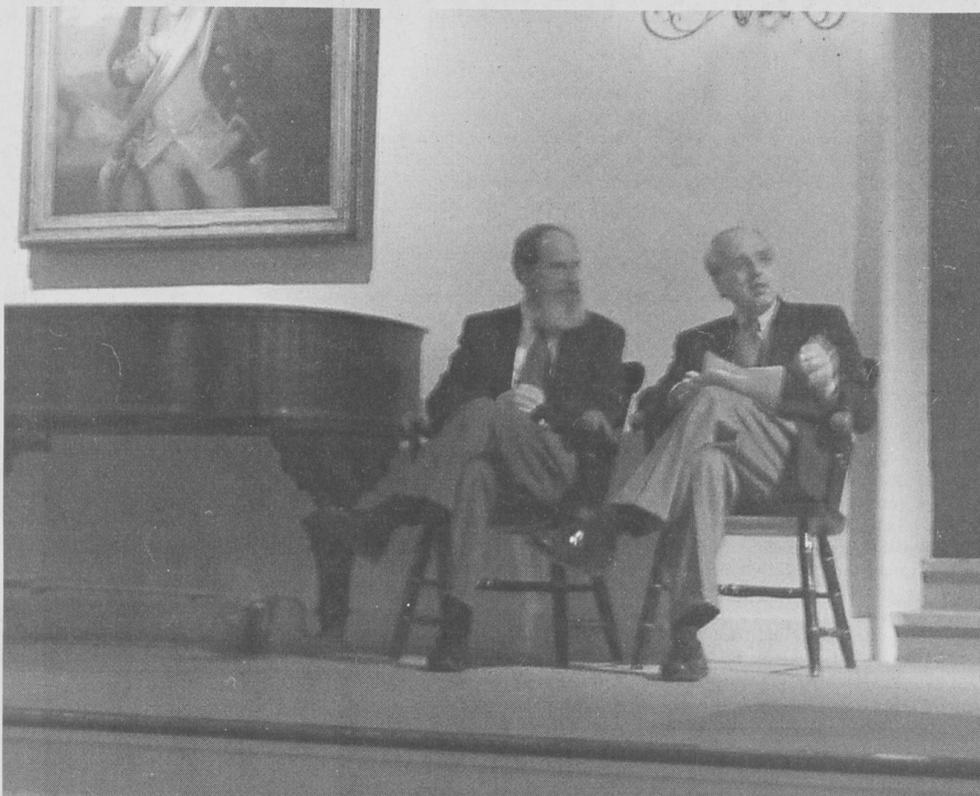
Launching BRAVE to a national level is Owens's next course of action. She is slated to attend conferences in Philadelphia and Las Vegas in the coming months, ready to tell her story, and the stories of the women she has tried to help.

Heather Owens may be the kind of woman it takes to make it happen.

news



THE WORKING POOR



CORBIN BLACKFORD / PHOTO EDITOR

David Shipler, Pulitzer-prize winning journalist and Washington and Lee University Woodrow Wilson Fellow, addressed the University Community Thursday, March 3, in Lee Chapel and is pictured with Professor Harlan Beckley. He spoke on his latest book, *The Working Poor: Invisible in America*. Following his speech, he signed books at the University bookstore. Shipler addressed several classes while he was on campus, ranging from journalism to economics. He also ate every breakfast, lunch and dinner with students in the Marketplace.

98th Fancy Dress Ball theme revealed Chairs unveil "In the Shadow of the Sphinx" theme

By Erin Julius
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Washington and Lee's 98th annual Fancy Dress Ball, themed "In the Shadow of the Sphinx," will be held March 19 in the Warner Center. Johnny White and the Elite Band will perform in Doremus gym, with a DJ as entertainment

in the smaller gym.

Johnny White and the Elite Band is a 10-piece show and dance band known for its Motown medleys.

The Fancy Dress Committee, co-chaired by Amanda Jones and Catherine Turner, revealed the "In the Shadow of the Sphinx" theme last night.

The ball is scheduled for 9 p.m. - 1

a.m. Ticket prices for this year's ball are \$35 per person, \$40 at the door. This year's memorabilia package, which includes a ticket, t-shirt, shot glass, poster, playbill and cups costs \$50.

This year's Fancy Dress was scheduled later than normal in an effort to accommodate law students, who are currently on spring break.

Gender Relations Committee forms

Group aims to educate campus on what constitutes sexual assault

By Katherine Shell
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

The newly-formed Gender Relations Committee held an organizational meeting last Tuesday to open itself to student involvement. The GRC intends to "coordinate the educational and preventative efforts of various campus groups currently dealing with sexual misconduct," according to the W&L News Office.

According to committee member Mary Jacob Rankin '05, a major purpose of the group is to form "education and even ground for everyone on campus what is consent, what is sexual assault."

Dean of Students Dawn Watkins and President Thomas Burish asked the Panhellenic Council and the Inter-Fraternity Council to address the issue of sexual misconduct. As such, the committee is made of students from fraternities and sororities, most of whom have held positions within their own affiliation, Panhel or IFC. The group will be a "permanent group allying faculty, staff, and students," said member Susan Somers '05.

However, students who are not Greek-affiliated should not feel as though they cannot be a part of this committee. "This group should bridge and extend to all areas of life," not just Greek life, Rankin said.

One goal of the GRC is to form "action teams to deal with specific challenges," Somers said. These subgroups, based on various aspects of gender relations on campus, include Activities and Gender Interactions, Male and Female Outreach Curriculum,

Academic Curriculum Infusion and Judicial Review. Activities and Gender Interactions, led by Somers, would seek to promote social activities that are not alcohol-based.

The student organization One in Four is a starting point for the Male and Female Outreach Curriculum, headed by John Gaffney '06. During the past few weeks, One in Four has been traveling to every fraternity on campus to educate other men about sexual assault. As of now, they plan to be part of Freshmen Orientation next fall.

Curriculum Infusion Education would seek to "organize ways for gender issues to be incorporated into classroom settings," said Tom Pickering '05, head of the action committee and former IFC President. "We would collaborate with the faculty," he continued, and the committee would seek to allow on campus issues to be part of classroom discussion. The Judicial Review Action Team, led by Katie Henderson, the student chair of the Student Faculty Hearing Board, which hears cases dealing with sexual assault, would "evaluate reporting procedures to make students more comfortable," said Henderson. They would also seek to "make sure procedures and policies fit within W&L culture right now."

Somers states that the GRC is "hoping before the end of the year to make a lot of changes." Seniors on the committee all plan to see specific changes as a result of this formation before their graduation.

The GRC's co-advisors Jan Kaufman, director of Health Promotion, and Jennifer Sayre, counselor, are working closely with the group to ensure faculty support.

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sports

THIS WEEK

MONDAY, MARCH 7

■ Baseball vs. Villa Julie; 3:00

TUESDAY, MARCH 8

■ Women's Tennis at Sweet Briar; 4:30

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9

■ Men's LAX vs Elizabethtown; 3:30
 ■ Women's LAX vs. Frostburg 4:00;

THURSDAY, MARCH 10

■ Baseball vs. S. Virginia; 3:00

FRIDAY, MARCH 11

■ Track at NCAA's TBA
 ■ Women's Tennis at MWC 4:00

SATURDAY, MARCH 12

■ Women's Tennis at R-MC 9:00
 ■ Men's Tennis at R-MC 9:00
 ■ Track W&L Inv. 10:00
 ■ Women's Tennis vs. Guilford 10:00
 ■ Baseball R-MC 12:00
 ■ Men's Tennis vs. Denison 12:00
 ■ Women's LAX at CUA 1:00
 ■ Men's Tennis vs. VWC 3:00
 ■ Women's Tennis vs. VWC 3:00
 ■ Men's LAX vs. F&M 6:00

SUNDAY, MARCH 13

■ Women's Tennis vs. Denison 10:00
 ■ Baseball vs. HSC 12:00
 ■ Women's LAX at Lynchburg 2:00

SPORTS BRIEFS

W&L Men's Lacrosse Downs Gettysburg, 9-8 (3/5)

Senior attackman Jack Murray scored a career-high four goals and assisted on another to lead eighth-ranked Washington and Lee to a 9-8 win over sixth-ranked Gettysburg on Saturday afternoon at the W&L Turf Field.

Two W&L Swimmers Headed to NCAA Championships (3/4)

Washington and Lee senior Chris Colby and sophomore Michael Ginder have qualified for the NCAA Division III Men's Swimming and Diving Championships held at the Holland Community Aquatic Center in Holland, Mich., from Thu., Mar. 17-Sat., Mar. 19.

W&L Field Hockey Earns NFHCA Academic Honor (3/3)

The Washington and Lee field hockey team has been cited by the National Field Hockey Coaches Association (NFHCA) for its team grade-point average (GPA), the association announced on Wednesday.

W&L Men's Tennis Defeats No. 18 Washington, 6-1 (3/5)

The Washington and Lee men's tennis team improved to 4-4 overall with a 6-1 win over 18th-ranked Washington College on Saturday evening.

W&L Baseball Picked Sixth in ODAC Preseason Poll (3/2)

The Old Dominion Athletic Conference released its baseball preseason poll on Wed. and W&L was picked to finish sixth among the 10 conference teams.

Ginder sets pace for team

By Kathryn Krall
STAFF WRITER

Using powerful strokes, a desire to win, and his secret dorsal fin, Michael Ginder swam his way into the record books at the Bluegrass Mountain Championship. The sophomore from Jacksonville, Florida dominated the freestyle events, coming in first in the 50, 100 and 200 meter freestyle races. He set a school record in the 200 free, and led two relay teams to two more records.

Ginder's outstanding performance was rewarded with Co-Swimmer of the Meet honors. In addition, Ginder qualified for NCAA Division III Swimming & Diving championships in all five events. The most important outcome for him, however, was the second straight W&L win at the Bluegrass Mountain Championship.

Ginder began swimming when he was eight years old for a neighborhood summer club team. He continued to swim through high school. He chose W&L in



"I usually swim my best when there's someone that's faster than I am in the lane next to me. I don't like to lose, so I push myself even harder when I'm swimming against someone fast"

Michael Ginder

order to gain a strong education while pursuing swimming. In addition, his father attended and swam for W&L. "As I was growing up, he used to tell me stories from his college years. I knew I wanted to swim in college, but also wanted a balance between athletics and academics," Ginder explained.

A competitive spirit and a desire to win motivates Ginder to swim his best. "The thing I enjoy most about swimming is probably racing. I usually swim my best

when there's someone that's faster than I am in the lane next to me. I don't like to lose, so I push myself even harder when I'm swimming against someone fast" said Ginder.

Although he excels in many aspects of swimming, Ginder's area of expertise is freestyle. "My favorite race has to be the 200 free. I like this race best because it's still considered a sprint race but there's room for some minor mistakes." He has had continued success in this race. "I also

placed 4th at the NCAA DIII Nationals meet last year so that's a big part of why I like the event so much."

Ginder's favorite moment of the season was the 400 meter free relay at Conferences. The relay team was seeded third for the last event of the meet. After being behind for much of the race, Ginder, who was swimming the anchor leg, was able to bring them into first. They ended up winning by .67 seconds. The win put them at 800 points, which was a goal of the meet, and enabled the team to come home Conference champions.

Ginder attributes much of his success to goal-oriented coaching. "Joel did a great job of motivating us to put everything we had into every race this season. We had a great second season under his coaching finishing the season 6-2."

Known as "Golden Boy," Michael Ginder has shown himself to be a consistent and motivated swimmer. With speed, determination, and a true love of the sport, Ginder promises to be a star on the swimming team for the rest of his W&L career.

Generals sweep Hollins, Washington

By Sarah Bloom
STAFF WRITER

There was an atmosphere of focus and confidence as Washington and Lee defeated both Hollins University and Washington College this weekend. The Generals walked away victorious in every match played.

"Everyone just dominated," said sophomore Ginny Wortham.

Coach Curt Speerschneider has developed a game plan with a week by week breakup of the team's short and long-term goals. "This week was the first week where we really aimed to focus on our playing," said Wortham. The team currently has an undefeated record and number three doubles team Katie Kingsbury and Kelly Will have yet to lose a game in competition.

Though the ODAC has not been

known to provide stiff competition to the Women's tennis team in recent years, upcoming matches with teams outside the ODAC will prove challenging.

Next weekend's match at Dennison College is one of those matches. "Everything this week will culminate with Dennison," said Wortham. "We lost last 4-5 last year and it was a heartbreaker."

Looking to turn last year's loss around, the team has remained focused and maintained an intense standard of training since the beginning of the season. Though recent snowfall and bitter cold days have added extra challenges to the already demanding practice schedule, the women have found ways to continue to workout. Each practice consists of an hour of conditioning and an hour of actual play. "It's a new level of focus, but we have big goals," said Wortham. "When we do well and work hard it's kind of a good feeling."

DOMINATING THE COURTS



Jon Rogers / Staff Photographer

Led by No. 25 Paul McClure and No. 20 David Shay, the No. 10 Mens' Tennis team defeated No. 18 Washington College 6-1 on March 5.

Women laxers pull off 9-8 victory in final seconds

Team improves record to 1-1 with win over No. 14 Franklin and Marshall

W&L Sports Release
SPORTS INFORMATION

Senior midfielder Natalya Hoobchaak (Barrington, Ill./Loyola Academy) scored off an assist from senior midfielder Maggie Speasmaker (Charlottesville, Va./St. Anne's-Belfield) with 22 seconds left in the game to lift No. 20 Washington and Lee to a 9-8 victory over No. 14 Franklin and Marshall in women's lacrosse action on Saturday afternoon at Watt Field.

The Generals (1-1) led 2-1 with 4:50 gone-by in the first half, but the Diplomats (0-1) scored three straight goals, including two by junior attacker

Kristen Foster (Denver, Colo./Kent Denver), to take a 4-2 advantage with 13:19 remaining in the first half. W&L junior attacker Amanda Strickler (Lexington, Va./Rockbridge County) notched an unassisted tally at the 19:27 mark to cut the deficit to 4-3, which was the score heading into halftime.

The Generals trailed 5-3 just 3:10 into the second half, but would score the next three goals to take a 6-5 lead with 15:58 remaining in the game. Freshman attacker Christine Bender (Moorestown, N.J./Moorestown) scored the first of her three goals to give W&L the lead. F&M replied with two goals to take a 7-6 lead and the Generals responded with a pair of

goals to go up 8-7.

The Diplomats tied the game at 8-8 on a free position goal by sophomore midfielder Brenna Dolphin (Wilmington, Del./Archmere) with 5:33 left in the game, which set up Hoobchaak's game-winner.

Hoobchaak notched one goal and two assists in the game, while sophomore midfielder Kelly Evans (Lexington, Va./Rockbridge County) added a pair of goals.

F&M was led by Foster, who had three goals and an assist. Senior attacker Alexis O'Meara (Millersville, Md./Severn School) also notched three goals.

W&L freshman goalkeeper Sarah Tilbor (West Simsbury, Conn./Simsbury) made nine saves, while Diplomats

sophomore netminder Kim Pleasants (Upper Darby, Pa./Upper Darby) stopped eight shots.

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BATTLE OF THE BANDS

PHOTOS BY STEVEN MARINOS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

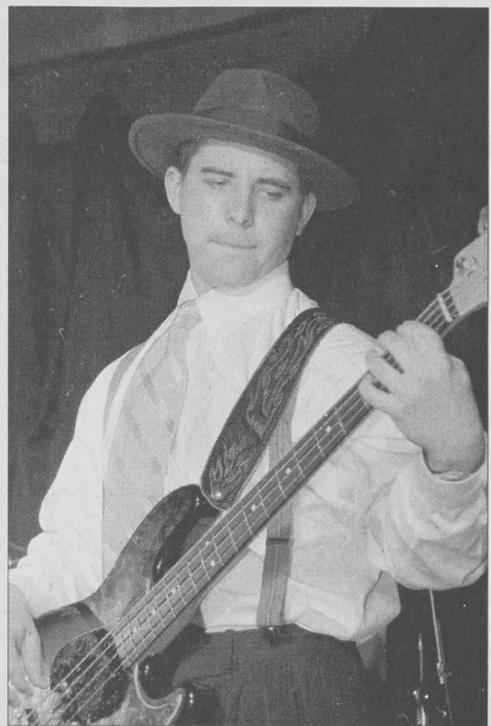
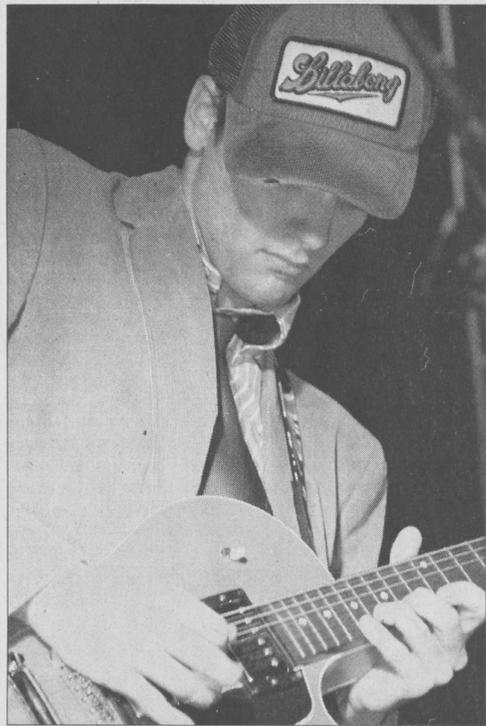
Jacob's Ladder takes 1st, JonBovi & the Afternoon Delights takes 2nd

By Sarah Murray
NEWS EDITOR

After innumerable covers of Phish, Dave Matthews, Coldplay and U2 at Friday's Battle of the Bands, the only band to perform all-original compositions took home the first-place prize of \$1000. Jacob's Ladder, last to perform, received the most enthusiastic audience support after its set. Band members Dan Fassio '05, Wheeler Sparks '06, Pete Jones '06

and Jared Meyer '07 also won a spot on the program at Buffalo Creek this May.

Second place and \$500 went to another crowd favorite, Jon Bovi and the Afternoon Delights, whose vocalist announced, "I got a fever...and we're going to fill that prescription with some friggin' cowbell." Spirited cowbell use drew cheers and laughter from a crowd numbed by dreary Oasis covers. Social Probation earned third place and \$250 with its energetic covers of Madonna and The Darkness.



Freshman basks in the glory of opportunity

By Mary Childs
IT'S NOT YOU, IT'S ME

Being a freshman is a tricky thing. The world is before you — a sea of fun things cry your name and it's your job to stand there and bask in the glory that is opportunity. You get here, you set your stuff up in your square inch of personal space, and the frat calls commence. Now it is rumored that one or two freshmen girls have all of a sudden taken to fancying themselves wonderful and beautiful, as a direct result of these said frat calls, and the boys consider themselves frat lords, because whenever they attend said parties they are lauded over and praised. "Man," they think to themselves, "I must be like awesome, this guy thinks I am SO cool! They think I'm like the biggest partier, it must be true." And thus we have the head inflation of another class of Washington and Lee graduates. But, my friends, the glory that is first semester freshman year is finite.

First term I took such rigorous classes as Dance, Drawing and poetry. While all of these classes were magnificent in and of themselves, combined they provided me with the perfect opportunity to go out whenever I pleased and spend time as I saw fit.

This term, however, my courses were significantly different. And I sprained

I've been to all of these cities and I can't tell you what they look like because I slept through it, or sang through it, or was too dazed and confused to understand my own location. They put us on the bus, took us to a city, took us off the bus, and told us to sing, like a herd of musical sheep.

my foot, so I was late to all of them. But in any case, shifting gears from first to second term was nearly impossible. Please note that this is my first column since...2004. I slept through a few deadlines. And all of these classes that were breezy and fun last term have suddenly transformed into monstrous (interesting, too! Sorry, profs) juggernauts that consume as much time as I will allow them.

During what I believe was Orientation week, we were herded to the gym to walk around in circles past tables of upperclassmen hoping to get our commitment to some kind of important charity or extracurricular. Being the wide-eyed and excitable freshmen that I was, I signed up at pretty much every table I found. Pan-Hellenic fitness classes? Why sure! Cystic Fibrosis Ball? Sounds great! Interfraternity Council? Awesome!

Obviously all of these commitments to which I committed myself have since fallen away.

Just recently, the pledge class of my brand-new sorority and I decided our housing situations for the rest of our W&L careers. When we toured the country houses and all the rest, the map of Lexington spread out before us uncharted and full of hope. But alas, reality set in and suddenly the map was marked and flagged left and right — this one is a two-year lease, this one is taken for junior year, this one is taken for both years, this one is a five-person house, are you going abroad? Suddenly my life was asking me to commit to everything all at once. Where do you want to live? Who will be your friends in three years? The control I relished at the beginning of the year is disappearing as I sign my life away for the remaining of my time here. Soon they will ask me for my

major, and then husband and number of children. And these answers will be binding.

And harkening back to the frat calls and praise of yore? Unfortunately, we have all pledged or not pledged. The rushing has ended. The boys are no longer lords of every frat; instead, they serve one and only one. The girls are not amazingly popular with every lunch date booked 'till kingdom come; they are in but one sorority, or not, and receive not three, not two — nay, the frat calls of those golden days are now reserved only for the incomings in the fall.

Over Feb. break, while many of you were sunbathing on beautiful beaches with sand and air and water and beautiful things, others of us were on nasty-smelling buses watching Mallrats and 8-mile over and over. That's right, Jubilee/SoCo tour 2005. I think we managed about 24,733,901 cities in that week alone. And we paid to do it. It would have been glorious had I any idea where in the world I was. For example, I just now learned that I was in Fort Worth. It was news to me. I've been to all of these cities and I can't tell you what they look like because I slept through it, or sang through it, or was too dazed and confused to understand my own location. They put us on the bus, took us to a city, took us off the bus, and told us to sing, like a herd of musical

sheep. It was fun, and we loved to do it, but for Mary Childs, whose life has just recently been removed from her hands, it did not help her to orient herself and acclimate herself upon return.

So not only have my classes attacked me ruthlessly, and not only has housing been locked for the next three years (granted, I'm pretty flipping excited about living with dragons and pandas and bears, oh my!), but also I have officially turned into a singing sheep. Or a lemming. Whatever you choose, because I've relinquished all control. Clearly any attempts on my part to control where I go or what I do are futile. Perhaps signing up for two plays was a bad idea; perhaps I shouldn't have stacked my schedule this way. All of these thoughts, too, are just spinning wheels. But luckily I was told earlier that I will in fact float on alright, and hey, spring term is shining brightly at the end of this dreary semester. I can almost hold my breath that long. So the Orientation week glitter of opportunity, breezy classes and anything-you-want-to-do — mostly gone. Being a freshman is not the time to accomplish anything, to pursue your dreams — no, instead, it is a time to settle and a time to commit. Which is by no stretch a bad thing — but maybe they should put up a sign at the little Activities Fair that week just to give the wide-eyed frosh a heads up.

(PS. I just remembered Fort Worth).

Against the Grain

Junior forgets to grab "Guide to W&L dating"

By Kristin Evans
AGAINST THE GRAIN

I believe that I am an optimist. I always try to search for the brighter side of things, but lately my friends have been wearing down my optimism. How, you might ask, by mentioning the awful c-word...commitment. Not just commitment but relationships in general. Something that I have been forced to realize is less common than I thought on this campus.

In the past two weeks I have had so many friends complain to me

about the dating scene on our campus that it made me take a second look at it myself. I was a little surprised by what I found. Washington and Lee is not a relationship school, though there are exceptions to every rule it is a "hook-up" school, as my friends angrily reminded me several times throughout the week.

However, the lack of relationships on campus is not what took me by surprise. Relationships are rare, if everyone was in a fulfilling relationship, the dating services that practically attack me when I am online just would not exist. What puzzles me

is the relationship etiquette on this campus. Honestly, I just do not understand it. Maybe I neglected to pick up my "Guide to W&L dating" handbook at my freshmen matriculation because I am utterly confused.

For example, since when has it been okay to take someone else's boyfriend to a formal as your date? He may be a good friend of yours but he is someone else's boyfriend. I was under the impression that this type of behavior was taboo (or at least it is in the rest of the country). I am not a jealous person and I do not think that people should be upset if their significant other does

a friend a favor, but it is the principle of the thing!

Now I am not completely blaming the girl for asking in this example. She needed a date and if he agrees to accompany her, she gets what she wants. At the same time, I cannot completely blame the guy either. He did not want to be rude, she could just be a friend, and besides, she knows that he has a girlfriend anyway, right? WRONG! It seems like this is yet another case of political incorrectness. Neither party wants to offend, but at the same time both are wondering what is really going on. Please do not pretend

like you have not been in a situation like this before. I know that you have.

So maybe this explains the "casual dating" on our campus. It just seems easier. If you are not in a relationship then you can do whatever you want with whomever you want, period. I just have to wonder is that really what makes us happy? With so many of my friends complaining about this very thing, I am not so sure anymore. My friends would say the W&L way of dating is just destined for disaster, but the truth is that some people make it work. Like I said, I have to be optimistic.

"Being a woman is a terribly difficult task, since it consists principally in dealing with men."

— Joseph Conrad

Spring Fashion update

Shrunken jackets among this season's trends

By Emily Edwards
ARTS & LIFE EDITOR

Most of my friends at other schools are either skiing to their hearts' content or soaking up the rays at sultry beaches. As for us, we have a month until that gap between classes and fun that the administration calls Spring Break.

I don't know about the rest of you, but snowfall shouldn't happen in March, ever, unless you live in Antarctica.

I find that a little online shopping helps to ease the pain of the winter blues, especially when it comes in the form of an awesome white jacket by Vince or a new pair of Theory pants.

This spring's trends are nothing we haven't seen before. I wish a couple of them had never come back (or even started for that matter), but

we'll start with my favorites.

White, white, everything white. White pants, white dresses, white tank tops... you get the idea. Nothing says spring quite like crisp white clothing. Everyone from J. Crew to Bergdorf has a great selection of the color not in the UV spectrum. Just don't wear all white. It's not sorority initiation, and the purpose of spring is so that we don't have to look at snowballs.

Shrunken jackets have been making their way into the limelight since late fall, but with lightweight materials, they'll be huge in spring. Paired with a cute James Perse tank top and some Antik jeans, they'll have you whistling a bright tune in no time.

Full Skirts are reappearing for the

first time in a couple of years. They're adorable, if you don't have hips. If you do have hips, stay away. Otherwise, you'll wind up looking like a pear on steroids.

The Anthropologie catalog is full of adorable dresses and skirts sporting this trend.

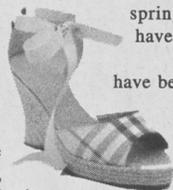
Oversized bags are in. Whether they're in a normal color, such as green or pink, or in a hot metallic

shade, these bags are hot. They're good for carrying everything from your chemistry lab manuals to your walk of shame necessities. No matter if you have the coveted Lolli bag or a cute

Prada tote, a nice spring bag helps to understate the cold weather.

The final trend is the wedge shoe. Can you walk in wedge shoes? I attempted in eighth grade and failed (ehem, fell) miserably. Some of these shoes are reminiscent of the Steve Madden platform era, God help us. But, nevertheless, everyone from Nine West to Kate Spade and Jimmy Choo are cranking out multiple wedge styles.

So, if you're looking to spruce up your wardrobe for the upcoming season, here are just a few of my picks. Take them or leave them. With the exception of the treacherous wedge, I'll definitely be wearing these items.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NEIMANMARCUS.COM

Phi investigates Glad product

By Emily Edwards
ARTS & LIFE EDITOR

In the past 24 hours I have learned many useful things. First, Z-rated tires are no match for a snowstorm, the theater in Buena Vista does not accept debit cards, and Glad has done it again.

During Thursday's repeat episode of *The OC*, an advertisement for a new product by Glad aired on TV. This product, Glad Press 'n Seal, promised to take away all my spillage worries. All my spillage worries? Something must be wrong with it.

They showed Gladware containers that were useless without their lids. They showed sectionless plates. They showed coffee cups. And Glad promised that their new product, when used as a Saran wrap of sorts, would eliminate spills. But does it?

I bought myself a roll of Press 'n

Seal at our neighborhood Wal-Mart for the amazing price of \$4.46 for approximately 150 ft. of wrap. I will admit, I was skeptical of this uber-American, self-proclaimed life-changing product.

Armed with some paper towels and a pile of leftovers, I tested Press 'n Seal in my Woods Creek apartment kitchen. If you desire the same thrills, I highly recommend it.

First on my list was the lidless Gladware container. I filled it with milk (sour, perhaps) and applied Press 'n Seal. According to the instructions, the container's rim must be dry. Check.

After thoroughly sealing the container, I carried it to the sink, and flipped, shook, and tipped the container. Nothing happened. And by nothing, I mean not a drop leaked out.

Next up was the sectionless plate. I spooned out some salsa, pasta, and rice



PHOTO COURTESY OF GLAD.COM

onto the plate. Now, if you're as anal as I am, you don't enjoy your food touching each other. This is a problem with leftovers.

Once again, I applied the wrap to the plate, and pressing it in between the different sections of food, I created sections.

I repeated the Gladware experiment again, shaking, turning, flipping and tipping the plate. Nothing moved.

Now, if for some reason, you're worried about your frat cup spilling at the next band party, don't use Press 'n Seal.

It miserably failed the cup tests.

Using coffee cups, frat cups, glasses, and a Pyrex measuring bowl, I was unable to make use of my miracle product. I guess we'll just have to keep using sippy cups.

Out of the realm of food, Press 'n Seal has many uses, from a lint remover to a makeshift table cloth (attractive, I know).

You can visit Glad's website for many more wonderful hints. If only my Michelins were as useful as Press 'n Seal.

Student poetically argues for snow days

By Ian Dickinson
STAFF WRITER

Not Rain nor Sleet nor snow nor hail
Shall ever close mighty W&L
Though Students fear th' icy car trip
In schedule changes it will never slip

An hour or two, maybe no more
A Stoic Tim Kolly Announces at th' door
No pity here shall you ever seek
Should late to class this weather make

This cold uncaring and unfeeling giant
Is really acting all quite defiant
Don't they know the consequences
When winter blizzard doth intensifies?

From screeching wheels to crunching crash
Or slipping feet from classward dash
The broken skull cannot repair
Nor can the leg that tendon tear

The lucid ice that covers the ground
It does not discern from student or town
All shall face Sir Jack Frost's wrath
When Mr. Kolly puts them in his path

The lawsuits! Oh see how they fly!
God help us if someone should die!
But lucky are you who on broken ground lie
For there is a law school right nearby!

And if this incident should cause attention
Then god forbid someone goes to prison
Although convenience is at our door
As VMI is our vigilant Neighbor

As things seem now, as it would stand
If rain of fire swept cross the land
Tim Kolly would contact us through mail
"School will be open, even through hell!"

And so sorry stands our state of affairs
That we question if our beloved school cares
Our hardworking staff that could use a break
But never from our time schedules take

So Administration please listen up good
Lest we think you cold hearted and rude
And take from me these words of advice,
My, wouldn't a snow-day sure be nice?



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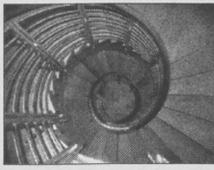
indecent exposure

**stand-up comedy
wednesday, march 9, 8:30 pm
commons theater**

**also featuring
chris walker - 8:00 pm
kate shellnutt - 8:15**

contains graphic language and adult content

opinions



STAFF EDITORIAL

Planning ideas

Because student input is an essential part of the strategic planning process, *The Ring-tum Phi* will put across a few ideas regarding the Communications report, which is concerned primarily with Washington and Lee's national reputation and name-recognition.

Within the Communications strategic recommendations, several excellent ideas are put forth. A satellite uplink seems to be a solid way to facilitate a huge amount of press coverage for the University.

The report also proposes to "Change the Conversation Around Robert E. Lee." Because Lee truly did make important contributions to the field of higher education, we fully support the idea of highlighting these very positive facets of his character.

We also fully support the idea of asking national figures to serve as commencement speakers. We firmly believe this is the easiest way for our school to garner national attention.

At the end of the report, the Communications task force points to the necessity of a Visitor's Center. This idea makes perfect sense, as currently the closes thing to a Visitor's Center that Washington and Lee has is Lee Chapel, which certainly does not help to "Change the Conversation Around Robert E. Lee."

The Communications report does make one unfortunate proposal. The University does not need to alter the Trident to make it look "less ominous and reminiscent of a swastika." Our Trident looks no more like a swastika than the New York Yankees' symbol. And anyway, why change something as inherent to our school's image as the Trident when the end goal is as vague as looking "less ominous"?

UPS & DOWNS

Opinions Editor Caley Anderson has recovered from the plague to give you his take on what rose and fell this week at W&L and around the world.

March

In like some sort of twisted lion-lamb hybrid, probably out in the same way.

GW Statue in Commons

I was showing around some girls from Hollins who were visiting for an athletic event, and when they saw the statue they were like "ohhhh...that is terrible." Thing was meant to be seen from a distance.

Trident Logo

Administrators- you really can't take it away. a- everyone loves it, who cares if it looks vaguely ominous? b- you'd have to spend a lot of money painting over things and getting letterheads redone. Our tuition is high enough.

Honor System

Only one person has left the school because of an alleged HV so far this year. Very low.

Prof. Diette

Dear Econ Dept.- Now is the time to stop the perpetual revolving door for visiting profs who teach intro courses. Hire this man. No, this has nothing at all to do with my midterm on Tuesday.

Exam Week a Month Away

Please, whoever makes this decision...please bring back free soda week during exams. Don't make me beg now.

The Brick

Getting orders out noticeably faster now. Still, could they serve soda in something OTHER than frat cups?

Nader

It's "Presidential Election Footnotes" year for Contact, apparently. Not that I'm complaining, Pol major that I am.

Baseball

Nothing warms this Little League umpire's heart like the smell of a freshly-tended field and the sound of the crack of a bat. Go Padres!

Belief in pre-marital sex on the decline at W&L and elsewhere

By Becky LeMoine
THE LIBERAL VIEW

Sex is usually regarded as a taboo subject, yet is also one that seems to consume our popular culture. We see sex in movies, TV, and music videos, hear about sex in songs and stories, and read about it in books and magazines. Indeed, sex seems to be everywhere. When it comes to engaging in premarital sex, if people were to simply follow the examples of popular culture there would be little question about it: the majority of media have given two big thumbs up to premarital sex.

According to a Gallup poll taken in May 2003, 58% of respondents said premarital sex is morally acceptable, a figure that just one year prior was five points lower. Views on premarital sex seem to differ greatly based on political ideology, gender, education, race, age, and other factors. For example, in the survey, 42% of conservatives supported premarital sex, compared to 64% of moderates and 80% of liberals. Men were more likely than women to support premarital sex, as were the college-educated, young adults, whites, and people who attended religious services rarely or never.

In addition, the number of cohabiting couples has increased nine fold since the beginning of the "sexual revolution." In the summer 2003 issue of *Youth Culture Today*, figures showed that the number of cohabiting couples increased from half a million couples to more than 4.5 million between 1960 and 2000. A Gallup survey of 13 to 17 year olds also showed that 70% of teens say they approve of couples living together before marriage.

Even at Washington and Lee, a random sampling of students revealed that

a majority have engaged in premarital sex, especially among males. So what does this say about our society?

Those opposed to premarital sex argue that it degrades the moral values of our culture, and counters the values instituted in many religions. They feel that the increasing support for premarital sex is only further evidence of the corruption in society. However, those in support often argue that premarital sex has no serious repercussions and that, since sex often plays a key role in relationships, premarital sex is helpful in choosing a lifelong partner that will satisfy the sexual aspects of a marriage.

While there are valid arguments on both sides of the issue and the emotional effects of premarital sex still remain highly contested, certain facts are difficult to ignore: an increase in premarital sex leads to an increased risk in the contraction of sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy. People who practice abstinence until marriage are less likely to bring a sexual disease to a marriage, whereas people who engage in sex with multiple partners before marriage are more likely to have contracted a sexual disease that could possibly cause severe pregnancy complications. Therefore, if the trend continues, premarital sex could present serious physical consequences for our society.

Whether or not you approve of premarital sex, there is no denying that our society is gradually discarding the ideals of the past and moving into a future that embraces a new set of moral values. Yet, this is not an unfamiliar story. Each generation must face a degradation of previous ideals and learn to adapt to the popular ethics of modern culture. Even though virginity until marriage is not quite dead, it is certainly not on the rise, and that is an issue that we must face personally as well as collectively.

Blogs an excellent new frontier for news and opinion

By Whitney Duffley
GENERALLY SPEAKING

If you're anything like most Washington and Lee students, you're probably too busy/tired/strung out on Red Bull to find time to read the newspaper on a daily basis. Not to say you wouldn't check out CNN every once and a while (okay...maybe Fox News is more likely) or read a column or two on the internet, but I think we all agree that sitting down to read a newspaper is a pretty time consuming activity. "Yeah," you may think, "but if I had more time I'd read it every day." Maybe...or maybe not.

Susan Goldberg, executive editor of Silicon Valley's Mercury News, speaking at the National College Newspaper Convention, said, "More than 80 percent of adults read a daily newspaper 40 years ago...Last year it was hovering just above 50 percent."

It is safe to say that the decline in newspaper reading is due, in part, to the plethora of new media outlets, especially the internet. However, I believe this figure is indicative of a greater problem, a changing image of the mainstream media.

The post-Nixon era saw a stampede of journalism students, fueled by youthful idealism and the influence of Woodward and Bernstein. Reporters were viewed as an effective and necessary check on those with power.

Today, most people are aware that the news is more a packaged product in support of or against the status quo, rather than an impartial source of information. Do you choose "Hearty Conservative" talk radio or "Right Lite" Fox News? How about "Left Lovers" New York Times? Of course, you could always go for "Manager's Choice," internet blogs.

The partisanship of media is evident, despite the protestations of media moguls ("No really, we're fair and balanced.") It is unclear if this bias was created by the idealistic polarity of the American public or visa versa, but one thing is certain. The American people have a growing desire to hear the news that they want, and to discredit that which they don't.

Add this issue to the lack of accountability seen in many newsrooms as of late (thanks Dan Rather, Howell Raines, and Eason Jordan), and you end up with a lot of people sick and tired of mainstream media. The result: alternative new sources of varying levels of accuracy, in the form of internet blogs.

...there is a lot of junk out there in cyber space, so if you wanted to find some lunatic blogger and quote them to discredit blogging as a whole, it wouldn't be a hard task.

Debate over minimum wage misses the point

By Caley Anderson
MODERATE MUSINGS

Even as we speak, debate rages in the Senate over two conflicting plans for raising the minimum wage. While both Republicans and Democrats of every ilk agree that the minimum wage needs raising, they differ on the degree. Republicans want a raise of slightly over a dollar over 18 months, Democrats want a two dollar increase over roughly two years.

Personally, I've always been baffled by debate over minimum wage laws. The purpose of a minimum wage is to ensure that those who find employment keep up (more or less) with the cost of living. The price paid for this is to actually increase unemployment (as anyone who has taken Econ 101 can attest).

But as it stands, the minimum wage is inconsistent and fails to meet even the simple goal of ensuring that

Many initially picture bloggers as burnouts, sitting on their couches and typing their random opinions, but in fact American political history has a great tradition of blogging (think of Thomas Paine as a precursor). Although there may be a few burnouts contributing their opinions, the growing distaste for mainstream media has created a demand for accountable and well written internet blogs, much to the alarm of traditional news sources.

To combat this threat, mainstream media had been doing everything in its power to discredit the bloggers. For example, New York Times recently ran an article entitled "Bloggers as News Media Trophy Hunters," a blatant attempt to portray bloggers as an unintelligent, unreliable mob of two-bit writers (as opposed to the highly intelligent and reliable writing always found in mass media today).

Yes, on occasion this is true (but keep in mind it's the internet...you could find a mail order wife while combating pop ups advertising various types of "enhancement"). The fact is that there is a lot of junk out there in cyber space, so if you wanted to find some lunatic blogger and quote them to discredit blogging as a whole, it wouldn't be a hard task.

Still, there are well researched blogs written by both conservatives and liberals, and that these outlets provide an important service-a check on the mainstream news media. So when mainstream media decides to ignore Jordan's remark about U.S. soldiers shooting journalists in Iraq, there are watchdogs to demand coverage.

Meanwhile, media moguls are toying with ideas to make mainstream news more appealing again to the American public. Here's a few simple ones for them:

1. Try harder to be responsible in reporting, lately it seems to be a lost art.

2. Hold those accountable who are unreliable reporters. The only thing worse than being found to be irresponsible in reporting is being found trying to cover up an indiscretion.

3. Try being unbiased for once. You don't ALWAYS have to slant news stories, and in fact the story may just be easier to stomach if you don't.

Otherwise, in ten years we may just find ourselves reading blogs instead of newspapers.

the employed meet the cost of living. The wage ranges across states; some states use the Federal minimum wage of \$5.15, others set it higher (California sits at \$6.75).

There exists no state or federal minimum wage, however, which is even close, proportionally, to the cost of living in the area where it applies. Thus, debating constantly over when and by how much to raise it seems inefficient.

It would make more sense to tie the minimum wage to a local price index, as is done in San Francisco. Thus, the cost of living in any particular area would directly determine the minimum wage, with adjustments occurring perhaps monthly. Locality is important; it costs more to live in Los Angeles than Omaha, yet the Federal government sees little difference in their official minimum wage.

To sum, indexing the minimum wage is a simple and efficient way to guarantee that people meet living costs.

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

THE RING-TUM PHI.

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"I'm so overexposed, I'm making Paris Hilton look like a recluse."

—QUOTE OF THE WEEK Barack Obama

Response to claim of W&L's title as "Best School"

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to the opinion article "W&L is the Best School in the Country" in your last issue. It is not meant to take on the "challenge," because even without the author's calling for challenge, my reaction to the article would still be the same. Nor is it meant to offend anybody because I take the opinion article to come from good intentions despite its flaws.

First of all, I'd like to make one distinction. It is not all clear to me whether the article is supposed to be more of a joke or a serious opinion piece. From past experiences of reading the two school newspapers, I know I have some problems distinguishing between the two types of articles. It's probably just me. (Or maybe not—for otherwise, another author wouldn't have to stress in parentheses that "I'm not creative enough to make this stuff up" in his opinion article in the last issue of the Trident.)

If it is indeed a joke, my discussion about the article would end here. But it's curious why jokes need to be published "by the students and for the students" of W&L, a school that boasts one of the best

undergraduate journalism programs in the country. If the demand for them is overwhelming, maybe the paper can respond by creating a new section called Entertainment, or more elegantly, Style.

However, the author seems to have taken a lot of effort in research and comparison to form his opinions. Calling it a joke, then, might be a complete insult to his work, and possibly, to the school as well.

Granted that's the case, please allow me to be a little more serious here. No doubt W&L is a wonderful school. But saying it is *the* best school without solid, intellectually substantial evidence, and for us (the very people who, to a large extent define what the school is) to say that, don't seem to lend very strong support to the claim.

But what's wrong with the article's evidence, which the author painstakingly gathered from those not-too-inspiring visits to the eight colleges around Virginia and North Carolina? His single most important criterion for judging schools appears to be, interestingly, the existence/quality of PARTY (or in its daytime version, "out-and-about-ness"). At Mary

Baldwin, only "one group of girls" was outside at "cocktail hour." At University of Richmond, the author and friends found something that "resembled a party," but only after driving around the campus "for a long time."

Finally, a party with the "potential" to be fun was found at William and Mary, but sadly enough, the potential didn't become actual due to the omnipresence of university security. Only when this criterion alone couldn't rule out a school's chance of beating W&L did the author employ a second criterion: academics. This was how Elon University was defeated.

The author, with no exception, clearly knows it is not a very sensible move to compare schools based primarily on their party scenes. I must have misread him by saying party scene is his "single most important criterion," for what really concerns him is the sense of community.

He may seem to focus a lot on "party-ness", but it's just his way of coming to understand something deeper, more significant about the schools, which is reflected in the party-ness. But how exactly does having parties or being out

of dorms/library relate to the sense of community? How is it that "the student body [at the University of Richmond] lacks a school-wide community" simply because their parties only have ten to twenty people usually of the same sex?

And even more peculiar, how does William and Mary, where parties are spoiled by university security, become not only a "closed community," but worse, a community "which does not understand how to share ideas in an open and productive forum?"

Does this imply only parties, and only good parties, provide "an open and productive forum?" Is that why W&L is "open to new people, experiences, and ideas," as the author claims? I sincerely hope not.

Or maybe it's not about community, but about having fun. This too is a big part of college life. But it's altogether another question as to what constitutes a "fun" college life.

Would it be too narrow a definition for fun, all the fun, to be equated to parties? I wonder what the whole array of student organizations on campus is for.

As to the other merits of W&L

mentioned briefly by the author toward the end, I have no violent objections. I would certainly be thrilled if they point to one and only conclusion, W&L is the best college in the country. But they don't.

But why am I so reluctant to accept the conclusion, since I too go to W&L and thus would be all too glad upon hearing something like that, even though it is very unlikely to be true?

As I said in the beginning, the truly best school wouldn't allow its students to be consumed by conceit and ignorance. This is not how W&L can strive for the best.

Nevertheless, the article does seem to prove something about the school. How about the best party school? (True, we are no. 2 in the Princeton Review ranking. But I think we qualify for "the best party school in the positive sense," for "maintain[ing] a balance which is unprecedented at other schools.")

Sincerely,
Yujia Song '07

Law student protests recruitment bias against military

Dear Editors,

I am writing as a student deeply concerned with the university's policy on military recruiting on campus. As a second year law student interviewing with Army JAG last year, I was disgusted by the lack of respect the school showed to its students and the Army recruiter by allowing anti-military signs and a small gay rights protest to go on right in front the interview room. This lack of respect hurt not only W&L students trying to get jobs in the military, but also brought disrespect to the law school by allowing an employer to be treated like that.

If this disrespect was not enough, I am now aware that the Law School would like to ban or restrict the Judge Advocate General corps from recruiting on campus if it was not faced with the loss of federal funds. Specifically, it is Law School policy that any employer, who discriminates on the basis of sex, age, race, religion, national origin, handicap or disability, or *sexual orientation*, may not recruit on campus. The policy has an exception for the military due to the potential loss of funding to the University that would result from the Solomon Amendment (a federal law which threatens to take away federal funding from universities that ban the military). In other words, if the university had its way and

would not lose federal funding, it would ban or otherwise restrict the ability of the military to recruit on campus, because of its disapproval of the military's rule against gay service people. A recent decision made this a realistic possibility by holding the Solomon Amendment unconstitutional, at least in the Third Circuit.

Regardless of the merits of this "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, I think it is outrageous that this university, founded by Generals Washington and Lee, would even consider banning the military from recruiting, especially while our nation is at war. While I respect the valid concerns many people have with "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," registering disapproval in this manner disrespects students who seek to serve their country, and brings dishonor to the institution as a whole. I do not criticize administration officials who have good intentions of protecting gay students, just the way they are going about it. A ban or limit on military recruiting at W&L will not have any effect of changing the military's policy, and will only hurt W&L students who are interested in serving their country.

As a result, I suggest that the Law School revise its anti-discrimination policy from one of forced toleration of the military to open acceptance. Instead of

the non-discrimination policy saying that the Law School allows the military to recruit because of the loss of federal funding, the policy should welcome military recruiting, out of respect for the value of military service, and the hundreds of W&L students and Alumni who gave their lives in the military. In addition, the school should strictly enforce its policy of respect for *all employers* who interview on campus, not only those who it politically agrees with. This means that it should actively ban protests from interview areas. With these changes, the university would remain free to register its disapproval of homosexual discrimination in other ways, possibly by writing to Congress or acting as an amicus in cases that challenge "Don't Ask, Don't Tell."

Most importantly, the hundreds of W&L students and Alums whose names are listed on the bronze plaques at the front of the university deserve nothing less than full respect for the military in which they gave their lives, and the current policy of the Law School, which treats the military with disdain, demonstrates something much less.

Sincerely,
Christopher L. Swain
Law 2005

Housing change reaction

Dear Editor,

This is a response to the article about the student housing changes.

After reading the recent Ring-Tum Phi article about the proposed changes in student housing, I decided to explore the strategic plan website to learn more about the school's plan for the future. I think that it is very important that the plan be thoroughly discussed with the student body, especially because any changes in student housing will affect the students more directly than any other changes. In my opinion, the student housing situation as it is right now is perfect. During freshman year, the new students make friends and bond as a class by living together in the dorms. Dorm life is unique and essential to the freshman year experience. However, once freshman year is over, students look forward to something new: the experience and privilege of living in Greek housing. Living in Greek housing is a vital part of sophomore year because it allows the new members of each organization to grow closer to their pledge classes by living together. Currently, I am living in the sorority house with my fellow sophomore pledge sisters, and it has allowed me to get to know all of them better. We have grown so close as a

pledge class and have made friendships that will carry us through the rest of our time here at W&L. After sophomore year, Juniors and Seniors look forward to living independently in off campus houses with friends of their own choosing. The experience of searching for a house, signing a lease, and paying monthly rent teaches life skills and allows upperclassmen to have the independence of living on their own, just like it will be in the real world. Further, Juniors and Seniors are old enough and responsible enough to live independently in houses of their own choosing, and this is a privilege they deserve. Students who are 21 and 22 years old are adults and have the right to live wherever they want to live. Forcing upperclassmen to live in Greek housing or in "off campus learning centers" will create resentment, and living in Greek housing will become a burden instead of a privilege. I really hope that the administration not ruin one of the most important aspects of life at this school and of college life in general. To those in charge of this strategic plan—please make sure that the opinions of the students are heard and carefully considered before any changes are implemented.

Sincerely,
Callie Ellis
Class of 2007

Phi Opinions



Got something on your mind? The Opinions section of the Ring-tum Phi is currently accepting requests to join the op/ed staff. E-mail phi@wlu.edu



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last word



QUICK HITS

■ I miss Pi Phi's army men on the front lawn.

■ Every pledge has to get every active to engage in half an hour of cuddling.

■ The sorority agenda for Saturday: Rush Workshop #1!

■ Hell Week suggestion from the Phi Staff: Make your pledges work for the Phi.

■ Have the pledges reenact scenes from Monty Python movies in the Commons between classes.

■ Make them pledge PIKA for a week. That would be awful.

■ Worst Hell Week ever: Being locked in a room with Jeb, Worthy and Walotsky.

■ Is Dean Dawn going to play basketball outside the coop this year?

■ I heart sorority pledgship.

■ Have your pledges strip for Chi-O...oh wait...that happened in week seven.

■ Make the pledges attend every lecture brought to campus this week by all the organizations.

■ PLEASE PLEASE have your pledges serenade the sorority houses this week!

■ I'd rather peel my toe nails off one-by-one-by-one than go through hell week.

■ One week to go!

■ Hell Week is a breeze. It's totally overrated.

■ Make me eat in Evans again.

Next time's topic:
Strategic Planning,
what's up with that?

Drunk Dial with caution

Play sport of champions responsibly

By Hugh Trout
The Fisherman

Cavemen escaped it. Even college kids in the 80s never witnessed its awesome power. But for the current crop of college kids, such as you and me, it is both a privilege and a danger that we must approach carefully. When handled appropriately, it can be as beautiful as a magnificent sunset. And when handled poorly, it can be as vicious and damaging as a bad episode of "When Animals Attack." What is this awesome responsibility that you and I possess?

Drunk Dialing. When cell phones and a significant amount of alcohol mix, the results are fantastic. In past years drunk phone calls had to be made from a house phone and were a lot less convenient, but with the spread of cell phones, your ex-girlfriend who left you "because of her, not you" is just a few buttons away (speed dial if you're a champ about it). Remember the guy who cheated on you and forgot about you a week later? After a few shots of JD is a great time to call him and remind him about who you are and how much he sucks. Really, let it all out, because while it may be painful and uncomfortable for him, you will have no recollection of this awkward conversation the next morning. But beyond just calling people you really want to give a piece of your mind to, there are even finer opportunities.

You know that point in your relationship where you clearly are becoming something with somebody but you have to play your cards right to be sure not to screw it up? Now is the time to get blasted and give them a call. Not so much because it's the *smart* thing to do, but the *right* thing to do. Sure, you may begin to tell them how long you have thought they were hot and how you just are pretending to like their friends to get to chill with them, but there is an honesty there that could never be achieved between two sober people trying to carefully maneuver their way into a relationship. And much like children can blame the missing

cookies on their invisible friend, the next morning you can blame all of that on the bottle. And here is the true wonder of it all: if the next morning they still want to hang out with you, you can feel completely comfortable that they understand your intentions with them. Except the part about getting a dog together...that part was just weird and a drunken rambling that made no sense.

Here is the danger of drunk dialing that sadly strikes all of us at some point: drunk dialing people who you actually don't want to hook up with but have convinced yourself that you do because you know you can. It's a vicious drawback to DDing, and you can be sure that your friends will never let you live it down. This is perhaps the most vicious and, sadly enough, common type of Drunk Dialing. Treatment includes using the buddy system (girls, you know when she shouldn't be talking to that guy, so don't let her call him...unless it's me...then just let it slide...just kidding), deleting numbers from your cell phone, or even just giving your phone away when you feel the urge to call that girl who would be incredible so long as the lights are off and no one ever finds out. In the end, you have to fight to keep your self-respect as you keep drinking.

I write the DD article for this week because I believe that having just finished registration we are turning our eyes to the glorious Spring Term. Although Drunk Dialing is a sport that is played year long, it certainly has a season in which it reigns supreme. Spring is this season. Because its warm and life is great, it can be a recipe for either disaster or glory. So let us all enjoy the privilege and responsibility that comes with a gin bucket and a cell phone. But remember, a drunken marriage proposal to that cute girl in your Bio class can be as painful to watch as a raccoon stuck in a glove compartment on "When Animals Attack 6."

Public urination, flip flops top Potato Man's stupid list

By Marshall Rule
Potato Man

I've done some pretty stupid things in my day. Some things were done under the influence of alcohol, others under the influence of girls and the rest under the influence of the superego.

But I have recently seen some very stupid things done in the world, and in order to make myself feel smarter and more mature, I am going to list off the stupidest things that I have recently seen done.

1 - There have been many times that I have woken up on a beautiful Saturday morning and asked myself what I wanted to do that day. Never has my answer been, "I should get ripped and urinate in the middle of the downtown parade." But, to each his own, I suppose. I hope you got out of that sex offender charge, cause that would have made your life a little less worth living.

2 - I know wearing flip flops is a W&L pastime, but when you are walking around in flip flops in 6 inches of snow,

I know wearing flip flops is a W&L pastime, but when you are walking around in flip flops in 6 inches of snow, you look like a tool. At least I haven't seen anyone in all out spring term dress yet.

you look like a tool. At least I haven't seen anyone in spring term dress yet.

3 - Some freshmen are actually looking forward to Hell Week. This is a very stupid idea. Imagine the worst week of your life, and then plan on it being nine times as bad. You may look back on it and say it was fun, but don't ever say that you are looking forward to it. It just makes upperclassmen think of more stuff to make you do.

4 - Going into an airport restroom where there are numerous open urinals, and using the one next to me. This is weird enough, but then add it to the fact that the guy then proceeded to try to talk to me about where I was headed and who I was

going to see and you have a really awkward situation.

5 - Starting to smoke. It's a horrible idea. It is bad for you, makes you smell, will kill you, and makes you anti social.

6 - Quitting smoking is even more stupid. Nobody likes a quitter. Do you think Michael Jordan ever wanted to quit playing basketball? Sure he did. But he knew that quitting was wrong, so he made several comebacks.

7 - People that don't watch Desperate Housewives. It is the best show ever, and I'm not afraid to admit it.

8 - Admitting that you watch Desperate Housewives. You will never be looked at the same way again.

Long live Kristine's king: the sippy cup

By Kristine Early
The Milk and Cheese Girl

Today, I announce it to the world: I believe in the power of the sippy cup. I am not alone in my adoration of a beverage container so vaunted and so superior that the beer mug and the frat cup are left to cower in Natty Light. There are many worshippers out there, on the fringes of society now perhaps, but one day, we will rise up and work together to promote the idolatry of our god. Hey, weirder things have cult followings, for example, The Grateful Dead.

I haven't always seen the way. I was once misled by the variety of drink containers on the consumer market. But Justine and Brittany rose out of the ranks to be my spiritual leaders. And now that I have seen the light, I can never turn back to the dark ways.

Why is the sippy cup worthy of so much praise?

First of all, the sippy cup is small and portable. It fits nicely in an oversized coat pocket for easy transport. But it can still hold a respectable amount of H2O (cough, cough).

Secondly, if you're a klutz like me, the sippy cup is there to save the day. Never again will you spill orange juice (cough, cough) all over your white t-shirt.

The sippy cup is also cheap. I tend to lose things. (Check campus notices on Thursday and Saturday mornings for more of my carefully crafted prose.) If you misplace a good flask, you lose a significant investment. If you lose a sippy cup, why, only one trip to Wal-Mart and your collection of drink containers is as good as new.

Plus, unlike the frat cup, which comes only in standard hues, - clear, blue, and red- the sippy cup is sold in a wide variety of colors. Why, you can even match your outfit to your sippy cup! (And be a tool, but I don't judge...)

But, frankly, the best part about the sippy cup is its ability to invigorate dead conversations or to spark up a little chitchat. The conversations tend to follow a given format:

Drunken Girl: "Wait, is that a sippy cup?"

Me: "Yep."

Drunken Girl: "That is so cool. I need a sippy cup."

Me: "Yeah. They're great!"

Drunken Girl: "Wow! I'm so excited. You are such a trendsetter."

Me: "Why, thanks."

OR

Drunken Guy: "Whoa. A sippy cup!"

Me: Yep.

Drunken Guy: A sippy cup!

Me: Uh huh.

Drunken Guy: Do you want to make out with me?

Me: Not really. (Although the answer would clearly be yes if that were coupled with "I see you're drinking 1%. Is that 'cause you think you're fat? 'Cause you're not. You could be drinking whole if you wanted to." Napoleon Dynamite is so hot right now.)

Now, I know you're feeling the sippy cup. But if you want to join the coolest of the cool there are a few rules you have to follow.

The Commandments of the Sippy Cup:

1) Thou shall have no other preferred beverage containers.

2) Thou shall never leave the sippy cup on the floor to be kicked and stepped on.

3) Thou shall never let the sippy cup remain empty on Friday and Saturday nights.

4) Thou shall never leave beverages to ferment in the sippy cup overnight. (Chug it! Chug it!)

5) Thou shall never attempt to play beirut with sippy cups. It just doesn't work.

Long live my king the sippy cup.

Proctor explains showering at VMI System has makings of a bottom-shelf romance novel



Jonathan Proctor
THE GUY NEXT DOOR

After months of frustration due to the fact that the water which comes out of the faucet in my room is more mother-of-pearl than clear, I thought that I would take a moment this week to explain our living conditions within Barracks. One must understand that the current plumbing and wiring systems in Barracks have been virtually unchanged since the mid-twentieth century.

Compound that with our lack of air-conditioning, telephones, refrigerators, microwaves and even (gasp) televisions, and one should not be surprised to learn

that, if Barracks were a prison, it would be the third worst in the country. Oh, did I mention the fact that we don't even have beds? We have a mattress ("hay") and a wooden cot ("rack") which must be put up before 7am each day (except Sunday, thank God...guffaw guffaw).

As I write this, I am sitting in the comforts of my home since I decided to leave Lexington for the weekend; believe me, dear readers, you wouldn't believe how much I appreciate sleeping in my own bed.

We shower without stalls in an open room with no less than twenty nozzles, and in order to keep the water running, one has to push a button approximately every seven seconds. And thank goodness for those buttons; they are quite adept at keeping your mind off of the fact that, in any other situation, our shower system

would have the makings of a bottom-shelf romance novel. Approximately once a semester, the plumbing in Barracks gets so backed up that a yellowish liquid consistency of syrup ebbs up and sits in our sinks for a minimum of two days (prompting the following announcement over the speaker system: "Attention inside and outside of Barracks, DO NOT drink the water"). Yummy.

This has not been an attempt to portray cadets as "harder" because of our living conditions, merely to explain why we're so damn miserable all of the time. Remember a few weeks ago when I spoke of "those nights" when we go uptown in an effort to drown our collective Pain and Sorrow? Well, hopefully now you understand what I was talking about. Until next time, neighbors: Illegitimus nil carborundum.